SPANISH, ENGLISH, AND IN-BETWEEN: SELF-TRANSLATION IN THE U.S. AND LATIN AMERICA

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ABSTRACT

SPANISH, ENGLISH, AND IN-BETWEEN:
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Spanish American and/or U.S. Latino authors Manuel Puig, Ariel Dorfman, Rosario Ferré, Gloria Anzaldúa, and Margarita Cota-Cárdenas challenge notions of authorial, textual, linguistic, and national integrity through their bold, literary translations of their own texts. Through their strategies of mistranslation, non-literal translation, translation via context, or non-translation, these writers manipulate words such that they foreground language, make the negotiations of translation visible, approximate the aesthetics of exile, expose dynamics of the literary marketplace, and, as a result, engage contradictions and ambiguities that complicate linguistic and national identities. Since their texts both are and are not translations, the often substantive differences between their texts combine to create an elusive "third" space in literary and translational practice. The unlikely status of an equally authoritative translation enables talk of "versions," "variations," "renditions," or "interpretations" in place of terms that implicitly subordinate subsequent versions of a text to a more sacrosanct "original." I provide an overview of how these authors approach translation in the context of the late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century North American literary marketplace and emphasize the postcolonial possibilities of their non-traditional approaches to their texts. By comparing the disparate Spanish and English versions of their texts and examining the translational strategies within their texts, I show how these multilingual authors are uniquely positioned to challenge and/or succumb to the pressures of nationalism and globalization that are reinforced by rigid perceptions of language, nation, and

authorship. Whether as political exiles, “domestic foreigners,” willing “traitors” of their multilingual competencies, or as cultural mediators, these self-translators extend the parameters of one or both of their assumed languages and advocate a fluid if not harmonious relationship with each.

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What constitutes an "original" text? Who is an author? How does literature change across space and time? Does a source or target language predetermine the possibilities of a text? How does the event of reading become an act of translation? These questions, anticipated by Jorge Luis Borges in his inimitable "Pierre Menard, autor del Quijote," are central to current debates within translation studies and literary criticism. While Borges' story has become a point of critical departure for readers and translation theorists alike, less attention has been directed toward the texts and rewritings of multilingual U.S. and Spanish American authors who, in a manner that is no less audacious, enact the inverse of Menard's creative path.[1] Unlike the fictional Menard who traverses centuries of time and literary history to write an identical and still original version of Cervantes's immortal *Don Quijote*, these late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century authors translate or rewrite their texts over a relatively short span of time to produce original yet dissimilar versions of their own works. Their disparate and also contingent texts are replete with implications for time-honored concepts of literature, authorship, language, nationality, and identity.

Through the Spanish and English or Spanish-and-English versions of their texts, multilingual authors such as Manuel Puig, Ariel Dorfman, Rosario Ferré, Gloria Anzaldúa, and

[1] See, for example, Sergio Waisman's *Borges and Translation*, Efraín Kristal's *Invisible Work: Borges and Translation*, Edwin Gentzler's discussion of Borges and translation in *Translation and Identity in the Americas: New Directions in Translation Theory*, N. Katherine Hayles' examination of "Pierre Menard" in "Translating Media: Why We Should Rethink Textuality," Suzanne Jill Levine's nod to Borges in *Subversive Scribe: Translating Latin American Fiction*, and George Steiner's reading of "Pierre Menard" in *After Babel*. Steiner argues that Borges' story "is the most acute, most concentrated commentary anyone has offered on the business of translation," and goes so far as to claim that "What studies of translation there are [. . .], could, in Borges' style, be termed a commentary on his commentary" (73).

Margarita Cota-Cárdenas emphasize the potential of the translator to amend, revise, contest, multiply, and/or extend the claims of a text in its first instance.[2] In the moments of conflict and confluence between and within their equally authoritative and intrinsically multilingual works of fiction, they make the negotiations of translation more transparent and actively illustrate the mutual dependency of an "original" and a "translation." They disregard the established hierarchy between a source and a target text or language and, as result, mandate a critical vocabulary that includes "versions," "variations," "renditions," or "interpretations," rather than relying on terms that implicitly subordinate subsequent translations or instances of a text to a more sacrosanct "original." As Elizabeth Klosty Beaujour argues about an author rewriting his/her text into another national language, "Because self-translation and the (frequently) attendant reworking makes a text retrospectively incomplete, both versions become avatars of a hypothetical total text in which the versions in both languages would rejoin one another and be reconciled (as in the "pure" language evoked by [Walter] Benjamin)" (112). Whether or not these authors attain a glimpse of the primal, Ur-language envisioned by Benjamin in his pivotal reassessment of translation in "The Task of the Translator," each occasions the need to reexamine perceptions of an "original" text or of a "national" literature by giving primacy and authority to their translations via their association with his or her namesake. These authors put into practice Benjamin's insistence that the original attains in its translations "its ever-renewed latest and most

[2] Other authors whose work would qualify for this kind of study include Guillermo Cabrera Infante, María Luisa Bombal, Casey Calvert, Giannina Braschi, and Rolando Hinojosa. In his *Tongue Ties: Logo-Eroticism in Anglo-Hispanic Literature*, Gustavo Pérez Firmat examines cases of both overt and latent multilingualism in the context of U.S. and Spanish American literature. Steven Kellman attempts a more exhaustive, global catalogue of trans- or multilingual writers in *The Translingual Imagination*.

abundant flowering" (72).[3] By retaining a measure of control of the processes of translation, these authors elevate the task of translating, and by their typically strong or literary revisions of their works they visibly question whether a more cautious and measured approach to translating is correct, possible, or even desirable.

These authors emphasize the shifting, dynamic conception they maintain of themselves and of their relationship with their work by either purposefully or tacitly sanctioning semantic *and* ideological differences between or, even, within their texts. As Steven Kellman argues in *The Translingual Imagination*, "Authors invest their identities in the texts, to which they sign their names, and when they not only vary the languages in which those texts are written but transmute the language of a particular one, they are denying the existence of a stable self" (33). How, for example, to account for the many national and linguistic uncertainties between the Spanish and English versions of texts by exilic authors Manuel Puig and Ariel Dorfman? Are these suggestive revisions the cause or the result of the authors' decision to rewrite their works in an adopted or once-forsaken national language? Why does Rosario Ferré alter the characterization of the mulatta prostitute Gloria Camprubí in *Sweet Diamond Dust* as compared to the previous *Maldito amor*? Does her increased awareness of her mainland readership prompt her to endorse a more exoticized feminism? Finally, how do Chicana authors Gloria Anzaldúa and Margarita Cota-Cárdenas champion and/or undercut the polemic multilingual aspirations of their texts through their varied intra-textual strategies of translation? Do their summary decisions to translate, partially translate, or not translate the second or "other" language in their

[3] I draw from Harry Zohn's English translation of "Die Aufagabe des Übersetzers," "The Task of the Translator." Steven Rendall examines certain problems and/or interpretative dissonances within Zohn's version of the essay and claims that "Because of copyright restrictions, Zohn's version continues to be the main form in which Benjamin's famous essay is known to English-language readers" (23).

multilingual texts reinforce or undermine their efforts to transform a dominant, monolingual Anglo-American imaginary? In the case of each of these authors, self-translation entails both the revision by and of the self; the processes of translation become indistinguishable from the processes of textual and personal reinvention.

These authors trounce what Lawrence Venuti has termed "the invisibility of the translator" (*The Translator's* 1) by virtue of having authorized two divergent and conditional originals (or in the case of the Chicana authors, by writing inherently multilingual texts) that both defy and foreground the practice of translation. However, instead of adopting Venuti's prescriptions for a "foreignizing" (97) approach to translating—one which resists smooth and fluent translations that domesticate and/or mitigate the linguistic and cultural peculiarities of an original or source text—Puig, Dorfman, and Ferré craft what is, from the reader's perspective, a generally fluent and unconstrained revision of the first version of their texts, while Anzaldúa and Cota-Cárdenas create texts whose language strategies both domesticate *and* foreignize either English or Spanish.[4] Their approach borrows more from Borges insomuch as each takes full ownership of translating or rewriting and is apparently uninhibited by concerns that his or her literary translations are adequate, "equivalent," or ethical. As Borges says concerning the "hermosa discusión Newman-Arnold," which he references in both "Las versiones homéricas" and "Los traductores de *1001 Noches*" (241, 400), "Traducir el espíritu [del texto original] es una intención tan enorme y tan fantasmal que bien puede quedar como inofensiva; traducir la letra, una precisión tan extravagante que no hay riesgo de que la ensayen" ("Los traductores" 400). Borges discounts resolute postures of either literalism on the one hand (Newman) or loose

[4] Venuti, for example, gives attention to resistant strategies of translation such as "abusive fidelity" (*The Translator's* 256), the inclusion of "unidiomatic" language in the target text (98), and resistance by translators "choosing marginal texts" to translate (228).

paraphrasing on the other (Arnold), and he also playfully suggests that he favors those heavy-handed translators who either willingly or inadvertently impose their altered temporalities and cultural contexts onto the world of the first text. Concerning six differing translations of a passage from the *Odyssey*, Borges vies for the least literal and most transformed of the translations saying that, "No es imposible que la versión calmosa de Butler sea la más fiel" (243), and about the various translators of *The Thousand and One Nights*, he praises the brazen efforts of Richard Burton to transform the distant and marvelous stories for the English gentlemen of his time, for those "pícaros, noveleros, analfabetos, inifinitamente suspicaces de lo presente y crédulos de la maravilla remota [. .] señores del West End, aptos para el desdén y la erudición y no para el espanto o la risotada" (404). Sergio Waisman explains that "Burton becomes the perfect figure of the translator/recreator for Borges: a translator who irreverently (re)writes the original in order to (re)create a version capable of supplanting/displacing it" (70). Similarly, the bilingual writers examined in this project create irreverent continuations and/or contestations of their own works of fiction. However, like Borges himself, each of these writers departs from the "model" translators described by Borges in that, for the most part, each approaches translation from the periphery. From this vantage point, their translational poetics are less suspect and are more productive of the contradictions and ambivalences that belie constructions of nation, identity, and language; their self-translations are at once imitative and creative, contingent and able to stand-alone, domesticating and resistant, self-effacing and self-promoting, peripheral and dominant. In the end, their works are both utterly faithful and wholly disrespecting toward the authors' (their own) intentions, which they reveal as shifting and temporal. The lack of restraint these writers exhibit toward core aspects of their original or initial text extends the parameters of translation and of reading, generally.

Presumably, this lack of caution results from the authors being less distanced from the world of the genesis of the first text. In her discussion of German exilic authors, Verena Jung explains that having virtually unlimited access to the previous text tends to prompt or animate the creative impulses of the self-translator. She maintains that self-translators are more apt to make significant changes to their initial texts than other translators—and that their revisions "have not been adequately related to the target audience" and have more to do with a lack of deference toward an original text (4). Free from an impossible premise of fidelity to a prior text by another writer, multilingual authors who choose to translate, or translate within, their own literature often embrace the opportunity to amend, extend, or reinterpret aspects of their fiction. As Gustavo Pérez Firmat quips, "No writer wants to play second banana to another writer, least of all to himself" (108). Through their infidelity toward their texts and/or themselves, these authors both disrupt and open up the usual processes and products of literary creation. Their overtly transgressive approaches to translating highlight the political tensions surrounding language, bilingualism, ethnic identity, and literary production. The meta-textual dissonances occasioned by translations of the authors discussed in this project are markers or signposts by which we can locate problems and instabilities that permeate constructions of language, nation, and identity: e.g., the perceived intrinsic possibilities or limitations of one or another language, the linguistic and emotional strains of exile, the changes in a author's conception of his/herself or his/her literature over time, and the porous borders of national and ethnic identity, particularly in the volatile context of twentieth-century relations between the U.S. and Latin America.

Arguably, all acts of communication are acts of translation, and all acts of interlingual translation evidence the internal negotiations that constitute speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Each of these events involves a transfer of information across time and space, whether

short or lengthy, close or distant. As George Steiner claims, "On the inter-lingual level, translation will pose concentrated, visibly intractable problems; but these same problems abound, at a more covert or conventionally neglected level, intra-lingually" (49). He suggests that bridging "The time-barrier may be more intractable than that of linguistic difference" and insinuates that theorizing interlingual translation will have implications for how to think about language, generally (29). Thus, examining translational negotiations between languages becomes a way of surmising the choices, omissions, and shifting variables that an individual encounters within the language or languages that he or she speaks. Steiner explains,

> The process of diachronic translation inside one's own native tongue is so constant, we perform it so unawares, that we rarely pause either to note its formal intricacy or the decisive part it plays in the very existence of civilization. History is a speech-act, a selective use of the past tense. [. . .] We have no total history, no history which could be defined as objectively real because it contained the literal sum of past life. To remember everything is a condition of madness. We remember culturally, as we do individually, by conventions of emphasis, foreshortening, and omission. (30)

Accordingly, translation is ingrained in every act of speaking and of remembering; it makes possible our attempts to order the past, imagine the future, and create narration. Interlingual translations can never occur out of time, just as the individual's inability to account for the totality of time assures that one must translate, parse, or select in order to communicate. Translators between languages must attempt to account for temporal displacements as much as linguistic and cultural differences. As Waisman indicates concerning Borges' theorizations of translation in "Las versiones homéricas" and "Los traductores de *1001 Noches*," "The issue

becomes how to translate a text from one context to another. [. . .] it is the context (including class, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, time period, historical, political, and cultural conditions), and not just the language that changes as one goes from source to target text" (69). Interlingual translations stand as visible reminders of some of the linguistic, cultural, and temporal instabilities that pervade all acts of communication.

In this sense, the linguistic and semantic dissonances between and within the texts of authors who translate their own works reiterate the extent to which temporal concerns are bound with linguistic and cultural concerns in shaping a text and its varying historical context. In their strong revisions of their texts, self-translators illustrate how, like other translators, they are instantly displaced from the total motivations and circumstances that shape the parts of their works—as well as the combined processes through which their ideas are transformed into a written or, usually, a nationally-identifiable language. The distance between self-translators' successive versions of their texts (or, even, the distance between the translations within their texts) reveals how the sum and/or individual "intentions" of a text are only estimable, even for the authors themselves. These authors' strong, literary translations contest the impossible formula for slavish and "perfect" imitation and artistry while translating, as Vladimir Nabokov famously advocates in "The Art of Translation." Nabokov rails against writerly translators who liberally transform texts for a new target readership, arguing that "The [. . .] worst, degree of turpitude is reached when a masterpiece is planished and patted into such a shape, vilely beautified in such a fashion as to conform to the notions and prejudices of a given public. This is a crime, to be punished by the stocks as plagiarists were in the shoebuckle days" (315). Yet, even Nabokov concedes, in the end, that perfection is elusive—he withholds from his readers his translation of the opening lines of a Pushkin poem, "because to give my version at this point

might lead the reader to doubt that perfection be attainable by merely following a few perfect rules" (321). Self-translators make some of the impossible demands of translation apparent.[5] They are, at once, the most ideal and most ill-suited candidates to rewrite their texts, given that they are both the most qualified to represent and the most liable to betray the initial claims of their works. The differences in and between their texts show how authorship varies with context and how translating inevitably combines with authorship.

Self-translated texts stand as complications or wrinkles in deceptively stable and/or linear narratives of literary and national history because of how they unsettle foundational romantic notions of a solitary author and a revered original and challenge conceptions of nation and

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[5] The paradoxical demands of translation are incisively noted by T.H. Savory, in his memorable catalogue in his *The Art of Translation*:

> 1. A translation must give the words of the original./ 2. A translation must give the ideas of the original./ 3. A translation should read like an original work./ 4. A translation should read like translation./ 5. A translation should reflect the style of the original./ 6. A translation should possess the style of the translator./ 7. A translation should read as a contemporary of the original./ 8. A translation should read as a contemporary of the translator./ 9. A translation may add to or omit from the original./ 10. A translation may never add to or omit from the original./ 11. A translation of a verse should be in prose./ 12. A translation of a verse should be in verse. (50)

Moreover, in her "Twenty Theses on Translation" presented in *The Translation Zone: A New Comparative Literature*, Emily Apter lays out some of the contradictions within contemporary discussions of translation within comparative literary studies:

> •Nothing is translatable./ •Global translation is another name for comparative literature./ •Humanist *translatio* is critical secularism./ •The translation zone is a war zone./ •Contrary to what U.S. military strategy would suggest, Arabic is translatable./ •Translation is a *petit métier*, translators the literary proletariat./ •Mixed tongues contest the imperium of global English./ •Translation is an oedipal assault on the mother tongue./ •Translation is the traumatic loss of native language./ •Translation is plurilingual *and* postmedial expressionism./ •Translation is Babel, a universal language that is universally unintelligible./ •Translation is the language of planets and monsters./ •Translation is technology./ •Translationese is the generic language of global markets./ •Translation is a universal language of *techne*./ •Translation is a feedback loop./ •Translation can transpose nature into data./ •Translation is the interface between language and genes./ •Translation is the system-subject./ •Everything is translatable. (xi-xii)

language as autochthonous and self-containing. As André Lefevere argues, "A writer's work gains exposure and achieves influence mainly through 'misunderstandings and misconceptions,' or, to use a more neutral term, refractions. [. . .] An approach to literature which has its roots in the poetics of Romanticism, and which is still very much with us, will not be able to admit this rather obvious fact without undermining its own foundations ("Mother" 234)." Lefevere indicates that "refractions" transform or "refract" a text over time and that, often, they become the principal points of access—e.g., many U.S. readers encounter Bertold Brecht "vicariously" through the translations and critical work of Eric Bentley (235). Likewise, for many readers Leo Tolstoy is the author refashioned by Constance Garnett, and Gabriel García Márquez is the author represented by Gregory Rabassa.[6] Also, as Borges illustrates, *The Thousand and One Nights*, *The Illiad*, and *The Odysessy* are but the sum of all their divergent translations and commentaries. Refractions undermine approaches to literary study that presuppose the stability of a text or its author by exerting significant or, perhaps, primary influence on the perception and reception of a text through time. Lefevere explains that these "romantic" approaches:

> [rest] on a number of assumptions, among them, the assumption of the genius and originality of the author who creates *ex nihilo* [. . .]. As if Shakespeare didn't have "sources," and as if there had not been some writing on the Faust theme before Goethe. Also assumed is the sacred character of the text, which is not to be

[6] To this end, García Márquez is said to have remarked that *100 años de soledad* is better in English. In his memoir, Gregory Rabassa somewhat cryptically recounts, "García Márquez is said to have remarked that he liked my English version of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* better than his own original Spanish one. I can only humbly assume that the credit lies with the English language, that the book should have been written in English and I was only trying to correct that mistake. My mystical feeling, however, is that Gabo already had the English words hiding behind the Spanish and all I had to do was tease them out. Against this, however, is the fact that when I reluctantly reread my translation I keep seeing things that I should have done better by" (43).

> tampered with—hence the horror with which "bad" translations are rejected. Another widespread assumption is the belief in the possibility of recovering the author's true intentions, and the concomitant belief that works of literature should be judged on their intrinsic merit only, [. . .] as if that were possible. ("Mother" 234)[7]

Self-translated texts underline the fragility of all of these assumptions. In and between these texts, authorship becomes an incomplete and collaborative endeavor, the inviolate original is made conditional to the claims of an equally authoritative translation, and the so-called "intentions" of the first text are deliberately and/or inadvertently discarded.

Moreover, multilingual authors who translate their own texts emphasize the tenuous binds that connect nation and language. By inserting themselves into the canons and sub-canons of national literatures that are traditionally observed as distinct, these authors reveal categorizations of literature based on national or linguistic identity as inadequate. They illustrate the permissiveness of linguistic identity on the one hand and the enforced exclusivity of national identity on the other. As Benedict Anderson argues, "Seen as both a historical fatality and as a community imagined through language, the nation presents itself as simultaneously open and

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[7] In addition to Lefevere, both Steiner and Leonard Forster substantiate the Romantic emphasis on the individuality and originality of the author and his/her text. Forster argues that following the Romantics,

> We are interested in personal expression of personal experience, something unique and individual which is peculiar to the poet, which constitutes his originality an his personal note, and which increases and deepens our knowledge of human nature. Until the Romantics poetry was concerned with the statement and presentation of socially acceptable themes; the poet was not talking for himself, in his own name, he was speaking to his society on behalf of that society; and because he had the gift of eloquent statement he was able to formulate familiar things in a new, surprising and moving way. Powerful originality would have seemed idiosyncratic, unrepresentative and jarring, and would thus have defeated its own purpose. (26-27).

closed" (146). Through their capacity to simultaneously inhabit multiple national literatures these authors disrupt narratives that project national and cultural integrity. As Lefevere argues concerning the emphasis on the relation between nation and language among Western Romantics,

> Romantic critics tended to identify the work of literature with the language in which it was written. They also emphasized language as the main, if not the only, constitutive factor of a nation. [. . .] Language was seen as perhaps the most obvious expression of that genius because it was both the past and present of a whole nation. If languages were unique, translation between them was extremely difficult, if not impossible. Every shift in the translation could be, and was seen as, a betrayal of the genius of a language, of a nation. Thought of in this way, translation almost amounted to high treason, and translators have, accordingly, been called traitors to their nations, usually because they were thought to weaken that nation's spirit by exposing it to foreign entities. (*Translating* 136)

Of course, manipulating language to build, wield, and consolidate cultural and political power is not an aptitude unique to the history and traditions of Western Europe.[8] The transgressive self-translators discussed in this project are not the unwilling heirs of a European Romantic tradition

[8] For more about the connections between nation and language, see, again, Steiner's *After Babel*, Forster's *The Poet's Tongues*, and, also, Anderson's *Imagined Communities*. Anderson provides many non-Western examples of language-unification as a means of building national consciousness and consolidating national power, e.g., the Thai government actively prohibiting missionaries from providing tribal minorities with their own transcription system, Attatürk imposing mandatory Romanization to build Turkish nationalism and quell wider Islamic identification (45-46), and the nineteenth-century English who hoped to diminish the cultural impact of Hinduism by educating Indians in English (91). I focus on how the transgressive poetics of certain U.S. and Hispanic authors complicate the perceived or "imagined" relation between an individual's language or languages and his/her national identity.

so much as they are products of the volatile relations between the U.S. and Latin America in the late twentieth century and are keenly aware that their language loyalties and cultural competencies do not align with a conventional national narrative. They approach translating from both the center and the periphery and are both culprits and activists in the struggle against the global dominance and imposition of English in the global literary marketplace. Their personal and fictional narratives are complicated by the linguistic and historic strains of exile, whether as actual political dissidents or as a perceived foreigners in their "home" country or countries. The meta-textual narrative in between their texts and translations attests to how their emotional, familial, social, and/or political ties to one or another of their languages are not readily circumscribed into an exclusively national or monolingual literary tradition.

Through the lack of correspondence or "equivalence" between the Spanish and English versions of their texts and/or the translations within their texts, these authors reiterate the multiplicity already extant within any one language. Their contingent and also contesting texts and translations point to the layers of pretense involved in discussing national literatures, multilingualism, or inter-lingual translation. As Jacques Derrida posits in the two central theses of his *Monolingualism of the Other: or, The Prosthesis of Origin*: "1. *We only ever speak one language/* 2. *We never speak only one language*" (7). In other words, all the languages of an individual are in some way dependent upon and relational to other languages; and, inherently, any language is already mixed or differentiated. The very notion of a single language or the presumption of the possibility of interlingual translation partakes of certain nationalist assumptions about the essentialist or stand-alone nature of a complex, relational linguistic system. As Venuti argues,

> Both foreign text and translation are derivative: both consist of diverse linguistic and cultural materials that neither the foreign writer nor the translator originates, and that destabilize the work of signification, inevitably exceeding and possibly conflicting with their intentions. As a result, a foreign text is the site of many different semantic possibilities that are fixed only provisionally in any one translation, on the basis of varying cultural assumptions and interpretive choices, in specific social situations, in different historical periods. (*The Translator's* 13)

The bilingual and biscriptive authors examined in this project draw attention to the derivative and provisional character of both language and translation by favoring a strong translation praxis that emphasizes the historical and/or temporal stakes of translation. By authorizing two divergent originals they imply that their works are the sum of their revisions and their language or languages—which are neither Spanish nor English but a shifting combination of both languages and their diverse parts. They insinuate the meta-text outside of the versions of their texts or their individual translations and underline the need for a critical vocabulary and a literary practice that takes into account the complex and variable whole of their works.

These multilingual authors draw light onto the ambivalences and instabilities that pervade constructions of national, literary, and linguistic identity. While self-translation in literature is hardly new—it has existed as long as writers have spoken and written in more than one language, and it was commonplace for Medieval and Renaissance authors to write in different languages for different audiences (Forster 18)—an increasingly formidable cadre of late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century authors have turned to translating their own texts. I maintain that the resurgence of multilingual writing and/or rewriting among these authors speaks to increased skepticism toward both the pressures of nationalism on the one hand and

globalization on the other. As Kellman posits, "Colonialism, war, increased mobility, and the aesthetics of alienation have combined to create a canon of translingual literature" (7). Puig, Dorfman, Ferré, Anzaldúa, and Cota-Cárdenas join bilingual twentieth-century authors such Vladimir Nabokov, Rabindranath Tagore, Karen Blixen/Isaak Dinesen, Guillermo Cabrera Infante, Samuel Beckett, Rolando Hinojosa, Giannina Braschi, and María Luisa Bombal in writing and translating their own texts. Several other multilingual authors write in only one of their languages, though the latent influence of their other language(s) often surfaces in their literature.[9] All of these authors are highly attuned to how translating transforms a text, and because or in spite of the enormity of the task of translating, many of them choose to translate or rewrite their own texts. Wresting momentary control of the passage of their texts through time allows them to extend their claims of authorship and to create a forum in which they can try to come to terms with some of the uncertainties and ambivalences occasioned by their ability to inhabit linguistic worlds that are traditionally observed as independent from each other.

In the context of the relations between the U.S. and Latin America, acting as author and translator provides a way of resisting the dominance of English as the global language of publication and of combating the domestication of their texts by and for others; by translating and/or translating within their own texts, self-translators such as Puig, Dorfman, Ferré, Anzaldúa, and Cota-Cárdenas challenge the prevailing standards for determining both how a text is translated and which texts are translated. They utilize their peripheral and central positioning within the Latin American and U.S. literary marketplaces to take ownership, for better or for worse, of their texts through time and space. As Waisman argues,

[9] See Pérez Firmat's *Tongue Ties* for more on the implicit or, even, repressed multilingualism of authors such as Richard Rodriguez, George Santayana, Pedro Salinas, and Luis Cernuda.

> [T]he ethics and the aesthetics of translation are fundamentally different in the periphery than they are in the center. To use a crude metaphor: it is not the same when a king steals from a serf as when a serf steals from a king [. . .]. In Latin America, a domesticating translation can represent an appropriation from the Metropolis through linguistic acculturation, and a way to challenge not only the supposed supremacy of the original, but also of the cultural political power of the society in which it was produced. (81)

In relation to the demands of the literary market, the bilingual, Spanish-English self-translator can either be thought of cynically, as a mercenary who sacrifices or prostitutes integral elements of his/her linguistic or cultural expertise for profit, or idealistically, as an agent of resistance countering a massive, hegemonic, and for-profit enterprise. The reality is likely both, neither, and/or somewhere in between the two extremes. Still, because of the difficulty of accessing any tangible record of the interchange between authors and editors or authors and publishers, the disparities occasioned by these authors' translations are even more fascinating. The revisions of self-translation provide a trail according to which we can make more educated guesses about the social, political, and economic pressures that prompt the transformation of a text.

In an increasingly global society in which innumerable texts are translated from English into other languages and very little is translated into English, self-translators writing from and/or *for* the periphery act as cultural mediators and, in this capacity, can mitigate problems of access and representation that limit individuals and communities whose native language is not

English.[10] As Gayatri Spivak argues, "I think it necessary for people in the Third World translation trade now to accept that the wheel has come around, that the genuinely bilingual post-colonial now has a bit of an advantage" (404). Spivak insinuates how self-translators can resist the neutralizing or neutering of their literature into a bland and innocuous sort of English, that

> In the act of wholesale translation into English there can be a betrayal of the democratic ideal into the law of the strongest. This happens when all the literature of the Third World gets translated into a sort of with-it translatese, so that the literature by a woman in Palestine begins to resemble in the feel of its prose, something by a man in Taiwan [. . .] For the student, this tedious translatese cannot compete with the spectacular stylistic experiments of a Monique Witting or an Alice Walker. (400)

She implies that a more literary or, at least, a less mechanical approach to translating can better serve both the source and target-text constituencies. Her prescriptions for translating resonate with Venuti's calls for "more visible" practices of translation that underline the dominance of English as "the language that prevails in teaching and research" ("Translating" 259). Venuti advocates that translation "be practiced, in various genres and text types, so as to make their users aware of the social hierarchies in which languages and cultures are positioned" (259).

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[10] Only an estimated 3 percent of books are translated from other languages into English—which grim statistic is reiterated by the aptly named "Three Percent" website, run by the University of Rochester's translation program and press and dedicated "to providing reviews and samples of books in translation and those that have yet to be translated." The authors assert, "And that 3% figure includes all books in translation—in terms of literary fiction and poetry, the number is actually closer to 0.7%." Even a cursory investigation into the global practices of translation and publication attests to the weighted odds favoring English language and Anglophone culture. As Claire Squires argues, this disparity is impoverishing not only to those writers who do not have access to a larger readership, but for readers in the U.S. and the U.K who "have very limited access to texts created beyond their own cultures" (408).

Insomuch as translating becomes a crucial means of resisting the cultural clout of Standard English, the ethical and cultural capabilities of the translator are imperative. Multilingual authors able to write both in English and Spanish are uniquely posed to either challenge, succumb to, or at least make more problematic the pressures of nationalism and globalization that the patterns and assumptions of linguistic communities reinforce. These authors' very political decisions about language—as evidenced through the various multilingual strategies they employ in and between their texts—have the potential to make more apparent the inaccuracies of language, the aesthetics of exile, the market forces of literary production, and the uncertainties of ethnic and linguistic identities.

All of these tensions are multiplied in connection with the unequal or hierarchical relationship between the U.S. and Latin America. As Waisman indicates, "translation has completely different cultural political implications for 'younger' literatures than it does for 'older' ones; and the motivations and effects of translation are fundamentally different for writers in the margins than [they are] for those in the center" (21). By translating their own texts, authors such as Puig, Dorfman, Ferré, Anzaldúa and Cota-Cárdenas undertake negotiations that become opportunities to reopen, patch, and/or avenge wounds resulting from their marginalization in both or either of their home and adopted countries. Rewriting enables them to emphasize the false cohesiveness of national narratives and literatures and to manipulate language to account for their exilic, dual, hybrid, double, or hyphenated positioning in the world outside of their texts. As Edwin Gentzler argues, "translation in the Americas is less something that happens between separate and distinct cultures and more something that is *constitutive* of those cultures" (5). In the discrepancies between and within their texts these authors bring to

light the always multilingual and multicultural underpinnings of the languages and cultures that they constantly combine and also separate in their lives and literature.

By self-translating they counter cultural institutions that advocate "English-only" or "English-first" on the one hand and, on the other, those that equate the creative use of English by multilingual authors as assimilation.[11] As Pérez Firmat explains, "In the Americas, the two languages are and have been for centuries not only in contact but in competition" (9). He indicates how in Latin America, and especially in Mexico and Puerto Rico, there are "equally vigorous" efforts to lessen the impact of English on the Spanish language, and he claims that "[i]n the New World, English and Spanish represent countries and cultures that, when not engaged in outright war, have been consistently hostile to each other" (10). The multilingual authors examined in this project attempt to reconcile or, at least, agree to disagree with the perceived effects of each of their literary languages. They implicitly rebut divisive, either-or conceptualizations of language usage and underline the postcolonial possibilities available to them as bilingual Hispanic authors—a positioning that Dorfman describes as being a "bigamist" of language ("The Wandering" 29), and Ferré describes as being "ambidextrous" ("Blessing" 9). While each of these authors hails from distinct historical and sociolinguistic circumstances, they all align in their revisions of U.S and/or Hispanic identities through their translations between

[11] For perspectives implying that the creative use of English by multilingual writers is a concession to assimilation, see Ana Lydia Vega's criticisms of Rosario Ferré in "Carta abierta a Pandora," Pedro Salinas' *Aprecio y defensa del lenguaje*, or the impassioned perspective of Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, who argues in his "farewell to English" in his *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* that African writers should write in their native languages to resist the colonial and cultural imposition of English and other dominant languages. He indicates, "The choice of language and the use to which language is put is central to a people's definition of themselves in relation to their natural and social environment, indeed in relation to the entire universe" (4). Calls for English-only, in the U.S. particularly, are loud enough that I assume they do need to be contextualized.

and within their texts. Their approaches recall Homi Bhabha's claim that "it is the 'inter' —the cutting edge of translation and renegotiation, the *in-between* space—that carries the burden of the meaning of culture. It makes it possible to begin envisaging national anti-nationalist histories of the 'people.' And by exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of ourselves" (56). These self-translators approximate this "Third Space" by locating themselves in the interstices of nationalist and linguistic imaginaries.

These writers are rare practitioners and implicit theorists of translation, in a field that has been largely defined by theorists and translators from Europe and, more recently, the U.S., Canada, and Brazil. Spanish-American voices on translation have been less visible contributors to the conversation on translation, arguably, because for Spanish-American writers the theory of translation is tied to the act of translating and of writing, generally—as is verified by the effusive but belated critical attention to Borges' theorizations of translation, which are characteristically interwoven with his labyrinthine fiction or fictions. In addition to his overview of the burgeoning scholarship on translation in Canada and Brazil, Gentzler points to the significance of translation in the works of the some of the most celebrated twentieth-century Spanish American authors, including Borges, García Márquez, and Mario Vargas Llosa. He goes so far as to argue that "translation is perhaps the *most* important topic in Latin American fiction, more important even than the widely circulated magic realism theme featured by most (North American) scholars" (108). Authors such as Puig, Dorfman, Ferré, Anzaldúa, and Cota-Cárdenas are surely familiar with the works of these Latin American authors and, while highlighting the ambivalences of their own personal and national identities, they join these Boom behemoths in interrogating and deconstructing a larger Latin American identity through and in between their texts and translations.

By translating their own texts they prompt questions fundamental to both the theory and practice of translation, including: the problem of "equivalence," the debates concerning what constitutes a "good" translation and who should evaluate a translation, the very question of how to define translation, and, especially, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis concerning the supposed control or power that a language wields over those who think, speak, and/or write in it—the concept of linguistic determinism. Do these self-translators make changes to their texts because the target language necessitates that the changes be made? Or, do these authors' revisions result from thoughts and decisions independent from the syntactical structures in which they were formulated? As Pérez Firmat concludes concerning literary bilinguals and the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, "the ultimate validity" of the notion of linguistic determinism "is irrelevant" (13). More important, he suggests, is the idea that "many bilinguals relate to their languages in ways that enact some version of this hypothesis" (13). In my examination of how these bilingual authors rewrite and realign their texts when writing in one or another national literary tradition, I engage the authors' own observations about the extent to which they feel at the mercy of a particular language and its accompanying literary tradition, and I emphasize the dissonances between their theorizations and their actual translations. For instance, Ferré describes Spanish as more florid and "baroque" than English which, for her, is more "precise" and "direct" ("On Destiny" 160-61); Dorfman insinuates Spanish speakers' inherent capacity for passivity and avoiding responsibility through their use of the Spanish "*se*" (*Rumbo al Sur* 158); and Anzaldúa claims that Chicano Spanish is the language to which those who do not identify with either standard Spanish or standard English "can connect their identity" and "communicate the realities and values true to themselves" (55). I do not aim to establish the accuracy of these statements so much as I show how these multilingual authors' perceptions about their language or languages

reiterate the temporal stakes of translation and the emotional and political conflicts occasioned by their efforts to transform their language for a national literary audience. For them, self-translating awakens both a revision of the self and a renewed awareness of the limits of firm linguistic and national identities. Their translations provide a rare window into the collaborative forces that comprise authorship, the collective pressures that fuel monolingual narratives of language and nation, and the always individual and historical tensions that shape, shift, and recreate a text through time and space.

This project centers on the differences between self-translators' versions of their texts, whether deliberate or inadvertent, and on the national and socio-linguistic ambivalences that surface in the space between their texts or between the translations within their texts. Through their strong or literary strategies of translating, these authors illustrate the extent to which both "original" texts and translations are never separate from the time and circumstances surrounding their genesis, production, and consumption. As Gentzler argues concerning the unconventional approach to translating that Borges appears to endorse in his "Los traductores de 1001 Noches,"

> rather than focusing on fidelity and equivalence, [Borges] emphasizes instead the differences, digressions, and accidents. Many of the embellishments and contrasts by the translators he cites are not due to mistakes or errors but instead are attributed to the literary traditions and values of the respective cultures of which the translators form a part and to which they contribute. (113)

Like the translators favored by Borges, multilingual authors such as Puig, Dorfman, Ferré, Anzaldúa, and Cota-Cárdenas take active and renewed ownership of the texts they are translating and/or rewriting. However, unlike the heavy-handed translators playfully celebrated by Borges, these authors utilize their peripheral or, at least, intermediary status in society to lend greater

preeminence to the "task" of translating and to challenge the formulation and perpetuation of national literatures in the global literary marketplace. In the meta-text surrounding their texts and translations, they reveal a heightened awareness of the limits *and* the possibilities of language, a willing tolerance for contradiction, and a self-reflexive posture toward the political and social implications of language usage. Their language choices highlight the emotional and linguistic strains of exile, the long-standing polemics surrounding language usage in border regions, and the divisive question of how to represent marginalized linguistic communities and whom should represent them.

The first chapter of my project explores the linguistic tensions of exile in the formally disparate but thematically similar works of South American exilic authors Manuel Puig and Ariel Dorfman who illustrate and develop exile's emotional and linguistic toll in and between the English and Spanish versions of their texts. A side-by-side examination of their revisions reveals how for both of these multilingual authors the event of translating is intimately connected to the ambivalences that each harbors toward both their home and adopted countries. In and in-between Puig's *Eternal Curse on the Reader of These Pages* (1982) and his *Maldición eterna a quien lea estas páginas* (1980), he emphasizes such divided loyalties through the reeling and self-reflexive conversations between Mr. Ramírez, an infirm Argentine political exile, and Larry, Ramírez's wheelchair attendant and a former graduate student with Marxist leanings. Through the often contentious conversations between these two characters, Puig creates a dialogue about the positive and negative implications of life in translation and indicates how the limitations of language and memory can be both a curse and a blessing in relation to a traumatic past. Likewise, in and in-between the English and Spanish versions of his memoir, *Heading South, Looking North: A Bilingual Journey* (1998) and/or *Rumbo al sur, deseando el norte: un romance*

en dos lenguas (1998), Dorfman weighs the costs and benefits of having to and also choosing to move between his two languages. He recounts his tortuous journey to and from English and Spanish as literary languages and then, eventually, his reconciliation with both languages. He displays, through translating, his internal deliberations about whether or not writing in another language and for multiple national audiences calls for a change in literary strategy. In their textual and translational negotiations, Puig and Dorfman interrogate and complicate the linguistic tensions that shape their historically and personally specific depictions of exile.

The second chapter of my dissertation charts the linguistic and political transformations of Puerto Rican author Rosario Ferré through the course of her writing Spanish and English versions of two sets of related novels, first *Maldito amor* (1986) which she rewrote into English as *Sweet Diamond Dust* (1988) and then *House on the Lagoon* (1995) which she rewrote into Spanish as *Casa en la laguna* (1996). The creation, translation, and publication of each of these works follow, in a somewhat parallel trajectory, Ferré's individual evolution from a national Puerto Rican author and an ardent advocate for the island's independence to a cross-over U.S. Latina author and a proponent of Puerto Rican statehood. While the motivations of each of her texts and translations cannot be so grossly simplified, a comparison of the versions of her texts yields several contradictions that underline the "different instinct" ("On Destiny" 160) that Ferré adopts when writing in either English or Spanish. In her willingness to engage the firestorm of criticism that she knew would accompany her decision to write *House on the Lagoon* first in English and through her related shift to supporting statehood, Ferré acknowledges the political weight of her language decisions and all but drags her reader into the polemics surrounding her texts and her translations of them.

The third and final chapter of my dissertation explores the possibility of an openly bilingual literary praxis of writing and/or translating and the concomitant questions of how to represent marginalized voices in literature and society and who should make these representations. I compare the pioneering multilingual strategies of translation or non-translation in Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La frontera* (1987) and Margarita Cota-Cárdenas' *Puppet* (1985), and I examine how and if these Chicana authors ultimately offset the overtly multilingual gestures of their texts with their efforts to accommodate the monolingual Anglo-reader. In their varied approaches to translating, these authors attempt to create a literary forum for the unofficial and/or bastard voices of Chicano Spanish, and by attempting to represent these extra-national voices, they both foreground and deny the need for translation. As Gentzler argues about border writers similar to Anzaldúa and Cota-Cárdenas, these authors' transgressive poetics invite questions such as: "What is it like to think about a nation when one has no home? What is it like to think about translation when one has no native language? How is one's identity affected if one's homeland has been dissolved?" (145). I ask whether the literatures of English and/or Spanish are large enough for an unapologetically multilingual text like Cota-Cárdenas' 1985 edition of *Puppet*—which remained in virtual obscurity until the relative success of the new "bilingual" edition of the novel in 2000. If a translation into English becomes the primary point of access to texts such as *Puppet*, what can be done to further emphasize the extent to which a translation or "refraction" transforms a literary text?

All of the authors and texts approached in this project offer an implicit answer to this question with their bold strategies of translation between and within their texts. By authorizing English and Spanish, Spanish and English, and/or Spanglish interpretations of the claims of their texts, they reveal translation as tantamount to authorship and illustrate how a text assumes the

image or weight of the time in which it is produced or received. By lending their namesakes to the processes of translation they do not lament the violence of translation so much as they make more transparent the passage of a text through time. As Steiner emphasizes, "One thing is clear: every language-act has a temporal determinant. No semantic form is timeless. When using a word we wake into resonance, as it were, its entire previous history. A text is embedded in specific historical time" (24). Moreover, by self-translating they insinuate a larger, total text outside of their individual works and/or translations. As Borges declares in "La flor de Coleridge," "Durante muchos años yo creí que la casi infinita literatura estaba en un hombre. Ese hombre fue Carlyle, fue Johannes Becher, fue Whitman, fue Rafael Cansinos Assens, fue De Quincey" (23). Literature becomes an explicitly collaborative endeavor in the event of self-translation. Self-translation reveals the instability and temporality of the cardinal literary notions of authorship, originality, language, nationality, and textual integrity.

Chapter 1

Self-Translation and Exile: The Dialectics of Exile in Manuel Puig's *Eternal Curse on the Reader of These Pages*/ *Maldición eterna a quien lea estas páginas* and Ariel Dorfman's *Heading South, Looking North: A Bilingual Journey*/ *Rumbo al sur, deseando el norte: un romance en dos lenguas*

The turbulent history of twentieth-century Latin America—considering only the Mexican Revolution, Peronismo in Argentina, the Cuban Revolution, the rise and fall of Salvador Allende in Chile, and the numerous military coups, dictatorships, and foreign interventions throughout the region—led to an unprecedented exodus of Spanish-speaking nationals to other parts of the world. The list of exiled authors, artists, and intellectuals is extensive and includes, among many others: Miguel Angel Asturias, Victor Montejo, Alejo Carpentier, Guillermo Cabrera Infante, Casey Calvert, Pablo Neruda, Ariel Dorfman, Angel and Isabel Parra, Luisa Valenzuela, Cristina Peri Rossi, and Manuel Puig. Whether as an active or lurking presence, the backdrop of exile inserts itself into the creative processes of these individual artists. In reaction to a foreign setting, some authors, like Spanish poets Pedro Salinas and Luis Cernuda, cling to Spanish as their preferred literary medium; both became more resolute hispanophones in response to their circumstances of exile in the United States. Other writers, like the versatile Cabrera Infante, experiment with polyglot poetics, and still others decide to write in their second native or newly-adopted language. The latter of these options is the least common, the most obvious reason being that most writers are not able to write equally well in more than one language.

Yet, the decision to self-translate is also the most fascinating because by writing in a foreign, second, or politically alien tongue these biscriptive authors create opportunities for personal revision or, even, reinvention—as they take ownership of the linguistic, cultural, and

political ambivalences that arise from authoring two similar yet always distinct narratives. Argentine author Manuel Puig learned U.S. English at an early age and also came to speak and write in French, Italian, and Portuguese.[1] He wrote the vast majority of his creative work in Spanish, withstanding the fact that he spent the majority of his professional career as an exile abroad. However, Puig wrote *Eternal Curse on the Reader of These Pages* (1982)/ *Maldición eterna a quien lea estas páginas* (1980), which more directly centers on exile and more powerfully interrogates the limits of language than his other works, first in English.[2] Likewise, Argentine-Chilean-U.S. author Ariel Dorfman, a "native" speaker of both Spanish and English since childhood, relates how his language decisions have loosely conformed to the "rights" and "lefts" of his own political trajectory. In his self-translated memoir, *Heading South, Looking North: A Bilingual Journey* (1998) and/or *Rumbo al sur, deseando el norte: un romance en dos lenguas* (1988), he recounts that as a young boy and adolescent who identified most closely with North American popular culture, he refused to speak or write in Spanish. However, upon identifying with the leftist ideals that shaped Chile and much of Latin America in 1960s and 70s, Dorfman forsook writing in English. In his more mature years, as a resident writer and academic teaching at Duke, he now espouses a more bilingual kind of poetics.[3] For Dorfman and for Puig, deciding to write in either English or Spanish is unavoidably connected to the personal and

[1] Suzanne Jill Levine, Puig's friend, translator, and literary biographer claims that for Puig was motivated to learn "the languages of the cinema," which for him were English and, also, French and Italian, following the arrival of post-war European films in Argentina (*Manuel* 60).

[2] While Puig wrote his "original" manuscript in English, he actually published his own Spanish "translation" of the English text with Seix Barral two years before he published the English version.

[3] Dorfman published simultaneous English and Spanish versions of his 1998 memoir and, in 2002, published his first-ever overtly bilingual text, *In Case of Fire in a Foreign Land*.

complicated relationship each has with the volatile past of the Americas in the late twentieth-century—the raging politics of the Cold War; the repeated interventions of the U.S. in Latin America and the Caribbean; the rise, fall, and aftermath of dictatorial and/or militaristic rule in the southern cone and elsewhere in the Americas; the debates over dependency, subalternity, and globalization—and, ultimately, the authors' mixed loyalties toward both the original and the adoptive homelands that have shaped them as citizens and as individuals.

Both authors self-consciously and even conspicuously conflate the ties between life, literature, and language, especially in and *between* the English and Spanish versions of their works. I argue that Puig and Dorfman, among the many authors in Latin America and elsewhere whose writings reflect and reproduce the tensions of exile, complicate the larger discussion on exile as "first of all, a linguistic event" (Brodsky 32) through their acts of self-translation. As translators and/or re-writers of their own texts, both authors engage much self-reflexivity in their writing. Each alludes to and, often, underscores the linguistic and social problems occasioned by choosing to write or rewrite in another language and, at the same time, neither fully embraces the notion that deciding to write in one or another language controls or shapes the processes of literary production for them. Rather, both authors/translators explore and eventually reject the idea that a chosen language and/or the linguistic pressures of exile fully *determine* their texts and/or their personal identities. Through their self-translations or rewritings, Puig and Dorfman adopt a critical and dialectical stance toward the said political, social, and linguistic tensions of exile. Certainly, their experiences and recollections of "exile" are historically distinct, generically dissimilar, and individually raw. However, discussing their texts—or their different versions of their texts—in the same stroke provides a window into a mature and reflective

conversation on exile, one that seeks to move beyond monolithic and/or monolingual notions of national, individual, linguistic, and textual identities.

Self-translation and Exile in Puig's *Eternal Curse on the Reader of These Pages* and *Maldición eterna a quien lea estas páginas*

The emotional and linguistic tensions of exile are the lifeblood of both Puig's *Eternal Curse on the Reader of These Pages* and his Spanish revision of the same, *Maldición eterna a quien lea estas páginas*. The two versions turn around the largely unimpeded and filmic dialogue between Mr. Juan José Ramírez, an elderly and infirm Argentine political exile who is said to have amnesia, and Larry Johns, a middle-aged North American divorcee who works as Ramírez's overeducated wheelchair orderly.[4] In their outings, the two engage each other with mutual antagonism, suspicion, deceit, and, at times, ill-intent. Larry complains that Ramírez is a "prying bastard" (EC 151) and a "parasite" (EC 105) who feeds off of the lives of others, and he (Larry) looks to secure an academic appointment as a result of his work decoding and interpreting the notes Ramírez recorded while a political prisoner. Ramírez maintains that Larry is an ungrateful and unsympathetic confidant (EC 211), and he frequently manipulates Larry on account of Larry's supposed poverty and his own (Ramírez's) infirmities, which he uses to

[4] "Ramírez" is only accented in Puig's Spanish version of his novel. I accent the surname throughout but leave the the name as is when cited in primary or secondary texts.

engender guilt and sympathy.[5] It appears that while Larry depends on Ramírez for physical and temporal sustenance, Ramírez turns to Larry for mental and emotional stimulation. Seemingly, he besieges Larry with questions and hypotheticals so that he can acquaint himself with a new language, culture, and setting, and, at the same time, redress or rewrite both the traumas of his forgotten past and his repressed memories of wrongs toward his wife and, especially, his son.[6] The narrative strain in Puig's Spanish and English texts, however unreliable, revolves around Ramírez's need to know and, simultaneously, his need to forget. The affective tensions drudged up by Ramírez's character—the conflict between wanting to reconnect and remember and also wanting to forget and rewrite—evidence the novel(s)' critical and "dialectical" relation toward exile. As Sophia McClennen explains in her *The Dialectics of Exile*, for late twentieth-century exilic authors like Juan Goytisolo, Dorfman, or Cristina Peri Rossi, exile is neither entirely a state of loss and profound nostalgia nor a state of creative liberation from national and local strictures. Instead, these authors approach exile as a complex, historically-specific experience that engages and challenges binary theorizations of exilic experiences (2-3). Likewise, I suggest that Puig approaches Ramírez's emotional experience of exile both as a time of loss and

[5] In an interview with Jorgelina Corbatta, Puig explains that Larry's character derives, in part, from a man that Puig encountered while living in New York. Puig took extensive notes on this man's life and returned to them in writing the English version of the novel (620). Moreover, Levine, explicitly connects Larry with "Mark," an embittered divorcee and non-tenured lecturer at NYU who was somewhat friendly toward Puig but did not reciprocate his sexual advances (*Manuel* 295).

[6] In the same interview with Corbatta, Puig claims that Ramírez is modeled after his own father—"En esta novela no me intereso yo como personaje, sino que la contrapartida del norteamericano es mi papá" (620). Levine extends and complicates this claim by arguing that, "In his relationship with Mark, Manuel at first saw himself as the older displaced Latin American who clearly sees through a self-centered younger North American: it was the psychodrama of the critical father and the rebellious son; the narcissist is the parental figure, producing a son who is a mere reflection of himself" (295).

estrangement from the known and familiar and as an opportunity for personal revision and, possibly, absolution from a traumatic and unrelenting past.

Of course, in the case of Ramírez, and in the case of Puig himself, the emotional experience of exile is virtually indistinguishable from the linguistic and/or translational tensions that inform the event of exile. Puig foregrounds the linguistic strains of exile through Ramírez's heightened if not compulsive awareness of the ways in which his life and perceptions are altered or colored by speaking in another language, in this case English. Ramírez's anxieties are immediately apparent in the first exchange between Ramírez and Larry.

> —What is this?
>
> —Washington Square, Mr. Ramirez.
>
> —I know "square" but not "Washington." Not really.
>
> —Washington is the name of a man, the first President of the United States.
>
> —Yes, I know. Thanks so much. (EC 3)

> —¿Qué es esto?
>
> —Plaza Washington, señor Ramírez.
>
> —Plaza sé lo que es, Washington no. No del todo.
>
> —Washington es el apellido de un hombre, del primer presidente de los Estados Unidos.
>
> —Eso lo sé. Gracias. (ME 9)

Through his clipped responses (in both the English and Spanish texts), Ramírez indicates his dissatisfaction with Larry's answers to his question, with Larry's assumption that it is merely the denotative meaning of "Washington" that eludes Ramírez. Puig's Spanish translation is more

explicit as to the source of Ramírez's frustration. With the pointed "Eso lo sé" (ME 9), Ramírez insinuates that he is searching for meaning beyond a rote familiarity with the facts associated with the name "Washington." After Larry continues to brusquely reply to his follow-up questions and refuses to engage the larger questions of language that Ramírez insinuates, Ramírez retorts, "—I know. What I don't know is what one is supposed to feel when one says "Washington" (EC 3).[7] Larry eventually brushes off Ramírez's reservations, telling him, "—Yes, and they told me to wheel you around and nothing else. The pay is lousy. And if I also have to give you English lessons, I want more money. The cost of living is high in New York" (EC 3).[8] Larry identifies Ramírez's questions as mere indicators of the difficulties posed for him by the English language. For Larry, the gaps in Ramírez's knowledge are not significant; they could as easily trouble any given English-as-a-foreign-language learner as they could rankle a political exile under the protection of a prominent Human Rights organization or, at the same time, an author who has left his homeland for political and sexual dissidence and is attempting for the first time to publish a novel in English. However, for Ramírez, as for Puig himself, the lapses in meaning and in linguistic context appear to signify something more—they recall the placelessness, strangeness, and emotional liminality of exile.

Perhaps because of Puig's own attention toward those literary markers in the English text that belie his authorial preoccupations with the crossover into English, Ramírez almost immediately discounts the possibility that his need to recover the fuller meaning of English

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[7] "—Gracias. Eso lo sé. Lo que no sé …es lo que tendría que sentir, cuando se dice Washington" (ME 9).

[8] "—Sí, me dijeron que tenía que sacarlo en la silla de ruedas y nada más. No pagan gran cosa, pero si encima tengo que dar lecciones de inglés voy a pedir más dinero. La vida es cara en Nueva York" (ME 10).

words and names results solely from his linguistic displacement.[9] He dismisses this notion outright when he tells Larry, "Mister …. Larry. I know English, I know the words. I know the words in French and Italian. I know all the words in Spanish, my native language, but…" (EC 4).[10] Through this pause and in the explanation that follows, Ramírez implies a kind of emotional amnesia or uncertainty toward abstract, unfamiliar, and/or not readily translatable words and the webs of meaning in which they are presented. He tells Larry, "—In my country I was very ill. I remember all the words, the names of things that can be seen, heard, smelled, tasted, touched. But other things that are . . ." (EC 4).[11] He insists that these words are alien to him because they draw upon and incite emotions and feelings that he has never before experienced, at least not in the same context. He explains to Larry that when he encounters words like "nervous breakdown, depression, euphoria . . . [he] doesn't know what these words mean" (EC 4),[12] and that he "understand[s] them only up to a point" (EC 4).[13] Through these exchanges, Puig uses Ramírez to advance the idea that the linguistic problems of exile are symptoms rather than the source of exile's emotional toll.

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[9] Levine recounts that Manuel "got uncomfortable when critics emphasized his linguistic displacement—as when an Argentine academic in Paris attributed Ramirez's linguistic aphasia and illnesses to Manuel's 'somatization' of exile or transference of his linguistic limbo into physical disease." Levine writes that, "The loss of language was a delicate point, if, on the one hand, Manuel himself spoke of somatizations or pychosomatic manifestations, he was worried about a possible impoverishment of his language" (*Manuel* 300).

[10] "—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…" (ME 10).

[11] "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, que no están más que en… en…" (ME 10).

[12] "colapso nervioso, depresión, euforia, eso no lo [sabe]" (ME 10).

[13] "[entiende] el significado… hasta cierto punto, nada más" (ME 10).

However, can we take Ramírez at his word? Moreover, can we trust that he is a reliable mouthpiece for Puig as the author and translator? A close comparison of the English and Spanish versions of the novel reveals that the vast majority of Ramírez's questions and linguistic doubts develop from the differences or disproportions between English and Spanish and not from the abstract, unfamiliar, or unrealized emotional context of the words that he encounters.[14] For example, as a part of the aforementioned conversation between Ramírez and Larry, Ramírez inquires as to the meaning of English words and phrases such as "named" (EC 3), "I'm sorry" (EC 5), and "jogging" (EC 6). It is unclear whether Ramírez (or Puig for that matter) is thinking first in English or Spanish. Yet, Puig's translations or recastings of the same words and phrases into Spanish help to internalize the trans- or inter-lingual dissonances that frustrate Ramírez. "Named" is paired with "le pusieron nombre" (ME 9), "I'm sorry" with "Lo siento" (ME 12), and "jogging" (EC 6) with "haciendo ejercicio" (ME 12).[15] While adequate, these translations are all somewhat unequal. Ramírez's uncertainty reproduces for the reader Puig's own awareness of the disjunction between certain words and phrases in English and their Spanish counterparts; More often than not, Ramírez's linguistic conundrums reflect the difficulty of Puig's own decisions as translator. In another example, Ramírez grapples with the word "memory" (EC 12),

[14] Lori Chamberlain points to Puig's similar preoccupation with the dissonances between Argentine Spanish and Mexican Spanish in *Pubis Angelical*, the novel previous to both *Eternal Curses* and *Maldición eterna* (265).

[15] I find it uncanny that Dorfman also points to both the linguistic/cultural oddity of "jogging," in a Chilean context. In both the English and Spanish versions of his memoir, Dorfman reflects on cultural/linguistic strangeness of jogging by relating how his insistence on jogging in the streets of Santiago made him out of place or "desubica[do]" (306); he recounts that his imported ritual of daily jogging upset the local dogs and sparked a confrontation with a political enemy who claimed that he was disturbing the peace. Dorfman reinforces the cultural oddity of "jogging" by translating or rendering it as the overly literal "hacer jogging" (305) or the disparate "salir a correr" (305).

which Puig translates as "memoria" (ME 17), an inequivalent substitute since "memory" in Spanish is doubly rendered.[16] Similarly, when Ramírez mulls over colloquial and not readily translatable words like "shrinks" (EC 40) or "snitch" (EC 53), Puig first translates the former as the somewhat disjunctive "reductores de cabeza" (ME 54) and renders the latter as the more formal "delatora" (ME 69).[17] I maintain that Ramírez's visible linguistic qualms and hesitations provide a vehicle through which Puig can signal the lack of equivalence or the relative incompatibility between and among words and expressions in Spanish and English. Through Ramírez, Puig adopts a discernible and reflective translation process that underscores the instabilities that shape both the processes of translation and the experiences of exile.

Puig shows his sensitivity to the linguistic and/or translational stakes of exile by foregrounding imbalances between English and Spanish and, at the same time, differences between the English and Spanish versions of his novel. I interpret Ramírez's contention that by persistently questioning Larry he means to account for emotional and not linguistic deficiencies as an indication of Puig's own heightened awareness of, or overcompensation for, the fact that he is writing in English. In Puig's conversation with Corbatta about the difficulties he faced while writing *Eternal Curse on the Reader of These Pages* in English, he concedes his linguistic insecurities. He admits, "Antes, el lenguaje era vehículo de psicología y de caracteres, un lenguaje del que tengo todas las claves; ahora tengo todos los datos de un idioma del que no tengo las claves" (620). I maintain that through Ramírez's character Puig reiterates his concerns

[16] Generally, "memoria" refers to a person's faculty or capacity to remember, while "un recuerdo" designates a past recollection.

[17] Later in the Spanish text, Puig translates "shrinks" as "jíbaros" (ME 157). To my mind, "reductores de cabeza" (ME 54) is an overly literal translation and "delatora" (ME 69) is a rather stiff translation of "snitch," a word better paired with "informer" in English.

about both misinterpreting and being misinterpreted. While Ramírez insists that Larry misunderstands his questions as revealing language-specific rather than emotionally-driven anxieties, comparing the English and Spanish versions of the novel establishes that, more often than not, Ramírez's emotional vexations stem from his being frustrated or alienated linguistically. For example, Puig makes light of the strangeness or unfamiliarity of English when Larry tells Ramírez, "—You're a pain in the ass" (EC 73), to which Ramírez responds "—That's gross" (EC 73). The cleverness of the exchange derives from the fact that Ramírez is a native speaker of Spanish and not English; it is likely that were Ramírez a native English speaker he'd be already desensitized to the coarse literality of the expression. In the Spanish text, Puig reproduces the coarseness but not the idiomatic wit of English exchange. Larry tells Ramírez, "—Un dolor fuerte de barriga, de diarrea, ese efecto me hace usted" (ME 91), to which Ramírez responds "—Qué grosería" (ME 91). Especially in the English version of the text, Ramírez monitors and/or makes strange the words that Larry takes for granted as an English speaker.

Ramírez also takes issue with Larry's use of English when Larry cynically bombards Ramírez with a number of expressions and phrases that overstate the Freudian overtones of his (Larry's) past:

> —I already told you. I'm guilty of lusting after my mother, of wanting to take her away from my father, of not caring what became of him, of throwing him out in my mind, letting him wander and starve, killing him—it didn't matter—anything to get him out of the way. Someone I loved, but wanted to destroy to satisfy my

> own needs. And, yes, take, steal his property, seize what was rightfully mine. (EC 132)[18]

Ramírez's response to Larry's tirade is interesting because he recognizes Larry's phrases as trite and "ready-made" (EC 132), in spite of or even because of the fact that he is a relative newcomer to the world of the English language. Ramírez retorts, "—You say that at the slightest opportunity; you're so quick to say that. You have ready-made phrases. Is that what the shrinks tell you to get rid of you? Or do you think it's amusing? Isn't it terribly unpleasant, and inaccurate besides?" (EC 132).[19] It seems that Ramírez's distance from English (and, simultaneously, Puig's closeness to it as an exilic author and self-translator) leads him to question or police Larry's casual use of words and phrases that Ramírez finds inaccurate or misleading. Ramírez's paranoiac tendencies speak to Puig's own compulsions and fears as an exilic writer. If, on the one hand, he is concerned about his inadequacies as a writer in English, he is, on the other hand, doubly concerned about the dissolution of his abilities as a writer in Spanish. When discussing the different versions of his novel with Corbatta, Puig himself is rather dismissive of the Spanish of *Maldición eterna*—describing it as "un castellano de traducción,

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[18] —Ya se lo dije, soy culpable de desear a mi madre, de querer quitársela a mi padre, de no importarme por la suerte de él, de echarlo a la calle, de abandonarlo, de dejarlo perdido y muerto de hambre, de matarlo, de lo que sea, con tal de apartarlo para siempre, alguien a quien también amé mucho, pero que lo mismo quise destruir, para poder satisfacer mis necesidades. Quitársela a él, ella que era de su propiedad, según él, y empuñar lo que por derecho me pertenecía. (ME 157)

[19] "—A la menor insinuación usted sale con ese cuento. Está siempre listo para repetir lo mismo, ya tiene las frases hechas. ¿Es eso lo que le cuentan los jíbaros para sacárselo encima? ¿o lo repite por diversión? ¿no le parece que en vez de divertido es inexacto y desagradable?" (ME 157).

desangrado, ficticio" (620).[20] I argue that Ramírez's hypersensitivity toward language foregrounds the careful balancing act and/or the mental conundrum into which Puig as author and translator is caught.

Ramírez reiterates his fears of being misinterpreted when he insists that Larry has incorrectly decoded the messages and correspondences that Ramírez inscribed into a series of French novels that he kept while in prison. To decode Ramírez's notes, Larry either transcribes and then translates the sentences that Ramírez underlined in a number of French novels, or, he transcribes, puts into order, then translates into English the individual words that Ramírez numbered in the same novels.[21] This complicated, meta-fictional scheme allows Puig to signal the multiple filters and layers through which meaning and content are transmitted or decoded in his own "original" text and in his rewriting of it.

Thus, Larry's rereading of his rewriting of Ramírez's recasting of a letter that Ramírez received from his estranged son underscores and anticipates the act of rewriting that Puig himself undertakes—both as he writes in English and translates into Spanish. The self-reflexive implications of this episode become evident when Larry reads to Ramírez his interpretation of Ramírez's introduction to the letter he has recreated, "I write for my own relief. If I had his letter in front of me it would be so easy, what was he saying? They didn't even give me time for a

[20] Likewise, Levine insinuates that one of the factors driving Puig to abandon his life in Brazil (from 1980-1988) was his fear that his immersion in Portuguese was negatively impacting his writing. She cites Puig's awareness of his linguistic displacement in Brazil in the excerpts of "portuñol" in his *Sangre de amor correspondido*, the novel immediately after *Eternal Curse* and *Maldición eterna* (*Manuel* 328-29).

[21] Chamberlain expands on how Puig lifts significant portions of text from French romantic novels: *La Princesse de Cleves*, *Adolphe*, and *Les liasons dangereuses*, particularly excerpts from a letter in the latter novel in which Madame de Tourvel reveals her undecided feelings toward the Vicomte de Valmont (270).

second reading; they tore the letter away from me and put it back in that big box they carry. I'm going to rewrite it. I hope not to change it. I hope I could change it. Its content is still burning in me, but the words?" (EC 214).[22] Per Puig's own commentary on the novel, Ramírez's rewriting of his son's letter suggests both a way in which Ramírez can revisit his troubled father-son relationship and a way in which Puig himself can return to or even rework his own turbulent relationship with his father. Yet, beyond the autobiographical ramifications of this moment in the text, I suggest that Puig's care to emphasize the emotional paradox that rewriting invites and his attention toward the disjunction between "content" (EC 214) and "words" (EC 214) recall Puig's own careful negotiations with English and Spanish as both a translator and an exilic author. Puig makes light of Ramírez's linguistic confrontations and, as a result, enunciates his role as a biscriptive author and creates an opportunity to revisit his complicated relationship with his fatherland or *patria*. Through Larry's interpretation and/or misinterpretation of Ramírez's recreation of his son's letter, Puig approaches the act of rewriting as a complex and highly filtered process that occasions both painful remembrance and willful forgetting.

In the moment when Larry reads aloud to Ramírez his (Larry's) interpretation of a segment of Ramírez's notes, which notes comprise Ramírez's introduction to his rewriting of his son's letter (via underlining sentences in four French novels!), Larry forces Ramírez to reencounter his strained relationship with his son and to reflect upon the language choices that have further strained their relationship:

[22] "La es tal que escribo para mi propio alivio. Si tuviese su carta delante mío sería tan fácil, ¿qué pretendía decirme? ni me dieron tiempo a leerla por segunda vez, me la arrebataron y la volvieron a colocar en esa gran caja que llevan. Voy a reescribirla. Espero no cambiarla. Ojalá pudiese cambiarla. Quedo marcado a fuego su contenido ¿pero y las palabras?" (ME 256).

> Relinquish that language I cannot wish to understand; renounce that sentiment that offends me, and frightens me, and to which, maybe, you should be less attached, knowing that it's the obstacle that separates us. This sentiment, is it the only one you know? (EC 213-14)
>
> Olvidemos el lenguaje, que no puedo dejar de aspirar a comprender, renuncie usted a un sentimiento que me ofende, y me asusta, y al cual, tal vez, usted debería sentir menos apego, sabiendo que es la barrera que nos separa. Ese sentimiento, es el único que usted conoce. (ME 255)

Presumably, the language in question is French—judging from a latter portion of the translated/transcribed letter that describes how Ramírez's son left for Europe to become a theater director only to later marry a stagehand and become an instructor of Spanish in a Parisian secondary school (EC 215)—Larry reads aloud Ramírez's sarcastic reference to "the triumph of my son in Paris" (EC 215).[23] However, the passage cited above could as easily refer to a kind of language usage, a way of speaking harshly or with injury. Moreover, it could implicitly recall Puig's own attachment to English, the language of Hollywood and North American popular culture that is so prevalent in his other works. What is most likely is that Puig is fully aware of the ambiguities prompted by the command to "Relinquish that language" (EC 213) in the English text and by the first-person plural injunction of "Olvidemos el lenguaje" (ME 255) in the Spanish text. Through these ambiguities, Puig subtly marks his awareness of the ways in which he as a bilingual author and translator must mediate and/or move beyond pressures to be loyal to one or another national language.

[23] "Ese fue el gran triunfo de mi hijo en Paris" (ME 257).

Puig further emphasizes the emotional and political ambivalences that arise from language choices by liberally translating excerpts of *Eternal Curse on the Reader of These Pages* into Spanish, taking to heart his friend and confidant Cabrera Infante's playful dictum that "writers dare where translators fear to tread," (qtd in Levine *Manuel* 233). In the passage of text quoted above, Puig chooses to rewrite more than to translate; or, at least, translating becomes rewriting. While the English text of Ramírez's recreated/reinterpreted letter to his son reads, "Relinquish that language I cannot wish to understand" (EC 213), the Spanish reads "Olvidemos el lenguaje, que no puedo dejar de aspirar a comprender" (ME 255). The statement that Ramírez "cannot wish to understand" the language spoken by his son conveys, possibly, disdain or resentment toward "that [particular] language" (EC 213) which divides father and son or, as likely, it shows how Ramírez acknowledges the futility of mastering the language that is so dear to his son. Conversely, the revelation that "no [puede] dejar de aspirar a comprender" his son's way of speaking betrays a near compulsion for trying to understand or more fully grasp a baffling, "other" tongue or way of speaking. In the Spanish translation, Puig does more to acknowledge the strong pull or draw of the other language—a revision that reflects on his own meta-textual deliberations about writing in English or rewriting into Spanish. A small, but significant change to the punctuation in the Spanish version reiterates the semantic realignment of this section in translation. While in English, Larry reads aloud Ramírez's question: "This sentiment, is it the only one you know?" (EC 214), in Spanish the sentence is not an interrogative: "Ese sentimiento, es el único que usted conoce" (ME 255). As a result, the Spanish sentence is more emphatic as to the emotional distancing caused by the son's attachment to his second or other tongue—which distance is already more pronounced in Spanish through the use

of the formal "Usted."[24] I find it curious that, in the Spanish text, Puig is less coy as to the impact and pressures of adopting another tongue. In the slippages of meaning between the English and Spanish texts, he seems to vacillate as to the determining influence of one or another language. Larry's resurfacing of the linguistic tensions between Ramírez and his son becomes a convenient medium through which Puig can continue his own interior dialogue about the implications of self-translating and, ultimately, rewriting.

Ramírez's response to Larry's rereading and/or reinterpretation of his (Ramírez's) notes spawns a conversation that I have reproduced at length because of the degree of self-reflexivity that characterizes the exchange. I maintain that Puig reveals his own preoccupations about writing first in English and then translating or rewriting into Spanish by having Ramírez and Larry argue as to whether or not Larry has willfully revised Ramírez's rewriting of his son's letter. Through their heated discussion, Puig playfully anticipates critical attention toward the differences between the English and Spanish versions of his text.

> —I don't believe a word of it. It's all twisted, according to your whims. I can't see what you got out of that. Changing the text.
>
> —What was it that you wanted to say, then?
>
> —I see very clearly that you're not qualified to do this work.
>
> —Thanks for your support, but the text has not been altered. These are your thoughts, and you felt them so deeply that you took the trouble to encode a French text to express yourself.

[24] The difference in punctuation could be a problem overlooked in the processes of editing or typesetting. However, I find this unlikely as questions in Spanish are normally set apart by both a concluding and an introductory question mark.

—Yes, all that trouble to have an irresponsible young man come along and play with it, erase the numbers, change them, write a whole new text . . . for a motive beyond my understanding. (EC 216-17)

—No creo ni una palabra de todo eso. Está todo tergiversado, siguiendo su antojo. No sé qué tipo de necesidad estaba usted satisfaciendo al hacer tal cosa. Cambiar un texto entero.

—¿Qué es lo que quería decir entonces?

—Veo muy a claras que usted no está capacitado para hacer ese trabajo.

—Gracias por su apoyo, pero el texto no ha sido alterado. Esas son sus ideas, y las sentía tan hondo, que se tomó el trabajo de codificar un texto en francés para expresarse.

—Sí, tanto trabajo para que un joven irresponsable venga y juegue según su capricho, borre los números, los cambie, y escriba una cosa completamente diferente… por un motivo que escapa a mi entendimiento. (ME 259)

This exchange parodies the inquiry that drives the text—that of interrogating the limits of language and, at the same time, unfolding the emotional stakes of exile, of having or choosing to live or recount life in translation. Seemingly, the linguistic demons inside Puig's head are grappling with whether not Puig himself has irrevocably changed the essence or core of his text by writing English and Spanish versions of his novel. Through Ramírez, Puig pokes fun at the translator and/or himself, as "an irresponsible, young man" (EC 217) who would dare to transform or try to recreate the instincts and intentions of an "original" text. Through Larry, Puig makes a stirring defense of the salience and resilience of content, despite the filters of translation.

Larry insists, "These are your thoughts, and you felt them so deeply that you took the trouble to encode a French text to express yourself."[25] I argue that Puig avails himself of the dialogue between Larry and Ramírez to mark the extent to which he is invested in the questions of how and if using one or another language places parameters on what one can experience or express in the form of words.

Puig throws his hat into an ongoing debate of translation, the discussion of how and whether or not a translator can "responsibly" communicate the thoughts and "intentions" of an "original"or source text. Following the school of translation that advocates utmost loyalty to the creative intentions of the author, a self-translator like Puig would be the ideal translator because of his less mediated access to the world of the genesis of the first, initial, or original text.[26] However, in the conversation that occurs in between the lines of the dialogue between Larry and Ramírez, Puig implicitly debunks the notion that even the author him/herself could recover the intentions or motivations of a sacrosanct original or first text. When Larry asks, "—What was it that you wanted to say, then?" (EC 216), and Ramírez responds, "—I see very clearly that you're not qualified to do this work" (EC 216), Puig thereby insinuates his own distancing from the first text; he voices the perception that translation cannot recuperate intention and/or the belief that

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[25] "Esas son sus ideas, y las sentía tan hondo, que se tomó el trabajo de codificar un texto en francés para expresarse" (ME 259).

[26] See, for example, Nabokov's aforementioned "The Art of Translation," in which he argues, playfully, that the ideal translator must be able to mimic as nearly as possible the feelings and intentions of the original text (319), or see Edith Grossman's *Why Translation Matters*, in which she emphasizes that "what we read in a translation is the translator's writing" and that "a translation should be evaluated on its own terms" but still holds to the idea that "The inspiration is the original work, certainly, and thoughtful literary translators approach that work with great deference and respect" (31-32).

intention is irrecoverable.[27] While Puig does not fully align himself with either Ramírez or Larry as a character, his interpolations in and between the versions of his novel as author and translator suggest that, withstanding all of the tongue-and-cheek between the two men, Puig mediates the otherwise unmediated dialogue to imply that he, too, is damned and/or cursed to misread and misinterpret as he rewrites his own text.

The dialectic that Puig engages as author and translator—the need to recover the meaning(s) of the original paired with his desires to move past the world of the first text and create anew—mirrors the presentation of exile in the text; Ramírez's desires to remember and reacquaint himself with the feelings and emotions of language and, conversely, his anxieties to forget painful incidents from an unrelenting and unreliable past are always tempered with the knowledge that neither remembering nor forgetting is fully attainable. In this sense, Puig adroitly approaches the strangeness, incompleteness, or liminality of exile by deciding to write the novel first in English. As Lori Chamberlain argues about Puig's presentation of the exiled subject primarily in the English version of his novel, "Writing in another language, then, is a way of objectifying the entirely unmetaphoric experience of alienation and exile, an objectification we can see in the detachment of Puig's flat prose style in *Eternal Curse*" (265).[28] The additional filter or added distance occasioned by taking on an "other tongue" provides Puig with a tangible method for trying to account for the intangible effects of exile.

Chamberlain argues that, "For a novel *about* exile—political and psychological—the English (translation) of this work survives as a sign of the novel's "truth," much as Argentine

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[27] "—¿Qué es lo que quería decir entonces?/ —Veo muy a claras que usted no está capacitado para hacer ese trabajo" (ME 259).

[28] Here Chamberlain refers back to Puig's statement to Corbatta that the Spanish of *Maldicion eterna* is "un castellano de traducción, desangrado" (620).

idioms *located* Puig's earlier novels set in Argentina" (262). I extend Chamberlain's observations by arguing that the existence of a frequently dissimilar and equally author-itative Spanish translation (which appeared in print in 1980, two years before the original English manuscript) further punctuates and/or calls into question the assumptions or truth claims about exile that are advanced in either the English or Spanish text. Often, even the slightest differences between the two texts or versions of Puig's novel complicate attempts to tease out a thesis about exile or the experience of exile in one or another linguistic milieu.

For example, in the previously cited argument between Larry and Ramírez, Puig tinges the meaning of Ramírez's statement about why he thinks Larry felt prompted to change the letter that Ramírez attempted to recreate while a political prisoner. While in the English text Puig writes, "—I can't see what you got out of that. Changing the text" (EC 216), in the Spanish Puig renders the same as, —No sé qué tipo de necesidad estaba usted satisfaciendo al hacer tal cosa. Cambiar un texto entero" (ME 259). The Spanish text is more explicit as to the compulsion or the almost physical need, "[la] necesidad" (ME 259), that Ramírez claims Larry is trying to satisfy by transgressing the bounds of the "original" text (which is hardly "original" as it is Ramírez's attempt to rewrite a cursorily read letter from his son via lifting words and sentences from the French novels he has with him in prison). In addition, Puig more clearly concedes the dramatic and substantive transformations that have taken place in the processes of translating or rewriting his own text by adding the adjective "entero" to modify "texto" in the Spanish version. These slight modifications in the Spanish text cast curious shadows on Puig's own decision to self-translate and/or completely revise the English version of his text. Ramírez's insinuation that Larry's act of translating and/or rewriting is a rash endeavor or a thrill-seeking experience prompts questions like: Why would Puig want to more firmly emphasize the dramatic

transformation occasioned by translation in the Spanish text? Was Puig's decision to write first in English and then translate into Spanish born of necessity, despair, or mere curiosity? Do these changes suggest that Puig's own narrative of exile is different in English than in Spanish? I don't aim to force answers to these questions so much as to emphasize that by self-translating Puig opens up the processes of textual transmission and obscures the notion that the experience of exile is language-specific.[29]

Admittedly, a side-by-side comparison of the English and Spanish versions of Puig's novel doesn't yield many startling contradictions. Still, many of Puig's self-translations into Spanish from the English version are scrupulously or, even, overly literal—which labored literality is in and of itself a kind of transgressive, non-fluent, and/or more "visibile" translation practice. Moreover, Puig disrupts or unsettles conclusions about one or both of the versions of novel through even his slightest revisions: changes in word choice, phrasing, connotation that lead to changes in context and characterization, as well as innumerable aural changes (of rhythm, meter, sound, etc.) that can alter the tone of the narrative. Drawing from Thomas Tanselle's distinction about the character of textual revisions, I maintain that several of Puig's translations are "vertical revisions" (335) in that they alter "the purpose, character, direction, or character of [the] work, thus attempting to make a different sort of work out of it" (335); unlike "horizontal" (335) revisions which continue and/or emend the supposed intentions of an "original" text or manuscript, these rewritings realign and/or challenge the claims of first text. In these instances,

[29] Levine intimates a more pragmatic motivation behind Puig's language decisions. She explains that while Puig, generally, perceived translations to be "pale clones" (*Manuel* 225-26) of an "original" text, he "knew he needed to publish beyond national borders to survive" (225). Levine writes, "He was an Argentine, after all, for whom Paris and New York were the capitals of the civilized worlds.[. . .] having done subtitle work in film, and industry that depended upon global marketing, Manuel was preconditioned to think of the Spanish version as a small cog in a vast publishing apparatus" (226).

Puig as translator resists the already hotly contested assumption that respecting the intentions of a first text is possible or even desirable. Especially through his suggestive revisions, Puig creates two contingent and contesting texts and, as a result, signals the ambiguities and multiple meanings that surface in the highly filtered processes of reading, writing, translating, and rewriting.

A particularly curious revision occurs near the end of the novel, in the few letters which close the novel (in English and in Spanish) and summarize the events that lead to Mr. Ramírez's eventual death and Larry John's reentrance into the world of the unemployed. In a letter to Larry from the Internal Secretary for the Human Rights organization that had been financing Mr. Ramírez's stay in the Greenwich Village nursing home, the secretary to this organization explains to Larry why he does not feel it correct to release to Larry Ramírez's manuscripts, which documents represent for Larry his future livelihood as he planned to work in coordination with the University of Montreal to recover, decode, and eventually publish these texts. The secretary, Eli Margulies, writes to Larry that Ann Lewis (a nurse at the home and Larry's said former love interest) recounted for him her last conversation with Ramírez before his health rapidly declined and he was transferred to facilities in the western U.S. In the English version, Margulies recalls that nurse tells him, "[Ramírez] had called her to say good-bye, because she was the only person he had got along with at the Village Home. She found him *very depressed*" (EC 229, my emphasis). In the Spanish version, he recounts, "El señor Ramírez la llamó para despedirse, porque según la señora Lewis ella había sido la única persona con quien había congeniado en el Hogar "Village." Ella lo encontró *muy eufórico y lleno de planes*, coincidiendo así con mi propia impresión" (ME 275, my emphasis). In both texts, Ramírez's final words to Lewis implicate Larry as an antagonist instead of a friend and collaborator and, also, corroborate

Ramírez's final will and testament, in which he leaves his prison notes to the Greenwich home's library and thereby prohibits Larry from retaining the books for his collaborative project with the University of Montreal. Effectively, Ramírez condemns Larry to a continued life of working jobs for which he is undercompensated and overeducated. However, the kind of vengeance enacted by Ramírez in the Spanish version is not born of sadness, despair, or betrayal but of excitement or "eufori[a]" (ME 275) and deliberate malice—a revenge wrought by a dying man who is still "lleno de planes" (ME 275). Puig's modification of Ramírez's behavior is reiterated through the nurse's subsequent assurance to Margulies in the English version that "although he sounded very sad, he was *composed* and lucid" (EC 229. my italics) and, in the Spanish, "que le pareció *sobreexcitado* pero lúcido" (ME 275, my italics). In both texts, Ramírez thwarts Larry's attempts to recover, translate, and eventually publish Ramírez's prison notes—which final action speaks to Puig's own meta-textual efforts to thwart or complicate readings of his text by creating a Spanish-language original that calls into question the reliability of his first, English manuscript. Yet, while Ramírez plots a more mean-spirited revenge on Larry in the Spanish text, as author and translator Puig plans a similar (though likely less mean-spirited) fate for the reader of either his English or Spanish novel. By creating an occasionally dissonant and still equally authoritative "translation," Puig condemns the reader of only one or the other versions of his text to a similarly incomplete interpretation and also muddles the larger text that comprises both of his novels.

The elusive manuscript that Ramírez bars Larry from translating and interpreting recalls the elusive narrative of exile that Puig himself recounts for readers of English or Spanish. While Puig's texts are works of fiction independent of their author, the biographical conditions of their creation provide added insight into the problems of language, communication, and misprision that move Puig's English and Spanish texts. As Levine argues,

> As with each novel [of Puig's], *Eternal Curse* was directly connected to a moment in his life: Ramirez suffers a loss of nationality; he says he knows words in different languages but not what he should *feel*; he suffers amnesia because of a repression that is psychological but determined in good part by the political. As an Argentine, he rejected roots in the old country, feeling totally removed from Europe, but he has also rejected/been rejected by Argentina. (*Manuel* 299)

Of course, determining why Puig felt prompted to write the English version of his text before the Spanish version cannot be so simple as to argue that writing in English provided Puig with an outlet through which he could exorcise his exilic angst. Rather, as Levine also recounts, Puig resisted the notion of being characterized as a prototypical exile (272). While he did leave Argentina upon fearing for his family and his personal safety, even receiving death threats from Triple A, a far-right, anti-communist group linked to Isabel Perón (241-42), Puig was not said to wallow with nostalgia or feelings of alienation whilst elsewhere. Levine writes that for all his desires to be accepted and appreciated in his home country, in his circles abroad he found warmer acclaim and a larger market for his works, welcome anonymity from Argentine judgment (291), and increased opportunities for romance (especially in and around New York's Christopher Street, the gay mainstay of Greenwich village) (272).[30] Moreover, by writing first in English, Puig may have simply wanted to avoid the ordeal of dealing with translators. Levine recounts that Puig, like Cabrera Infante, was accustomed to viewing translators as a "hassle" (299), as "necessary evils" (225); Puig may have been hesitant to deal with or to relinquish

[30] Levine recounts how Puig emphasized to the Scottish writer and translator Alastair Reid, "'It wasn't so much that I was fleeing . . . you've got to understand,' pointing in the directions of two young men kissing on the corner of Christopher Street and Sheridan Square. 'This for me is Mecca; why would I want to be anywhere else?'" (272).

control to another writer. Finally, Puig may have simply wanted to more accurately represent the period of life that the texts reflect—as he tells Corbatta, "Fue un problema vivido en inglés y yo quería escribir sobre eso" (620). Whatever the most pressing motivation behind Puig's decision to work out his narrative of exile in English and/or Spanish, his texts remain—with all of their assorted political, social, and literary implications.

It is clear, however, that through the ambivalences within and in between the Spanish and English versions of his novel, Puig more fully develops the thematic of exile recurrent in his fiction and emphasizes and/or makes light of the linguistic tensions of exile in and between his texts. Puig the author and translator appears to be ever aware of the dissonances between the English and Spanish versions of his text and, as a result, he actively resists the notion that writing in one or another language determines and/or delimits what he as an author can recount or create. Puig voices through his revisions his own unspoken insistence that what is lost in translation (in either text) is partially regained through the highly self-reflexive and carefully-coded attention to language and its limits in both versions of his novel. Chamberlain argues that these texts, along with Puig's previous *Pubis Angelical* (published in 1979) and his later *Sangre de amor correspondido* (published in 1982), "indicate a preoccupation with language as the place of exile" (265) and that by "foregrounding the otherness of language, Puig provides another perspective as a way of probing the issues of sexual and political repression that consistently appear in his works" (265). I add that only in and between *Eternal Curse on the Reader of These Pages* and *Maldición eterna a quien lea estas páginas* is Puig able to visibly engage and/or cast doubt on the linguistic tensions that are said to characterize the event of exile. By creating a space between the English and Spanish versions of his novel, he muddies the waters of authorial intention and textual transmission, and he approaches translation and exile both as opportunities

for reinterpretation and as openings for misprision or misinterpretation. In his "Traducción y exilio," José Francisco Ruiz Casanova asks if translation is a choice or condition of exile (142). Puig grapples with this same question as he takes on the role of both author and self-translator.

Dealing with the Discovery of Self-translation and Exile in Dorfman's *Heading South, Looking North: A Bilingual Journey* and *Rumbo al sur, deseando el norte: un romance en dos lenguas*

While with *Eternal Curse on the Reader of These Pages* and *Maldición eterna a quien lea estas paginas* Puig writes a largely fictional text that has latent autobiographical overtones, with *Heading South, Looking North: A Bilingual Journey* and *Rumbo al sur, deseando el norte: un romance en dos lenguas,* Ariel Dorfman crafts an unabashedly personal memoir, the artifice of which is deftly understated. Yet, even as the two authors frame the event of exile from different vantage points, both emphasize the linguistic tensions that inform the experience of exile and call attention to how these tensions complicate a firm sense of self, place, community, nation, and text. Both foreground the linguistic strangeness or dual awareness of their narrative selves or characters and, through their narrative voices, each writer highlights the interlingual liminality and/or the cross-cultural dexterity amplified by choosing to act as author and translator. The implicit questions and motivations of Puig's text—trying to account for the emotional stakes of having to maneuver in one or another language; attempting to revisit or to atone for mistakes in past and distant relationships; wrestling with whether or not essential content is lost in the decoding or translation of a manuscript; deciding whether or not to soften and/or embellish episodes or characterizations when translating or rewriting; approaching a host language as either a means of refuge or as a cruel necessity; grappling with the possibility of self before language or self because of language—are all explicit points of departure in Dorfman's

carefully crafted life story. Dorfman's deliberations in and between the two versions of his memoir manifest the extent to which he, too, has internalized the wiles, woes, and satisfactions of writing and translating as a multilingual author. Reading the English and Spanish versions of the memoir side-by-side reveals Dorfman's personal investment in elucidating exile as an individual, historical, and linguistic event.

As the disparate English and Spanish titles of his memoir suggest, Dorfman is keenly aware of ways in which he creates different versions of himself in either language. "*Heading South, Looking North: A Bilingual Journey*" paints a picture of a divided traveler on a fairly direct journey and also evokes the tragic gesture of looking back, e.g., Orpheus looking for Eurydice or Lot's wife stealing a glance at the home she is leaving. In line with these images, Dorfman insinuates that his dividedness—his anguish and concern for whom or what he has left behind—is also a kind of deviance, an act of defiance toward the gods or God who ordered that one should not stray from the path set for him/her; the physical act of looking back transgresses the established order set by the gods. Likewise, Dorfman's portrayal of a split or bilingual self transgresses established norms of language, nation, and self in society and literature. His insistence that his journey is "bilingual" speaks to his belated yet ardent defiance of the traditional parameters of a monolingual literary culture. Shades of Dorfman's non-compliance are echoed in the subtitle of his English memoir. "Journey" strongly recalls the Spanish "*jornada*," such that the English word is arguably a calque for the Spanish term which is rich in its evocations: of a day's work, a day's wage in Chile, a day's journey, a theater act in classical

Spanish drama, and of a more figurative, possibly endless journey through life.[31] As significant as the varied meanings of journey/*jornada* is the fact that Dorfman's text recalls the meanings of the word in both English and the Spanish—evidence that while he is writing in one language he is thinking of or in the other. As author and translator, he frequently fuses English and Spanish together such that the languages combine instead of compete. More often than not, Dorfman's translations reaffirm the larger thesis of the two versions of his memoir—his determination to counter the political, emotional, and linguistic traumas of exile with a message of positive hybridity, dual consciousness, and/or multi-cultural awareness.

"*Rumbo al sur, deseando el norte: un romance en dos lenguas*" reiterates the apparent implications of the English title, but with added drama. "*Rumbo al sur, deseando el norte*" conveys the same sense of direction as "*Heading South, Looking North*" but the Spanish words are more florid and emotional, an affirmation of a kind of baroque sensibility that Latin American writers as varied as Rosario Ferré, Jorge Luís Borges, Gabriel García Márquez, Alejo Carpentier, and Roberto González Echevarría have projected as an intrinsic characteristic of Spanish, the language of Góngora, Cervantes, and Quevedo that is revitalized by twentieth-

[31] In her definitive article on *Heading South, Looking North*, Sophia McClennen expands on the temporal implications of "*jornada*" in Spanish as compared to "journey" in English. She explains,

> [A]s revealed more overtly in the Spanish jornada, a journey signals both the events of one day as well as a trip that knows no limits. On one level, the subtitle indicates how it is only at the end of this journey that Dorfman finally comes to accept himself as a bilingual, to reconcile himself to the two forces of his two languages, and to more comfortably inhabit a world where both English and Spanish function compatibly. At another level, though, "journey" suggests that his travels in bilingualism and cross-culturalism persist, that they began well before his exile from Pinochet, and that they have not ended. ("The Diasporic" 6).

century "boom" authors such as Carpentier, Carlos Fuentes, and García Márquez.[32] As opposed to the Orpheus-like gesture of "looking north," *deseando* speaks to a more internal conflict of interest, a passionate longing that is not marked by physical movement.

Dorfman's classification of the Spanish version of his memoir as "*un romance*" is also evocative. Presumably, Dorfman refers not to the ballad form of poetry but to the *romance*, the main form of popular medieval fiction and a precursor to the famed works of the Spanish Golden Age.[33] Dorfman, an active student and professor of Hispanic literatures, with a son named Rodrigo after "El Cid, the first Iberian hero" (*Heading* 155), playfully conflates the events of his text within the traditional parameters of the *romance*. As Alan Deyermond explains in his defense and overview of the genre,

> The *romance* is a story of adventure, dealing with combat, love, the quest, separation and reunion, other-world journeys, or any combination, of these. The story is told largely for its own sake, though a moral or religious lesson need not be excluded, and moral or religious connotations are very often present. A

[32] Dorfman refers to this notion of "the baroque"/ "el barroco" when describing his "schizoid" (*Heading* 191) and/or egregiously hybrid behavior as a youth in Chile, recounting how he still clung to English as his intimate language while publicly making a name for himself as political, anti-imperialist activist in Spanish. Dorfman writes, "There was something monstrous and bizarre and twisted in my journey. But wasn't that also that also the story of Latin America, what it had baroquely permitted, admitted, submitted, remitted, since its origins?" (191). Curiously, Dorfman chooses not include this more explicit reference to "the baroque" in the Spanish version of his memoir, eliminating the whole paragraph in which the above statement is the concluding sentence. In both texts, however, he also talks around "the baroque" when he reflects on Fernández de Oviedo's attempts to translate the "fantastic composite" (193)/ "la composición fantástica" (*Rumbo* 261) of the New World for his European audience.

[33] For early histories and discussions of the generic characteristics of *el romance* see Alan Deyermond's 1971 "The lost genre of medieval Spanish literature" or Northrup Frye's 1957 *Anatomy of Criticism*. Famous examples within the span of the genre include *Amadís de Gaula* and *Cárcel de amor* by Diego de San Pedro.

> commentary on the meaning of the events is normally given, with special attention to the motives of the characters, and descriptions are fairly full. The audience aimed at is generally more sophisticated than the audience for the epic. (793)

Deyermond explains that writers of *romances* frequently recur to "[t]he marvellous" (793), they relay a world that is "remote from the audience in time, space or social class" (793), and that their *romances* "can be episodic, [. . .] have a unitary linear structure, or follow the more complex pattern of interlacing" (793). Dorfman's complex, interweaving narrative of self and of exile proves a worthy heir to the *romance*, to mention only his personal battle and quest for the political and social ends of the socialist government of Salvador Allende, his forcible separation from and later reunion with his wife and son in the aftermath of the military coup, and his reflections on his numerous marvelous or provident escapes from death. Dorfman's Spanish title frames with greater incisiveness the heroic and/or mock-heroic proportions of his text. Readers familiar with the conventions of the *romance* will be more highly attuned to the ways in which Dorfman both pays homage to and plays with the attributes of this Hispanic literary ancestor. With his divergent Spanish "translation" of the title, Dorfman enlarges and brings into sharper focus a significant literary context for his English language "original."

In an interview with Ilan Stavans, Dorfman claims that his "Spanish is haunted by English, and vice versa" (308) and agrees with Stavan's assertion that his writing is "a written English with a Spanish accent" (308). The Spanish presence in Dorfman's English text is particularly evident in the individual chapter titles to his memoir, which all begin with the circuitous phrase, "A Chapter Dealing With the Discovery of . . ." either "death" or "life and language." In Spanish, the chapters begin with the phrase "En el que," which is still indirect but

less cumbersome. McClennen explains how these titles "parallel the chapter titles from Don Quijote, many of which begin with the phrase 'which deals with…' or 'que trata de…' and 'de lo que . . .'" ("The Diasporic" 2) and indicates how like those titles in Cervantes, "Dorfman's chapter titles are a ruse and what they signal is not always what the reader encounters" (2-3). McClennen cites the chapter on "life and language" in which a young Ariel and his family mourn the executions of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg (5). Dorfman credits a looming literary predecessor by both employing the syntax of Cervantes' Golden Age Spanish in his chapter titles and by similarly exploiting readers' expectations of his individual chapters. These two-faced chapter titles evoke larger duplicities and/or continuities of both content and form in Dorfman's English and Spanish texts. In the case of *Heading South, Looking North*, Dorfman uses English that speaks of Spanish to recount a narrative of life, hope, and bilingualism that is, at the same time, a story of death, disillusion, and language loyalty. In the case of *Rumbo al Sur, Deseando el Norte*, Dorfman accomplishes the same via accented Spanish prose that both is and is not a translation. In either text, language is not just a vehicle of meaning but a generator of it.

The co-presence of English and Spanish in the two versions of Dorfman's memoir both reinforces and undermines the fundamental dualisms that motivate much of Dorfman's narrative of life and language, e.g., North and South, English and Spanish, monolingualism and bilingualism. As McClennen argues, "Dorfman points to a flawed binary, an opposition that is inclusive rather than epiphenomenal, since what we have is not north versus south, but rather north and south, which in keeping with the title of the book, suggests Dorfman as a Janus face, a being who straddles the north and the south, always tied to both to some degree" ("The Diasporic" 5). While Dorfman plays with the literary currency that these oppositions hold and flirts with the notion that he is someone or something in Spanish that he is not in English, he

ultimately undercuts these oppositions in the processes of writing and translating. Rather, Dorfman's poetics resonate with Derrida's seemingly paradoxical insistence that while we "only speak one language," we can "never speak only one language" (7). Through the many hybrid moments in his texts, Dorfman visibly deconstructs the idea that a writer is actually able to fully demarcate or separate his/her shared language(s)—the autonomy of either his English or his Spanish is undone by the persistence of either language within the other.

Still, in his writing and in his critical commentary, Dorfman seems rather ambivalent as to whether or not he controls or is at the behest of his language or language(s). While discussing his writing with Stavans, Dorfman reiterates Derrida's either/or and/or neither/nor thinking about language and goes on to express his nearly unconscious, passive role in making language decisions:

> In a way, I think I'm married to both languages, but marriage implies divorce and separation. Perhaps I have two mothers: two origins, two beginnings. Or is it two mother wives? This does not preclude the fact that oftentimes I feel as if I don't have a language at all—a sort of aphasia: I can stumble, lose my sense of what language I'm using, and not find a word in either tongue; I can search for the word but the word is not there. Probably the deepest side of myself inhabits that no-language geography. When I'm writing, if the voice, the inner voice, comes to me in one language, I will follow through: I let the language choose me. (306)

In his memoir, Dorfman follows this kind of language logic by depicting numerous instances in which his narrative self is acted upon by language. His Spanish or *castellano*, "catche[s]" (*Heading* 12), "cradle[s]" (12), "pull[s] him back from the abyss" (12), "take[s] care of him" (13), "endures" (60), "resist[s]" (60), "waits" (60), and "flow[s] out of him like a river" (245).

Likewise, Dorfman's English causes him to "surrender" 40), "adopt[s]" (49) him, acts as "a constant companion and best friend" (160), "call[s] to [him]" (219), "persists[s]" (221), "flirt[s] […] with his mind" (269), and "grows indispensable" (270) to him. He depicts both English and Spanish as animate and active forces in his development as an adult and as a writer and, at times, even casts himself as a kind of amanuensis, a mere scribe to the larger upheavals of exile and language that have shaped him, instead of a willing participant in the unfolding of the same narrative. He claims that, "Spanish and history had different plans for [him]" (*Heading* 86) when as a twelve-year-old aspiring writer he forswore his language loyalty to English, and he writes that "History played a trick on [him]" (*Heading* 198) by sending him to Berkeley, California in 1968 near the center of the U.S. counterculture movements of the 1960s, just as was he wrestling with his own identity as an "American" author.[34] Moreover, he asserts that "history may [have] forc[ed] [him], against [his] will, to become bilingual" (*Heading* 269) when he used his English language skills, in part, to secure his passage to Argentina from Chile in the aftermath of the military coup.[35] In all of these moments, Dorfman implies that the pressures of history and language conspire to shape him rather than recounting how as an autonomous agent he influences the tensions of language and history through his individual actions.

However, in many other instances in his texts, Dorfman underscores his free will in making (and also portraying) language decisions. As author and translator, he intervenes in and between his texts to show that he consciously mediates or negotiates the linguistic stakes of

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[34] In Spanish, Dorfman renders the phrases cited above as "El castellano y la historia me tenían reservado un plan diferente" (*Rumbo* 120), and "Te llames como te llames, te espera una América sorprendente" (*Rumbo* 268).

[35] "la historia puede que me esté forzando, contra mi propia voluntad, a hacerme bilingüe" (*Rumbo* 359).

exile. In the first guise, Dorfman engages a tension between the active and passive portrayals of his narrative self. McClennen aptly describes this textual dialectic when she argues, "Dorfman wavers between emphasizing agency and choice in his use of language versus admitting his submission and passivity to the circumstances of his cultural displacement" ("The Diasporic" 3). Indeed, Dorfman asserts his linguistic independence early in both texts in his admittedly unreliable account of his hospital internment as a two-year-old. He insists that this experience prompted his near physiological refusal to speak Spanish, that as a toddler he effectively willed himself to be monolingual. McClennen points to Dorfman's contradictory insistence that he "instinctively chose" (*Heading* 42) to speak only English despite his being only two ("The Diasporic" 3).[36] Likewise, Dorfman emphasizes his willfulness in persisting in speaking only English into his childhood and in crafting an "American" identity for himself: "I reject that voice in Spanish [. . .]. This is how I create, day by day, my identity. This is how I deny, day by day, the brother who is in my mind and understands Spanish, how I deny him the chance to resurrect" (*Heading* 61).[37] In addition, Dorfman later recounts how as an adult in Berkley he "willed [himself] to become monolingual again" (*Heading* 101), deciding to "renounce English" (*Heading* 101) and to make Spanish the "love of [his] life" (*Heading* 101).[38] He reveals his thoughts as "What was I doing here, making believe I was a gringo, writing in this language that suddenly seemed an alien script? I was not from here. I was Latin American" (*Heading* 100-01).

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[36] "rechazar en forma instintiva" (*Rumbo* 59).

[37] "rechazar la voz que me habla en castellano [. . .] Es así como me voy creando, día a día, mi identidad. Es así como refuto, día a día, al hermano que se oculta en mi mente y que comprende el castellano, es así como le impide a él la posibilidad de resucitar" (*Rumbo* 84).

[38] He translates these phrases as "Monolingüe, de nuevo quise ser, hacerme monolingüe" (*Rumbo* 140), "renunciar al inglés" (*Rumbo* 139), and "En adelante sólo el castellano sería el amor de mi vida" (*Rumbo* 140).

In all these moments, Dorfman is a very active arbiter in his language decisions; he is the "I" or the "yo" that acts to craft both his linguistic and national identity.

Remarkably, Dorfman's last two emphatic statements as a newly discovered Latin American in Berkeley, "I was not from here. I was Latin American" are taken out of the Spanish version of the memoir (*Heading* 101, *Rumbo* 139). The Spanish version reads simply, "¿Qué demonios estaba haciendo yo acá, fingiendo ser gringo, escribiendo en este idioma que de pronto me parecía absolutamente ajeno?" (*Rumbo* 139). Did Dorfman remove these statements for fear of their sounding insincere or disingenuous to a Spanish-readership and/or a predominantly Latin American audience? Was he merely accounting for redundancies in content?[39] Did the very act of translating cause him to feel insufficiently Latin American? In any event, the deleted sentences represent an intervention and not an oversight on the part of Dorfman as translator and/or rewriter of the English version of his text. In the guise of translator, Dorfman continually inserts himself in and between his texts—leaving a visible trail marking the extent to which he tries to control, mediate, and/or mitigate the cultural implications of his language decisions. His literary translations attest to how actively he represents and, ultimately, resists being controlled by the larger demands of an animate History or Language.

Through his translations, Dorfman depicts himself as a consummate cultural mediator, "un hombre puente" (*Rumbo* 59), an "in-between person" (*Heading* 42). He makes pains to accommodate and/or provide context for readers less familiar with the history or the culture behind a textual referent and, at the same time, endeavors to affirm his individual credentials as a

[39] Toward the very end of the text, he does firmly state, in both versions, to the North American wife of the Argentine ambassador, "I *am* American. Latin American. *Soy chileno*" (*Heading* 267)/ "Yo le contesté que yo era americano, era latinoamericano. Soy chileno, le dije, finalmente en castellano, para que me creyera" (*Rumbo* 257).

cultural mediator and translator. The vast majority of the changes that he makes in translating or rewriting evidence his desires to add context, provide comparable cultural equivalents, or to ground himself as both a North American and Latin American author and cultural authority. For example, as seen in the passages below, Dorfman substantially revises and/or adds to his Spanish text, perhaps to balance his nostalgic catalogue of several cultural markers of his New York childhood in English:

> But my bizarre ally, General Perón, saved me for English and America, he saved me for the Teddy Bears' picnic and for Burt Lancaster as *The Crimson Pirate* and for Joe DiMaggio hitting one more home, he saved me for the smell of hot dogs sizzling at Nedick's and for the Easter Parade on Fifth Avenue and for the Three Musketeers candy bar and for the infinite aisles of toys at Macy's and the buzz of the yellow cabs of New York and the icy excitement of skaters at Rockefeller Center and the little train that could and the Great Gildersleeve. (*Heading* 63)

Below, I underline the main deviations from the English in the Spanish version to illustrate the extent to which Dorfman changes this passage, possibly to make the many North American allusions relevant to a Latin American readership and/or to brandish his knowledge of Southern cultural alternatives.

> Pero mi castellano no volvería de la muerte. Para eso estaba, "Perón, Perón, qué grande sos". Ese insólito aliado mío permitió a este compatriota suyo seguir a la caza de la vida norteamericana que el general nacionalista tanto aborrecía. Fue él quien me salvó para que tarareara a Frank Sinatra antes que a Gárdel, para que mi héroe fuera Burt Lancaster en *The Crimson Pirate* en vez de Hugo del Carril en *Las aguas bajan turbias*, para que jugara béisbol y no con la pelota de *soccer*,

> para que gozara de los *hot dogs* chicharreando en el *Neddicks* de la Forty-Second Street y jamás de un asado a la criolla, fue el peronismo triunfante en Argentina el que me abrió la aventura vibrante de Nueva York, los *yellow cabs* de la ciudad y las hileras infinitas de juguetes en *Macy's* y la *Easter Parade* con su flotillas de gigantescos muñecos multicolores bajando por la Quinta Avenida y los patinadores del Rockefeller Center; fue Perón el que me abrió las delicias de la radio y los comics y los libros infantiles de gringolandia, el que me alejó del Patoruzú para que soñara con Batman y la Pequeña Lulú. (*Rumbo* 86)

The translator that surfaces through the course of these revisions is a voice conversant with two worlds, an avid student of popular cultures North and South. Dorfman positions himself as a "human bridge" between his readerships and, in doing so, buttresses his own cross-cultural and/or translational credentials. He formally renders the spirit of the paragraph—much better than if he had done a word-for-word translation.

From his clarification in English that Guatemala is a part of Central America (*Heading* 120, *Rumbo* 166) to his added explanation in Spanish that he is translating from an English original (*Rumbo* 9, *Heading* 3); from his added details about Angel and Violeta Parra (*Heading* 139, *Rumbo* 193) to his extra illumination in Spanish that his mother was greatly impacted by the death of "el presidente" Franklin Delano Roosevelt (*Rumbo* 65, *Heading* 46); or from his use of "Spanish" instead of "*castellano"* to his careful use of the more specific term *destierro (Rumbo* 190) instead of *exilio* when translating "exile" (*Heading* 137) into Spanish, Dorfman's revisions play into the question of his identity and the manner in which he perceives himself and/or seeks to portray himself for two potentially diverse and competing readerships or hemispheric audiences. Certainly, he leaves many cultural references unexplained or without added context in

either version of his memoir, but his eagerness to intervene on so many other occasions suggests that he clearly embraces his role as a cultural mediator—that he views himself as having the cultural credentials to straddle the ideological, political, and physical borders that divide North and South. Through his self-translations, Dorfman posits this hybrid perspective as the net positive of the exilic upheavals of his lifetime. The translational extra- and/or inter-text surrounding both versions of his memoir is the story of how Dorfman survives the traumas and tragedies of exile by and through his linguistic dexterity or doubleness.

Dorfman projects a future recounting of his "linguistic bigamy" toward the end of either memoir, when his narrative self prepares to leave the Argentine embassy. He reflects,

> Time is on its side, history is on its side, and the years will pass and I will not be returning to my Chilean homeland so soon, until the day comes when English grows indispensable and my two languages call a truce after forty years of raging for my throat, my two languages decide to coexist. But how I became a bigamist of language, how I shared them or they shared me, how I married them both, is in the future, as I head North and look to the South where I can no longer live, [. . .].
>
> So this is where this part of my life ends? Poised on the verge of a bilingual future, about to plunge into a world that will force me, in order to survive, to accept that I belong to two cultures, that I straddle a space between two cultures? (*Heading* 270)

He reinforces and/or complicates this notion of his bilingual, "straddling" self when he renders this English passage into Spanish. He writes:

> El tiempo está de su lado, la historia está de su lado, y los años pasan y no regresaré a mi patria chilena tan pronto como creía, y llegará un día cuando mi inglés se vuelva enteramente indispensable, una vez que haya dejado atrás mis tres años en París y mis cuatro años en Holanda y haya fracasado en mi tentativa de irme a vivir en México, y Pinochet me expulsa por segunda vez de Chile, una vez que me quede, casi en contra de mi voluntad, en los Estados Unidos, es entonces cuando mis dos lenguas han de declarar una tregua después de cuarenta años de pelear emperradamente por la posesión de mi garganta. Pero no se trata de describir acá cómo me hice un bígamo del lenguaje, cómo me casé con ambos, Rumbo al Norte y deseando el Sur donde ya no vivo, [. . .].
>
> De manera que aquí se acaba esta parte de mi vida? ¿En el borde de un futuro bilingüe, a punto de zambullirme en un mundo globalizante y multicultural que me obligará a aceptar, para sobrevivir, que pertenezco a dos culturas, que yo existo en el espacio doble donde chocan y se encuentran esas dos culturas. (*Rumbo* 360-61, my emphasis)

The most dramatic departures from the English are Dorfman's added accounting of the placelessness that followed his first exile from Chile and his grim assertion that he now resides in the United States of near obligation instead of choice, "una vez que me quede, casi en contra de mi voluntad, en los Estados Unidos" (*Rumbo* 361). Finally, only in Spanish does he explicitly place himself in a "mundo globalizante y multicultural" (*Rumbo* 31), adding with these adjectives a possible defense for why he opted to write his memoir first in English. Thus, the composite Dorfman looks forward to his hybrid, bilingual future, but with more resignation and/or possible defensiveness when he revisits the same moment in translation. These

textual/translational emendations, however slight, point to the intensely personal stakes of self-translating for Dorfman. By liberally translating his memoir, he frees himself to reconstruct aspects of his narrative self that may not align with the later version of himself that he wants to project as he translates or rewrites.

Many of Dorfman's revisions, translations, or narrative reconstructions underscore the fluid and/or vulnerable nature of his national or transnational identity. When translating or rewriting, he seems eager to balance and/or counterbalance the extent to which his narrative self identifies with one or another homeland; he wrestles with his own previous attempts to "place himself" or "ubicarse" (*Heading* 229, *Rumbo* 306) in either North or South America. McClennen calls for further investigation into the identitarian stakes of these revisions—claiming that the disparities between the versions of his memoir are "all the more significant because, for the most part, translations of Dorfman's earlier work have tended to be meticulously literal" ("The Diasporic" 8).[40] Why, for example, would Dorfman declare "I am at home" when hiding out in a lower class Chilean "shack" (*Heading* 143) or "cabinita" (*Rumbo* 198) as he awaits safe passage to another location (*Heading* 144), and then express the same with the more ambivalent "Estoy en el lugar que me corresponde" (*Rumbo* 200) in Spanish? Why delete from the Spanish a reference to Chile as "my country" (*Heading* 137, *Rumbo* 190), or not translate into Spanish the seemingly innocent admission that as a youth he forsakes empanadas for U.S. chocolate bars, "*empanadas* I hardly wasted time on then, obsessed as I was with Milky Ways" (*Heading* 118, *Rumbo* 163)? Moreover, why would he eliminate from his Spanish memoir emotionally-charged references to sharing American (U.S.) shame and horror at Vietnam (*Heading* 212-213, *Rumbo*

[40] Dorfman, for example, translated his own *Mascara* from Spanish into English. Upon an initial investigation, the English version of his text does not depart from the Spanish version to the same extent as the English and Spanish versions of his memoir.

283-284) or add to the Spanish text the declaration that "Chile siempre fue mi principal obsesión./ No sólo el paisaje de América, sino siempre gente y más gente" (*Rumbo* 262, *Heading* 194)? Conversely, why does he translate, on several occasions, "America" (*Heading* 50) as "América gringa" (*Rumbo* 69) or add to the Spanish a lengthy aside about the rich significance of the word "compañero" (*Rumbo* 189, *Heading* 137) in *castellano* or reiterate in Spanish the irony of the fact that he escapes to the Argentine embassy "después de haber jurado tantas veces que jamás me iba asilar" (*Rumbo* 269, *Heading* 200). Charting the implications of all the statements added to, taken away from, or rewritten in Dorfman's translation of his memoir makes for a mind-bending game of ping pong—as it becomes increasingly difficult to place Dorfman's national allegiances as he bounces from North to South and back again.[41] His constant tinkering

[41] Many more of Dorfman's edits are relevant to the question of his national identity. He, for example, deletes from the Spanish a passage that links the process of naming of himself "Ariel" with how he "became a Latin American": "More than the name Ariel itself, it was the process of naming, the process of situating myself on the border between the continent of my birth and the world outside, which signals how I became a Latin American. Because there you have, in a nutshell, in that process of redefining my identity, the way in which Latin America captured me" (*Heading* 161, *Rumbo* 222). Dorfman also does not include in translation a portion of text in which he bemoans the difficulty of becoming a Chilean citizen, "Something similar happened in my quest for a new nationality. Except that reincarnating an identity depends on your will to belong and the willingness of people to accept that need and recognize you, whereas the transition toward becoming a citizen of Chile, dependent as it was on the acquiescence of the state and not on my own desires, turned out to be a far bumpier road" (*Heading* 162, *Rumbo* 224). In addition, he handily revises in Spanish his polemic assessment of Latin American history, stating that "it had a history that was never sufficiently autonomous of foreign forces to be really free but also never so submissive and subordinate as to be blotted out, so that the struggle itself for a story that made sense ended up being the sole defining element, its heart" (*Heading* 194, *Rumbo* 262), as well his insinuation that his refusal to write in English while at UC Berkeley partially fell in line with the "extreme nationalism" of the 1960s: "You were one thing or you were another, you had to be on this side or that side of the conflict for the soul and the wealth of the world, and the mental maneuvers whereby I had disassociated my love for English from my everyday existence and political options had finally become inoperable (*Heading* 220-21, *Rumbo* 294-95), and his assertion that a "real" revolution arises from "discipline," "purpose," and "order" as opposed to American/ "norteamericana" excess, "egocentrism," and "naïveté" (*Heading* 225-26, *Rumbo* 301).

with the national and/or transnational implications of his writing in translation evidences his compulsive need to revisit and/or reshape his already fluid portrayal of his national loyalties in either version of his memoir.[42] Through his many revisions, Dorfman further complicates his already messy or split portrait of himself as a man divided between allegiances North and South.

Yet, other changes that Dorfman makes when translating suggest that he edits simply to avoid offending readers more likely to encounter his text in Spanish. On numerous occasions, he revisits potentially derisive characterizations of a specific individual or groups of people in the Spanish version of his text. He, for example, softens his depreciative and/or unflattering description of a Chilean school teacher whose mouth smelled of "poorly digested pork and fried garlic" (*Heading* 110); the Spanish speaks only of her "aliento lleno de ajo" (*Rumbo* 152). Dorfman also eliminates an explicit reference to his Spanish language teacher (the same teacher whom he later met at a conference of the MLA) as "abusive" (*Heading* 113, *Rumbo* 156), and he removes from the Spanish a somewhat pained reflection on how he and fellow activists at the University of Chile boycotted a banquet in honor of poet Ned O'Gorman—the English text specifies that O'Gorman's personal efforts to serve the poor were "more than any of us, with all

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[42] What's more, Dorfman strengthens in Spanish the claim that he and Armando Matleart both viewed hegemonic North American popular culture as "un virus que nos había invadido cuando éramos mas jóvenes y vulnerables" (*Rumbo* 336, *Heading* 251), and adds to the Spanish an emotional retrospective of how he would revisit Allende's last moments from exile, "Durante años en el exilio, en la clandestinidad, leeríamos esas palabras sobre las anchas alamedas por donde pasaría el hombre buscando su libertad, pero en ese momento lo que creo que más nos impactó fue la serenidad con que Allende anunciaba su propia muerte, nos exhortaba a sobrevivir, sí, pero con dignidad" (*Rumbo* 52, *Heading* 36). He also adds to the Spanish text a quieting reflection on how and when he and his family used the phrase "Mientras que en Chile" while living in Berkeley, California: "Mientras que en Chile. Una frase que usábamos una y otra vez para confrontar la distancia entre el superdesarrollo y el subdesarrollo que nos saltaba en cada rincón, cada actitud, cada objeto" (*Rumbo* 288, *Heading* 216). In short, the sheer number of these revisions points to a definite compulsion on the part of Dorfman about his treatment of his national/transnational identity in translation.

our socialist convictions, had ever done" (*Heading* 185, *Rumbo* 252). Likewise, in the Spanish text, Dorfman redirects his criticism of the intolerance shown by revolutionary militants who refused to protest the poor treatment of people who had been unjustly hurt by the ascension of Unidad Popular, those "Don Patricios." In English he laments, "(and I was one of the most tolerant and empathetic of the militants!)" (*Heading* 258), whereas in Spanish his accusations are more self-critical, "por muy tolerante que me sintiera [. . .]. Yo los ofendía, los veía como traidores a la causa de los pueblos" (*Rumbo* 345). Furthermore, Dorfman softens explicit accusations of corruption among functionaries within the Argentine embassy (*Heading* 238, *Rumbo* 318), takes out a specific reference to Chilean soldiers torturing prisoners blocks away from Avenida Eleodoro Yáñez (*Heading* 136, *Rumbo* 188), and deftly does away with the subtle interjection that he and his wife Angélica "uneasily" (*Heading* 197) moved in with his parents as newlyweds. As to the latter omission, Dorfman instead adds to the Spanish text the more diplomatic reflection that, "Por muy hospitalarios y generosos que ellos fueran, se iban desarrollando tensiones, como es natural cuando dos familias cohabitan bajo un mismo techo" (*Rumbo* 265-266). Whether on his own behalf or the behalf of others, Dorfman's many eager interventions while translating add to the already puzzling meta-text of revisions and rewrites that inevitably informs both versions of his memoir. Through even the slightest omissions or oversights in translation, Dorfman puts into question or movement the claims and characterizations of either of his texts.

He, for example, revises and/or eliminates from his Spanish memoir several possibly hasty assessments of poverty and underdevelopment in Latin America. He does not translate his assertion that, unlike the hippies that he encountered while living in Berkeley, "misery—and not fashion—[. . .] had tattered [the] clothing" (*Heading* 208, *Rumbo* 279) of the Latin American

poor. Likewise, he removes from the Spanish his declaration that "[he] was going back to the reality of people who did not have the obscene luxury of being able to choose poverty like these sham hippie paupers" (*Heading* 209, *Rumbo* 280), as well as his claim that while in California "[he] was haunted by the experience of underdevelopment, [. . .] possessed by the memory of the penniless people back home" (*Heading* 209, *Rumbo* 280). Certainly, Dorfman not translating these statements may indicate that he is merely accounting for undue repetition in the Spanish version of his text. Still, the consistent redaction of statements about Latin American impoverishment begs interrogation into his motives, however elusive. Even more suggestive is Dorfman's decision to remove from the Spanish text a rather far-reaching assertion from a lengthy paragraph about how the Chilean masses are effectively institutionalized to be submissive and thus resist real social change—which appears in the context of Dorfman remembering the multitudes of Chilean people that, nevertheless, looked to the newly elected Allende as a source of hope and change. Only in the English text, Dorfman's narrative self reflects that these masses were "all their lives taught to bow their heads and lower their eyes so as to survive, warned to obey or else, the doctrine of submission drilled into every nerve of their bodies" (*Heading* 244, *Rumbo* 326). By removing this bold criticism is Dorfman, again, accounting for redundancies in content? Or, does he change his text for fear that his reflections on the Chilean multitudes will seem pretentious or affected to a Spanish-language readership? Does the act of translating itself make him newly anxious about his portrayal of such a diverse and critical mass of people? Attaining answers to these questions is not nearly as important as being aware that the claims of either version of his memoir are contingent upon Dorfman's presentation of the same ideas in translation. While there are many jibes, slights, and polemics directed toward North and South Americans alike that Dorfman does not mitigate or revise in

translation, his revisions of his texts in translation make for sibling texts that compete as much as they combine. He amplifies the linguistic tensions of his experience of exile by making visible some of the personal and political ambivalences or uncertainties that arise in the processes of self-translating.

As both author and translator, Dorfman flirts with the possibility of being able to parse or distinguish between the two linguistic halves of himself, though he ultimately dismisses such a pursuit as "discomforting" and, even, unnatural (*Heading* 221, *Rumbo* 296). Still, on occasion, he insinuates certain intrinsic differences between Spanish and English and even projects said differences into his writing and/or translating. These tendencies surface in the moment when Dorfman recounts his encounter with Spanish's "impersonal se" upon breaking his handiwork as an adolescent in carpentry class. Dorfman writes,

> I turned to the carpentry teacher and "*Se rompió*," I said, shrugging my shoulders. His mouth had twisted in anger. "*Se, se, se*," he hissed. "Everything in this country is *se*, it broke, it just happened, why in the hell don't you say I broke it, I screwed up. Say it, say, "*Yo lo rompí, yo, yo, yo*, take responsibility, boy." And all of a sudden, I was a Spanish speaker, I was being berated for having used that form of the language to hide behind, I had automatically used that ubiquitous, impersonal *se*, I had escaped into the language, *escapé lenguaje adentro*, merged with it. (*Heading* 114-15)

Via his narrative self's interpretation of the reaction of his frustrated teacher, Dorfman engages a precariously essentialist discourse as to what kinds of grammatical structures or syntactical mechanisms define and/or control the speech patterns of a Spanish speaker; specifically, he

implies that Spanish in and of itself creates passivity or a greater lack of individual responsibility on the part of the speaker.

However, while Dorfman lends credence to the notion of ingrained passivity in the speaking patterns of Spanish speakers he undercuts the idea of an overriding linguistic certainty by actively intervening in his texts as a translator. In other words, he overactively asserts his passisivity. By reproducing the same grammatical forms in the Spanish version of his text, he does more than just affirm the "ubiquitous," ingrained usage of the passive voice and/or the impersonal *se*. Dorfman's "translation" reads:

> Me dirigí al profesor de Trabajos Manuales y…
>
> -Se rompió- le dije, encogiéndome de hombros.
>
> La rabia le torció la boca.
>
> -Se, se, se –me agredió-. Todo en este país es *se*, se rompió, se cayó, todo sucede siempre por culpa de otro, por qué no dices yo lo rompí, yo las cagué. Dilo, muchacho, dilo: *Yo lo rompí, yo, yo*. Responsabilízate de algo, por Dios.
>
> Y de pronto me había convertido en un hispanohablante, se me estaba reprendiendo por usar el idioma como un escondite, en forma automática había utilizado esa forma ubicua e [sic] impersonal, me había escapado lenguaje adentro, el lenguaje y yo conformábamos una unidad. (*Rumbo* 158)

He reiterates through repetition or modeling the claims of the disgruntled shop teacher. While in the English text Dorfman emphasizes the first-person pronoun—"I turned," "I said," "I was a Spanish speaker," "I was being berated," "I had automatically used," "I had escaped" (*Heading* 114-15)—his Spanish text is conspicuously absent of personal pronouns. Aside from the dialogue in which Dorfman's teacher stresses a more responsible course of speech, "por qué no

dices yo lo rompí, yo las cagué. Dilo, muchacho, dilo: *Yo lo rompí, yo, yo*," the Spanish episode is replete with impersonal and/or past-perfect constructions, "se rompió, se cayó, "me había convertido," "se me estaba reprendiendo," "había utilizado," "me había escapado" (*Rumbo*158). Through these recurrent forms, Dorfman visually and/or orally underscores the apparent lack of agency in the Spanish language. He intimates passivity as an essential marker of his Spanish-speaking self but then undermines this passivity by his marked willingness to emphasize or enhance in translation this aspect of the language. In his concerted attempts to stack the deck of linguistic possibilities, Dorfman ultimately creates distance from the idea that an intrinsic linguistic structure necessarily leads to changes in behavior or perspective.

In the moments before and after his depiction of his encounter with *el se* in carpentry class, Dorfman is even more explicit as to the determining influence of language on his behavior. He reflects that "Spanish was beginning to speak to me, to infiltrate my habits" (*Heading* 114), recounts how through "the proliferation of passive forms and the overemployment of the *hay que, había que, habría que* [. . .]" Spanish "allowed its devoutest followers to pass the buck onto others" (115), tells of how he had "internalized the subjunctive" (115), and relates how the "vocabulary and the grammatical code [were] seeping into my consciousness slowly, turning me into a person who, without acknowledging it, began to function in either language" (115).[43] All of these statements are precursors to Dorfman's eventual conclusion that, try as he might, he

[43] Dorfman's Spanish renderings of the same statements/phrases are as follows: "yo me estaba convertiendo en el portavoz del castellano, en el sentido de que portaba literalmente su voz, que en vez de hablar yo el idioma era el idioma que comenzaba a hablarme a mí, que había infiltrado mis hábitos" (*Rumbo* 158); "la proliferación de construcciones pasivas, el sobreempleo del *hay que, habría que, sería necesario que*…," "ayudaba a sus devoto a responsabilizar a los demás de sus errores" (158); "había internalizado el subjuntivo" (159); "el vocabulario y el código gramatical inculcándose en mi cerebro de a gotas; transformándome en una persona que, sin admitirlo a plena luz todavía, iba a poder funcionar en cualquiera de las dos lenguas" (159).

cannot and should not try to suppress or stifle any part of his bilingual self. By portraying his doubleness as inevitable, he supports the idea that history and/or language have conspired to shape him and, thus, prepare him for his role as a witness, scribe, and eventual translator of the events of his lifetime. Moreover, by emphasizing the disproportionate influence of language and/or bilingualism on his life, he lends ethos to his narrative of exile and understates the extent to which he as an author and translator shapes, frames, and/or rewrites the linguistic, political, and personal upheavals of his lifetime. As much as he capitulates to language, he manipulates language to persuade the reader that language and not he is heavy-handed.

Still, aside from his reflections on the many passive forms and structures in Spanish, his thoughts on the fluid sense of time afforded by the subjunctive, or his speculations as to the inherently baroque nature of the Spanish language, Dorfman seems generally reluctant to examine or distinguish between the said differences between Spanish and English, between the "Northern" and "Southern" parts of himself. He seems to recognize that such a pursuit would be too reductive, and/or he recognizes the futility of trying to parse between the two overlapping versions of his persona. In this regard, he writes,

> But there may be more to my automatic decision not to probe how those languages affected me, because even now, in fact, even now that I swim merrily in them both, the mere attempt to establish where one ends and the other begins and how they overlap causes me acute discomfort, as if I were transgressing a taboo, getting too close to the mysterious center that unifies me in spite of language. (*Heading* 221)

Dorfman implies that dissecting his linguistic self or selves is a self-defeating or ill-advisable course, one that may result in exposing more sameness or "unity" than difference. He hints at

having mystical and indissoluble core that resists all his efforts to compartmentalize himself or his language.

In the Spanish text, Dorfman is even more explicit as to the disconcerting nature of trying to distinguish between his two idioms—adding that the act of translating the self-same words that he is writing prompts an almost visceral reaction.

> Aunque puede que se agitara algo menos contingente en esa decisión automática de no sondear la manera en que esos lenguajes me afectaban, porque aún ahora, cuando voy nadando con aparente alegría en ambos ríos lingüísticos, el mero intento de establecer dónde uno termina y el otro comienza y dónde los dos se superponen me causa inquietud y desconcierto, ahora mismo al traducir estas palabras del inglés al castellano, diferenciar vocabularios diferentes para una vida supuestamente única e idéntica, me siento mal y me mareo, como si estuviera transgrediendo un tabú, arriesgando el centro misterioso que me unifica más allá de mis vicisitudes de lenguaje. (*Rumbo* 296, my emphasis)

By reminding the reader of the Spanish text that he is self-translating, Dorfman punctuates the emotional, even, impossible of trying to either project and/or minimize linguistic difference while also trying to recount an individual life or recreate a single narrative. His awareness that as a self-translator he is forced to distinguish between aspects of himself and his language that upon closer examination are whole or indistinguishable gets close to the crux of his dilemma as an author, translator, and exile—when is it strategic to create or emphasize difference, and when is it useful to emphasize wholeness or unity? As McClennen argues, "Dorfman's text has two intersecting and overlapping critical frameworks that shape the way that he narrates his life. The first is a strategy of duality, where the self is described as interacting with two oppositional

social forces, and the second is a strategy of polyvalence, where the self is described as a hybrid that cannot be represented through dualisms" ("The Diasporic" 2). She explains that as a result of this approach, Dorfman shows how "national, territorial, linguistic, and symbolic signifying systems" are both "inescapable and imaginary" (7). In other words, by recurring to both these strategies, Dorfman emphasizes the possible role of dual oppositions in shaping and discerning his identity and, at the same time, distances himself from the idea that these binaries are inevitably formative or definitive. He acknowledges that while he draws creative impetus from the oppositions between North and South, English and Spanish, as an individual author, translator, subject, and person he is much more complicated than these unstable dualities.

Dorfman's maneuverings as a self-translator reaffirm his attempts to simultaneously engage and move beyond the tensions between North and South, English and Spanish, self and community, agency and linguistic determinism. Translating provides Dorfman with an outlet through which he can reiterate, rewrite, or revisit certain ambivalences as to previous events, relationships, or allegiances. By adopting a liberal translation practice, he highlights for the reader the instabilities that inform recounting and then rewriting an already unreliable and highly volatile past. In this sense, exile unfolds on a word-by-word level as much as on a philosophical level in and between the two versions of his memoir. Dorfman is, at once, highly attentive to the linguistic pressures of exile and wary of asserting that these pressures are formative or determining. His translation stands as an examination of and a challenge to the notion that content and/or identity are inevitably altered or betrayed across another language. The continuities and disparities between his texts emphasize for the bilingual reader the multiple or polyvalent meanings that arise in the processes of reading, writing, translating, and rewriting.

Unlike the paranoid and embittered amnesiac who is Mr. Ramírez in Puig's *Eternal Curse on the Reader of These Pages/ Maldición eterna a quien lea estas paginas*, the composite self in either version of Dorfman's memoir is seemingly optimistic about the linguistic strains of exile. While Ramírez complains to Larry that he feels deficient in and emotionally disconnected to his languages, "I know English, I know the words. I know the words in French and Italian. I know all the words in Spanish, my native language, but…" (EC 4), Dorfman's narrative self ultimately comes across as fully ambidextrous and comfortable in linguistic milieus North and South; he appears confident where the aged Ramírez seems anxious. Dorfman depicts himself as willing to embrace the complexity of himself, his memories, his language, and his loyalties to the country and idiom both despite and because of the traumas and upheavals of his past. The shades of gray between (or within) his languages serve as a source of motivation and not angst for Dorfman's narrative self. He portrays his inescapable hybridity and/or his linguistic duality as the self-same aspects of his character that enable him to survive and put into words the political, emotional, and linguistic traumas of his experience of exile.

Dorfman, like Puig in his self-translation of his novella, approaches exile in a way that is dialectical; he is both indulgent toward and skeptical of the linguistic tensions that shape the historical and personal specifics of his experience of exile. Despite the apparent generic differences between Puig and Dorfman's texts, both authors align in their refusal to adopt neither either/or nor neither/nor thinking about the experience and/or the event of exile. Through Larry's counterpoint of Ramírez's anxieties about being misinterpreted or being unable to remember—e.g., Larry insisting on the salience of meaning and content in his translation of the decoded markings Ramírez made in a series of French novels, or Larry contending that Ramírez relishes instead of regrets being able to forget certain painful moments from his past—Puig opens up

dialogue about the costs and/or gains of translation, as well as discussion about the positives and negatives of the failings of human memory in relation to a traumatic past. Likewise, Dorfman, through his writing and rewriting, tackles the question of whether or not language and/or bilingualism plays a definitive role in the shaping of one's character and behavior and, in the same vein, the problem of whether or not writing in another language and being beholden to two possibly competing national audiences necessitates a change in literary strategy or vocabulary. Moreover, both authors provide vivid and highly-individualized glimpses at the linguistic and personal traumas of exile and forced displacement while, at the same time, emphasizing the unreliability of their memories relevant to these same searing and traumatic experiences. For both authors, language unfolds as a gift, a curse, an illness, and a mode of survival. Puig is not Mr. Ramírez, nor is Dorfman the writer and translator necessarily the same incarnation as his autobiographical self. Yet, a comparison of the interlingual implications in and between the English and Spanish versions of these authors' texts reveals the extent to which Puig and Dorfman are personally invested in illuminating and interrogating the linguistic stakes of exile. Through their self-translations, both engage a healthy or, even, moral examination of linguistic determinism and of the firm nationalism that is often conflated with choices or imposition of idiom. Withstanding their historical, literary, and/or individual differences, Puig and Dorfman share a critical distance toward the necessity and/or the possibilities of writing and rewriting in either English or Spanish.

Chapter 2

Self-Translation and Contradiction: Rosario Ferré's Reinventions in *Maldito amor*/ *Sweet Diamond Dust* and *House on the Lagoon*/ *Casa en la laguna*

Of the many processes that shape a text and the reader's experience with it—typesetting, editing, anthologizing, film and television adaptation, or otherwise—interlingual translation is arguably the most understated of these transformations because of the unseen manner in which it reshapes a text across time and space. As André Lefevere argues, "For readers who cannot check the translation against the original, the translation, quite simply, is the original. Rewriters and rewriting project images of the original work, author, literature, or culture that often impact many more readers than the original does" (*Translation* 110). The stealth overtaking of the "original" or "first text" in translation is amplified by expectations among those who produce and consume the text. Lawrence Venuti explains that,

> A translated text, [. . .] is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers, and readers when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem transparent, giving the appearance that it reflects the foreign writer's personality or intention or the essential meaning of the foreign text. [. . .] What is so remarkable here is that this illusory effect conceals the numerous conditions under which the translation is made. (*The Translator's* 1)

Since a translation is not as overtly manipulative as an adaptation or rewriting of a text for film, television, or stage productions, readers often overlook the fact that they are reading refashioned words and ideas. Those who are more aware resign themselves to the fact that they have only mediated access to the text—they accept that they are necessarily distanced from the sounds, rhythms, and conjured associations of a sacred "original."

Self-translators provide access, however limited, to the world of the creation of the text and, with it, a window into the ambivalences, hesitations, and/or shifting allegiances of the author and translator. Along with a willingness to change their texts, these authors embrace or, at least, invite the temporal and/or cultural contradictions occasioned by rewriting a text. They, at times, alter characterization, change the direction of the plot, handily add to or take away from the first version of their text, and/or engage or avoid certain polemics in translation. By liberally translating and/or rewriting their own texts, they propose an even more dramatic revision to the "task of the translator." As Pérez Firmat asserts,

> Of all the varieties of translation, perhaps none is more faithless than self-translation. Although the technical challenges are the same, it adds a dimension of personal and creative reassessment missing from second-party translations. The author who translates his or her own work knows it too well, rather than well enough. Unlike the typical translator, the autologous translator works not only with the finished product; present at the creation, he remembers the gestation of the work—the false starts, the dead ends, the changes of direction, all of the decisions and accidents that shaped the finished product. (107)

Self-translators' frequent lack of deference for the rhythms and/or reasons of the first versions of their texts makes for a daring, if not rash, recounting of the original and/or initial text. Pérez Firmat seconds Steiner's assertion that strong writers, particularly, are not "good" translators—arguing that these authors "find it even harder to adopt the passive, absorbent posture required, at least initially, of an effective translator. [. . .] As if the web of tongue ties were not obstacle enough, the temptation to tinker, to amend, to get it right or righter the second time around, will tend to alienate the self-translated work from its original" (108). Thus, depending on readers'

expectations for the visibility or agency of the translator, self-translators are both the best and worst of possible translators. Their closeness to the world of the first text often goes hand-in-hand with a more free translation process that, withstanding judgments of better or worse, opens up the processes of textual reproduction and challenges the traditional submissive posture of the translator.

Puerto Rican author Rosario Ferré, like the other U.S and/or Latin American authors described in this project and like scores of other biscriptive writers, boldly undertakes both the creation and perpetuation of her own texts as she translates them from Spanish into English or vice versa. Her translations result in two undeniably "authoritative" versions of a text whose equal claims to authority unsettle fixed notions of both texts and of Ferré as their author. Her lack of fidelity to an inviolate original disrupts traditional hierarchies of textual production and, at the same time, foregrounds the violent transformation that translation, in any event, imposes upon an a text in its first instance. The semantic and ideological spaces between the Spanish and English versions of Ferré's texts, as well as the audacity with which Ferré speaks against, betrays, and/or rewrites texts that she has written previously, prompt a vexing inquiry into the confrontational poetics of her texts and her translations of them.

By liberally translating or rewriting her texts, Ferré engages, if not embraces, a "tolerance for contradiction" (Anzaldúa 379) as an author and translator. As evidenced by her citation of the "chauvinist" French maxim on translation, "La traduction est comme la femme, plus qu'elle est belle, elle n'est pas fidèle, plus qu'elle est fidèle, elle n'est pas belle," Ferré maintains, both in purpose and in practice, that only by betraying can a translator better or "beautify" the original ("On Destiny" 162). In her own translations, she is not careful to preserve punctuation, paragraphing, or even basic indicators of chronology, and she does not hesitate to undertake

several other substantive or "vertical" (Tanselle 335) revisions of her text.[1] In both her actual translations and in her writings about translating, Ferré connects her method of loosely translating with her view of translation as a kind of necessary and benevolent prostitution, a liberal giving of self in order to perpetuate the consumption and reproduction of her texts by diverse and/or competing audiences. She writes almost messianically of her desires to reach with her text those mainland "engineers, architects, [. . .] doctors, [. . .], taxi drivers, elevator operators, or seasonal grape and lettuce pickers," all of those who "are often forced to be merciless with memory" and have "lost the ability to read the literature and history of their island" (163), and she posits the translator as the literal port or "puerto" through which cross-cultural intimacy and communication are achieved. She envisions translation as a way of perhaps "assuag[ing]" the "melancholy of the Puerto Rican soul" and of "reinstat[ing]" memory to its "true abode" (163-64), and she touts the role and responsibility of bilingual Puerto Ricans to "set the pace for our neighboring Latin American countries, help them enter the modern world, and at the same time help the United States become more cosmopolitan" ("Writing" 107). Yet, the many contradictions and ambivalences between the Spanish and English versions of Ferré's texts both punctuate and complicate the task of the translator that she advocates in her fiction and in her criticism of it; her personal explanations of *why* she translates do not actually account for *how* she translates or rewrites.

The polemics that surface in the gulf between her texts— the unsettled tension between Ferré endorsing either one or all of the multiple narratives of history presented in her text, the shifting politics of Ferré's either pro-statehood or pro-independence stance, the varied portrayals

[1] Ferré does not self-translate all of her works. She had her friend Diana Velez do a basic version of *Papeles de Pandora*, but only under the condition that Velez "couldn't have the final word" (Perry 102).

of Northern imperialism and progress, the uncertain relationship proposed between language and a national and/or ethnic identity, the tenuous assertion that a language itself dictates what can be said or written in it, and the implicit question of whether or not a bilingual author has the obligation to write in or translate into one or another language—all point to a seemingly fluid and/or ongoing sense of self and text. Pérez Firmat argues that self-translators often revise their texts so handily that they "improve the original, [. . .] damage it, or [. . .] produce a version so unlike it that comparison is all but impossible" (108). I maintain that, in Ferré's case, the seeming contradictions between the Spanish and English versions of her texts demand rather than preclude the possibility of comparison.

Comparing Ferré's novella *Maldito amor* (1986) with its English partner *Sweet Diamond Dust* (1988) and, also, pairing her later novel *House on the Lagoon* (1995) with its Spanish partner *Casa en la laguna* (1996) gets to the crosshairs of Ferré's conflicted poetics of translation and her divided loyalties to language(s) and/or nation. As an outspoken representative of Puerto Rico's literary elite and an ardent defender of Puerto Rican literary culture, the ramifications of the changes she makes in any and all of these texts are far-reaching and inescapably political. Largely in response to her decision to write *House on the Lagoon* (1995) first in English, Ferré's national colleagues lambasted her as a cultural traitor or assimilationist, even considering that Ferré published a near simultaneous version of the novel in Spanish in 1996.[2] Ferré appears to have anticipated such a reaction, given that the meta-narrative that surrounds both *House on the*

[2] Many Puerto Rican writers are ardent defenders of writing in Spanish, part of their efforts to preserve the island's literary independence from the United States. Accordingly, many of these same authors are also firm supporters of Puerto Rican independence. Ferré's changed position on this issue (which followed her decision to write in English) sparked the following incensed editorials in *El Nuevo Día*: Ana Lydia Vega's "Carta abierta a Pandora" and Liliana Cotto's "Carta abierta a Rosario Ferré." For a brief summary of the controversy surrounding Ferré's decision to write in English and the rivalry between English and Spanish in Puerto Rico, see Javier Espinosa's "¿Por qué hiciste eso, Agapito?,"originally published in *El Mundo*.

Lagoon and *Casa en la laguna*, and to a certain extent, *Maldito amor* and *Sweet Diamond Dust*, reflects Ferré's own deliberations about writing in English and/or Spanish, and, at the same time, historicizes the debate about statehood or independence for Puerto Rico. Shortly after the publication of *House on the Lagoon*, Ferré published a controversial 1998 op-ed piece in the *New York Times* in which she reversed her position on Puerto Rican independence and advocated statehood, arguing, "To be Puerto Rican is to be a hybrid. Our two halves are inseparable; we cannot give up either without feeling maimed. For many years, my concern was to keep my Hispanic self from being stifled. Now I discover it's my American self that's being threatened" (A21). Seemingly, Ferré connects the political question of independence vs. statehood with her internal discussion of whether or not to translate from or into English. I maintain that while her expressions of a divided self in the *Times* op-ed appear to arise from her political choice to support statehood rather than independence, they have as much to do with her decision to publish a crossover novel in English. The earlier dissensions between *Maldito amor* and *Sweet Diamond Dust* provide a preface to the tensions of language and loyalty that Ferré later more fully develops in and in between *House on the Lagoon* and *Casa en la laguna*. I read these four novels or sets of "twin texts" alongside each other to bring light to the linguistic, national, and personal ambivalences that Ferré engages in and in-between her texts and her "translations" of them.

Translation, Prostitution, and Reconciliation in *Maldito amor* and *Sweet Diamond Dust*

Maldito amor and *Sweet Diamond Dust* combine and collide such that they make apparent some of the political and/or socio-linguistic tensions that Ferré revisits when translating and/or rewriting. Referring to the dissensions between *Maldito amor* and *Sweet Diamond Dust*, Janice Jaffe asks whether or not Ferré downplays the anti-Yankee sentiment in the English

translation (76). Jennifer Beatson argues that the Spanish version is more a story of the life and travails of the De la Valle family and the English version is more a historical and sociological study of the Puerto Rican and North American struggle for control of the sugar industry (14). She includes the loaded assertion that, "It seems that, in producing the new work in English, Ferré's priority lies less in offering the North American audience a translated Latin American novel and more in transforming herself into a North American author whom a North American audience will accept" (40). Accordingly, George Handley questions if, in consideration of her more white-identified readership, Ferré grants Gloria, the novella's final, mulatta protagonist, transcendent narrative authority (174). Among the many great and slight derivations from the first version of Ferré's novel, I specifically examine how and if her concept of history and her political allegiances shift from one text to the other. Does she ultimately side with Gloria and thus seek to merely substitute the history of the marginalized, underprivileged female for that of the traditionally-dominant, privileged male—denying the need to consider diverse perspectives when constructing a national history? Moreover, by consistently redacting the decidedly pro-independence sympathies of Laura and Gloria from the Spanish version of her novella, does she shift to advance a more conciliatory national agenda as a bilingual author and a Puerto Rican citizen? Finally, does the very act of translating or rewriting into English prompt Ferré to make these changes to her text?

These questions arise largely from examining sections of prose that are either added to or taken from *Sweet Diamond Dust*. In the first event, Ferré's makes significant changes to the narratives of two of the pivotal female characters in her novel, changes which contest if not eventually supplant the framing narrative of Don Hermenegildo, the self-interested biographer and *hacendado* friend of the De la Valle patriarch, Ubaldino De la Valle. She adds a lengthy

section to Doña Laura's narrative in which Doña Laura explicitly and unashamedly acknowledges Gloria as a prostitute and then hails Gloria or Gloria's womb as the literal future of Puerto Rico; and, she includes new dialogue in Gloria's narrative that more dramatically establishes Gloria's point of view as resounding or most important. These revisions counteract Ferré's insistence in the preface to *Maldito amor* that the claims of all of the narrators of her text(s) are equally unreliable and, at the same time, credible, "Todo lo que ellos cuentan es chisme, mentira, calumnia desatada, y sin embargo todo es cierto" (14).[3] Rather, I argue that because of these additions to her text, readers of *Maldito amor* can more readily proclaim Ferré as an advocate for multiple voices and witnesses to history than can readers of *Sweet Diamond Dust*.

This argument hinges on assessing how Ferré revises her portrayal of Gloria Camprubí, the final, mulatta narrator in both versions of her novel, whom Ricardo Gutiérrez Mouát describes as "el personaje en torno al cual se organizan las facciones familiares y que en gran medida decide el destino del patrimonio familiar" (285). Both versions of Ferré's text chronicle the degenerate, Faulkner-esque history of the De la Valle family, as a part of which Gloria is an alleged prostitute, nursemaid, household servant, wife, shared lover, and potential heiress to the family's estate and sugar mill ("Diamond Dust Sugar Mills" in the near eponymous English text). The reader uncovers the scandalous family story by piecing together the conflicting and chronologically jumbled stories of five divergent narrators, all of whom are invested in influencing an official narrative that will protect and perpetuate their own financial and/or personal interests. Critics are more or less equally divided as to whether or not Ferré lends

[3] Ferré reiterates as much in the English preface to the 1996 edition of *Sweet Diamond Dust*, "the novel is all gossip, lies, shameless slander—and yet the story remains true" (x). There is no preface to the 1988 English version of *Sweet Diamond Dust*.

Gloria's account of the De la Valle mishaps and exploits greater validity than those accounts of the other narrators. Gutiérrez Mouát heralds *Maldito amor* as "polyphonic" (290). Jaffe maintains that from the reader's perspective none of the contradictory voices in the novel establishes clear authority (75). Yet, Carmen Pérez Marín, who interprets Gloria as the character who eventually recuperates the repressed feminine voice, insinuates Ferré's allegiance to Gloria's endeavor to *silence* the deceitful, patriarchal voices of history (42, my emphasis). Similarly, Handley claims that Ferré posits Gloria's narrative as the "real" History and that Ferré intimates that "black female subjectivity is the radical and ultimate witness to the struggles of Puerto Rican nationalism" (171). I reconcile these critical perspectives by comparing and/or contrasting how Ferré weighs the scales of discourse in the Spanish and English versions of her novel. Reading these texts together suggests that she ultimately lends greater credence and finality to Gloria's perspective in *Sweet Diamond Dust* by adding to and/or rewriting sections of her English text, contradicting her insistence elsewhere that "You need to see [history] from many different points of view to really understand it" (Perry 90).

As a mulatta, an alleged prostitute, a member of the working class, and a sexual victim Gloria is the most marginalized of any of Ferré's characters. Her character and her narrative are antithetical to that of Don Hermenegildo. Mouát explains that while Hermenegildo narrates from the top of the social pyramid, Gloria narrates from the very bottom, not solely because of her sex and her class, but because she literally lives in the basement (283). He refers to Gloria as "la loca del desván" (283), recalling Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's discussion of the trope within nineteenth-century literature of the imprisoned and/or cloistered "mad" woman who does not conform to expectations of a patriarchal society. Like *Jane Eyre's* Bertha, Gloria's character clouds the official narrative spun by the novel's lead male protagonist, the patriarchal and

paternalistic Don Hermenegildo. As Ferré asserts in the preface to *Maldito amor*, Gloria's perspective opposes the blindly self-serving history of Guamaní that Don Hermenegildo is writing, "la version official de Puerto 'Rico'" (14). Ferré claims that, alongside Titina and Doña Laura, Gloria relates a version of history—"donde todo cambia y no hay realidad segura. Son ellas las que ponen en entredicho la voz del novelista oficial y desafían el mito del cacique héroe" (14). However, I maintain that by adding to the narratives of Doña Laura and Gloria in *Sweet Diamond Dust*, Ferré does more than call into question or "pon[er] en entredicho" the perspective of Hermenegildo. Her additions to the English text dramatically impinge on Ferré's portrayal of Gloria from one text to the other, enough to detract from the certainty of her claims that *Sweet Diamond Dust* calls for multiple voices and perspectives in constructing a national history or histories.

First and foremost, the idea that Gloria is a prostitute is not as explicitly stated in *Maldito amor* as it is in *Sweet Diamond Dust*. In the Spanish text, the idea is only insinuated, particularly through statements of the male characters (Jaffe 78). Yet, in the English text, Ferré develops a celebrated and problematic vision of Gloria as a prostitute that very strongly recalls and reaffirms the vision of "the translator" that she sets forth in her critical writing. As Jaffe explains, "The representation of Gloria in *Sweet Diamond Dust* preserves the deprecatory attitude toward the prostitute represented by the male characters in the novella, but simultaneously envisions the potential for freedom in this mutable identity. In this different construction the links between the transformative power embodied in the translator and the prostitute emerge" (79). Doña Laura admiringly recounts to Hermenegildo that Gloria "became a sort of legendary prostitute, offering herself to all those ruined farmers who were about to emigrate to Chicago and New York, as well as to the new entrepreneurs who came from the north" (*Sweet* 76). She elevates Gloria, as a

mulatta and a prostitute, to the very pinnacle of Puerto Rican society and depicts Gloria as the literal body or Pan-American meeting ground in which countries, North and South can come together. Laura proclaims, "In her body [. . .] both races, both languages, English and Spanish, grew into one soul, into one *wordweed* of love" (76, my emphasis). Likewise, in her landmark essay on translation, "Ofelia a la deriva en las aguas de las memorias" or "On Destiny, Language, and Translation; or Ophelia Adrift in the C & O. Canal," Ferré depicts translation as a kind of unifying, democratizing prostitution.[4] She claims that translators "are dedicated to the pursuit of communication, of that universal understanding of original meaning which may one day perhaps make possible the harmony of the world. They struggle to bring together different cultures, striding over the barriers of those prejudices and misunderstanding which are the result of diverse ways of thinking and cultural mores" (155).[5] She insinuates that, like Gloria, translators, particularly bilingual translators, facilitate intercultural and interracial communication and understanding by prostituting themselves; they sell their knowledge of two languages, their experience with two ways of thinking and perceiving the world.

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[4] As these disparate titles suggest, Férré's Spanish and English versions of this article merit further investigation. Jaffe highlights the following differences between the articles:

> When she translates her essay about translation, she omits the pejorative image of English, "aunque sea en inglés" [. . .]. Furthermore, where her essay in Spanish speaks of Puerto Ricans on the mainland confronting a "lucha por integrarse a una sociedad que discrimina cruelmente contra ellos" (*Coloquio* 79), the essay in English eliminates any mention of discrimination and also refrains from criticizing the goal of assimilation among these Puerto Ricans who "struggle to integrate with and become indistinguishable from the mainstream" (163). (74)

[5] "[el traductor] tiene como meta alcanzar la comunicación, esa comprensión universal del significado original de los textos que algún día quizá hará posible la armonía del mundo. Lucha por conciliar culturas diferentes, salvando las barreras que establecen esos prejuicios y malentendidos que son el resultado de costumbres muy distintas y diferentes maneras de pensar" ("Ofelia" 53).

Just as Laura describes that Gloria makes possible the harmony of the world by bringing together languages, races, and cultures in her "wordweed of love" and by birthing Nicolasito as "the child of all" (*Sweet* 76), Ferré intimates that the bilingual translator endeavors to achieve a consensus of meaning and inter-cultural understanding by creating a mixed text or body of literature born of and for diverse audiences. By emphasizing the bilingual Puerto Rican translator's capacity to reach Puerto Ricans both on and off the island—the said "engineers, architects, and doctors," as well the "the taxi drivers, elevator operators, or seasonal grape and lettuce pickers," all of those who "are often forced to be merciless with memory" and have "lost the ability to read the literature and history of their island" ("On Destiny" 163), Ferré underscores translation as way of offsetting the loss of identity that arises from the loss of language and the assimilation into another culture. Jaffe posits that, "Fundamental to Ferré's vision that the translator and the prostitute play prominent cultural roles [. . .] is the idea that they disseminate knowledge, whether sexually or linguistically, that has potentially transformative power for society" (70). While Gloria offers her body to all, "ruined farmers who were about to emigrate" and "new entrepreneurs [. . .] from the north" (*Sweet* 76) alike, Ferré liberally offers her text "to those rich and poor, those emigrants and immigrants, and, finally, those who speak Spanish and those who speak English. Through her revisions of Gloria's character in *Sweet Diamond Dust*, Ferré advances a vision of the translator as a transformative, transgressive, and productive figure with the unique potential to bridge or meld together national constituencies otherwise divided by linguistic and cultural differences.

Effectively, Ferré eschews the traditional role of the translator as a faithful, chaste, and submissive scribe and instead embraces the transformative however conciliatory possibilities of being a translator who sacrifices or prostitutes textual, linguistic, and/or national loyalties for

larger access to her fiction. Laura's lofty recharacterizations of Gloria in *Sweet Diamond Dust* reaffirm Ferré's commitment to her linguistic philandering. As Jaffe argues, "Fidelity and license are the binary terms that [. . .] reflect the damaging analogues that have long been established between the translator and the prostitute, and, hence, are useful for initiating the theoretical discussion of Ferré's treatment of these figures" (69). Ferré evidences her unabashed rejection of these binaries when Laura extols Gloria as "a priestess of our harbor; pythia of our island's future; of a time when a scanty meager land that for centuries had condemned us to immobility and backwardness will ultimately have no importance and where our souls, our very lives will be determined by transformation and daring, in other words, by change" (*Sweet* 76). While Laura's praises of Gloria as a prostitute evince an assimilationist and racially problematic Pan-American political philosophy—in that she envisions the eventual dissolution of all races, and thus the whitening and/or Anglicization of Puerto Rico's peoples and cultures—her words also signal Ferré's acceptance of and dedication to advancing Puerto Rico's inherently bi-, inter-, and/or trans-national character, especially through her additions to *Sweet Diamond Dust*. To this extent, Laura proclaims, "It's our island's destiny to become the gate to South as well as to North America, so that on our doorsill both continents will one day peacefully *merge into one*. [. . .] for this reason [. . .] I'm set on leaving Diamond Dust to Gloria and Nicolasito" (76, my emphasis). Gloria's role as a prostitute is essential to Laura's decision to bequeath the family property and legacy to her, as is Laura's assurance that Gloria will prostitute and/or judiciously sell off the family's land, "to aid those who have already begun to emigrate to the mainland by the thousands, [. . .] as well as to those who will undoubtedly return, perhaps after spending half their lives reaping California grapes, or driving a taxi through New York, but with enough money in their pockets to buy a piece of their lost paradise back" (76-77). By implication, Ferré

suggests that the bilingual author and/or translator has the critical responsibility to facilitate the processes of cultural exchange and transformation for Puerto Ricans both on the island and on the mainland. She emphasizes the "duty" of the Puerto Rican writer "privileged enough to learn both languages, to try to alleviate" through the prostitution of his/her linguistic capacity the "melancholy of the Puerto Rican soul" and to "[appease] its perpetual hunger for a lost paradise" ("On Destiny" 163-64). By revindicating the role of Gloria as prostitute in *Sweet Diamond Dust*, Ferré both defends and promotes her purposefully transgressive poetics of self-translation within and without her texts.

Laura exuberantly explains to Hermenegildo that, "Through a chink in our tropical moss the North will talk to the South and the South will talk to the North, and one day they'll finally understand each other" (*Sweet* 76). For Ferré, both Gloria and the translator clearly represent that "chink in the wall," the vehicle through which nations and peoples North and South can communicate.[6] Yet, perhaps, an unintended consequence of forging a literary connection between Gloria as prostitute and herself as translator, of her eagerness to make prostitution and translation analogous in the English version of her text, is that Ferré unsettles the precarious balance of perspectives on Puerto Rican history among the novel's contesting narrative voices. Laura's heavy-handed favoritism toward Gloria tips the scale of competing discourses in *Sweet Diamond Dust* and effectively disqualifies the English text as polyphonic—as Ferré's monological presence as the author becomes more preeminent. With the equation of prostitution

[6] The intertext here is *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Jaffe argues that Ferré "remind[s] the reader that for the lovers, Pyramus and Thisbe, the hole, like the translator's 'pasaje,' both exposes and weakens the barriers to forbidden love, in Puerto Rico's case between the Anglo and Hispanic legacies to Puerto Rican identity" (80). Moreover, by including this link to Shakespeare only in *Sweet Diamond Dust*, Ferré endeavors to contextualize the English version of her text within the larger pool of world literature. Ferré also overtly alludes to the Shakespearean canon in "On Destiny, Language, and Translation; Ophelia Adrift in the C & O. Canal"/ "Ofelia a la deriva en las aguas de la memoria," and in her 1998 preface to *Maldito amor*.

and translation as sister trades in *Sweet Diamond Dust*, Ferré lends authorial credence to the claims of the marginalized Gloria and risks sanctioning Gloria's perspective as "correct" and overarching. By emphasizing Gloria's unique ability to bring nations, races, and cultures together through her exalted brand of prostitution or linguistic and cultural translation, Ferré shifts the focus of her text from that of a fairly balanced account of differing takes on Puerto Rico history since 1898 as in *Maldito amor* to more an caustic repudiation of a patriarchal and hacendado-favored history and literature as in *Sweet Diamond Dust*.

The other addition to the English text that, perhaps, more dramatically plays into Gloria's emergence as a more dominant and conclusive character and narrator is the dialogue added to Gloria's narrative in *Sweet Diamond Dust*. Her character in *Sweet Diamond Dust* has stronger viewpoints than her counterpart in *Maldito amor* and, as Beatson argues, her opinions are less attenuated by the male characters (129). For instance, it is only in *Sweet Diamond Dust* that Gloria tells Titina,

> Facts have a strange way of facing down fiction, Titina, and if Don Hermenegildo's aborted novel was to have been a series of stories that contradicted one another like a row of falling dominoes, our story, the one we've taken the authority to write, will eradicate them all, because it will be the only one in which word and deed will finally be loyal to each other, in which a true correspondence between them will finally be established. (82)

This statement is the strongest evidence that Ferré offers Gloria's history or narrative as singularly correct and preeminent. Gloria establishes her story, and also that of Titina—that of the marginalized and misrepresented female—as the one that will "eradicate" all others, denying the need for other witnesses to history. She claims that if she were to write her story, "it [would]

be the *only* one in which word and deed will finally be loyal to each other." Her words directly contradict Gutiérrez Mouát's claim that Ferré "trabaja con contradicciones específicas sin intentar resolverlas y les permite desquiciar el texto o los textos del libro" (283). Rather, Gloria's narrative, especially through the added dialogue, becomes the unraveling strand in *Sweet Diamond Dust,* the story that finally undoes the claims of all the other narrators, even Titina, to a lesser extent.

In both texts, Gloria chastens Titina for appealing to Don Hermenegildo, for thinking that he would ever have interest in infusing truth into his romantic novel. Yet only in *Sweet Diamond Dust* does Ferré include Gloria's added statement to Titina. She chastens her saying, "You must understand that *everything* he wrote about us was a *lie,* and that the only thing that will remain of his novel will be the allegiance between fire and words" (85, my emphasis). With these words, Gloria demonstrates her loyalty to "word and deed" and proceeds to reveal to Titina her plan to "light up the cellar of the house" (82). This disclosure about burning the cellar is another addition to *Sweet Diamond Dust*. It conveys an image of complete inversion; Gloria will destroy the plantation and, as a consequence, the *lying* witnesses to the De la Valle history from "the bottom up." The additions to Gloria's narrative shape and veritably transform *Sweet Diamond Dust*. Because of her revisions of Gloria's voice, character, and narrative authority in the English version of her text, Ferré appears less invested in recreating the past through multiple voices or histories.

By privileging Gloria's account of the De la Valle family's scandalous history in *Sweet Diamond Dust,* Ferré risks merely reinforcing the opposition set up between the marginalized female on the one hand and the dominant male or colonizer on the other. In her 1998 preface to *Maldito amor*, Ferré implies that nationality poses "un problema tan agudo" for Puerto Ricans

because they are perpetually mired in binary or polarized thinking (13). Yet, ironically, by inverting the players on "bottom" and the players on "top," Ferré perpetuates binary thinking in *Sweet Diamond Dust*. Specifically, Ferré lends authority to Gloria's character by linking prostitution and translation, and she establishes Gloria's story as the one that ultimately eradicates and dismisses the truth-claims of the other narrators by embellishing Gloria's narrative with additional dialogue.[7] As Beatson argues, "Gloria's chapter is both a resounding conclusion to the work and a conclusive resolution to the themes and tensions contained in it. [. . .] Ferré privileges the perspective of two female characters in the novel, Doña Laura and Gloria, and thereby offers what appears to be a more accurate version of the island's history" (123-24). The additions to both Laura and Gloria's narratives in *Sweet Diamond Dust* lessen the polyphonic timbre of the work as whole. *Sweet Diamond Dust* becomes, in the end, more of a concerto than a symphony.

Of course, the very act of translating or rewriting into English may prompt Ferré to concede the polyphonic nature of her text. Creating a stronger narrative voice for Gloria may be the inevitable outcome of crafting a voice for herself as an author-translator and attempting to account for potential criticisms that she "prostitutes" or is unfaithful to her text in Spanish by publishing an English-language version of it. Indeed, Ferré's concerns about writing in English seem to overtake her anxieties that she is even-handed or impartial in her presentation of perspectives on Puerto Rican history. On the one hand, she seeks to challenge and/or redeem the negative perception that by self-translating she is betraying her original text and/or selling out to

[7] Di Iorio Smith, in her discussion of *Sweet Diamond Dust*, suggests that Laura's narrative is more convincing than Gloria's—that Gloria's claims seem more attenuated, theatrical, and histrionic than those of the other characters (41-42). I maintain that the affected and/or apocalyptic aspects of Gloria's narrative do not detract from its resounding and conclusive nature.

a more lucrative market. On the other hand, her maneuverings for and on behalf of those Puerto Ricans whom she describes as having "lost the ability to read the literature and history of their island" ("On Destiny" 163) appear to cause her to newly embrace the inherently transformative and/or "esquisinfrénico" (*Maldito* 13) character of Puerto Rico that she later emphasizes in her preface to *Maldito amor*.[8] Portraying Gloria as a stronger narrator and as a beneficent prostitute in *Sweet Diamond Dust* provides Ferré with a means of addressing both of these ends. As Jaffe maintains,

> Ferré underscores the link between the transitory character of the translator and prostitute and of Puerto Ricans in their presumably temporary "commonwealth" status by using terms such as "cambio," "transformación" and "transitar entre dos extremos o polos" to portray the core of Puerto Rican character. At once emblematic of traditional notions of fidelity and of license, of powerlessness and power, what emerges perhaps most prominently in the above discussion of the prostitute and the translator is enormous ambiguity of identity. In *Maldito amor*, Ferré suggests that for Puerto Ricans this uncertainty is ultimately destructive, but

[8] It is curious that Ferré emphasizes the polarity of Puerto Rican identity in her 1998 preface to *Maldito amor* and not in *Sweet Diamond Dust*: "País esquisinfrénico con complejo de Hamlet, nuestra personalidad más profunda es el cambio, la capacidad para transformación, para el valeroso transitar entre dos extremos o polos" (13). Later in the preface, she reiterates this emphasis on Puerto Rico's transitory identity by arguing that the "puerto" of Puerto Rico "nos define, nos constituye en un país de caracoles viajeros, de peregrinos que vamos por el mundo con nuestra casa a cuestas" (14). I find this belated characterization of *Maldito amor* more in line with the conciliatory portrait of both Gloria's prostitution and North American intervention in *Sweet Diamond Dust* than with the more pejorative depiction of both cultural exchanges in the Spanish text, which remains unedited in subsequent editions. While Ferré asserts in this later preface that "[e]n *Maldito Amor* intento contar esta transformación de Puerto Rico en Puerto; [. . .] Y por ello en el texto hay tantas voces contrapuestas" (14), I contend that the contrapuntal nature of the Spanish text is an eventual casualty of her celebration of the transformative, democratic, and welcoming nature of Puerto Rico—as impacted by the strengthening of Gloria's character and narrative in *Sweet Diamond Dust*.

> she envisions the positive possibilities of this fluidity through her emplotment of herself as translator and of Gloria Camprubí as prostitute in *Sweet Diamond Dust*. (71-72)

Through her reshaping of Gloria's character, Ferré ultimately embraces and works to her benefit the positive or postcolonial possibilities of translating and/or rewriting. While her revisions may lessen the impartiality of her novel and convey a more accommodating or assimilationist agenda—i.e., she creates a less polyphonic text in order to advance a seemingly more palatable political vision of transnationalism— they also speak to Ferré's commitment to celebrate rather than lament the uncertainties that complicate formulations of nationality for Puerto Ricans. By emphasizing the transformative and transgressive aspects of Gloria's character in *Sweet Diamond Dust*, Ferré anticipates and underlines her own emergence as an empowered, inconsistent, and unapologetic translator of her own fiction.

Ferré illustrates her investment in promoting a more conciliatory transnational agenda through both her additions to and her subtractions from *Sweet Diamond Dust* as author and translator. Specifically, Ferré is careful to strike from the English version virtually all the statements in Doña Laura's and Gloria's narratives in *Maldito amor* that reflect a pro-independence stance. Her meticulous attention toward eliminating the pro-independence overtones of the Spanish version of her text points to her growing receptiveness toward a pro-statehood stance, which attitude she more clearly articulates in the later dissensions between *House on the Lagoon* and *Casa en la laguna* and, formally, in the controversial 1998 *New York Times* Op-ed in which she made waves by reversing her long-held support of Puerto Rican independence. The few years between the publication of *Maldito amor* and *Sweet Diamond Dust*, approximately 1986 to 1988, appear to have been a formative period in which Ferré warmed to

the necessity, if not the desire, for an even more official and extensive relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States. While the conflicting politics of Ferré's characters cannot be touted as wholly reliable indicators of Ferré's own thoughts and opinions, the conspicuous absence of her characters' pro-independence leanings of *Maldito amor* within *Sweet Diamond Dust* suggests that Ferré deliberately revises her English text to reflect a more open attitude toward statehood and, on a larger scale, a less combative stance toward past and present U.S. cultural interventions within and without Puerto Rico.

In the first place, Ferré strikes from the English version of her text Gloria's insinuations in *Maldito amor* that Laura is motivated to disinherit her living children and leave la Central Justica to Gloria and Nicolasito on account of her lingering resentment toward her deceased husband for betraying his commitment to Puerto Rican independence while a national Senator. In *Maldito amor*, Gloria implies to Titina that Ubaldino's abandonment of his quest for independence is the final straw contributing to Laura's disenchantment with her husband. Gloria explains that Laura,

> era independentista, y por eso su hijo preferido siempre fue Nicolás, mientras se peleaba todo el tiempo con sus otros hijos. Al final terminó también odiando a Don Ubaldino. Porque tu amado Niño, como tú dices, Titina, fue siempre independentista, y hubiese quizá muerto un independentista feliz, si al llegar a Senador la Central Justicia no se le hubiese vuelto de pronto un Potosí. (82)

As Gloria implies, the cause of independence had previously united Laura and her husband—and had enabled her to overlook some of his moral failings and misadventures. Apparently, Laura is able to pass over Ubaldino's sexual improprieties but not his eventual political impotence relevant to fighting for Puerto Rican sovereignty. Gloria claims that Laura's resentment toward

Ubaldino is rooted in the fact that while, in theory, he, "defendía la independencia y bordaba, con su pico de oro, las glorias de nuestra patria mística, esa patria tan sentidamente cantada por nuestro gran Gautier," in practice, he actually opposed several reforms that would have helped the nation establish itself and would have alleviated some of the burdens on the nation's working poor: "se oponía violentamente a la ley de las quinientas cuerdas, al salario mínimo y a la jornada de ocho horas de trabajo, medidas que hundían a Guamaní cada vez más en el hambre y en la desesperación" (83). In Spanish, Ferré presents Laura's antipathy toward Ubaldino as centered in his unforgivable transformation from a philandering idealist and anti-imperialist, "obsesionado aún por sus gloriosos sueños patrios" to a lecherous political dandy who allied himself with his northern neighbors in order to sustain his personal interests and corrupt lifestyle (82). As Gloria reminds Titina, "Don Ubaldino pasó, [. . .], en menos de diez años, de prócer egregio y preclaro, a viejo lujurioso y decrépito" (83).

Granted, in *Sweet Diamond Dust*, Ferré also insinuates Laura's emotional and political disenchantment with Ubaldino. However, she revises the motivation behind Laura's resentment. In English, Gloria recounts to Titina that Laura felt betrayed by Ubaldino because of his general hypocrisy while as politician—"once he became a senator he quickly forgot his patriotic ideals. He became just another politician" (*Sweet* 83), "un politicastro más" in the Spanish (*Maldito* 83). Yet, in the English text, she never mentions his changed stance on independence, nor does she reference his self-interested alliance with the northerners who were once his enemies. Rather, Gloria implies that Laura's rancor stems, in part, from the fact that American industrialists did more to improve life on the island than did Ubaldino in his tenure as Senator. She claims that:

> every morning, as he shaved and did his twenty minutes of weightlifting, he'd practice a series of forgetting exercises, to weaken his memory as much as

> possible, and opposed the advanced social legislation proposed by the northerners at every opportunity. He thus fought fiercely against the northerners' efforts to democratize the town, against the right to strike, the minimum wage, and the eight-hour work day, striving to keep Guamaní's inhabitants in the same state of abject poverty they had know for centuries. (*Sweet* 83, deviations from the Spanish underlined)

Similar to *Maldito amor*, Gloria notes Ubaldino's opposition to populist reforms aimed at curbing both poverty and abuse of the working class in Puerto Rico. But, significantly, in *Sweet Diamond Dust* she attributes the promotion of these reforms to the North Americans, to whom she refers to in Spanish as Ubaldino's "antiguos enemigos" (*Maldito* 83). Gloria claims that while Laura sympathized with her husband's rhetorical sorrow at the loss of the island's "own time," previous "history," and long-time "language" after the arrival of the U.S. capitalists in 1898, she also understood that these losses were concessions made on the account of "progress," "electricity, [. . .] modern sanitary facilities, [. . .] intelligently built roads and bridges—in short, [. . .] survival" (*Sweet* 83). Moreover, Gloria suggests that Laura feels betrayed because, for all his flowery rhetoric, Ubaldino "never did anything about" his concerns for the nation and only voiced a consciously moot opposition (83).[9] Thus, in the Spanish version of her novel, Ferré illustrates that Laura is generally disillusioned with her husband on account of his political incapacity and all-around hypocrisy toward reform, while in the English version of her novel she implies that Laura particularly resents Ubaldino's abandonment of the cause of political and

[9] Ferré's portrayal of Ubaldino De la Valle bears a strong, deliberate resemblance to José de Diego, a Puerto Rican patriot, poet, and famed independentista of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. He was a vocal opponent of the seemingly reasonable and humanitarian House Bill 14, which sought to limit the weight that a dock-worker or *bracero* would carry on his shoulders. Juan Flores argues that de Diego's "poetic and philosophical eloquence was but a thin veil camouflaging his very interested defense of the hacendado class" (114).

cultural independence for Puerto Rico, which resentment she still harbors on her deathbed. As a result, Ferré creates in *Sweet Diamond Dust* a much more conciliatory and less antagonistic portrait of U.S. intervention in Puerto Rico since 1898. She literally redacts or rewrites excerpts of her text that may seem hostile toward or resentful of a North American presence in Puerto Rico for her English-only readership.

Ferré's conscientious interventions to this end are apparent throughout *Sweet Diamond Dust*. She, for example, does not translate into English Don Hermenegildo's claims that he and Ubaldino were united by their dreams of independence. He recounts in the Spanish text that "Nos hermanaba un mismo propósito y un mismo sueño: llegar a ver nuestra estrella, nuestro mítico lucero del alba, brillar contra el cielo inmarcesible de la bandera de la patria. Hacía ya demasiado tiempo nos decíamos, casi veinte años, que la isla pasaba, como pelota de oro problemática, de político a político en la palestra de Washington" (*Maldito* 59). Moreover, Ferré adds to Laura's narrative in *Sweet Diamond Dust* the somewhat sarcastic but still glowing characterizations of the U.S. industrialists as: "dynamos, men of unflagging action; [. . .] young and handsome, engineers, architects, doctors, energetic entrepreneurs who believed they could transform the world and bring us the blessing of progress" (*Sweet* 67). Only in the English text, Laura presents them as "brimming ideal[ists]" who "built marvelous cities" and "practically wiped out poverty" (67). Laura boasts that "when the foreigners came: they established modern methods of reaping and planting, the field hands were treated like human beings instead of like slaves; their children could go to school; they were given adequate housing and shoes. In other words, the foreigners were a blessing to the poor and to the middle class as well, albeit a scourge to the rich" (68). She declares that she "hold[s] the foreigners in high esteem" and that she "couldn't have been more pleased when three of [her] daughters married these civilized men" (69). Finally, as the disparate

titles to the English and Spanish versions of her novel suggest, with "Sweet Diamond Dust" Ferré moves away from the implications of a vexed, doomed, or, even, damned relationship with country as expressed in and by "Maldito amor." As Jaffe suggests, "Whether recounting Puerto Rican domination by Spain or by the United States, or the parallel domination of women by men, the title *Maldito amor* refers equally to the doomed romances in the novella and to a frequently misdirected and thereby accursed love of country" (75). While "Sweet Diamond Dust" evokes the nation's contentious past with sugar, the title is less suggestive of internal angst toward country and more in line with the more positive perspective on the transformative events of Puerto Rico's history in the twentieth century that Ferré provides through her numerous revisions in the English text. Jaffe argues that the English title "erases the image of doomed love" in light of more optimistic vision of Puerto Rico's future (76). Through these pointed revisions of *Maldito amor* and/or additions to *Sweet Diamond Dust* in translation, Ferré makes visible her efforts to construct or reconstruct a narrative more friendly to a U.S. past and present within, without, and with Puerto Rico.[10]

This is not to say that Ferré's English text is shamelessly obsequious to North American interests. In both texts, Ferré emphasizes the islanders' struggle to defend and preserve their economic, social, and cultural interests amidst the imposition of both Spanish and U.S. cultural legacies upon them. Also, as Jaffe describes, "the Spanish and the English texts alike espouse the

[10] Ferré also adds to Gloria's narrative the assertion that her deceased husband, Nicolás, blamed the hacendados for the "infested hole" that Guamaní had become: "He knew the local hacienda owners were to blame for this, long before the arrival of the northerners on the island; and his father was a typical example of it" (*Sweet* 84). Moreover, Jaffe points out how, in the Spanish text, Hermenegildo "proudly proclaim[s] the rescue of the Puerto Rican plantation from the predatory force of the North American mills" while in the English text, "the sense of an identifiably Northern threat is eliminated and the criollo mill is saved "from being blown away by the wind" (52). Ferré collective modifications toward modifying Northern, "Yankee" bias in translation are fodder for another, larger project.

conviction that the sugar mill and land should forever remain in Puerto Rican hands" (77). Jaffe elaborates that several of Ferré's revisions are strategic in that her "less dichotomous, 'us' versus 'them' representation of Puerto Rican reality may be seen more constructively as transcending binarism in the passage toward a new understanding of what Puerto Rican identity means at the close of the twentieth century" (77). Whether for personal or literary motivations, Ferré purposefully alters the anti-imperialist and pro-independence substance of *Maldito amor* in favor of a more accepting and/or less resistant stance toward previous and future U.S. involvement in Puerto Rico in *Sweet Diamond Dust*.

This change of perspective is unquestionably relevant to Ferré's decision to publish a version of her novel in English. Writing and/or rewriting into English appears to be the critical means by which she convinces herself that her previous appeals for a sovereign and/or culturally independent Puerto Rico are neither feasible nor desirable. In accord with Jaffe, I maintain that Ferré ultimately shifts to accept and adopt a more hybrid or transitory existence for herself and Puerto Rico in light of and in defense of carving out a voice for herself in English. As Ferré argues in her preface to the 1996 edition of *Sweet Diamond Dust*,

> Now that ten years have gone by since *Sweet Diamond Dust* was published, I think I can better understand now what made me write it. I am fifty-eight years old and, like a number of Puerto Ricans, have spent half my life in the United States and half on the island. My three children live on the mainland because that's where they can make a living, and if I ever have any grandchildren, they will be born there. I travel to the States at least once every two or three months to visit my sons and daughter. In this I am thoroughly and typically a Puerto Rican. (vii)

Ferré intimates that being "thoroughly and typically" Puerto Rican consists of a life divided between the island and the mainland, a life of travel and exchange that is born of both desire and necessity. By implication, she suggests that deciding to write *Sweet Diamond Dust* stemmed from her realization of her transient, dual reality and her desire to formulate that reality in the English version of her text. Ferré's shift toward celebrating rather than resisting the transitory and divided aspects of her identity signifies the extent to which translation or rewriting becomes for her a process of self-examination and personal reinvention instead of a rote and tedious exercise of linguistic transference. As Jaffe argues, "in English she seems to become an assimilationist, silencing both her native language and the non-technological vision of the world that Spanish represents for her. To dismiss or reject Ferré's work in translation on this basis, though, is to misunderstand the 'verdadera morada' that Ferré discovers through the transitoriness of her work, in the passage from Spanish to English" (74). While her substantive revisions of her texts make for a vexing comparison of her works, the conversation in and between Ferré's versions of her text affords a window into her internal deliberations on translation, nation, and the limits of literature and language in communicating a fluid and volatile sense of national identity.

Sovereignty, Agency, and Identity in *House on the Lagoon* and *Casa en la laguna*

Ferré expands on the intertextual conversation between *Maldito amor* and *Sweet Diamond Dust* with her *House on the Lagoon* and the later *Casa en la laguna*, this time opening the discussion with her English version of the text. In and between these, again, disparate versions of her novel, Ferré re- or cross-examines the tensions of Spanish and English, independence and statehood, feminism and patriarchy that prompt the counterpoint between *Maldito amor* and *Sweet Diamond Dust*. While on the surface *House on the Lagoon* and *Casa en*

la laguna both purport to be ambitious, drawn-out sagas chronicling the scandals, sorrows, and secrets of the Mendizabal family, both versions ultimately combine and compete to form a complex, carefully layered composite text that engages the larger problems of language, identity, and agency that surround all of Ferré's fiction. Ferré herself projects the inherently digressive and transformative nature of her text(s) with Isabel's closing sentence in the introduction of the novel she is writing: "My original purpose was to interweave the woof of my memoires with the warp of Quintín's recollections, but what I finally wrote was something very different" (*House* 6).[11] In either English or Spanish, "what Ferré finally writes" is an intensely self-critical, compound text comprised of a series of texts and conflicting narratives—a text that attempts both a defense and a discussion of her choice to publish first in English and, at the same time, her controversial decision to support statehood in Puerto Rico's 1998 plebiscite. Through this highly filtered presentation of her authorial preoccupations, Ferré deftly approaches questions vital to the production and consumption of her fiction, such as: What constitutes an "original" text or work of art? Who participates in the unfolding, creating, or reconstituting of the meaning and/or content of a text? What are the political and literary ramifications of supporting statehood for Puerto Rico? And, finally, is the decision to first publish in English and/or later translate into Spanish a mark of surrender or emancipation for her as an author? In both the similarities and dissensions between *House on the Lagoon* and *Casa en la laguna*, Ferré reiterates and, also, methodically confronts and complicates implications of the kind of hybrid, post- and trans-national vision for Puerto Rico that she begins to articulate and celebrate in her revisions of *Sweet Diamond Dust*.

[11] "Mi propósito original fue tejer, a los recuerdos de Quintín, las memorias de mi propia familia, pero lo que escribí finalmente fue algo muy distinto" (*Casa* 18).

Ferré intimates a critical guide to reading both *House on the Lagoon* and *Casa en la laguna* text in a loaded exchange between Isabel, the novels' primary narrator and protagonist, and her husband Quintín, a secondary narrator and frequent antagonist to the claims that Isabel puts forth in the manuscript she has secretly been writing. An anonymous, third-person narrator recounts:

> The last few days, Isabel had been almost cordial toward Quintín. She was affable at dinnertime and one night she began to discuss with him Choderlos de Laclos's *Les Liasons dangereuses*, which she had been reading. She found it fascinating. The literary convention of the letters exchanged between Monsieur de Valmont and Madame de Merteuil was particularly effective. The characters communicated indirectly, through a delayed echo. "Between the writing and the reading of a text, things change, the world goes round, marriages and love affairs are made and unmade. Wasn't all storytelling, in a sense, like that?" Isabel asked, as she took sip of wine from her glass. "Each chapter is like a letter to the reader; its meaning isn't completed until it is read by someone." (311)[12]

The narrator's recounting of Isabel's contention that the characters communicate "indirectly, through a delayed echo" speaks to Ferré's own awareness that she "indirectly" communicates

[12] Durante los últimos días, Isabel había estado muy afable con Quintín. En el curso de la cena, empezó a discutir con él la novela que estaba leyendo por aquellos días: *Les Liasons dangereuses*, de Choderlos de Laclos. La encontraba sumamente interesante. La convención literaria de las cartas intercambiadas entre monsieur Valmont y madame de Merteuil, sobre todo, le pareció particularmente eficaz. Los personajes se comunicaban indirectamente por medio de ellas, a través de un eco postergado.
—Entre la escritura y la lectura de un texto, el mundo de vueltas, la gente cambia, los matrimonios se hacen y se deshacen. La persona que escribe la última oración de una página no es la misma que escribió la primera. ¿No es ésa le naturaleza misma de la escritura?—le preguntó Isabel a Quintín, mientras brindaban con sus copas de vino—. Cada pliego es una carta dirigida al lector; su significado no estará completo hasta que alguien lo lea. (*Casa* 332)

with her reader via the "delayed" implications of her text and of her translation of it. Similar to how Isabel slyly acknowledges to Quintín that she knows he has been reading her novel and, also, leaving angry notes and/or suggested revisions in the margins of it, Ferré insinuates through her slight nod to the Laclos novel that she is highly attuned to the reader of her text, and to role that he/she plays in contributing to the meaning and shaping of the text(s) that she writes.[13] Of course, in the case of Ferré, being attuned to the role of the reader is also inextricably linked to her role as author and/or translator of her text. She signals first in English and then in Spanish that she is aware of the world "between the writing and the reading of [her] text" and intimates that changes in the world around her text have prompted differences between the versions of her novel—another audience, a different language, and a changed literary context all being possible catalysts. In other words, Ferré subtly marks for the reader how she herself may have changed in relation to her source text and her target text, or the text that she rewrites.

The Spanish rendition of the same passage is more explicit on this point. While in English Isabel reflects, "things change, the world goes round, marriages and love affairs are made and unmade" (311), in Spanish she indicates, "el mundo da vueltas, la gente cambia, los matrimonios se hacen y se deshacen. La persona que escribe la última oración de una página no es la misma que escribió la primera" (*Casa* 332). Ferré places greater emphasis on how a person or individual becomes an agent of change in the course of the text at hand, and adds the statement clarifying that an author his/herself transforms from one moment to the next. While in the immediate context of the novel that Isabel discusses, Isabel refers literally to different individuals changing her source text, her words also evidence Ferré's own awareness of how she

[13] This novel is, coincidentally, the same text upon which Manuel Puig's somewhat autobiographical protagonist, Mr. Ramírez, decodes messages while a political prisoner in Argentina. Like Puig, Ferré emphasizes the highly filtered presentation of meaning in and between her texts by alluding to the unfolding of the intrigue in the complicated French novel.

herself is a changed person in regard to the text she writes and/or the one that she rewrites. In her non-literal translation of Isabel's words, Ferré implicitly acknowledges that even if she were to create a more scrupulously faithful and/or literal translation of her English text into Spanish it would resonate differently with a new readership and it would not, necessarily, be true and faithful to the author that she has become since writing the first version of her text. Through the narrator's take on Isabel's fascination with the communicative intrigue of the French novel she is reading, Ferré signals for the reader her own enthusiasm for her own unashamedly transgressive approach to translating her novel and communicating with her reader.

Thus, in and between the English and Spanish versions of her text Ferré promotes her brand of self-translation as a means of engaging and enhancing her source text, as a way of constructively reexamining and recreating her text in relation to the perceived possibilities and/or constraints of another language or a new audience; she rejects the notion of translation as mere imitation and creates another, contingent "original." On a theoretical level, Ferré emphasizes, similar to Borges in his "Pierre Menard," that even an identical rendering of her first text would make for a profoundly different text—as it would be met in a different time, by a different readership, and in a different literary context. Her characterization of Milan Pavel, the immigrant architect who devotedly and innocently recreates identical yet authentic reproductions of the masterpieces of Frank Lloyd Wright for the Puerto Rican bourgeosie, speaks to this perspective on translation. Isabel writes that when accused of plagiarism, "Pavel was stunned; he couldn't understand how anyone could say such a thing. His church would have been a faithful recreation, stone by stone, of Wright's masterpiece, not a mere copy" (*House* 41). The Spanish translation makes Pavel's honorable intentions even more apparent, "Pavel lo miró sorprendido; no podía comprender cómo podía hacer una denucia semejante. Su iglesia era una recreación fiel, piedra

por piedra, de la obra del maestro, y no una vil copia. Era su manera de rendirle el homenaje máximo" (*Casa* 55, deviation from the English underlined). With her portrait of Pavel, Ferré parodies the very possibility of a "mere copy" or a "una vil copia"; she insinuates that a Puerto Rican recreation of a Wright building would, in any event, be an "original" work of art, given the inevitable intrusions of a new setting, space, time, and history.

Quintín's undiminished enthusiasm toward Pavel's slavish imitation of Wright's work reflects Ferré's own playful intimation that her reproductions of her own text via translation or rewriting are recreations "faithful" to herself and her evolving artistry, despite and because of their apparent differences. Isabel relates that when Quintín sets out to restore Pavel's original version of "the house on the lagoon," which his father Buenaventura razed and rebuilt to reflect a more austere, medieval Spanish sensibility, he is thrilled to discover within Pavel's personal copy of Wright's Wasmuth portfolio the exact plans for his former family home. In the Spanish text, Isabel recalls his excitement upon discovering that one of the houses in Wright's/Pavel's portfolio "era exactamente igual a la casas de la laguna, tal y cómo él la recordaba en su niñez" (320).[14] Only in the Spanish, Ferré adds the provocative assertion that "Ya para aquel entonces en Puerto Rico se sabía que las casas de Pavel eran copias exactas de las de Frank Lloyd Wright, pero a Quintín eso no le importaba. El dato hacía al personaje de Pavel aún más interesante" (319). The image of the house on the lagoon itself, a twice-recreated architectural imitation that purports to be an original and is all the more "interesting" for its likeness to another work of art, speaks to the larger text that Ferré herself is revising and recreating through and in between the English and Spanish versions of text.

[14] The English version of the same statement is less explicit as to the identical nature of the plans for the house: "One of them was the plan of the house on the lagoon" (*House* 299).

Ferré further emphasizes the, at times, narrow distinction between "original" and "imitation," "authentic" and "counterfeit" in Isabel's recounting of the scandal involving her former ballet instructor, André Kerenski. Isabel writes of how the Russian emigré instructor recreates Swan Lake but with his own "original" choreography.[15] He and the dancers in his studio perform a production that both is and is not the original ballet. In the Kerenski story, which is otherwise somewhat out of line with the rest of the novel, Ferré appears to find an outlet for addressing the indignation of those who embrace her work as authentic from the guise of an "autora puertrriqueña" but not from the perspective of a "U.S. Latina author."[16] As Isabel recounts, the audience for Kerenkis's "Swan Lake" is completely enamored of the ballet performance until, afterward, they learn that Kerenski himself has danced the second act, instead of Tony Torres, the boy from the slums of Machuelo Abajo. Initially, they exclaim, "God bless our great Tony Torres [. . .]. Today he's brought great honor to Machuelo Abajo!" (*House* 177), and/or "—Que Dios bendiga a nuestro gran Tony Torres [. . .] porque hoy ha puesto en alto el honor de Machuelo Abajo!" (*Casa* 191). In the metatext that surrounds both *House on the Lagoon* and *Casa en la laguna*, Ferré is, at once, a kind of "Tony Torres" and also an "André Kerenski"—on the one hand, a national artist with the unlikely opportunity to perform for a larger audience, on the other, a world artist who in her eagerness for wider acclaim steals the stage from a beloved national author.

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[15] Ferré, through Isabel, emphasizes that the choreography is a Kerenski original "Kerenski was obsessed with the choreography, which he was doing himself. [. . .] We would interpret segments of works in an original Kerenski version" (171)/ "Kerenski estaba obsesionado con la coreogradóa, que sería original para cada obra. [. . .] interpretaríamos segmentos de ellos, en una versión original suya" (*Casa* 184).

[16] Di Iorio Smith charts Ferré's transformation from an "autora puertorriqueña" to a "U.S. Latina Writer" in *Killing Spanish*: *Literary Essays on Ambivalent U.S. Latino/a Identity*.

The Kerenski story reflects both Ferré's empathy and defensiveness toward the notion that she is more "authentic" as Rosario Ferré from Puerto Rico than as Rosario Ferré, a trans-american writer. In either text, Ferré depicts the anger of the crowd:

> se pusieron furiosos [. . .] Se apiñaron al borde del escenario y empezaron a quitarse los zapatos y a arrojárselos al profesor Kerenski, así como carteras, sombreros: todo lo que encontraron a mano, gritándole que era un tramposo y un embustero; que le había hecho a creer a todo el mundo que le iba a dar a Tony Torres aquella noche la oportunidad de ser el bailarín estrella, cuando desde un principio planeaba ocupar su lugar. (191)[17]

And, only in the English text, Isabel caps her description of the rage of the crowd with the poignant observation that—"Tony had never been given a chance to dance the second act" (*House* 178). The implication behind the crowd's reaction in either text is Ferré's implicit acknowledgement that, for many of her readers, the "who" behind the artistic representation is as or more important than the representation itself. She portrays their feelings of betrayal as justifiable and, even, understandable—though she evidences that Kerenski's deceit is born of passion for the dance itself, his exasperation at having another perform a role that he could do better himself, as well as of his passion for his co-ballerina, Estefanía Volmer, Isabel's red-headed friend who reminds Kerenski of his adored mother. Like Kerenski, Ferré may have chosen to write her text first in English because of not wanting to have to outsource a task that she could perform herself, or, conversely, she may have simply given into her passion for

[17] "Tony had never been given a chance to dance the second act. His friends crowded together at the foot of the stage and began to throw shoes at Professor Kerenski, handbags, umbrellas, cigarette cases, whatever they could find in their handbags, yelling that he was a cheat and a liar, that he had led everyone to believe that he was giving Tony Torres the star role when he had planned to take his place from the start" (*House* 178, non-translated text underlined).

English as her other "mother" tongue. As stretched as this analogy may seem, I maintain that Ferré utilizes the Kerenski excerpts within her text to underline and undermine the tenuous distinctions between English and Spanish, originality and imitation, authenticity and forgery that permeate her fiction.

Further complicating the matter is Quintín's assertion in his revision of Isabel's manuscript that Isabel herself pulls the curtain on the unmasked Kerenski and Estefanía after the performance—that she deliberately exposes Kerenki's identity as the final dancer for the lingering crowd and purposefully reveals for all the fact that he is passionately kissing Estefanía. I argue that by crossing-over first into English and then back into Spanish, Ferré pulls the curtain on the notion of herself as solely a national author and reveals herself, for better or for worse, as a bilingual transnational writer. In the production and reproduction of her texts, she is, in the first act, the marginalized national writer aspiring for larger acclaim and, in the second, the veteran artist who trounces the conventions and expectations of Puerto Rican society by claiming a role that is assumed to be another's. Through her purposefully insubordinate mode of translating, Ferré emphasizes the murky, border territory of Puerto Rican identity. She reiterates in translation her argument that "To be Puerto Rican is to be a hybrid" ("Puerto Rico" A21) and her claim that for her translating is "a necessary reality" ("On Destiny" 163). She maintains that translating is necessary because, "As a Puerto Rican I have undergone exile as a way of life, and also as a style of life" (163). Ferré's acceptance and bold assertion of the "hybrid," "exilic," and translational aspects of her personal and national identity is an important and recurring sub-, inter-, and/or meta-text in and between *House on the Lagoon* and *Casa en la laguna*.

This self-referential emphasis is evidenced in Ferré's attempts to out herself as the translator of the text, her efforts to make the processes of self-translation more visible for the

reader of both versions of her novel. She does this by frequently changing markers of number or chronology in translation, by modifying her texts for her different readerships, and by compiling multilingual intertexts, among other gestures. In the first event, Ferré almost compulsively revises numerical or chronological identifiers in translation, suggesting that she either revels in correcting or creating inaccuracies between the two versions of her text. The sheer number of these revisions indicates deliberation on Ferré's part. Isabel, for example, recalls that her friend Esmeralda is "four years younger" than her in English (217), and "cuatro años mayor" in Spanish (232). Likewise, Isabel states that Quintín's great-grandfather Don Esteban was naturalized in 1885 in English and then in 1899 in the Spanish, and that he arrives in San Juan in 1899 in English and then 1879 in Spanish (*House* 88, *Casa* 102). She also writes that Quintín's maternal grandmother Madeline returned to Boston after 37 years in the English text (94) and after 31 years in Spanish text (108), and that Isabel's paternal grandmother had to give up her education when she was "nineteen" in *House on the Lagoon* (203) and "dieciséis" in *Casa en la laguna* (215). Moreover, in English Isabel relates that Quintín's mother Rebecca resumed her artistic activities two weeks after [giving] birth (64), while in Spanish Isabel recounts that Rebecca didn't observe even a week in bed, "ni una semana de cama" (80), and in English Isabel recounts that pre-plebiscite polls showed "four percent" for independence in the English (357) and "el cinco por ciento" in the Spanish (380). I have cataloged at least twenty of such disparities between the versions of Ferré's novel. The frequency of these corrections or adjustments points to the extent to which Ferré is faithfully unfaithful or, at least, inconsistent toward her original or source text. As she argues about translating her own work, "It can be diabolic and obsessive: it is one of the few instances when one can be dishonest and feel good about it, rather like having a second chance at redressing one's fatal mistakes in life and living a different way" ("On

Destiny" 162). By giving in to and/or creating opportunities to revisit or "redress" certain numerical or chronological markers in translation, Ferré illustrates her personal investment in both reexamining her text and in marking her auto-reflexive role as translator for the reader.

Quintín's criticisms of Isabel's novel parallel, underline, and/or parody the self-critical stance that Ferré adopts when translating her texts. The third-person narrator recounts Quintín's insistence that, "Isabel had made some inexcusable mistakes. Some of them were silly; for example, pretending there were hot-dog stands in 1917, [. . .] Quintín laughed again. No one knew for sure when hot dogs had arrived on the island, but he doubted it was before the Second World War" (*House* 73).[18] Likewise, Quintín corrects Isabel's account of the siege of the German submarines,

> A more serious error was saying that Puerto Rico's siege by German submarines had taken place during the Great War, when actually it had happened during the Second World War. [. . .] But Isabel needed to invent the siege of Puerto Rico in 1918; the German blockade was important for her development of Buenaventura's supposedly Fascist sympathies. She had consciously altered the facts of history to serve her story. (74)[19]

[18] "Isabel había cometido unos errores históricos inexcusables. Algunos eran tontos; por ejemplo, decir que en 1917 se vendían 'perros calientes' en San Juan. [. . .] Quintín se rió de nuevo. Nadie sabía, a ciencia cierta, cuándo habían llegado los hot dogs a Puerto Rico, pero estaba seguro de que no había sido antes de la segunda guerra mundial" (*Casa* 89).

[19] "Un error más serio era afirmar que los submarinos alemanes sitiaron la isla durante la primera guerra mundial, cuando en verdad sucedió durante la segunda. [. . .] Pero Isabel necesitaba inventarse el sitio de Puerto Rico en 1918 porque el bloqueo alemán le resultaba útil para desarrollar la personalidad fascista de Buenaventura. Había alterado—conscientemente—los hechos para hacer más interesante su historia" (*Casa* 89).

Ferré reveals her familiarity with playing the role of historian, fact checker, and critic of her own texts through Quintín's incensed criticisms of the novel or family history that Isabel is writing. Per his commentary about the historical inaccuracies of her novel, the heavy-handed feminist overtones of the text (*House* 108-09, *Casa* 122-23), or, elsewhere, his criticisms about the extent to which Isabel identifies with her characters (*House* 72, *Casa* 88), Ferré pokes fun at some of the most idiosyncratic, strident, and prevalent aspects of her writing. On a less playful level, Quintín's words mark her investment in revisiting and reshaping her text as she reencounters it. Quintín's inability to refrain from criticizing and, eventually, revising Isabel's novel—later in the text he resorts to "scribbl[ing] angry comments on the margins" and "introduc[ing] his thoughts in long, third-person monologues on the back of the manuscript" (*House* 380) [20]—mimics Ferré's own unrestrained or, even, compulsive behavior toward her texts as she translates.

Ferré further evidences her lack of restraint through several other minor but striking revisions of the English version of her text when translating. Frequently, she makes apparent accommodations for her Spanish readership by either adding or taking away context, by including linguistic flourishes and/or local color, and by editing certain assertions or characterizations that could be found offensive. In addition to historian and critic, Ferré takes on the role of ethnographer, cultural mediator, and diplomat as she self-translates. She, for example, expands on her discussions of local food in the Spanish text (*House* 227, 247, and 307; *Casa* 242, 266, and 328), modifies her descriptions of local toys from one version of her novel to the other (*House* 323, *Casa* 345), and showcases her ability to translate seemingly untranslatable idioms or figures of speech from English into Spanish, and vice versa. She translates "[He] didn't have a cent to his name" (*House* 22) as "había llegado con una mano por delante y otra

[20] "añadir sus comentarios iracundos al margen de estas páginas" and "estampar sus pensamientos torturados en ellas" (*Casa* 402).

por detrás" (*Casa* 34), renders the notion of one's mate or "other half" (*House* 309) as one's "media naranja" (*Casa* 331), and translates the expression "*Vegigante a la bolla; Contigo, pan y cebolla!*" (*House* 141) as "Marry me tomorrow, and we'll live on radishes with bread and onion" (141), among many other suggestive linguistic gestures. With these somewhat disjunctive translations (especially those that she includes in text, alongside their Spanish or English equivalent), Ferré makes visible for her readers the difficulty of translating concepts or idioms that carry with them much cultural weight or specificity—and, again, points back to the fact she herself is translating. She presents herself as the antidote to the suffering of Quintín's maternal grandmother Madeline, whom Isabel remembers for having "never learned to speak Spanish" and for having felt alienated by the inevitable "bit of juicy gossip [. . .], risqué joke or expression which could only be rendered in Spanish" (94). Isabel cites as an example the Spanish expression: "Eramos [sic] demasiados y parió la abuela" which she translates in text as "[t]here were already too many of us, and then Grandma got pregnant" (*House* 94). While Madeline suffers loneliness, discomfort, and near invisibility for not being truly bilingual, Ferré revels in the community, agility, and power of being proficient in both languages. She makes light of the fact that she can negotiate between cultures and languages and, in the conversation between her texts, presents herself as a consummate bilingual who dexterously overcomes and/or creatively compensates for the cultural differences posed by writing in English and writing in Spanish.

Ferré's confidence is such that she edits or opts out of translating select statements and insinuations that could offend her Spanish readership. She, for example, does not translate Isabel's laden assertion that Arístides did not serve jail time for the Ponce incident because, "He was from too good of a family for the law to be applied literally" (132), nor her accusations of corruption on the part of "Puerto Rican legislators, whom Isabel recounts were "bribed by the

tycoons of the garment industry" such that they "worked around the National Labor Relations Act" (221). Only in the English text, Isabel clearly asserts that because of the corrupt legislators, "The strike was declared illegal, and the poor conditions and low salaries in the needle industry stayed just as they were" (221). Likewise, Ferré amends Isabel's English recounting of Arístides' portrayal of the locals' harsh treatment toward him after his role in the Nationalist shooting, "At the water's edge there was nothing to hold you back; nothing to remind you that you had lost everything and <u>that people laughed at you wherever you went</u>" (133, non-translated text underlined), and she doesn't translate Isabel's self-assured claim that because she "was thoroughly bilingual" she "never had any difficulty with my studies" (185). The Spanish text is less self-congratulatory—Isabel relates, "enseñaban inglés desde primer grado, de manera que nunca tuve problemas con mis estudios" (198). Moreover, in English, Isabel recounts that when Quintín's father, Buenaventura Mendizábal, arrived to San Juan in 1917, he heard "someone announc[e] through a loudspeaker that all citizens over twenty-one were expected to sign up as volunteers in the U.S. Army" (19). In Spanish, Isabel recounts that Buenvaventura "escuchó a alguien anunciar por aquellos megáfonos que los que desearan alistarse como voluntarios en el ejército norteamericano podrían hacerlo" (30). Certainly, the distinction between being "expected to" and "being able to" enlist in the U.S. army "if desired" has colonial and/or imperialist implications. In these examples and in several other telling modifications, Ferré takes advantage of the leeway that accompanies the task of self-translation. The frequency with which Ferré tweaks, takes out, or totally revises polemic excerpts of her English text in translation indicates that she finds in translating welcome opportunities to revisit, realign, or destabilize concerns of her first or source text.

Because of her transgressive approach to translating, Ferré is able to create a dialogue around the controversies that surround her writing and/or rewriting—most importantly, the looming question of sovereignty, statehood, or continued commonwealth status for Puerto Rico. This debate fuels and/or colors most of the familial tensions that drive either version of her novel. Ferré situates her characters on all ends of the political spectrum and, in this way, gives voice to a range of perspectives on this divisive issue throughout and in between her texts. To this end, some of the most curious dissensions between the two versions of Ferré's novel are the slight revisions relative to Puerto Rico's national status. At one extreme, she creates the character of Arístides, Quintín's maternal grandfather, who accepts the post of chief of police under the stipulation that he "hunt down" (*House* 127) or "cazar" (*Casa* 142) Nationalist extremists and is commissioned to open fire on an otherwise peaceful demonstration by Nationalist cadets. Only in the English text, Isabel narrates that he accepts the police job to prove to the U.S. governor that Puerto Ricans "were loyal American citizens" (*House* 127). At the other extreme, she creates the characters of Manuel and Cora, Isabel and Quentín's son and his girlfriend, who participate in a later manifestation of the Nationalist faction that Arístides is tasked to eradicate. Their "AK-47" group embraces violent action as a means of awakening indecisive voters for the upcoming plebiscite. While in the English text, Coral declares that "the plebiscite will cause a crisis on the island. [. .]We must stop being Hamlets" (357), in the Spanish her accusation is more explicit—she faults luke-warm liberalism for keeping the country at a stalemate: "—El liberalismo es una mojigatería que no lleva a ninguna parte. Tenemos que dejar de ser Hamlets" (379). Through these subtle revisions of and/or additions to these characters' statements about Puerto Rico's national status, Ferré provides an internal discussion of the topic of Puerto Rico's most pointed political question; she does not promote a stance on the issue so much as she creates a dialogue

around it as she writes and then rewrites her novel. In either text, she quietly punctuates through Cora's allusion to Hamlet her investment in both evaluating and reevaluating what she refers to as Puerto Rico's "perpetual dilemma" ("Blessing" 9). She restates her previous characterization of Puerto Rico as a "país esquisinfrénico con complejo de Hamlet" in her 1998 preface to *Maldito amor* (13) and also her public declaration to the *The San Juan Star* that the Puerto Rican "struggle for self-definition" causes "us to feel like Hamlet, lost in the marshes of Elsinore" (9). She tackles in writing and again in translating the questions of identity and nationality that persist in shaping in her public and literary personae.

Ferré further signals her investment in these national questions by portraying several characters who espouse more nuanced or, at least, less extreme positions on national status. These characters represent some of the shades of gray informing the statehood and/or independence debate as it unfolds in and in between Ferré's texts. Quintín's father, Buenaventura, is said to be a closet-supporter of independence; Isabel surmises that as a "proud descendant of the Conquistadors" he found it "difficult [. . .] to accept the fact that his adopted country was only partly self-governed" (*House* 239).[21] Likewise, Quintín's mother Rebecca, along with her artist friends, is a said "salon type" independentista (97). In Spanish, Ferré renders this as "aunque sospecho que para la mayoría de ellos la política era más bien una pose" (*Casa* 111). Moreover, Isabel's grandmother Abby is an ardent independentista who is nonetheless "tempted [. . .] to renounce her Independentista ideals" as she looks at the goods in the Sears catalogue (*House* 183),[22] and Quintín's brother Ignacio is profoundly ambivalent as to either statehood or independence. Isabel writes that, "When you asked Ignacio if he believed in

[21] "a un descendiente de los conquistadores"; "se le hacía dificil aceptar que su patria de adopción no se gobernara a sí misma" (*Casa* 257).

[22] "tentada a renunciar sus ideales independentistas" (*Casa* 196)

independence for the island, he asked what you believed, and if you said you were for independence, he said he was, too. But five minutes later a Statehooder asked him if he believed in statehood, and he would say he did" (270).[23] Finally, in his later years, the same Arístides who commandeered the firing squad against the Nationalist cadets becomes a barely lucid drifter who mumbles his support for both statehood and independence. In the English text, Isabel flatly recounts that "he would praise statehood and independence in the same breath" (137). Through these characters' diverse stances on Puerto Rico's national status, Ferré provides an ample cross-section of the varied perspectives that form the debate on the national question. She, again, marks the extent to which she is invested in examining the murky questions of personal and national identity and their repercussions for her as a Puerto Rican citizen and as bilingual author.

Through these discordant perspectives on the national question, Ferré provides context for the profound discord between protagonists Quintín and Isabel on this issue—for the corresponding dissension in the characters' marriage, and for her own somewhat parallel, strained relationship with her Spanish readership. Quintín, an avowed supporter of statehood, fumes that Isabel is writing a novel, in part, to give impetus to the independence movement. He accuses her of writing "a feminist treatise and Independentista manifesto" (386) or "un alegato independentista, un manifesto feminista" (*Casa* 408). However, Isabel, in turn, firmly rebuffs Quintín's suppositions about her intentions. In the English text she declares to him, "My novel is about personal freedom, Quintín, not about political freedom [. . .]. It's about my independence from you" (*House* 386). Likewise, in the Spanish text, she similarly proclaims, "Mi novel no es

[23] "Si uno le preguntaba cuál era condición política que le parecía más conveniente para la Isla, contestaba devolviendo la pregunta. Si uno decía que la independencia, Ignacio contestaba que a él también. Pero si cinco minutos más tarde un estadista le preguntaba si creía en la estadidad, también aseguraba que sí" (*Casa* 289).

sobre política [. . .]. Es sobre mi emancipación de ti" (*Casa* 408). In both versions of her novel, Isabel distances herself from the notion that she writes in order to advance a political agenda. Instead, she insists that her primary concern is achieving freedom from the constraints of her overbearing husband, and she is decidedly apolitical and conciliatory as to the independence vs. statehood debate. She recounts that,

> I like to think of myself as apolitical, and when election time comes around, I don't like to take a stand. Maybe my indecision is rooted in the Sears catalogue; it goes back to the times I sat as a child in the living room of our house in Ponce with the catalogue on my lap, wishing for independence and at the same time dreaming about our island being part of the modern world. (*House* 184)[24]

I maintain that Isabel's contention that she is motivated by personal and not political freedom is a smokescreen behind which Ferré establishes her own independence from her "Spanish-only" constituents and also sets the stage for her eventual shift toward advocating a hybrid or dual reality for Puerto Ricans both on and off the island—a reality that is, at once, personal and political. Isabel's ambivalences anticipate Ferré's controversial and less nuanced declarations in her *New York Times* op-ed. In this piece, Ferré argues, first, "When I travel to the States I feel as Latina as Chita Rivera. But in Latin America, I feel more American than John Wayne. To be Puerto Rican is to be a hybrid" and, later, "We have become the other. As a Puerto Rican and an American, I believe our future as a community is inseparable from our culture and language, but I'm also passionately committed to the modern world. That's why I'm going to support

[24] "Por eso soy apolítica; cuando llegan las elecciones, no voto. Quizá mi indecisión se remonta a la época en que me sentaba de niña en la sala de la casa de Ponce con el catálogo de Sears sobre las rodillas, anhelando la independencia y a la misma vez soñando con que nuestra isla formara parte del mundo moderno" (*Casa* 197).

statehood in the next plebiscite" ("Puerto Rico" A21). While Isabel is not a ready puppet for Ferré herself, nor is Quintín a firm representation of a restrictive, patriarchal readership—I find in Isabel's said political neutrality and in her efforts to break away from her controlling husband the groundwork for the pro-statehood stance that Ferré eventually adopts, as well as for her larger transformation or cross-over from a Spanish American author or "autora puertorriqueña" to a U.S. Latina writer. Ironically, Ferré dissolves one marriage in order to explore another—the union of the island and the mainland.

In effect, Isabel's endeavors to make herself independent or *independizarse* from Quintín stand as another instance in which Ferré "indirectly" communicates with her reader via the "delayed" implications of her text (*House* 311). Beyond the aforementioned overtones of her portrayal of the ballet instructor Andre Kerenski, the passionate artist who ultimately betrays Tony Torres and Tony's hometown supporters, Ferré marks her independence from her Spanish readership by both her exhaustive attention to different perspectives on the national question and her patent defensiveness in, in between, and outside of her texts about writing in English. Through Isabel's ambivalences, Ferré creates an opportunity to respond to both her anxieties and her critics. She anticipates the reaction of peers like Ana Lydia Vega, who famously balked at Ferré in "Carta abierta a Pandora" in *El Nuevo Dia*, "Serías la misma que hace unos días, bajo el manoseado eslogan de 'Puerto Rico USA', le entregara al New York Times una tan triste apología de la asimilación? Serías la misma que, el pasado 19 de marzo, proclamándose 'más americana que John Wayne', le anunciara alegremente a nuestros conquistadores que por fin habíamos llegado a ser como ellos?" (IB). Particularly in Isabel's tepid endorsements of Puerto Rican independence, Ferré finds an outlet through which she counters the claims of assimilation

by positing the value of both Spanish *and* English for the national culture and, even, the benefits of statehood. As Isabel recounts,

> The way I see it, our island is like a betrothed, always on the verge of marriage. If one day Puerto Rico becomes a state, it will have to accept English—the language of her future husband—as its official language, not just because it's the language of modernity and progress but also because it's the language of authority. If the island remains single, on the other hand, it will probably mean backwardness and poverty. [. . .] There's no question in anyone's mind that independence would set our island back at least a century, that it would mean sacrifice. But we can't help being what we are, can we? (*House* 184)

Isabel employs the language of marriage to imply that an official relationship with the United States would bring with it both the constraints and benefits of English as an official language and that independence would bring underdevelopment or come at the cost of "modernity" for Puerto Rico. In her final question—about Puerto Ricans not being able to avoid who they are—she seems to concede development as a necessary casualty of independence, but is seemingly pained rather than glad at the prospect. Through Isabel's luke-warm support for independence, Ferré floats opinions about the value of English and the hybrid nature of Puerto Rico's national identity that she later makes waves with in her public discussions of her decision to write first in English and in her "coming out" *New York Times* op-ed in which she announces her support for statehood.

Ferré's Spanish rendition of this passage is even more explicit as to the formative potential of English for Puerto Rico and in the modern world:

> Como lo veo, nuestra isla es como una novia siempre a punto de casarse. Si algún día Puerto Rico escoge ser un estado de la Unión, tendrá que aceptar el inglés, el lenguaje de su futuro esposo, como su lengua oficial junto con el español, no sólo por ser el lenguaje de la modernidad y del progreso, sino por ser el lenguaje del poder en el mundo hoy. Si la Isla escoge la independencia y decide quedarse soltera, por otra parte, tendrá que sacrificarse, y aceptar la pobreza y el atraso que significará vivir sin los beneficios y la protección de Estados Unidos. Independientes no seremos más libres, porque los pobres no son libres. [. . .] No me cabe menor duda de que la independencia nos atrasaría más de un siglo, y que significaría un enorme sacrificio. Pero ¿cómo dejar de ser lo que somos? (*Casa* 198, deviations from the English underlined)

Only in the Spanish text, Isabel adds the important clarification that English, "junto con el español" would be the official language in the event of statehood. In the same vein, she emphasizes in translation the island's agency to "escoge[r]" either statehood or independence. She also adds the unambiguous specification that "pobreza" and "atraso" would be the certain results of choosing to "vivir sin los beneficios y la protección de Estados Unidos" and the dramatic assertion that "Independientes no seremos más libres, porque los pobres no son libres". Ferré appears anxious to refute in the Spanish version of her text the notion that Spanish would lose official status should Puerto Rico become a state, as well as the idea that islanders would be forced to choose or become anything. Moreover, she gives credence to the assertion that the costs of independence would be enormous and, even, paralyzing for islanders. While translating into Spanish, she endeavors to make the "assimilationist" points of Isabel's arguments more persuasive.

Ferré's attentiveness to flashpoints relative to language, power, and the unequal relationship between the U.S. and Puerto Rico recurs throughout and in between the versions of her text. For instance, only in *House on the Lagoon*, Quintín emphasizes to the reader that Isabel writes her manuscript in English—as a part of his argument that Puerto Rican sovereignty would entail the loss of English on the island: "Would Isabel herself give up English if the island became independent? Would she have written her manuscript in English if she didn't think English was important? If she had written her novel in Spanish and published in Puerto Rico, why, only a handful of people would read it! But if she published in the United States, thousands would read it" (150-51). Via an indignant Quintín, Ferré underlines for her English audience that she herself has not "sold out" the core components of her text in the name of greater access to it; rather, by highlighting the appeal of a wider audience she offers an implicit defense of her decision to write first in English. Quintín's words recall Ferré's own defensiveness in her public discussion of readers who questioned whether money was the primary motivator of her switch to writing *House on the Lagoon* first in English. She, for example, argues in *The San Juan Star* that, "all writers want to sell their books and hope to be read as much as possible" (8). Yet, through the conspicuous absence of Quintín's statements on Isabel's language of choice in the Spanish version of her text, Ferré illustrates that she is hesitant to emphasize, even indirectly, the appeal and strategic importance of English for readers who encounter her text in Spanish. Through the dissonances between the English and Spanish versions of her text on this point, she makes visible her tendency to tiptoe around the perceived sensitivities of her different audiences when writing and, particularly, when translating or rewriting.

Similarly, only in the English text, Isabel reflects, "With the difficulty Congress was having retaining English as the official language in the United States, I thought, letting a

Spanish-speaking territory become a state would be like letting a fox into the chicken coop. But I didn't dare say anything to Quintín" (*House* 390-91). In the context of her conversation with Quintín, who is angered by the chaos and upheavals that could occur should supporters of statehood not obtain a majority in the upcoming plebiscite, Isabel implies that statehood could result in even more unrest—which opinion she doesn't share with her husband for fear that he will be enraged at her for speaking disparagingly of this outcome. However, in the context of Ferré's other, public pronouncements on Puerto Rico's "perpetual dilemma" ("Blessing" 9), Isabel's words are another incidence of Ferré's double-speak in and in between her texts. As Ferré claims in *The San Juan Star*,

> When we discovered we could learn English without losing Spanish, and that it gives us an edge in the world, we began to be less afraid of *el otro*. We thought maybe we could teach him a thing or two, help our neighbors to the north become better American citizens by making them resemble us. A second language was the ace up our sleeves. Growing up ambidextrous had been an unexpected blessing, after all. (9)

And, as she points out in *The New York Times*,

> But conditions have changed. Latinos are the fastest growing minority in the United States: by 2010 their numbers are expected to reach 39 million—more than the population of most Latin American republics. Bilingualism and multiculturalism are vital aspects of American society. [. . .] The reality is we can no longer "be disappeared." (A21)

Isabel's prediction of the melee that would ensue in the event of statehood prefigures Ferré's own more optimistic prognoses on how Puerto Ricans could effect or reciprocate change within

the dominant, Anglophone culture in the U.S. Accordingly, by opting not to translate Isabel's insinuations about the event of statehood Ferré avoids emphasizing for readers of her text in Spanish the transformative role that Puerto Rico could take on in regards to the United States; she, in this instance, edits out the implication that Puerto Rico could be a catalyst toward the demise of monolingualism in the U.S. and, dually, the idea that statehood could create circumstances beneficial to both the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Read in the context of Ferré's public posturings on politics and language, Isabel's words are particularly suggestive—and Ferré's decision not to translate them is equally evocative.

Determining "why" Ferré translates such that in her English text she more clearly establishes the foundation for her eventual support of Puerto Rican statehood than she does in her Spanish text is a difficult and endless quandary. I do not aim to establish Ferré as "two-faced" so much as I want to bring into focus the blurry distinction between what Ferré describes as being "ambidextrous" ("Blessing" 8) and what is, in practice, being contradictory. As she relates to *The San Juan Star* concerning why she wrote *House on the Lagoon* first in English,

> I wrote the novel in English and [later] in Spanish because I am ambidextrous. When I was a little girl I wrote with my left hand, but when I turned seven Mother changed me to the right. I couldn't be left-handed she told me. Left-handed people are impaired: there were no left-handed desks at school . . . At seven I became 'right-handed', *obligada*; I had to assimilate my left self into my right self. Today I write with both hands, be it with a pen or [. . .] a computer; and also in both languages.
>
> I think learning to speak a second-language in America has a lot to do with learning to live with *el otro*, "the other" that lurks inside us: our neighbor to the

> north if we come from Latin America, our neighbor to the south if we come from North America. (8-9)

I ask if Ferré's conception of being "ambidextrous" accounts for the points of dissension between her texts and/or for the apparent accommodations she makes for her different readerships. Do the conflicting demands of different audiences cause Ferré to make changes or are these changes connected to the linguistic and sociological differences that Ferré herself projects onto her writing? What is gained or lost by embracing the "other that lurks inside"? In any event, Ferré's strong translations and/or willful rewritings make for an intensely filtered and layered composite text, one that is made up of the contingent and, at times, perpendicular claims of two "twin" or "sister" texts. Read together and, even, in continuation with the exalted vision of translation and prostitution that she sets forth in her English translation of *Maldito amor*, Ferré creates with *House on the Lagoon* and *Casa en la laguna* a challenging and engaging conversation around the intersections between, language, agency, and identity.

I maintain that the inter- and meta-textual implications of Ferré's versions of her novels are even more compelling than the individual storylines she creates. Through her heightened sensitivity to language behaviors throughout and in between the versions of her text, Ferré both promotes herself as a multilingual author and endeavors to insert her texts within the canon of multilingual literature. She marks her texts as multilingual by a host of open and/or veiled references to other multilingual intertexts, bilingualism, multilingualism, or language, generally. For example, it is highly significant that the transgressive play which Ferré, via Isabel, designates that Rebecca and her friends make covert plans to perform is Oscar Wilde's *Salomé,* Wilde's controversial cross-over drama which he wrote first in French and published three years later as an English translation. In English, Isabel relates that Rebecca and her artistic friends,

"read it aloud and found it extraordinary, and one of them translated it into Spanish" (*House* 65). In Spanish, Isabel recounts, "Lo leyeron en voz alta y lo encontraron extraordinario. El desafío que esa obra encarnaba fue tomado como bandera de batalla por sus amigos" (*Casa* 80). In the English version of her text, Ferré emphasizes how Rebecca and her friends encounter the play (whether in French or English) and find it worthy of translating into Spanish while, in the Spanish version Ferré calls attention to how the challenge of performing such a text becomes a rallying point or "bandera de batalla" for Rebecca and her companions—there is no mention of the language in which they encounter the play or of whether or not it is translated. In *House on the Lagoon*, Ferré prefaces her own translation into Spanish by referencing the translation of *Salomé* into Spanish and, in *Casa en la laguna*, she subtly refers back to her "original" English text by marking Wilde's cross-over drama as a "bandera de batalla" (*Casa* 80). Rebecca's willingness to take on the role of Salomé and to dance the transgressive Dance of the Seven Veils recalls how Ferré herself takes upon herself the risky act of writing first in English, interpreting a role for which she is bound to suffer repercussions. By alluding to Wilde's multilingual drama, Ferré underscores her own controversial gesture of writing first in English and marks *House on the Lagoon* as a personal rallying point.

Ferré adds to the discussion of language and languaging in and around her texts with several other multilingual and/or intertextual gestures. She references authors such as Homer, Shakespeare, Balzac, George Sand, Francisco de Quevedo, Karl Marx, and Edgar Allan Poe, she depicts Isabel reading Choderlos de Laclos, presumably in the French original (*House* 311, *Casa* 332), and, only in the English text, cites Ivan Turgenev (*House* 72)—who, coincidentally, famously remarked that "a writer who did not write only in his mother tongue was a thief and a pig" (qtd. in Pérez Firmat 1). She also speaks of Buenaventura's beloved Dobermans, Fausto and

Mefistófeles; incorporates quotes from Letizia the mother of Napoleon, references artists Marc Chagall, Antoni Gaudí, and Carlo Crivelli, among others; and writes of Russian, Czech, Italian, Corsican, and U.S. immigrants to Puerto Rico. Via Quintín, she alludes to Suetonius' *The Scandalous Lives of the Caesars* and Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Romans*. In the English text, Quintín chances upon Isabel's hidden manuscript while retrieving a Latin dictionary to look up a word in the latter text by Plutarch (*House* 70). Yet, in Spanish, he retrieves a "diccionario griego-español" as a part the same action (*Casa* 86). It is difficult to know whether Ferré is merely covering in translation for having mistakenly assumed that the text Quintín reads was written in Latin or if she has him read the text in Latin in the English text in order to subtly emphasize that Quintín, a native speaker of Spanish and English, is reading a Latin translation. No matter her motivation, it is likely that all these multilingual and international literary intertexts are pointed and not casual.

Of particular interest is Ferré's discussion of Bernabé, grandfather of Petra who is the long-time servant to the Mendizabalfamily. Bernabé plans a rebellion in his native Bantu and fears the punishment of having his tongue cut out more than that of death (*House* 62, *Casa* 78). While introducing his character, Isabel relates that for Bernabé, "One's tongue was so deeply ingrained, more so than even one's religion or tribal pride; it was like a root that went deep into one's body and no one knew exactly where it ended. It was attached to one's throat, to one's neck, to one's stomach, even to one's heart" (*House* 60).[25] Ferré emphasizes with Bernabé's character the importance of one's native tongue, of one's language loyalty, particularly in the face of repression—a gesture that she undermines or, at least, complicates by writing and

[25] "La lengua de una persona era algo más profundo que la religión o el orgullo tribal. Era una raíz que penetraba muy adentro del cuerpo, y nadie sabía en realidad dónde terminaba. Estaba conectada a la garganta, al cuello, al estómago, quién sabe si al mismo corazón" (*Casa* 75).

authorizing versions of her text in both English and Spanish. Like Bernabé, she revels in the power of her tongue and/or language, but she presents her tongue as inherently double or bifurcated, even organizing her own "secret" inter-textual and/or multilingual rebellion against the traditional parameters of literature and literary translation.

I contend that the very visible multilingual signature that Ferré sprawls across and in between *House on the Lagoon* and *Casa en la laguna* and, also, *Maldito amor* and *Sweet Diamond Dust* is key to understanding these texts and Ferré's eventual transformation from a Puerto Rican author to a transnational Latina writer. Through all of these texts, she emerges as an ardent champion of bilingualism, a tried advocate for a visible translation practice, and as a consummate artist both willing to make substantive revisions of her texts from one version to the next and not unwilling to make accommodations for competing audiences. Considering either set of her texts, Ferré is, arguably, most adept at examining the ambivalences of language, nation, and identity that inform her fiction in the space in between her versions of her texts. In the dissensions between her texts, Ferré extends, colors, and complicates the conversation around questions central to her public and literary selves. What determines authorship? What constitutes an original text? What should be the role of the translator? To what extent does writing in one or another language inform or predispose the possibilities of a literary text? How to account for apparent historical or ideological imbalances between equally authoritative texts, and how to formulate a poetics of hybridity? Moreover, what are the advantages and responsibilities of being a "bilingual translator," and what are the political ramifications of championing bilingualism? Only in *House on the Lagoon*, Isabel recalls how Ernesto Ustariz, a liberal lawyer who marries the partially black woman whom Quintín's brother Ignacio is forbidden from courting, lauds his daughters' bilingualism while insisting they retain the Spanish language by speaking only

Spanish at home (338). Isabel recounts how Ernesto would tell his daughters, "For every language you speak, you're worth another person, [. . .]. Each language gives you another set of tools with which to solve life's problems" (338). Ernesto's words to his daughters reverberate strongly with the individual and composite portraits of herself that Ferré creates while writing and rewriting her texts. While determining precisely why and for whom Ferré reinvents herself across and in between the different versions of her texts will remain elusive, reading her texts in continuation with each other brings into focus the hesitations, unknowns, and uncertainties that persist in even her boldest assertions of hybridity or multiculturalism. Ferré tools herself with each and/or the sum of her languages to examine and reexamine the linguistic, social, and political polemics that combine and collide in her life and literature.

Chapter 3

Self-translation and Accommodation: Multilingual Strategies in Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* and Margarita Cota-Cárdenas' *Puppet*

The linguistic and social ambivalences of English and Spanish are, perhaps, most pronounced in the multilingual acrobatics of individual Chicano and/or U.S. Latino authors. These authors forcefully challenge the perception of Standard American English and/or Standard American Spanish as pure or self-contained through various strategies of wordplay in their texts, e.g., code-switching, calquing (writing in a language in a way that recalls another language), or providing both literal and non-literal translations. By recurring to these and other transgressive linguistic stratagems they visibly resist both the notion of a monolingual literary text and the representation, fictional or otherwise, of a static linguistic community.

By titling her English novel "*So Far from God*" Chicana author Ana Castillo cleverly recalls Porfirio Diaz's famed characterization of "pobre México" as "tan lejos de Dios tan cerca de los Estados Unidos" and, in the same stroke, emphasizes the strained and porous relations between Mexico and the U.S. Likewise, by titling his book of poetry *AmeRícan*, Tato Laviera signals the confluence and/or conflict of a dual national identity with only a capital letter and an accent mark. Similarly, by self-identifying as a "post-Porteño neo-Latino Canadian" (75), Argentine-Canadian author and artist Guillermo Verdecchia makes light of the inadequate descriptors to account for him and his nationality. Roberto Fernández's memorable A*buela* confuses "cojon" with "go home" (148), Luis Valdez's nimble *Pachuco* seamlessly incorporates English, Spanish, and Spanglish into his narration, e.g., "¡Órale pues!/ Don't take the pinche play so seriously, Jesús!/ Es puro vacilón!/ Watcha." (78), and Ana Menéndez's domino-playing Máximo creates both humor and heartache in the Spanish-and-English jokes he tells to his exiled

and immigrant friends—e.g., his tale of a mutt who roughly translates for an "elegant" poodle the pick-up line, "O Madre de Dios, si cocinas como caminas…" (28). In English, the mutt stumbles with "Mamita, you are one hot doggie, yes? I would like to take you to the movies and fancy dinners" (28). These examples, among many others, provide moments of fertile overlap and cultural confluence which are especially significant given that the majority of Chicano and Latino fiction is written overwhelmingly in English for a mainstream, non-Latino audience.[1] As Gustavo Pérez-Firmat grimly asserts, "As the monolingual expression of a largely bilingual population, Latino literature detaches culture from language, celebrating the former even as it silences the latter" (139). By creating incidences of multilingual play in their texts, Chicano and other U.S. Latino authors reaffirm, however momentarily, the voices and sounds of the socially-stigmatized variants of Spanglish—Tex-Mex, Caló, Chicano, Nuyorican, Dominican, Cuban Spanish, etc.—that surface in their texts. They challenge the very presumption of monolingualism by illustrating the porous borders of Standard English and/or Standard Spanish and stretch the bounds of North American literatures in either English or Spanish by representing minority voices within the rapidly emerging but still marginalized canon of Chicano and Latino literatures.

Of course, certain authors are better able than others to choose to write in English, Spanish, and/or a combination of both. As Pérez Firmat recounts, "For every writer like Gloria Anzaldúa or Roberto Fernández who endeavor to reproduce the actual speech, *the idioma*, of a particular group of Latinos, there are several like Cristina Garcia [sic] and Julia Alvarez [sic], who translate it into something like George Santayana's Received Standard English" (139).

[1] Notable examples of ostensibly "bi-lingual," Spanish-and-English texts include "Pollito Chicken" by Puerto Rican author Ana Lydia Vega; the mind-bending *Yo-Yo Boing!* by Giannina Braschi, also Puerto Rican; and the recent collections of poetry by Ferré and Dorfman, her *Language Duel/ Duelo del Lenguaje* and his *In Case of Fire in a Foreign Land*.

While the bilingual, biscriptive, and Cuban-born Pérez-Firmat is quick to concede that for many Latino and Chicano authors English is their native tongue and Spanish informs their literature primarily as language of heritage, he is decidedly unenthused by the extent to which these same authors, generally, strive to accommodate a non-Latino audience by acting as literary tour guides or hasty ethnographers. Following Ernst Rudin's scheme for classifying the categories of Spanish that are used in Chicano literature—into terms of address, high impact terms, ethnographic terms, culinary terms, and terms for groups of people (Rudin 152)—Pérez Firmat remarks,

> If someone were to attempt to learn Spanish from Latino literature, he'd be able to do little else but cuss, pray, make love, and order lunch. Dictated less by the needs of the story than by the desire to give non-Hispanic readers a taste of the foreign flavors they came for, Latino literature's Hispanicisms turn many of these works into formula fiction, novels and memoirs written *for* rather than written *by*. (142)

His criticisms prompt further, related questions: will the more balanced and contextually-driven use of codes from both languages make for less formulaic literature?; is it overly optimistic to assume that bilingual authors can sustainably produce and publish texts that are overtly multilingual?; and, finally, assuming a bilingual author's capacity to write in either and/or a combination of English and Spanish, should he or she feel obligated to write in a way that accounts for the social and linguistic marginalization of Spanish and Spanish-speaking peoples in the U.S.? Less than begging an answer, these questions underscore the binds into which bilingual Chicano and Latino authors find themselves as they approach the roles of translator, spokesperson, and cultural mediator in their, often, autobiographical narratives.

The delicate negotiations of Chicano and/or U.S. Latino writing are ever present in the signature texts of Chicana authors Gloria Anzaldúa and Margarita Cota-Cárdenas. In the mid-1980s, both publish semi-autobiographical, mixed-genre, and inherently multilingual texts that are well received critically and form the vanguard of Chicana literature. In these texts, both authors project the possibility of an openly bilingual literary praxis and come to terms with the mantle of authorial and social responsibility that each presents as inseparable to their formally transgressive and activist-oriented works. A major difference between their texts is that Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987) is written primarily in English and is now frequently studied and taught in U.S. universities while Cota-Cárdenas' *Puppet* (1985) is written primarily in Spanish and remains relatively undiscovered.

I compare Anzaldúa's and Cota-Cárdenas' respective multilingual strategies to determine whether the formal or linguistic components of their texts support or undermine the social and political agendas trumpeted in their literature. In their visible struggles to create voices appropriate to their narratives, both authors foreground the power and influence of language and highlight the extent to which a national, standard, written language does not account for the linguistic variability of its citizens and/or speakers. By alternatively code-switching, offering literal or contextual translations of loan words, providing either redundant or reworked English and Spanish versions of a story or an idea, or by simply refusing to translate, both Anzaldúa and Cota-Cárdenas challenge the notion of an "invisible" translator (Venuti "The Translator's" 1) by forcing their readers to encounter and synthesize relational aspects of the variants of English, Spanish, and Spanglish that form the meta-language of their texts. However, I maintain that the sum concessions that each author does or does not make as an intra-textual guide and translator reveal a significant distinction between the two writers as to how they ultimately approach the

immense social and cultural responsibility that each insinuates is an essential part of being a Chicana author and translator. While Anzaldúa presents herself as a willing and confident voice for "the New Mestiza," Cota-Cárdenas' narrative self is initially tentative and uncertain about her capacity or her authority to speak or write on behalf of the migrant laborers who seek her help in securing justice for their mutual friend, "Puppet." Yet, more often than not, Anzaldúa undercuts her platform of renewed cultural change and altered social consciousness by translating for or playing to an Anglophone audience, while Cota-Cárdenas strengthens the at times tentative calls for action in her text by generally refusing to accommodate either the reader of only English or Spanish. The decision of whether or not to translate looms in both of these groundbreaking texts. I examine the apparent motivations and social implications behind Anzaldúa's and Cota-Cárdenas' language choices and explore how the linguistic and/or translational aspects of their texts support, complicate, and/or contradict the claims that each sets forth in their literature.

Theory and Translation in Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La frontera: The New Mestiza*

I admit that the whole of my argument concerning how Anzaldúa's and Cota-Cárdenas' acts of translation relate to the central arguments of their texts builds on the false opposition between, on the one hand, the social or theoretical discourse of a text and, on the other, the formal praxis of the author—in that the two usually overlap or collapse into one another. As Alfred Arteaga argues in his comprehensive study of Chicano poetics, "the study of literary style

is inextricably bound up with that of discursive practice" (70-71).[2] I emphasize that one cannot fully distinguish between the formal and discursive nor the linguistic and social markers of a text—as the signs of a literary text, like the signs of language, are present in a relational web rather than as stand-alone factors in an equation. However, I maintain that by attempting to separate questions of form and content in the literature of both Anzaldúa and Cota-Cárdenas, I illustrate the interdependency of language and discourse in their texts and highlight both the possibilities and problems of their inherently multilingual messaging.

In *Borderlands/La frontera*, Gloria Anzaldúa is openly unapologetic about the multilingual gestures within her text. She reiterates, on both a formal and a discursive level, linguistic difference as a primary characteristic of the border community from which she narrates and touts her multilingualism as an important asset in theorizing a larger border culture or consciousness. While the physical border that Anzaldúa grapples with is the border between the U.S. and Mexico, she emphasizes that she is as concerned with the kinds of intangible borders that divide and define human society. In the preface to her semi-autobiographical memoir she asserts, "The psychological borderlands, the sexual borderlands and the spiritual borderlands are not particular to the [U.S.] Southwest" (np). Likewise, she insinuates the larger ramifications of

[2] Arteaga sees interlingualism as a defining characteristic of Chicano literature, in particular Chicano poetry. He argues, "the speech [of the Chicano subject and/or text] is interlingual in that it not only acknowledges a confluence of difference but emphasizes the factor of hybridity. It readily permits a fluidity in conceiving race and homeland by treating these concepts as categories of concepts that are composed of multiple and conflicting texts" (17). Accordingly, more than other inter- or multilingual texts which make "polyglot poetics" (69) a point of aesthetic play or tension, interlingual Chicano texts better interrogate categorical totalizations, given that the linguistic structuring of these texts is already a politicized act which reflects on and responds to the conflictive realities of the space of the border. As Arteaga elaborates: "The border as discursive and existential fact does something to the interpretation of Chicano writing. It removes the discussion of the styles of linguistic interplay from the realm of the aesthetic alone because the border is a space where English and Spanish compete for presence and authority. It is not the site of mere either/or linguistic choice but one of quotidian linguistic conflict where the utterance is born at home in English and in Spanish and in caló" (70).

the linguistic concerns of her text when makes the controversial declaration, "So, if you want to really hurt me, talk badly about my language. Ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity—I am my language. Until I can take pride in my language, I cannot take pride in myself" (59). She posits both her linguistic and social marginalization as platforms upon which she builds her authority as a writer and thinker. In statements such as "Colored homosexuals have more knowledge of other cultures" (85), "*En unas pocas centurias,* the future will belong to the mestiza" (80), "In our very flesh, (r)evolution works out the clash of cultures" (81), and "I, for one, choose to use some of my energy to serve as mediator" (85), her narrative self confidently claims the helm of enunciation.

Anzaldúa goes so far as to mandate a future in which she as an author will not have to translate her text—presumably because the minority literature of the "new mestiza" will be recognized as legitimate or mainstream. She first voices this imperative in the preface to her text, in the form of an invitation to "you," presumably the hegemonic, monolingual Anglo-American reader. She writes, "Today we ask to be met halfway. This book is our invitation to you—from the new mestizas" (np). Similarly, in the same passage in which she links ethnic and linguistic identity, she declares, "Until I am free to write bilingually and to switch codes without having always to translate, while I still have to speak English or Spanish when I would rather speak Spanglish, and as long as I have to accommodate the English speakers rather than having them accommodate me, my tongue will be illegitimate" (59). She bases her ideal of a more inclusive and pluralistic community on the requisite transformation of the imaginaries of the Anglo-American reader. As Johnson and Michaelsen argue in *Border Theory*, she presents Spanish American writing "as a kind of final destination for *all* world writing" (12). By explicitly refusing to translate or make accommodations for her more white-identified reader, Anzaldúa

proposes a "new consciousness" (78) remarkably like that consciousness which is already her own. Instead of merely emphasizing the difference and the validity of her own point of view, she privileges her own stance of enunciation.

Yet, as I indicated earlier, the formal aspects of Anzaldúa's text are more ambivalent and less uncompromising. Rather than negating the act of translation in her novel, Anzaldúa, like many other Chicano authors, actually foregrounds translation by taking great pains to define, explain, or contextualize those non-English aspects of her text for her readers. As Rudin argues, most Chicano authors essentially function in the role of translators in that the implied authors and the narrators of their texts frequently mediate between Anglo and Mexican American contexts by translating linguistic and cultural differences for their readers (60). In an interview with Andrea Lunsford, Anzaldúa acknowledges the mediative role of her narrative self within her text—the balancing act into which she is caught as she tries to play to her different audiences. She relates:

> I have to weigh things. [. . .] If I write in this style and I code-switch too much and I go into Spanglish too much and I do an associative kind of logical progression in a composition, am I going to lose those people that I want to affect, to change? Am I going to lose the respect of my peers—who are other writers and other artists and academicians—when I change too much, when I change not only the style, but also the rhetoric, the way this is done? (41)

She concedes her struggle with what Pérez Firmat describes as "writing *for*" instead of writing *by*" (142). The contours of this struggle recur in the linguistic and translational aspects of *Borderlands/La Frontera*, which suggest that Anzaldúa's primary audience, the pointed "you" of her preface, consists of those readers who speak only English as first-language.

On a purely statistical level, her text is overwhelmingly in English. The author of the summary of the text on the desk-jacket for the first, Aunt Lute edition promises that English readers will understand the Spanish phrases "in context." Were the text to be translated, it is likely that the English portions of the text would be translated and the Spanish portions would remain in order to exemplify the local or vernacular aspects of the text. Moreover, almost every multilingual gesture in the novel is accounted for by some kind of discursive explanation or other strategy of translation.[3] As Rudin argues, Chicano authors who incorporate Spanish into their primarily English texts alternate between methods of translation: strategies of literal translation (double naming and the pairing of words through and/or statements); of non-literal translation (paraphrasing, explanation, or summary); of translation by contextualization (the explaining of a word through an action/reaction scheme, by association, antonymy, synecdoche or metonymy); or non-translation, the least common of strategies (124-51). Anzaldúa makes recourse to all of the above strategies, usually with the end result of catering to the reader of English and not Spanish. Her translations, literal or otherwise, evidence the extent to which she as an author and as a discursive subject *is* willing to meet her Anglo other halfway, if not further. The criticisms and lack of inclusivity toward an Anglo American perspective that surface within her border theorizations—e.g., "Gringo accept the doppelganger in your psyche" (86)—are frequently mitigated by the eagerness with which Anzaldúa reaches out to her Anglo American reader through the formal and/or translational aspects of her text.

[3] The second half of the book, *Un Agitado Viento/ Ehécatl, The Wind*, includes several untranslated poems, entirely in Spanish. The translational poetics of her poems are less conciliatory than in *Borderlands/La Frontera*. I consider these poems a separate text, largely because of how the book as a whole is formatted (*Borderlands* has its own section of endnotes). Also, I am persuaded by Jane Hedley's argument that since Anzaldúa speaks of "this book I'm almost finished writing" (66) in the sixth chapter of *Borderlands* it is possible she only added the second half at the publisher's request, to make the book more substantial (51).

Anzaldúa characterizes her writing as shifting, emerging, and "threatening to spill over the boundaries" (66). She also describes it as "a hybridization of metaphor, different species of ideas [. . .] full of variations and contradictions" (66). As concerns code-switching or the interplay between Spanish and English in her text, her appraisal of her craft seems accurate. For the most part, English, Spanish, and Spanglish flow seamlessly throughout her text. While "Standard English" is the language that predominates in *Borderlands/La Frontera*—Anzaldúa claims she speaks it along with "Working class and slang English," "Standard Spanish," "Standard Mexican Spanish," "North Mexican Spanish dialect," "Chicano Spanish," "Tex-Mex," and "Pachuco" or "caló" (55)—its boundaries are often disrespected by Anzaldúa. The linguistic varieties and national voices depicted in her text are, per the norm, non-standard, unofficial and/or undocumented. Anzaldúa's willingness to legitimize or even "legalize" these voices is from the outset productive of a "new" paradigm of literary practice.[4]

Her transgressive methods are readily apparent in the first chapter of her text, "The Homeland, Aztlán/ El otro México." As the somewhat disparate chapter title suggests, Anzaldúa revisits the region of the U.S. Southwest borderlands—the original, mythical Chicano homeland—and emphasizes both the singularities and contingencies of the region vis-à-vis the U.S. and Mexico. She paints the borderlands as a "vague and undetermined place" (3), a place of "[a]mbivalence and unrest" (4), "*una herida abierta*" and "a no-man's" land (12), and portrays herself as uniquely able to bridge worlds "*gabacho*" and "*mojado*" (3). She, for instance, declares in the Spanish-language conclusion to and/or reprise of the mostly English poem that opens her chapter, "*Yo soy un puente tendido/ del mundo gabacho al del mojado,/ lo pasado me*

[4] Admittedly, the politically-charged rhetoric of the current debate about immigration in the U.S., e.g., "illegal" vs. "undocumented," somewhat post-dates Anzaldúa's text. Still, I think it is productive to show how both non-standard languages and "undocumented" peoples are similarly problematic within traditional literary or national discourses.

estirá pa' 'trás/ y lo presente pa' 'delante./ Que la Virgen de Guadalupe me cuide/ Ay ay ay, soy mexicana de este lado" (3). She grounds her narrative authority in her capacity to both straddle and move beyond the social and linguistic boundaries that divide cultures and peoples north and south of the border. Especially through her attention to the speech in and around her familial home in South Texas, she uses her pulpit to give voice to the hybrid or extra-national language of her homeland—as when her strongly autobiographical narrator recreates the voice of her mother:

> "Drought hit South Texas," my mother tells me. "*La tierra se puso bien seca y los animales comenzaron a morrirse de se'. Mi papá se murío de un* heart attack *dejando a mamá* pregnant y *con ocho huercos*, with eight kids and one on the way. *Yo fuí la mayor, tenía diez años*. The next year the drought continued y el *ganado* got hoof and mouth. *Se calleron* in droves *en las pastas y el* brushland, *pansas blancas* ballooning to the skies. *El siguiente año* still no rain. *Mi pobre madre viuda perdió* two-thirds of her *ganado*. A smart *gabacho* lawyer took the land away *mamá* hadn't paid taxes. *No hablaba inglés*, she didn't know how to ask for time to raise the money." (8)

In this somewhat extreme example, Anazaldúa incorporates both English and Spanish voices into her narrative. She favors a truly bilingual approach in this passage even though the substance of the recollection can be understood in context for readers of either language. By pairing Spanish articles with English nouns, e.g., un heart attack and el brushland, she points to the literal amalgamation of said linguistic difference, the convergence and/or the dissolution of Standard American English and Standard Mexican Spanish. Admittedly, the mere interchange between English and Spanish does not make the text suddenly plural or dissolute as the etymologies of any of the individual English or Spanish words would indicate that they are also already multiple

and mixed. However, through her fluid interweaving of the two languages, Anzaldúa's makes her text more one *and* plural; she indicates the legitimacy of Chicano Spanish as a stand-alone language and emphasizes the permeability of the perceived linguistic constraints of both English and Spanish.

Through the multilingual gestures of her text she champions a hybrid poetics dually vilified and celebrated by authors and critics within the circles of Latin American and U.S. Latino/a literatures.[5] By refusing to "tame [her] wild tongue" (53), she allies herself and her text with those who promote the multilingual and postcolonial possibilities of Chicano writing. As Arteaga suggests,

> [I]nasmuch as Chicano discourse is specifically multilingual and multivoiced, it further undermines the tendency toward single language and single-voiced monologues, that is it undermines Anglo-American monologism. It undercuts claims of prevalence, centrality, and superiority, and confirms the condition of heteroglossia. It draws the monolingual into dialogue. In short, it dialogizes the authoritative discourse. (73)

Similarly, Emily Hicks projects that "by choosing a strategy of translation rather than representation, border writers ultimately undermine the distinction between original and alien culture" (xxiii). In the same vein, Frances Aparicio argues that by displacing the monolingual American reader and by producing texts that require cross-cultural competency, bilingual U.S. Latino and Latina writers call for a reshaping or reenvisioning of the ideals and embodiments of cultural literacy (800). In declarations such as, "we are suffering from [. . .] an absolute despot

[5] Famous detractors of "Spanglish" include Mexican authors Octavio Paz and Carlos Monsiváis, while noted proponents of a multilingual praxis, in addition to those already discussed in this project, include Ilán Stavans, Doris Sommer, and Debra Castillo.

duality that says we are able to be only one or the other" (19) or "As a *mestiza* I have no country [. . .] I am participating in the creation of yet another culture" (81), Anzaldúa squarely aligns herself with the most optimistic prognoses of Chicano poetics.

Yet, what literary or translational strategies qualify as "Chicano," "border," hybrid, bi-, inter-, trans- and/or multi-lingual, and how and when do these multilingual gestures actually work to displace the monolingual reader and/or favor a multilingual praxis? As Rudin argues, code-switching and the other translational and even non-translational strategies of Chicano texts may, in the end, work to favor the monolingual, Anglo reader. Using Rudolfo Anaya's *Bless Me Última* as an example, Rudin claims, "Paradoxical as it may sounds, the bilingual reader loses from knowing Spanish, while the monolingual reader wins from not knowing it" (225). He explains that many of the Spanish language entries in Anaya's novel are "contextually 'cushioned'" and indicates that for the bilingual reader several of his translations seem "unmotivated," slow, and redundant (225). Anzaldúa implicates herself in this kind of redundancy by compensating for the non-English aspects of her text through strategies of literal or contextual translation. Hedley underlines this penchant toward repetition in more glowing terms, when she argues that Anzaldúa's text "assumes coherence from a reader's perspective not through narrative chronology and not by sustaining a discursive argument, but through repetition and recapitulation, the structural hallmarks of Anzaldúa's mythographic approach" (46). Whatever the motivation, is it possible that in trying to displace the monolingual reader of her text Anzaldúa may have achieved precisely the opposite effect.

Her care to accommodate her English reader is manifest in the following episode in her text, in which Anzaldúa describes her encounter with her "*tono*," what she defines as her "animal counterpart" (26):

> Once we were chopping cotton in the fields of Jesus Maria Ranch. All around us the woods. *Quelite* towered above me, choking the stubby cotton that had outlived the deer's teeth.
>
> I swung *el azadón* hard. *El quelite* barely shook, showered nettles on my arms and face. When I heard the rattle the world froze.
>
> I barely felt its fangs. Boot got all the *veneno*. My mother came shrieking, swing her hoe high, cutting the earth, the writhing body. (26)

Anzaldúa explains all of the italicized words in this passage in context. "*Quelite*" is understood to be a weed in that it is in a field, it "chok[es]" the cotton, and it has "nettles" just as "*el azadón*" is understood to be a tool like a hoe insomuch as it swung at a kind of weed and Anzaldúa's narrative self has already stated for the reader that she was "chopping cotton in the fields." Likewise, the English reader recognizes that "*veneno*" is poison or venom (already a close English cognate) because Anzaldúa prefaces the word with the mention of a "rattle" and "fangs" and follows the word with the image of her mother screaming and swinging her hoe at "the writhing body." The Spanish used in this passage doesn't create a voice for a marginalized linguistic community so much as it creates an other-worldly or mythical presence in her text. As a proper noun, "*El Quelite*" is personified and becomes almost menacing, and both "el azadón" and "[el] veneno" seem more than their English counterparts. Her care for her English reader is solicitous, if not gratuitous. She not only cushions in context the italicized words in this passage, but she explicitly defines each word in a separate endnote, further undermining her stated efforts to legitimize her "bastard language" and transform her Anglo reader (preface). Spanish, in this instance, becomes a means of enhancing rather than diminishing the monolingual English reader's experience with the text.

I do not discount Anzaldúa's more aggressive attempts to upend the reading experience of her monolingual reader. As she herself explains regarding her expectations of the code-switching in her text, "Code-switching jerks readers out of their world and makes each think, 'Oh, this is my world, this is another world, this is her world where she does this, where it's possible to say words in Spanish.' It's like taking the counterclockwise and injecting into the clockwise" (Lunsford 59). Accordingly, she includes several, multi-paragraph Spanish entries in her text that are unabashedly inaccessible to the monolingual English reader. Still, the content of these lengthier Spanish segments is usually summarized or reworked into the text (what Rudin describes as strategies of non-literal translation) and the monolingual English reader is often able to grasp the crux of the foreign passages through familiar cognates. Moreover, as Rudin argues, even the disorientation of the monolingual reader in the event of non-translation can create suspense and intrigue within the text. He explains that "For a reader that does not know Spanish, the passage builds up and releases various tensions, while the bilingual reader is left with an impression of needless redundancy and excessive repetition" (226). Likewise, the gross effect of even Anzaldúa's most alienating gestures toward her Anglo reader is suspect. In some instances, she obligates her Anglo reader to reflect on what he/she cannot understand and calls attention to the manifold ambiguities and unknowns that characterize so-called cross- or multicultural communication. Still, in more instances, she clearly plays to her monolingual reader by heightening the suspense of her narrative and mires the bilingual reader in a more sluggish and repetitive text.

Anzaldúa, for example, offers divergent Spanish and English versions of her account of the legend of the appearance of la Virgen de Guadalupe to Juan Diego. While in Spanish she adopts a poetic and sentimental approach to the encounter, her English retelling of the event is

more ethnographic and didactic. The Spanish version is an approximately twenty-line poem that relates in folk-tale fashion the story of "[el] pobre indio" Juan Diego (28):

> *El nueve de diciembre del año 1531/ a las cuatro de la madrugada/ un pobreindio que se llamaba Juan Diego/ iba cruzando el cerro de Tepeyác/ cuando oyó un canto de pájaro./ Alzó al cabeza vío que en la cima del cerro/ estaba cubierta con una brillante nube blanca./ Parada en frente del sol/ sobre una luna creciente/ sostenida por un ángel/ estaba una azteca/ vestida en ropa de india./ Nuestra Señora María de Coatlalopeuh/ se le apareció./ "Juan Diegito* [sic]*, El-que-habla-como-águila,"/ la Virgen le dijo en el lenguaje azteca./ "Para hacer mi altar este cerro eligo./ Dile a tu gente que yo soy la madre de Dios,/ a los indios yo les ayudaré."/ Estó se lo contó a Juan Zumarraga/ pero el obispo no le creyo./ Juan Diego volvió, lleño su tilma/ con rosas de castilla/ creciendo milagrosamente en la nieve,/ Se las llevó al obispo,/ y cuando abrío su tilma/ el retrato de la Virgen/ ahí estaba pintado*. (28)

As if recounting a story long familiar to her, Anzaldúa reimagines the physical attributes of the two characters and recreates the Virgin's words to Juan Diego. She speaks to him tenderly, referring to him with the affectionate "*Diegito*" and using the familiar "tu." The tone of this excerpt is a stark departure from Anzaldúa's less proverbial and more informational English version of the event, which immediately follows. Anzaldúa writes:

> *Guadalupe* appeared on December 9, 1531, on the spot where the Aztec goddess, *Tonantsi* ("Our Lady Mother"), had been worshipped by the Nahuas and where a temple to her had stood. Speaking Nahua, she told Juan Diego, a poor Indian crossing Tepeyac Hill, whose Indian name was *Cuautlaohuac* and who belonged

> to the *mazehual* class, the humblest with the Chichimeca tribe, that her name was *María Coatlalopeuh*. *Coatl* is the *Nahautl* word for serpent. *Lopeuh* means 'the one who has dominion over serpents,' I interpret this as 'the one who is one with the beasts.' Some spell her name, *Coatlaxopeuh* (pronounced "*Cuatlashupe*" in Nahuatl) and say the "*xopeuh*" means "crushed or stepped on with disdain." Some say it means, "she who crushed the serpent," with the serpent as the symbol of the indigenous religion, meaning that her religion was to take the place of the Aztec religion. Because Coatlalopeuh was homophonous to the Spanish Guadalupe, the Spanish identified her with the dark Virgin, Guadalupe, patroness of West Central Spain. From that meeting, Juan Diego walked away with the image of *la Virgen* painted on his cloak. Soon after, Mexico ceased to belong to Spain, and *la Virgen de Guadalupe* began to eclipse all the other male and female religious figures in Mexico, Central America and parts of the U.S. Southwest. "*Desde entonces para el mexicano ser Guadalupano es algo esencial/ Since then for the Mexican*, to be a *Guadalupano* is something essential." (28-29)

She restates all of the essential details of the story as first told in Spanish—the date, the place, the persons involved, and the outcome—and adds to her English rendition of the story a lengthy digression as to the cultural and spiritual significance of the encounter. Seemingly, Anzaldúa compensates for the unknowns in her previous Spanish version of the event by doing more explaining or ethnographic contextualizing in English. The many ethnographic asides in the English paraphrasing of the legend are dizzying—she expands on Juan Diego's Indian ancestry, tells how to pronounce *Coatlaxopeuh* in Nahautl, alleges a linguistic and cultural link between the Aztec and Spanish cults of *la Virgen*, and, ultimately, builds a rationale for her subsequent

declaration, first in Spanish and then in English, of the significance of being "Guadalupano." Aside from having access to a more intimate, folkloric version of the same story the bilingual reader has very little, if any, advantage over the Anglo reader in apprehending or experiencing the text. The preceding twenty lines of Spanish do not displace the monolingual reader so much as they illustrate the extent to which Anzaldúa as writer and as translator calculates what aspects of a story she should reiterate, leave out, or expand upon in her English narration in order to accommodate or provide context for the reader of only English.

The normative use of Spanish in the text suggests that Anzaldúa's primary reader is monolingual; Spanish is the "other" language marked by italics and accounted for by parentheses, footnotes, repetition, context, and other strategies of translation. Anzaldúa's characteristic prose consists of redundant statements such as "*Soy nopal de castilla* like the spineless and therefore defenseless cactus that Mamagrande Ramona grew in the back of her shed" (45), "Racially, culturally and linguistically *somos huérfanos*—we speak an orphan tongue" (58), and/or "*Hocicona, repelona, chismosa,* having a big mouth, questioning, carrying tales are all signs of being *mal criada*" (54)." Typically, she incorporates aspects of local speech into her narrative while keeping her English reader informed of any perceived gaps in content. For instance, in the lengthy Spanish passage in which she expands on the shame that she felt at being different or abnormal within her culture and family, Anzaldúa keeps the attention of the English reader with the refrain of "Esa Gloria" (44) that recurs throughout the passage. This refrain, paired with the fact that Anzaldúa sandwiches the Spanish excerpt in between English portions of text that reiterate the circumstances under which her narrative self comes to terms with her alterity (43-44), signals to the English reader that the passage relates to the author's period of self-repudiation and discovery. Anzaldúa nurses her English-only reader through most

of the inaccessible portions of her the text, softening via translation her more aggressive gestures toward her Anglo-American audience, e.g., "We need you to accept the fact that Chicanos are different, to acknowledge your rejection and negation of us" (85) and "the dominant white culture is killing us slowly with its ignorance" (86).

However, while Anzaldúa keeps her monolingual reader informed as to any major breaches in content, the English-only reader does on occasion miss out on the poetry and the vernacular of her writing in Spanish. This is the case when Anzaldúa recounts, first in English and then in Spanish, the expectation within Chicano culture that women become wives and mothers. In English she states rather plainly, "Educated or not, the onus is still on woman to be a wife/mother—only the nun can escape motherhood. Women are made to feel total failures if they don't marry and have children" (17). In Spanish, she follows with a more pointed and lively exchange that punctuates the aberrance of her lesbian identity within her local community, "*¿Y cuándo te casas, Gloria? Se te va a pasar el tren." Y yo les digo, "Pos si me caso, no va a ser con un hombre." Se quedan calladitas. Sí, soy hija de la Chingada. I've always been her daughter. No 'tes chingando*" (17). Though it is possible that the monolingual reader could intuit a portion of the dialogue given the timing of the question to the narrator and a basic understanding of Spanish, in this instance the bilingual reader has exclusive access a more intimate and vivid sound bite of the voices informing Anzaldúa's depiction of the tensions surrounding her sexual identity. Likewise, only in Spanish does Anzaldúa include the resolute declaration, "*Ya verás tan bajo que me he caído. Aquí no más encerrada en mi cuarto, sangrándome la cara con las uñas. Esa Gloria que rechaza entregarse a su destino. Quiero contenerme, no puedo y desbordo. Vas ha [sic] ver lo alto que voy a subir, aquí vengo*" (44) or the strong accusation that "*El Anglo con cara de inocente nos arrancó la lengua*" (54). While the

untranslated excerpts of Anzaldúa's text typically do not convey essential content that is not expressed elsewhere, they often provide color, emotion, or lyricism not reproduced by her various strategies of translation.

If on the one hand, Anzaldúa mitigates her strong criticisms of a presumably white, hegemonic North-American culture by her persistent catering to the Anglo-reader via translation, on the other she challenges the dominant expectations of literary practice and interpretation by attempting to normalize a multilingual or, at least, multi-voiced text. The unresolved tensions in her approach to both writing and translating are instructive in that they point to the fine line between making a caricature of a local language and community and providing a reality-based portrait of a group of people for Chicano/a and/or Latino/a writers. Chicana author Ana Castillo reveals her cynicism toward the first approach in Chicano literature when she writes:

> On the one hand, we may choose to adopt standard English and white writing standards, using material from our cultural heritage as a 'motif.' This, in my opinion, would reduce our poetry to Oaxacan paper cuts strung from beam to beam; white standards the firm structure, with Hispanic flourishes lending the local color that sanctions the celebrated fallacy of the melting pot. (*Massacre* 167)

Castillo resents the way in which Spanish words are used to "decorate" the otherwise monolingual text; she insinuates that instead of promoting multiculturalism such a practice can encourage the trivialization if not the subordination of the Hispanic culture. Similarly, Pérez Firmat posits that:

> Like other ethnic writing, Latino literature is bound to a pedagogical imperative that requires it not only to distract, entertain, elevate, but also teach; it must be *útil* as well as *dulce* (*de guayaba*). And what does Latino literature teach? For the

> most part, what its readers already know, or think they know about Latinos, Latinas, and Latin Americans: that they are slightly wacky, somewhat mysterious, very sensuous, and definitely spiritual. (140)

Thus, for the Chicano and/or U.S. Latino author the task of translating is increasingly onerous and thorny insomuch as he/she feels obligated to string along the monolingual reader and, at the same time, break down social and cultural barriers in a way that does not perpetuate current power structures. This dilemma is apparent in Anzaldúa's text insomuch as she offers herself as a "mediator" between "men and women of color" and "white society" (85), and she also celebrates not having to "*rendir cuentas a nadie*" (21) because, in her words, "unlike Chicanas and other women of color who grew up white or who have only recently returned to their native cultural roots, I was totally immersed in mine" (21).

I do not want to argue that the literary value of a Chicano text stems from how much or how appropriately Spanish is used in a text—nor do I want to create an argument about the authenticity of the author—so much as I hope to emphasize that skepticism toward the penchant for code-switching and translation in the multilingual text is productive when the author takes upon him or herself the role of community spokesperson or representative; In trying to both write and/or translate for an Anglo audience and speak on behalf of a marginalized community, Chicano and/or Latino authors enter a minefield of essentialisms and unsubstantiated generalizations.

The problem of Nahuatl in her text, or as Anzaldúa refers to it, the "sprinkling of Nahuatl" (preface np) further illustrates the slippery slope upon which Chicano authors position themselves when they recur to language as adornment—when they cherry-pick individual words of language in order to support larger claims about a culture or group of people. There is hardly

anything fluent or convergent about Anzaldúa's recourse to this indigenous language. Most of the Nahuatl words in the text are mythological names that are seemingly untranslatable for their character as sacred designations and invocations. The problem with this word-level borrowing is that it has the effect of infantilizing or fetishing the language by isolating it from its larger linguistic context. As it stands, Anzaldúa's text not only characterizes Nahuatl as mythological and magical but as pre-linguistic and premodern. By "sprinkling" her text with bits of Nahuatl—by invoking the likes of *Coatlalopeuh, Huitzilopochtil,* and the mythic homeland of Aztlán—she aims to create a mythological foundation for her text, and as a result, a privileged stance of enunciation for herself as subject and speaker. More than her use of Spanish and Spanglish in the text, her borrowing of Nahautl words seems motivated or, at least, limited by essentialist notions of the larger Aztec and Nahua cultures.

Yet, is there a correct, responsible way to write a multilingual text? Could or should strategies of code-switching or word-level borrowing be standardized?[6] For whom, if anyone, should Chicano or U.S. Latino authors write? Moreover, are Anzaldúa's fears that she will "lose the people" (Lundsford 41) that she wants to affect or change on account of the trans- or multilingual gestures of her text founded? Ernst Rudin implicitly counters her concern when he asks, "Why should we require intelligibility from the authors of "New Literatures" if we celebrate at the same time the cryptic texts of consecrated and canonized writers? [. . .] And why should the use of foreign language entries be regarded as an asset in *The Waste Land* and in the *Cantos* but as a drawback in multicultural texts?" (223-24). The question that looms over

[6] In "Revolution Through Poetic Language: Bilingualism in Latina Poetry from *la frontera*," Jeraldine Kraver is critical of the efforts of Chicano writer Gary Keller, along with sociolinguist Guadalupe Valdés Fallis, to "codify the process of code-switching, imposing on the practice a set of acceptable situational parameters or qualitative standards." She claims that the standardization of the practice would work against the "instinctual types of urges that motivate [Latino/a] writers" and cites as an example the writing of Chicana author Cherríe Moraga (194).

Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera* is whether her efforts to make her writing "intelligible" for her Anglo reader undermine the transformative aspirations of her text? Her visible translational wranglings attest to the extent to which her ostensibly multilingual text is in the end quite univocal. While her multilingual poetics are, at times, productive of a "third place," she frequently infringes upon the linguistic sovereignty of this new space through her reluctance to truly abandon the borders established for and by the Anglo reader. Certainly, the dissonances between Anzaldúa's uncompromising theorizations of the border and her conciliatory strategies of translation should not lead the reader to discount the larger possibilities of her text. As Rudin asserts, "novels do not stand or fall by their use of bilingual techniques" (230). However, I hope to emphasize in contrast to or, perhaps, along with Anzaldúa that she hampers the creation of "new" or "third" place by her hesitance to displace or wholly upend the literary expectations of the monolingual reader.

Theory and Non-Translation in Cota-Cárdenas' *Puppet*

While Anzaldúa's narrative self touts her inherent *mestiza* ambivalence and her "total immersion" in her "native cultural roots" (21) as grounds for the authority of her narration, Margarita Cota-Cárdenas' semi-autobiographical protagonist worries that she is disconnected from the larger Chicano movement and culture and fears that she is inadequate to represent her migrant worker friends in their quest to make public the unjust murder of their friend "Puppet"—whose story both the author and the protagonist attempt to narrate. As Desireé Martín argues, Cota-Cárdenas' "Petra 'Pat' Leyva is relentlessly plagued by what she perceives to be her inability to embody an *authentic* Chicana self" (91). However, as Martín also insinuates, through Petra's insistence on her placelesseness within Chicano society Cota-Cárdenas, at the same time,

establishes herself as a cultural mediator, Chicana spokesperson, and community activist. Because she does not fully identify with any of the groups depicted in her text—her Chicano activist friends, her academic friends, her Mexican friends, the migrant construction workers for the contracting company where Pat is an administrative assistant, and the farm laborers that her family housed in her childhood—she also somewhat identifies with all of them.

Anzaldúa implicates herself in this nowhere-but-everywhere positioning when she writes, "*A veces no soy nada ni nadie. Pero hasta cuando no lo soy, lo soy*" (85). Like Anzaldúa, Cota-Cárdenas builds a case for the exceptionalism and versatility of her narrator/protagonist. Yet, more than Anzaldúa, Cota-Cárdenas quietly and steadily bolsters the authoritative claims of her narration by the bold linguistic or formal strategies of her text. I concur with Martín in arguing that in its "radical interrogation of language and translation" the first edition of *Puppet* "deviates from the now dominant mode of hybrid identities and liminal, transnational spaces" as in *Borderlands/La Frontera* and other more well-known Chicano texts (91-92). Instead of foregrounding the act of translation in her text, Cota-Cárdenas actually negates the possibility of translation by building her narrative around a chorus of competing and unfiltered transnational voices in Spanish, English, and Spanglish. These voices combine and collide such that they indicate the permeability of national languages and challenge the traditional parameters of literary practice and interpretation. Through her unflinching multilingualism in *Puppet*, Cota-Cárdenas founds a "new" place of enunciation like that space envisioned, but never fully realized, in Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera*.

Comparing these two novels and their authors provides many productive points of contrast, especially considering the circumstances surrounding their publication and reception. While *Borderlands/La Frontera* has birthed a virtual industry of secondary criticism since its

publication in 1987, relatively little has been published about Cota-Cárdenas' 1985 *Puppet* or her other works of prose and poetry. Withstanding the novel's status as an "underground classic" (Rebolledo xv) and its resurgence in Chicano literary circles following the bilingual edition of the novel by University of New Mexico Press in 2000, there are still only a handful of secondary articles and/or book chapters relevant to *Puppet* and Cota-Cárdenas' other works.[7] The vast disproportion between the two authors' readerships highlights the difficulties Cota-Cárdenas faced in trying to publish her predominantly Spanish novel in the U.S. literary market. As Martín Rodríguez asserts, "si publicar siendo mujer resulta ya difícil, unirle las dificultades de publicar en español lo convierte en una tarea casi imposible" (68).[8] Similarly, Tey Rebolledo posits, "Because it was written in Spanish and published by a small press, *Puppet* had its distribution problems from the start. With no wide distribution system for sending out books, readership suffered" (xiv-xv). While Cota-Cárdenas published her text with the diminutive Relámpago Press in Austin, Anzaldúa was able to link her novel with the growing cadre of texts surrounding the women's movement in the U.S. by publishing with the burgeoning Aunt Lute Books/

[7] The MLA International Bibliography, for instance, lists only two peer-reviewed articles of literary criticism directly concerned with *Puppet*—as well as two interviews with the author, an article of literary biography, and two dissertations that partially discuss the novel. These works of criticism, in addition to a couple of articles about Cota-Cárdenas' poetry, a number of articles of secondary criticism written by Cota-Cárdenas herself, and a few other secondary articles and book chapters relevant to the novel from other sources, comprise the slight secondary bibliography on *Puppet* and all of Cota-Cárdenas' other texts. A basic search for "Anzaldúa" on the database nets 240 results (MLA International Bibliography).

[8] Martín Rodríguez argues that the neglect of Chicana writers by the early publishing houses associated with the Chicano Movement, particularly Quinto Sol, compounded the other obstacles to publishing encountered by these women writers, e.g., lack of educational and professional opportunities outside of the home and a preference for poetry and shorter fiction. He explains, "A partir de la institución de los premios anuales Quinto Sol, la novel chicana empieza a conocer un auge inusitado en la década de 1970: vientiocho novelas publicadas en esa década recogen la bibliografías más completas; de entre ellas sólo dos son escritas por chicanas y—el detalle es interesante—ambas son publicadads por cuenta de sus autoras y no en editoriales establecidas" (67-68).

Spinsters press out of San Francisco. According to their website, Aunt Lute remains a non-profit press aimed at promoting works by and for "lesbians and women of color"—especially in its early instances—"lesbians and women of color" who wrote in English. As Martín Rodríguez explains, early North American feminist presses like Aunt Lute/Spinsters (he also mentions Naiad and Kitchen Table) had a different intended public than publishing houses associated with the Chicano movement (70). He argues, "En ese sentido, el uso del inglés (aun cuando se conserve una cierta dosis de español) es casi obligatorio, si se quiere llegar a ese público" (70). Accordingly, Cota-Cárdenas hampered her prospects of a larger readership from the outset when she chose to write her hybrid novel primarily in Spanish. From a marketing standpoint, she failed to make the linguistic concessions necessary to create a text within the perceived formula for publishing success.

The lack of a broader readership for her first novel also attests to the extent to which the unconventional formal and linguistic strategies of the text are challenging and not easily translatable for a mainstream U.S. audience. *Puppet* is formidable both for its non-linear, stream-of-conscious narrative and the non-translated English, Spanish, and Spanglish voices that compete in the text. Cota-Cárdenas herself concedes the potential difficulties of her text when she says, "Es muy posible que el estilo mosaico de pensamientos, comentarios o frases autorreferenciales, etc., [. . .], se recibieran o vieran por los lectores como demasiado reto con que lidiar. Mis libros no son "*safe*" ni "fáciles," especialmente en el caso de *Puppet*" (Capdevila Guitérrez 260). On account of its reeling, self-referential narrative and its linguistic acrobatics the novel has more affinities with multilingual novels such as Vladimir Nabokov's *Pale Fire*, Guillermo Cabrera Infante's *Tres tristes tigres*, and Giannina Braschi's *Yo-Yo Boing!* than with the ostensibly monolingual, bildungsroman-type novels of near Chicano/a contemporaries such

as Sandra Cisneros' *House on Mango Street* or Estela Portillo Trambley's *Trini*. As Martín indicates, "the language, form, and style of the novel explode strict boundaries at every turn, symbolically reflecting the transnational condition of Chicano/as in the United States" (92). In *Puppet*, Cota-Cárdenas does not "write for" so much as she draws the reader into the unpredictable and likely unfamiliar world of her text as both a pawn and as a collaborator.

The challenges of her narrative and her language are the strongest selling points of her novel. Unlike Anzaldúa, whose text is full of multilingual *moments*, the majority of which are accounted for by some strategy of translation, Cota-Cárdenas offers a multilingual *text* that negates the possibility of translation in the traditional sense, insomuch as translating the individual voices of her text into a standard national language would take away from the overall character or integrity of her larger narrative.[9] Debra Castillo argues that truly "interlingual" literary texts,

> defy translation into either of their constituent parts in a particularly strong sense, for to translate such performative utterances into either Spanish or English would be to distort them into meaninglessness, to subject them to a kind of linguistic assimilation and erasure. Such translations could speak to the reader only in a very limited sense, since they would inextricably dislocate the doubleness of the language into an unacceptable version of the monolinguism against which these writers are defining their entire poetics. (12)

Likewise, in the first edition of *Puppet*, Cota-Cárdenas builds her narrative around the discordant voices and shifting languages of her protagonists and obligates her reader to plot a course

[9] I draw from Rudin's distinction between "bilingualism in literature" and bilingual literature," in which "bi" is understood to "indicate two elements of equal or at least comparable weight, format, or scope" (10).

through their double, multilingual world. The branding of the 2000 edition of the novel as "bilingual" by University of New Mexico Press is an exaggeration, in that the strongest case for its "bilingualism" rests on the inclusion of the 1985 edition of the novel on the flipside of the otherwise predominantly English translation of her novel.[10] Both Rebolledo's claims in her introduction to the new edition that in it the reader is able to access a Chicano reality" because "the English version has uniquely incorporated some Spanish so that reader finds the meaning through an immediate translation or by context" (xv) and Martín's insistence that both versions of Puppet are "thoroughly multilingual" (93) are excessively optimistic. Rather, I argue that on a formal or a linguistic level the English version of *Puppet* reads more like Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera*. Apart from occasional asides in Spanish that momentarily disorient the Anglo reader, the prose is doctored to accommodate and hold the attention of the monolingual reader, whereas the bi- or multilingual reader encounters a more filtered and redundant text. At best, the inclusion of Cota-Cárdenas's first edition of her novel on the flip-side of the English translation speaks to the distance between the successive versions.

I do not lament the wider access afforded by the "bilingual" edition of *Puppet* so much as I fear the possibility that the English translation will become the definitive edition of the novel. It is telling that when Cota-Cárdenas published her second novel, *Santuarios del corazón* in 2005, the "bilingual" edition of the novel (i.e., an English translation with the predominantly Spanish manuscript included afterward) was the first and only edition. The English translation of the new novel, by Barbara Riess and Trino Sandoval in collaboration with Cota-Cárdenas, is the de facto

[10] Cota-Cárdenas is said to have been an active collaborator in this edition. Still, it is ironic that the "bilingual" edition of her novel results, in part, from the *excessive* bilingualism of the first edition of her novel.

"first" or primary access point to her text. Cota-Cárdenas provides implicit context for this latter decision when she speaks of her decision to authorize the 2000 edition of *Puppet*. She deadpans,

> Mira, es el supermercado en inglés. Tengo que aceptar que vivo aquí, y que mundialmente, si escribo o traduzco al inglés, más lectores tienen la oportunidad de—vamos a decirlo claramente—comprar mis libros. Ahora, esas escritoras a quienes les brota su creatividad en inglés, o mitad/mitad, pues tienen que hacerlo. Ya planteé mi idea que la voz creativa natural, surge, nace gritando para llorar y reír después, en el idioma de su alma más más íntima. (Capdevila Gutiérrez 261)

While she concedes the appeal of larger readership and a global literary market, she holds to the idea that creative forces, not market incentives, should determine the voice or voices of a literary text.

Earlier in the same interview, she claims that she is motivated by the discursive strategies of authors such as John Dos Passos, Carlos Fuentes, Rosario Castellanos, Nellie Campobello, Rolando Hinojosa, and Tomás Rivera, among others—that these authors prompt her to "jugar con el discurso" and also "dejar que hablaran mi(s) narradora(s) o hablantes, como les diera la real gana" (260). In accord with her stated intentions, *Puppet*, in its first instance, is a profoundly oral text. Whether in Spanish, English, or Spanglish her characters each have their own, not readily translatable linguistic signature—as illustrated by lines of dialogue such as Puppet-Hamlet's distinctive "Vivil o no vivil, ésa es la plegunta.." (47), the drug-trafficker Samuel Longoray's hardened Spanglish banter such as, "Ah come on, compa, **no se raje,** [. . .] Ve, Cerote, my compa and me, we're like **brothers**, seguro, puros hermanos, and he's no Malinchi, I tol' you" (76, Cota-Cárdenas' emphasis), or the sardonic narrator's characteristic jeering as in statements like "A ver, cómo va, cómo va? Ja, ja, ja, a ver qué qué de 'braun ais'... ja, ja...," in

response to the image of "BROWN EYES" in Petra's poem (30).[11] I maintain that the distinctive timbre and linguistic agility of these characters is either muted or considerably labored in translation and that the patent inadequacy of the "bilingual" translation speaks to the pioneering multilingual aesthetics of the novel in its first instance.

The many different characters and voices in *Puppet* underline the linguistic variability and versatility of the individuals in U.S. Southwest community depicted in the novel. The main protagonist, Petra Leyva—also referred to as Pat, Petrita, Patricia, Petru, among other names—proves as variable as her name in her chameleon-like capacity to absorb and reproduce the voices of the many individuals with whom she interacts as she is drawn into the questions surrounding the death of her friend *Puppet.*[12] While on a discursive level she frequently doubts her role in uncovering, creating, and promoting the true story of his murder, e.g.," No sabía todavía exactamente por qué Memo decidió confiar en mí, pero empezó a llamar por teléfono en esos días para informarme de lo que se iba sabiendo" (13) or "No quiero pensar todo esto que he estado pasando y repasando como grabadora…no quiero y encuentro que al entrar a la mortuoria, sigo componiendo frases, fragmentos de poemas, escenas en la cabeza" (45)—on a formal or linguistic level she is hardly tentative. She is the figurative "rock" upon which the other characters record or engrave their voices.

She showcases her linguistic versatility as she weaves in and out of the mass of personalities in the novel and then deciphers and reproduces their distinguishable linguistic foibles; in doing so, she builds her case for her privileged stance of enunciation. She, for

[11] Unless otherwise indicated, all bold or capital typeface lettering is Cota-Cárdenas' emphasis.

[12] In a similar vein, Martín Rodríguez argues, "Así como la idefinición del nombre de Petra, también la fluidez de voces y discursos que hemos notado como caracteristica de la novela apunta hacia una concepción antiesencialista de la identidad" (76).

example, recounts Memo's clipped Spanish when he speaks of Puppet's death: "—...Jue por na'a... Murió por na'a el batito...Lo poco que nos ha podido 'ijir el tío..." (109); the fluent and youthful English of her Chicana daughter María who complains, "then when I didn't even know what a quinceañera was… Well, they all laughed in the kitchen and Estér told me to ask my hot-shot mother, the Spanish teacher, what that was… Yeah, I was embarrassed" (8); the hesitant Spanish of her Chicana student who tells her, "This is Sally Aguirre, de su clase para los que trabajan en los hospitales…I can't make it to class tonight [. . .] Something happened to a a [sic] friend of mine, from the barrio" (37); the accented English of the farm laborers Wimpy and El Güero who tease the young Petra for reading the comics by calling her "Mees fanibuc" (25); and, certainly, the easily identifiable Spanish of Puppet-Hamlet, whose words are marked by a speech impediment that causes him to mix up the "l" and the "r" sounds. Petra imagines that he tells her, "Pala qué m'balacealon esos dos chotas,/ eso e lo q' quielo sabel, pala qué...yo/ qué les jice, qué...? [. . .] me quedé con muchas/ pleguntas...no tuve tiempo de pleguntal na'a...ARGO..." (47-48). In these instances and several others, Petra lithely switches from one linguistic register to another—providing a dizzying, synchronic portrait of a wide swath of Chicano society in the U.S. Southwest. Cota-Cárdenas uses Petra to provide a forum for the fifty-plus, largely disenfranchised voices conversant in her novel and, as a result, she lends visual and oral emphasis to her desires to capture, reproduce, and even represent the marginalized voices of a Chicano society.

Petra functions as a virtual tape-recorder in the novel, the sounding-board onto which the other characters project their frustrations, fears of injustice, and personal histories. Even when Petra resists this role, she reinforces it: "No quiero pensar todo esto que he estado pasando y repasando como grabadora… no quiero y encuentro que al entrar a la mortuoria, sigo

componiendo frases, fragmentos de poemas, escenas en la cabeza" (45). Cota-Cárdenas' care to emphasize Petra's inhibitions allows her to, at the same time, highlight Petra's roles as a community spokesperson and a cultural mediator—roles which, in many respects, parallel the social responsibilities taken on by Cota-Cárdenas herself. Both women are professors of Chicano literature, divorced mothers, and second-generation Mexican-Americans, with the crucial ability to speak and write in Spanish, English, and Spanglish, and with close ties to the university, local Mexican migrant workers, and the Chicano activist community. The author signals her autobiographical connection to her protagonist when she teases that while "fictitious" her novel "is based on an actual series of events" (iv) and when she recognizes her friend "Memo" in the acknowledgements and/or reconocimientos section of her novel—referencing Petra's long-time friend and advocate who urges her to transform into words Puppet's story (v). Moreover, Cota-Cárdenas puts the whole of her authorial weight behind Petra's investigations in the novel when she dedicates her novel to the "powerless, who like Puppet, must struggle daily for their small share of human dignity and respect" (vii). I don't aim to establish the two women as one and the same so much as I emphasize that Cota-Cárdenas' efforts to bolster the credentials of Petra as a recorder and interpreter of Chicano society also build a case for how she as an author is uniquely able to bridge the manifold moments of frustrated speech and miscommunication depicted in her novel and encountered in her own society. Petra's "balazos… escritos" (30) reflect on how Cota-Cárdenas' stakes out her narrative authority through language usage.

Petra's role and, by implication, Cota Cárdenas' role as the author becomes even more significant considering the many depictions of characters either paralyzed, traumatized, or somehow hampered by problems of mis- or in-communication in the novel. In her dialogues with the novel's large supporting cast, Petra provides raw and relatively unfiltered accounts of these

individuals' struggles to communicate. When Memo fails to find the words to tell Pat/Petra on the phone that Puppet was killed, Petra recalls that "Aquí se le fue la voz. Le pregunté si podía venir a contármelo en persona" (1). Similarly, when Memo recounts the death of his brother Félix, Petra describes, "Aquí Memo ya no puede hablar, yo volteo a examinar la pared porque no necesito verlo para saber que llora. Puedo oír que traga, trata de decirme algo, se levanta de repente y sale bruscamente hacia la camioneta" (3). Memo's inability to communicate is compounded by his memories of his brother's last moments, which were marked by the horror of not being able to speak. He tells Petra,

> A lo último, me miraba con unos ojos grandes de espanto, la cara toda torcida, y empezó a querer 'ijirme algo...hacía muecas muy feas, abría la boca grande para hablar y se le arqueaba la espalda porque se levantaba en parte de la cama tratando de decirme algo, pero no le salía nada...no podía pronunciar nada...Y se espantaba más y más con el horror de no poder. (9-10)

Petra's experiences with frustrated and incommunicative friends and acquaintances build to an almost frenzied pitch in the novel. When Petra asks her female student, Estér, to respond to a male student's denunciation of feminism and its effect on the Chicano movement, Estér does not respond and, instead, breaks into tears. "Qué crees tú, Estér...? El feminismo es **bueno** o **malo**...etc...? Ah, no quieres decir...? Tienes...miedo...? Qué dices, Nestorcito? [. . .] Estér, **por qué lloras**...qué te pasa...?" (88). Likewise, Petra recalls the panic that seized her as a young child when she realized that she couldn't tell her recently deceased friend, Wimpy, that his brother died in a car accident en-route to Wimpy's funeral. She recounts, "Empecé a llorar, sintiendo una confusión pesada, haciéndoseme un nudo la desesperación porque no le había podido decir al Wimpy que era su hermano el que había muerto" (25-26). Further, Petra learns of

the trauma of an undocumented Mexican woman when she delivered her first child in a hospital where no one spoke Spanish—how, while in labor, the woman cried out, "NO NO HABLAS ESPAÑOL? [. . .] qué qué me hacen no me meta el dedo me duele todo todo me estoy muriendo y vea que hay sangre"—and how the woman's trauma persisted to the point that she nearly bled to death at home for fear of returning to the hospital to deliver her second child (30). She gives Petra a muted explanation of her actions, "—Señora...lo siento, yo no puedo...hay cosas que una no quiere...esos recuerdos, ya ni con mi marido los quiero compartir" (40). Finally, capping many incidents of miscommunication in the novel, Petra imagines Puppet/Hamlet recriminating **"...**Saben? me quedé con muchas pleguntas...no tuve tiempo de pleguntal na'a...ARGO... (48), and she allows the intermittent refrain, "QUERIA DECIRNOS ALGO PERO NO PODIA" (15, 20, 76), to interrupt her narration—which excerpts reiterate the linguistic and emotional angst of several of the socially marginalized characters in the novel.[13] In all of these examples, Cota Cárdenas provides an incisive portrait of her characters' anxieties about being misunderstood or unable to communicate.

[13] Two other notable examples of frustrated or, in this case, repressed communication in the novel are Petra's friend Medeiro's comments on the oppressive silence concerning the Tlatelolco massacre in Mexico and Memo's recounting of the difficulties Puppet's friends have had in getting to talk to Puppet's uncle, the only witness of Puppet's death. Medeiros says of Tlatelolco "Me cuenta en la carta que no saben cuántos fueron, esa noche en Tlatelolco...no se sabe...no se sabe... pero algunos están ya escribiendo cosas, cosas que nadie publicará, porque no se vio ni por la televisión ni en los periódicos ni en la radio nadie nadie dijo nada... [. . .] Lo que se dijo oficialmente, ni se aproxima a la verdad, dice Chema en su carta" (67). Likewise, Memo recalls the bureaucratic conspiracy of silence surrounding Puppet's surviving uncle. He reveals to Petra that Puppet's uncle is not allowed to talk: "todavía está el tío del batito bajo police guard. Nadie le ha podido hablar, para confirmar o refutar o saber **si** la versión de la chota, la versión que Memo no cree por nada en absoluto..." (91), nor is he able and willing to talk: "...Al tío no le podemos jacer hablar casi na'a, dice que no quiere recordarlo..." (107) and/or "—...Jue por na'a... Murió por na'a el batito...Lo poco que nos ha podido 'ijir el tío..." (109). In these instances, Cota-Cárdenas reaffirms the horrors of institutionalized silence in her novel.

As a corollary, she emphasizes the need for a narrator and/or community spokesperson able to assuage or compensate for the frustrations of the linguistically marginalized voices depicted in the novel. Petra undergoes a gradual and very opportune transformation as she internalizes the social and linguistic anxieties of those persons with whom she interacts; their collective experiences motivate Petra to overcome her own trepidations and to use her words, her linguistic agility, to combat social injustice. She voices her resolution most forcefully toward the end of the novel, when she tells Memo, "Pues no más con la fuerza de nuestros escritos y nuestras palabras, podemos cambiar muchas cosas y hacer mucho más...[. . .] Soy la que fui hace mucho tiempo. Como cuando éramos niños y todos sabíamos, instintivamente y con valentía...a actuar...y **decir**..." (134). She resolves to be as bold and as unbridled in speaking out as when she was a child and was less constrained by societal fears or pressures. Her arrival at this conclusion is a welcome outcome to the other characters, who emphasize throughout the novel her mediative value to them and seek her help as a translator. The incessant ringing of Petra's telephone—the many calls of encouragement, calls for help, and calls of collaboration relevant to Puppet's death—punctuates the demand for Petra's input by the other characters. As Memo tells her about why he and his fellow laborers approached her about chronicling and publishing the circumstance of Puppet's life and death, "—Sabes, te teníamos miedo porque nos había dicho Stan [. . .] que eras maestro de español y que trabajabas también en la universidad... / Pero como te pudíanos hablar en español, se nos hizo que pos..." (3-4). Similarly, when her sister, la Beli, asks Petra to help her in her struggling marriage, she pleads, "Pat,...I...Pat...Help me, Pat...I... You have an education, you've lived so much…Manita, ayúdame…" (94). For these characters, Petra is indispensable; they portray her as able to transcend local boundaries of language, class,

and space through her linguistic agility and her resultant connections to both marginalized and institutionalized groups within her hypothetical Southwest community.

The novel's sardonic and self-referential narrator, perhaps an extension of Petra herself, reaffirms and makes light of this positioning when he/she jibes Petra, saying,

> En aquel entonces tú eras muy popular, umjum, bueno porque siempre andabas quedando bien, no hacías preguntas demasiado serias, te ajustabas al rol más o menos. Menos, por ser divorciada con hijos y tú ya te acuerdas lo que respondían tu padre tus tíos a ESO... Más, porque siendo una de las pocas **mexican-american** educated women, le dabas por representar a tu gente...desde la primaria andabas quedando muy bien, te elegían pa'acá te elegían pa'allá (como si juera una samba? Jajaja) y tú con el **smile** ése andabas muy líder, a veces hasta cuando no hacía falta, pues metías la cuchara... (99)

By having several of the voices in the novel build Petra's image as a "líder," representative, translator, and mediator, Cota-Cárdenas achieves a concerted and self-effacing strategy of asserting the cultural and translational authority of her central protagonist, and, by implication, the authoritative claims of her own narrative.[14] By emphasizing the strengths of Petra's character, her ability to move from one social and/or linguistic milieu to another, she underlines

[14] Other incidences of characters indicating Petra's worth to them as a writer, mediator, and representative include Loreto's insistence that Petra continue writing, "Hazte valiente, mujer...Si yo he visto a *otra Petra*.. pues en tus otras poesías... [. . .] Pero no dejes de escribir, Petra, uno no se puede ya callar..." (31), Loreto's words of encouragement to Petra: "—Oh, Petra, tú todavía ni sabes lo que puedes hacer... Ni cuenta te das todavía..." (34), Memo's implicit pleading with her that she'll become involved with Puppet's story, "somebody's gotta do it, mija…" (13), and, also, Petra's own imagining of Memo's desires that she'll continue pursuing the questions and injustices surrounding Puppet's death: "Se me queda mirando largo mi amigo, su cara sudada color bronce a la luz de la ventana esta tarde. Sus ojos me interrogan, preguntas inauditás pero inquietantemente presentes: Quién nos ayuda? Por qué tienen miedo? Quién nos representa, habla por nojotros, me da la mano en todo esto que nos sigue pasando, nos sigue pasando, nos sigue pasando?" (102).

the productive ambivalence of a "Chicana" identity, an identity which Anzaldúa champions as the perspective of "the new mestiza."

Yet, more than Anzaldúa, Cota-Cárdenas girds her narrative authority in the multilingual acrobatics of her text. Through Petra's agile maneuverings and the peculiar speech habits of her other characters, Cota-Cárdenas gives voice to several minority speakers within her Southwest community and exposes the permeable confines of English and Spanish as national languages. Petra, for example, normalizes switching back and forth from Spanish into English, and vice versa, in her conversations with her many friends, relatives, and acquaintances. When speaking to her friend Memo, her activist friends Venus or Chavela, and, to a lesser extent, her daughter María, she recurs to a more splintered form of both languages—as when she tells Memo, "—There's all kinds of mexicanos, Memo... You know that about most of our kids… Pues los tuyos también… tampoco hablan muy bien el español… Y hay otros, hasta *maestros* de español… y los hijos… Yes, *chicanos* is better… It's okay, Memo, maybe sometime I can teach you to read… (16), or when she tells María, "Listen, María… I know how you feel… But your Dad spoke English only, we were far from the family, and it was the easy way out… por lo menos, quisiste aprender después, lo hiciste por tu cuenta, y lo hiciste bien" (8).[15] Yet, when speaking

[15] Another, more extreme example, occurs as Petra works the reception desk as a part of her job for Southwest City Estates. Petra answers:

> "—….Aló, I mean, Good Afternoon, Southwest City Estates…No, Stan isn't here…Who…? Oh, Paco Jiménez from the Mex-Am C of C…Ajá…sí, hablo esp…mande…? No, no creo que no hayamos conocido [. . .] What can I do for you Mr...oh, Paco, all right… Boletos…? [. . .] Sure…cómo no, hasta luego…Excuse me? Oh!...Petra, Patricia Leyva de...well, just Pat Leyva is fine…Sure, no trouble…bye…" (98).

While, for the most part, Petra seems to effortlessly alternate between English and Spanish—in this instance, she seems somewhat skittish. Her responses are cordial but, also, clipped and confused. When she tells her caller that her name is, at once, "Petra," "Patricia," and "Pat," she seems uncertain as to which self or persona she should present in the conversation. Though we are privy to only one side of the conversation, Pat seems noticeably dizzied by the exchange.

with her mother (a first-generation immigrant), her friend Medeiros (a former teacher in Mexico), her activist friend Loreto, or other acquaintances that speak primarily Spanish Petra maintains a more unbroken variety of "Standard Mexican Spanish." Likewise, when writing Puppet's story in English or when talking to her reporter friend Sandy, her ex-husband Vittorio, or her youngest daughter Marisa, she shows that she is equally adept at maintaining a fairly consistent variety of "Standard American English."[16] While Spanish predominates in the text, the reader of either Spanish or English is forced to adapt as Petra adapts to her ever-changing socio-linguistic circumstances. As a result, he/she internalizes the linguistic contortions that both result from and shape Petra's Chicana identity.

Cota-Cárdenas insinuates the cumulative, psychological effects of Petra's constant switching between Spanish and English most forcefully in the numerous internal battles or dissensions between Petra and the novel's self-referential narrator. Throughout the novel, the two (who are possibly one and the same) banter over Pat's choice of words, idiom, storyline, and/or the overall narrative direction. The narrator, for example, interrupts Petra's recounting of how she promised Memo that she would teach him to read in Spanish, saying, (Oh seguro, *sometime* les va a enseñar a tus propios hijos…[. . .])" (16), and he/she interrupts Petra's story about an episode from her youth to say, "Qué qué? Qué point? (5), and then mocks the turn of the narrative saying, "SI SIEMPRE FUISTE MUY DAYDREAMER PANIC BUTTON ROMANTICACA" (6). Elsewhere in the text, he/she warns Petra to mind the bounds of her

[16] Cota-Cárdenas inconsistently depicts how Petra adapts her speech according to her socio-linguistic context. For instance, while Petra implies in her conversation with her daughter María and later in the text that she and her ex-husband Vittorio communicate primarily in English (8, 79), in other episodes of the text and/or imagined encounters with Vittorio she speaks to him mostly in Spanish (41, 62, 71). Moreover, she initially talks to her newspaper friend, Sandy, in Spanish (15), and then later speaks to him mostly in English (111-15). It is unclear whether these slippages in Petra's linguistic wranglings and reimaginings are intentional or inadvertent.

narrative, “Cuidado, y te estás saliendo fuera de papel” (11); complains that she is being excessively detailed, “(Te vas fijando… hasta en los detalles *más nimios*… [. . .] Bueno, a una niña se lo dejo pasar, pero a ti, viejonona…)” (18); accuses her of recurring to “la raza” as a buzz word, “Sí, muy amante de ‘mi raza’ aquí, y ‘mi raza’ allá, como si fuera una samba, *samba*” (30); pokes fun at her for sounding too academic, “(O que la profa! Siempre salió otra vez con las suyas...)” (33); chides her for fantasizing about her ex-husband, “Ja, ja, de veras les vas a contar de Vittorio? [. . .] Bueno, adelante, burrita, but I don’t think I want to stick around for this...Chale...” (41); laments her lack of progress writing Puppet’s lifestory, “Oh, sí, muy fácil, anímate...horas y horas de tratar de escribir una versión de la vida de Puppet [. . .] y todo lo que logras son fragmentos, puro stuttering romantichucho...” (49); questions her choice of language in writing Puppet’s story, “Ay, tú qué self-righteous... Mira, si insistes, por lo menos trata de esto en castellano…” (17); and, also in reference to her writing Puppet’s story in English, mocks her use of “whom” instead of “who,” “(Válgame el *whom*, qué *smart* eres tú)” (16). All of these self-reflexive interjections point back to the creation of the text and obligate the reader to more actively consider the narrative and linguistic choices of both Petra as the primary narrator and Cota-Cárdenas as author. As Francisco A. Lomelí argues concerning the novel’s effect on the reader when introducing the novel on the back cover of the first-edition, “Como obra dinámica reta al lector en cada frase. El lenguaje mismo lucha con el lector para absorberlo y bofetearlo, recordándlo que tampoco se deje tratar como títere” (np). The narrator’s attempts to destabilize Petra’s narrative and question her recounting of Puppet’s life story make more transparent for the reader the linguistic and cultural negotiations that Petra and Cota-Cárdenas undertake when writing. Petra’s agency, ambivalence, and uncertainty underscore the extent to which *Puppet*

engages the reader in the creative possibilities and inevitably traitorous choices of an inherently multilingual narration.

The weight and consequence of Petra's language decisions are further apparent in the conflicting advice she receives from her friends about writing in either English or Spanish and in her deliberations about whether or not she writes for an intended reader. Concerning her draft of Puppet's life story, Memo tells her "Qué bueno que los hiciste en inglés, Pat" (16), while her community organizer friend Loreto reads what she has written about Puppet and tells her, "Mira, tú quieres a tu gente, Petra? Bueno, trabaja el cuento…o el relato…a lo mejor saldría mejor en español" (23). Memo seems to think that in English her story will have more social reach, while Loreto implies that for the sake of "[su] gente" and/or "el pueblo" (23) Petra should write in Spanish. Her friends' contradictory views of which national language would be most apt for her story compound Petra's own ambivalence as to which language she should choose or the audience for whom she should write. She, for instance, appraises the text she has been writing as:

> Total, una ensalada de sentimientos confusos, acusaciones... un lashing out, y en inglés... Yo creía que lo escribía de una manera impersonal... no sé en qué lector estaba pensando... era algo o alguien vagamente afuera/allá que comprendiera, que sintiera, que viera... Empecé a escribir y re-escribir, pero no me salía bien la cosa, siempre estaba yo allí juzgando, juzgando a no sé todavía quién... (15)

All at once, she questions the purpose of her narrative, seems somewhat bemused that what she has written is in English, admits to not having a specific intended reader, reveals her disappointment with the drafts that she has written and revised, and voices her disillusionment about the judgmental role that she feels that she adopts as author. Between the conflicting commentary of Petra's friends and Petra's own assorted trepidations, the reader of *Puppet* is

privy to a host of concerns relevant to the creation of a literary and socially-minded text by a multilingual author. By sowing dissension as to the affective potential of either English or Spanish in a Chicano text and emphasizing Petra's confusion as to the appropriate purpose and public of her text, Cota-Cárdenas co-opts her reader into weighing the stakes of messaging in one or the other language and of writing for a specific cultural audience.

Ironically, Petra's creative reservations, particularly her anxieties about language, illustrate Cota-Cárdenas' own deliberateness concerning the poetics of her hybrid, inter- or multi-lingual novel. *Puppet* stands as a novel profoundly preoccupied with and shaped by questions of language. In addition to Petra's singular ability to pivot from one linguistic context to another, the playful and self-reflexive interjections of the novel's narrator, and the intra-textual dissensions about language and audience, Cota-Cárdenas foregrounds issues of language and multilingualism in her novel through several more overt gestures in English, Spanish, and Spanglish. She, for example, mixes languages on a word level; emphasizes her characters' linguistic idiosyncrasies by reproducing their speech through grammatical errors, misspellings, and phonemic re-castings of their words; and writes in one standard language such that she recalls another. As Martín argues, "By emphasizing apparent flaws such as repetition, mispronunciation, misunderstanding, colloquialism, and language mixing, the linguistic games in *Puppet* privilege flexible identities by revealing each person's capacity to shift between the poles of inclusion and exclusion" (92). In *Puppet*, Cota-Cárdenas exploits language to show the possibilities more than the deficiencies of multilingualism.

Besides showing her characters' frustrations about being unable to communicate, Cota-Cárdenas reveals a world where communication abounds with multilingual play, the result of linguistic excess or surplus. For instance, Petra refers to her migraine headaches as "hot-

cakes"—playing with the Spanish word "jaqueca**"** which she claims **"**siempre me recordaba **hot-cakes**" (45). In the same chapter, she conflates her complaints about her "migrañas" (45) or "jotquequis" (53) with her descriptions of the dread instilled by the threat of "la migra" (53). Her depiction of young children screaming "ay viene la migraaaa…..ay mamaaaaá…!" (53) also evokes the pain of her relentless headaches. Likewise, Puppet and his friends jokingly refer to Puppet's girlfriend "Inés" as "Inerest"—recalling Puppet's improvised answer to Inés's question about what would be the English meaning of her name (7). "Inerest" is a sign of the surplus of meaning that Puppet creates through his mistaken or his willful non-translation.

This linguistic surplus is further evident in the creative speech of the novel's imposing narrator who wantonly mixes Spanish and English for added effect or impact, such as when he/she asks Petra "Qué point?" (5), or when he/she refers to Petra's penchant for melodrama as "Romanticaca" (6) or "romantichucho" (49). By mixing Spanish and English and by showcasing her characters' non-standard speech habits through misspellings or phonemic renderings of their words, e.g., "Pos l'ije" instead of "Pues, le dije" (3), "lo'jotros" instead of "los otros" (45), or "güeno" instead of "bueno" (49), Cota-Cárdenas brings linguistically marginalized voices to the forefront in her novel. Moreover, in Hamlet/Puppet's characteristic declarations, such as "Vivil o no vivil, esa es la plegunta" (47) or "**ARGO HUELE MAL EN SOUTHWEST CITY**," she achieves a subtle means of recalling famous or idiomatic English phrases while writing in Spanish (134). In these instances, as well as in every instance in which the characters speak of the eponymous "Puppet"—whose English nickname is the preferred and inexplicable stand-in for the Spanish term "*títere*"—Cota-Cárdenas emphasizes and normalizes the confluence of Spanish and English in her novel. By instigating so much multilingual play in her novel, she makes a compelling case for her own enunciative authority.

Cota-Cárdenas' unrelenting multilingualism is, arguably, the biggest detractor and the greatest strength of her novel. Unlike the more well-known texts of contemporaries such as Gloria Anzaldúa or Rudolfo Anaya, texts that include an alarming number of concessions or translations for the monolingual English reader, Cota-Cárdenas'1985 edition of *Puppet* provides a rigorous and unapologetic foray into the linguistically and nationally ambivalent world of the U.S. Southwest. While the multilingual turns of the text make it more formidable and inaccessible to the reader of only English or only Spanish, the novel is most forceful in dismantling the illusion that Spanish and English are self-containing and impermeable. As Martín argues, "the novel's interrogation of language and translation reveals that the distinction between English as the national language of the United States and Spanish as a 'foreign' language is plainly untenable" (93). Petra's seamless pivoting from one language to the other; the distinguishable linguistic signatures of many of the characters in the text; the non-labored digressions in tone, tempo, and narration, the stand-alone presentation of Spanglish; and the challenge posed to the reader are all mitigated in the "bilingual" edition of the novel.

Certainly, the wider access and renewed attention toward to the first version of the novel prompted by the 2000 edition are positive. However, I maintain that critical enthusiasm for the "bilingual" translation of the novel should not outstep or neglect the singularity and political import of what Cota-Cárdenas accomplishes in the first instance of her novel. Insomuch as *Puppet* is dedicated to "the powerless, who, like Puppet, must struggle daily for their small share of human dignity and self respect" (vii), the first edition of the text, written mostly in Spanish with many non-translated and untranslatable multilingual turns of the narrative, is a more

persuasive renunciation of an "English-only" culture and literary practice.[17] In her novel, Cota-Cárdenas presents Spanish as "una lengua tan viable como el inglés" (Martín-Rodríguez 71) in the unequal linguistic playing field of U.S. and Chicano literatures and, through the countless multilingual gestures of her text, she offers her characters' brands of English, Spanish, and Spanglish as legitimate, standard, and representative voices in North American culture and society. She reaffirms the social aims of her text with the aggressive formal and linguistic gestures of her literary practice.

Because of its bold multilingual poetics *Puppet* is one of the most transformative and undervalued texts in the vanguard of Chicano literature. In the novel, Cota-Cárdenas draws her reader into virtually unchartered territory in the canon of North American literatures—the novel quickly becomes a nationally and linguistically ambivalent space where questions of language and translation freely intrude upon and shape an already reeling narrative. Unlike other contemporary Chicano texts, *Puppet* is marked by Cota-Cárdenas' refusal to accommodate or translate for the monolingual reader. She obligates the monolingual reader of Spanish or English to follow and try to synthesize the unpredictable and border-trespassing voices of the narrative and chooses not to translate or standardize the "foreign," mixed-language, or non-standard speech for the reader. Instead of committing herself to the kinds of conciliatory strategies of translation employed by most other Chicano and/or U.S. Latino authors, Cota-Cárdenas employs multilingualism as a point of play and possibility and as a primary means of accounting for her characters' abundant frustrations and moments of miscommunication.

[17] Just as the dedication to the predominantly Spanish version of her novel is written in English, the dedication to the English and/or "bilingual" translation of the novel is written in Spanish, "Dedicado a los que no tienen poder, que, como Puppet, luchan cada día por su pequeña porción de dignidad humana y amor propio" (ix).

Cota-Cárdenas offers her linguistic acrobatics as an implicit answer to the recurrent question posed by the narrator and other characters in the novel, "Qué hace uno para no amargarse para siempre?" (13, 48, 51). Petra's final realization that change is contingent upon "la fuerza de nuestros escritos y nuestras palabras" (134) speaks to Cota-Cárdenas' own purposeful manipulation of language as a means of social resistance in the novel. In response to an interviewer likening her work to Anzaldúa's, Cota-Cárdenas bristles,

> Han aparecido varias [. . .] bibliografías "chicanas" desde los setenta, y no figuro en la mayoría de ellas. ¿A qué se debe? ¿Será porque no me adherí a ningún grupo político (o dogmático) formal? ¿Cuáles han sido las fronteras verdaderas para mí, personalmente y como escritora? ¿Me marginé, o me marginaron? ¿Por qué?, por qué, es para ustedes responder. Pero no creas: soy demasiado "fregona" para ser víctima. (Capdevila Gutiérrez 257)

She questions whether her work has been excluded from critical appraisal on account of its not-easily classifiable politics or formal poetics and asks if she has been either the cause or the victim of marginalization. I maintain that Cota-Cárdenas achieves in *Puppet* and among Chicano/a texts a felicitous and unusual marriage of form and content—in which she reinforces the theoretical claims of her text with her unwavering multilingualism and illustrates both the dependency and fragility of medium and message, language and nationality, and nationality and identity. In her willingness to represent the socially and linguistically marginalized individuals of Southwest City and in her unwillingness to translate for a monolingual reader, she challenges literature and society to move beyond the traditional, debilitating representations of and for individuals and communities who do not conform to the "standard" means of messaging and representation.

To translate or not to translate—this is the question that looms over the textual production of multilingual authors who choose to create a reality-based portrait of their nationally and linguistically ambivalent societies. These authors have to decide if, for them, the prospect of accessing the monolingual reader outweighs the possibility of transforming the reader by altering his/her sociolinguistic expectations of the text. Their translational practices create questions for the academy and for the larger public: What constitutes a truly multilingual text? Where can and should multilingual texts be taught? Who are the speakers represented in these texts? What languages do they speak? How do these text evidence that our concepts of language, nation, and identity are inadequate? What is the relationship between a multilingual literary text and an intended public, and is it possible to conceive of one without the other? Is the establishment of a linguistically sovereign text, one occupying a "third place," feasible given the realities of the literary marketplace? The respective language choices of Anzaldúa and Cota-Cárdenas illustrate both the costs and the opportunities occasioned by either translating and/or refusing to translate the multilingual aspects of a text in the context of a borderlands society; through their formal and linguistic decisions each either lessens or reinforces the theoretical claims of their works.

Conclusion

This project stems, in part, from my insecurities about attaining "fluency" in another language and my hesitancies about approaching its accompaniment or assumed literary tradition. While examining the texts and the translation strategies of multilingual U.S. and Hispanic authors, I have had to reevaluate my own approach to comparing and writing about these authors' Spanish and English versions of their texts and/or their individual translations within their literature. I have wondered what is lost or gained when I read a text written primarily in one language and then examine that same text primarily in another. I have questioned if I can assume a bilingual Spanish-English reader or if I am sufficiently bilingual to judge the adequacy of or to commend the audacity of another's translation, especially when the self-same author is the translator. Finally, I have asked myself if I am truly committed to the Borgesian notion that strong and domesticating translations are in theory and in practice more principled and literary than other approaches to translating. These anxieties, while personal, reflect some of the larger questions that inform language usage and fuel comparative and translation studies. Is there a standard for determining bi- or multi-lingualism in literature and literary criticism? Is it possible, ethical, or productive to link ethnic and linguistic identities? What are the implications of Anzaldúa's claim that "I am my language" (59) or Kellman's claim that "if identity is shaped by language, then monolingualism is a deficiency disorder" (viii)? How are we limited or enlarged by the language or languages we speak or write? What can be done to cast greater light on the conditions under which texts and translations are made and to further emphasize the extent to which translating becomes a form of authorship? By writing about a number of intensely self-reflexive texts that center on the often strained relation between language and identity I emphasize the manifold transformations of language across space and time and hope to make more transparent the

assumptions that gird traditional approaches to literature, authorship, and communication, generally.

Read in tandem, the texts and translations of Manuel Puig, Ariel Dorfman, Rosario Ferré, Gloria Anzaldúa, and Margarita Cota-Cárdenas illustrate how questions about the possibilities and limits of language and about translation, specifically, should be at the forefront of conversations about identity and nationality in Latin American or Inter-American studies. Instead of asking "Who are we?" these authors ask "Who are we perceived to be?", "Who speaks for and about us?", and "Do I determine language or does language determine me?" As Gentzler argues,

> The nation-states of the Americas are artificial ones at best, carved out of the New World by colonizing powers until the postcolonial movements led the way to revolution and independence across the hemisphere. Thus, deconstruction and postcolonial theories, when applied to the Americas, help uncover theoretical questions regarding definitions of nation, nation-state, and national language, as well as ontological questions with regard to emerging concepts of identity. Such inquiry transitions quite naturally to the translational, transcultural, and transnational theories that follow. (xv)

Through their language choices in and in between their texts, Puig, Dorfman, Ferré, Anzaldúa, and Cota-Cárdenas make more transparent some of the national and linguistic ambivalences that undercut monolithic notions of nation, language, or self and fuel deconstructive and/or postcolonial perspectives on literature and history. By strategies of deliberate or inadvertent mistranslation, non-literal translation, contextual cushioning, or non-translation, these authors manipulate words such that they foreground the negotiations of translation, approximate the

aesthetics of exile, expose dynamics of the literary marketplace, and, as a result, engage contradictions and instabilities inherent in linguistic and national identities.

The task of self-translating enables these writers to tweak, readjust, or totally revise aspects of their texts and their literary personae. For authors such as Puig, Dorfman, or Ferré, the frequently substantive differences between the two versions of their texts combine to create an evocative "third" space in literary and translational practice. Through the unlikely status of an equally authoritative "translation" these authors reiterate how perceptions of themselves and their texts are always variable and contingent on the individual, historical, and linguistic circumstances surrounding both the production and the reception of their text(s). As Kellman argues about the multilingual author Fernando Pessoa, "The 'real' Pessoa, like the 'real' Shakespeare, must be inferred from the sum total of his creations, a process complicated by the poet's refusal to bind himself to one language or style" (34). Especially in the event of self-translation, authorship and textuality become evolving and collaborative endeavors; Puig, Dorfman, and Ferré emphasize the provisional character of their authorial and textual identities through their Spanish and English or English and Spanish versions of their texts.

Authors like Anzaldúa and Cota-Cárdenas make the ambivalences of national and linguistic identities even more transparent by translating and/or refusing to translate on an intra-textual rather than an inter-textual level. These Chicana authors present a narrative or literary self that is overtly fractured, double, "ambidextrous" (Ferré "Blessing" 8), duplicitous, versatile, and/or multiple. Both writers insinuate the possibility of a literary praxis that takes into account the complexities of the marginalized communities and voices represented in their texts. To different extents, Anzaldúa and Cota-Cárdenas create inherently multilingual texts that both foreground and obviate the negotiations of translation. Like the other authors discussed in this

project, they underscore the emotional, political, and transformative ramifications of their language choices. Through their varying translation strategies they visibly balance the desire to accommodate a monolingual readership with the goal of freely portraying or representing unofficial or peripheral voices within their texts.

In the overt or latent multilingual poetics of their writing, all of the authors examined in this study actively introduce fertile slippages, instabilities, or "*frayages*" (Spivak 398) between and within their texts. As Spivak argues,

> Language is not everything. It is only a vital clue to where the self loses its boundaries. The ways in which rhetoric or figuration disrupt logic themselves point at the possibility of random contingency, besides language, around language. Such a *diss*emination cannot be under our control. Yet in translation, where meaning hops into the spacy emptiness between two named historical languages, we get perilously close to it. By juggling the disruptive rhetoricity that breaks the surface in not necessarily connected ways, we feel the selvedges of the language-textile give way, fray into *frayages* or facilitations. [. . .] The task of the translator is to facilitate this love between the original and its shadow, a love that permits fraying, holds the agency of the translator and the demands of her imagined or actual audience at bay. (398)

Self-translators, particularly, disrupt the boundaries of self, language, and nation by elevating "translation" and asserting ownership of the dissonances between the versions of their texts and/or the translingual gestures within their texts. They emphasize the permissibility of linguistic and national identities and embrace and/or facilitate the fraying between the versions of their texts. Through the negotiations of translation they actively approach the "spacy emptiness"

between two national languages and emphasize the extent to which the decisions of writing and translating result both because and in spite of linguistic, literary, and social hierarchies.

The dissension between their texts is all the more significant given the unequal status between English and Spanish in the global literary marketplace. Waisman argues that "[t]he brilliance" of "Pierre Menard":

> resides in that, even as it manipulates the recontextualizations that amplify meanings, the previous ones are *not* lost. […] The displacements lead to a multiplication of layered meanings, which, even if they contradict each other, remain present for the reader to appreciate. And it is precisely here where we find the potential of writing as (mis)translation from the periphery. (108)

Likewise, by asserting some control of the processes of translation, Puig, Dorfman, Ferré, Anzaldúa, and Cota-Cárdenas engage, for better or worse, the possibilities of rewriting or "talking back" and resist both the neutralization of their texts into a kind of "translatese" and the categorization of their texts into inadequate national rubrics. Authorizing their words in English and Spanish and/or English-and-Spanish allows them to highlight the ever simmering tensions surrounding the usage of one, another, or both of these languages in the context of the border regions of the U.S. and Spanish America. In their texts, these authors illustrate that while, for them, Spanish and English may bear different emotional and political resonances, these two languages, like all languages, are always combinative and never entirely separate.

Whether as actual political exiles or as "domestic foreigners," as willing "traitors" or "prostitutes" of their multilingual competencies, or as cultural mediators and/or community spokespersons, these authors reveal their linguistic loyalties as more complicated than traditional conceptions of language and "languaging" in literature and society. Through their varied

strategies of translation, they extend the perceived parameters of one or both of their languages and advocate a fluid if not harmonious relationship with either and/or both of their assumed languages. Their overt multilingualism contrasts divisive politics of "English-only" on the one hand and calls for more unyielding Hispanophone postures on the other. Each promotes an official status for and/or dual representation of either or both of their languages. Their combined texts are in line with the firestorm of criticism and popular resentment incited by the 2012 Republican presidential primary candidate Rick Santorum when in an interview with Puerto Rico's *El Vocero* he was reported to have said that for Puerto Rico "to be a state of the United States, English has to be the principal language" (Trott). Following his comments in the Reuter's report and a host of other similar statements in his interview with *El Vocero,* Santorum summarily plummeted in the local primary, and his words prompted a response from Puerto Rico's pro-statehood governor, Luis Fortuño. In an interview with Fox News, Fortuño stated, "For more than a century, both English and Spanish have been official languages of Puerto Rico. And as you know that is a right that is reserved to states … and we believe strongly that it should remain that way," and he added his personal opinion that most Puerto Rican parents want their children to be bilingual and speak "perfect English because it's the language of opportunity, but at the same time we are proud of our heritage and we want to preserve Spanish as well" (America's Election HQ). Santorum's opponent, Mitt Romney, extended the governor's far-reaching linguistic commentary when he told reporters, "Spanish is the language of Puerto Rico's heritage, English is the language of opportunity" (Freidman). In the complicated web of dissensions and slippages between their texts, writers like Puig, Dorfman, Ferré, Anzaldúa, and Cota-Cárdenas defy both the political imposition of a single language and limiting essentialist notions about the inherent potential of either English or Spanish.

While each author approached in this project explores the seeming character of one or the other of their languages—Puig depicts Spanish as a language connected to Ramírez's traumas as a political prisoner; Dorfman intimates Spanish as an inherently passive language in his discussion of "the impersonal se" (*Heading* 114-15 and *Rumbo* 158); Ferré claims that, for her, English is a language of "direction," "action," "technology," and "capitalism" ("On Destiny" 160-61); and Anzaldúa and Cota-Cárdenas both illustrate how their narrative selves must constantly change linguistic registers to pivot between diverse social circumstances—the sum differences between their texts and translation strategies suggest that, rather than an overriding linguistic determinacy, indeterminacy and individual experience govern their language choices. As Pérez Firmat argues, "there is no model, no rule, no syntax, for the relation between Spanish and English or (more generally) between a first and a second language; the same tongues tie different speakers differently. Spanish is the language of the soul no more than English is that of the wallet. Perceptions of difference emerge from personal history, not linguistic theory" (162). Especially through the instabilities and ambivalences introduced between and within their texts, the authors examined in this project approximate language as inherently contradictory, inadequate, and, at the same time, permissive and full of possibility. Ultimately, these writers stretch language to create openings for reinterpretation, reinvention, and uncertainty rather than reinforcing linguistic and ethnic stereotypes.

The dissensions in and between their texts evidence translation as a form of authorship and reiterate the extent to which the "refractions" of a text inform and, often, shape the perception of a text through time (Lefevere, "Mother" 234). Particularly in their presumed lack of sanctity toward their own texts, these authors represent translating or rewriting as a feat of

"crucial intervention" (Venuti, *The Translator's* 1). As acclaimed Spanish-to-English translator Edith Grossman argues,

> But what never should be forgotten or overlooked is the obvious fact that what we read in a translation is the translator's writing. The inspiration is the original work, certainly, and thoughtful literary translators approach that work with great deference and respect, but the execution of the book in another language is the task of the translator, and that work should be judged and evaluated on its own terms. (31-32)

Grossman's comments prompt the question of what constitutes "deference and respect" toward an original text, as well as the contention over whether a strong or a measured translation practice is preferable in the global literary market. In their negotiations between and within their texts, authors like Puig, Dorfman, Ferré, Anzaldúa, and Cota-Cárdenas intimate the inescapable temporality occasioned by writing and, especially, rewriting, and they engage rather than restrict the possibilities for contradiction and misprision surrounding perceptions of themselves and their texts. As Gentzler maintains, "Ironically, mistranslation can reveal more 'truth' regarding the source of the border culture, than a more traditional 'accurate' translation" (145-46). Likewise, the authors I discuss embolden the task of translating, and in doing so, expose the tenuous constructs and/or mistruths and that bind language, nation, self, and community.

My project extends conversations around translation and the event of exile, translation and authorial or textual reinvention, and translation and the feasibility of an openly multilingual literary praxis in the texts of U.S. and Spanish American authors. In addition, this study invites a host of other, related inquiries: Does "the genuinely bilingual post-colonial" truly have an "advantage" in the contemporary literary marketplace (Spivak 404)? What responsibility, if any,

does an author have to write in one or another of his/her languages? Are multilingual authors connected by a shared capacity for tolerance, ambiguity, and/or self-reflexivity? Can we discern an "aesthetic of multilingualism"? How can we distinguish between an inspired and an abusive translation practice? Finally, to what extent do questions about translation collapse into questions about language, generally? As Steiner claims, "inside or between languages, human communication equals translation. A study of translation is a study of language" (49). In this project, I self-consciously examine the language decisions of U.S. and/or Spanish American authors to illustrate how the event of self-translation occasions valuable opportunities to rethink and reconfigure conceptualizations of language, nation, and self between and within literary texts.

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