

Rhetorics of Translation in Tino Villanueva’s *Crónica de mis años peores (Chronicle of My Worst Years)*

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In the rhetorics of translation, in the system of discourse we use to translate meaning, there is a gap between what is written in the original text and what is understood through the act of translation.² A space of disruption is created in the attempt to re-inscribe what a text says and what a translator claims it says. Edgar Andrés Moros (2009) argues that the binary distinctions between the theoretical and practical understandings of translations and translation studies are problematic. He states that the “distinctions are seen as arbitrary and culturally determined” and “generally used to maintain power differentials,” and he goes on to explain that these oppositions are unnatural human constructs (Moros, 2009, p. 8). Moros maintains that despite the belief that the practice of translation is free from theoretical or ideological choices, the fact remains that “even if translators do not write about these choices as theory, there is an implicit theory that they have created and followed, and which may be inferred at a later time” (2009, p. 11). Furthermore, Jose M. Davila-Montes (2017) argues, “Translations advertise the existence of a text by, paradoxically, causing it to ‘disappear’ in its original form and then by taking over its identity; a translation is the very illusion of reading” the original text (p. 1). In addition, translators are typically given the creative freedom to translate while adhering to the overall message of a text, but before translators can translate, they must interpret the text from and for their own understanding. And so, their translation is a reinterpretation of a text filtered through their own ideological, theoretical, rhetorical, and cultural understandings. Their translation is a re-inscription of a story upon the original text.

Tino Villanueva is a prolific Chicano poet, relying on memory to serve as his muse to write about oppressive educational systems, the erasure and denial of Mexican American history, learning to defend himself in a foreign language, and interrogating and coming to terms with Indigenous heritage. In *Crónica de mis años peores* (*Chronicle of My Worst Years*), Villanueva tells the story of his childhood growing up in Texas as a disillusioned self-recognition of himself as an encumbering remnant of conquest and domination to America.³ In the process of telling this story, however, Villanueva loudly denounces the continued perpetuation of a colonial history deeply embedded within every fiber of the American education system. Still, while this story is a story that he tells, this story is not the story that is translated. Villanueva utilizes Spanish almost exclusively within his *Crónica de mis años peores* publication. In doing so, he displaces readers whose first language is not Spanish and who must resort to English translations of his work. The English translation provided by James Hoggard creates a slightly different story that adheres to the binary Moros refers to in that Hoggard asserts the colonial gaze, seeks to control the text, and is dismissive of the decolonial strategies exhibited in the work. Villanueva's rhetorical choices of Spanish for this collection is reminiscent of Gloria Anzaldúa's resistance to write only in English or to avoid too much Spanish. Anzaldúa (2007) proclaims that "[her] tongue will be illegitimate" if she had to accommodate English speakers by not speaking in Spanglish, and that she's constantly forced to choose between English or Spanish and or to translate to English (p. 81). Like Anzaldúa, Villanueva's use of Spanish throughout the text almost exclusively marks his text as an act of defiance, and when he refuses to translate himself by bringing someone else to do it, this substitution is, in and of itself, an act of resistance.

Before I go any further, let me pause and first position myself in order to contextualize the source of my resistance based on my embodied experience. My positionality is based on the experiential recognition that translations are complicated by cultural histories, time, and geographic location. Furthermore, as someone who grew up on the border, I learned early on to read in-between the lines across bordered spaces as a matter of survival, both literal and metaphorical. I was born in El Paso, Texas, and I spent most of my childhood in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua Mexico. I did not learn to speak English until I was 8 years old, and the dual languages are still a source of tension, especially when my students question whether they should take an English class from me, given my Spanish last name. Growing up translating for my mother taught me that the practice of translation is complicated. Some things cannot be translated. Words are not always enough. As a child, I found myself utilizing memories, senses, and even dreams to try to capture the words I needed to convey

meaning to my mom saying things such as, “Es como decía mi Abuelita, o huele como cuando la tierra se hizo mala.” I’m not sure how successful I was in trying to convey the right meaning to my mother, but I do know that this lived experience led me to constantly question how Spanish and English is translated.⁴ As a rhetorician now, it’s led me to interrogate the intentionality and source of mis/translations and implications of mis/translations on the original text and on their various audiences. Thus, I insist that there is a gap or space created between translations that calls for scrutiny and interrogation. This practice can inform and transform both texts in its ability to unmask the process of translation, show the subtle shifts in meaning and their implications, and ultimately hold translators accountable.

The interrogation of a translation is more complicated than simply finding the equivalent or near equivalent word in a different language. I base this understanding both from my lived experiences and from the established work in cultural rhetorics and translation studies. Cultural rhetoric scholar, Angela Haas (2008) explains that language is culture specific; memory and stories are culturally and locally based (p. 9-10). Similarly, in translation studies, Laura Gonzales (2018) writes that “language is a culturally situated, embodied, lived performance” and thus calls for “[c]ounteracting traditional notions of translation that limit the analysis of language transformation to written alphabetic texts alone” (p. 3). Thus, as a cultural rhetorician my approach to reading these poems by Villanueva involves trying to understand the subtle shifts in the language used to make meaning and to always remember that language and culture are inextricably linked. My reading of *Crónicas de mis años peores* is heavily influenced not only by his history but also by Chicano and migrant worker history in Texas and by my own history growing up on the border. My readings of these poems are my way of recovering a story that has been suppressed by the translation, specifically by Hoggard’s translation.

My scholarship has always been rooted at the crossroad of rhetorics and poetics, specifically by writers of color, building and or maintaining real and rhetorical alliances, and creating a discursive community that seeks to aid in our mutual survival. I was initiated into this path by Native American writers such as Leslie Marmon Silko (1977),⁵ Lee Maracle (2015), and Malea Powell (2012).⁶ Powell taught me about the power of stories and storytellers, but from all of them, I have come to understand that story is theory. Reading stories as theory makes me cognizant that as I theorize, I am also in the process of creating another story and aware of the ethics that must underline my practice. In this article, I will first situate the presence and necessity of third space as a rhetorical framework to recover Villanueva’s story. Second, I will propose different rhetorical strategies that can be used as a decolonial praxis within Villanueva’s

text. Lastly, I will put theory into practice by building a story that showcases how the rhetorics of translation can be used to tease out a decolonial story and in that expose the dangers of mis/translations. This final section will present a close rhetorical and translational analysis of a few selected poems from *Crónica de mis años peores*.

Third Space Politics of Rhetorics and Poetics

The understanding and denial of a relationship between a translator and a text creates a situation where the actual text and the translation of it can be two separate and highly divergent narratives. While they are both attempting to tell the same story, the translation of a text carries an imposed meaning dependent on the translators' personal ideologies and theoretical understandings of the text. For example, as a graduate student, I first encountered Tino Villanueva's poem "Haciendo Apenas La Recolección" in the anthology *Literature and the Environment* edited by Lorraine Anderson, Scott P. Slovic, & John P. O'Grady (1999). Immediately, I was struck by the editors' loose translation of the title and synopsis provided in the introduction to the poem. "Haciendo Apenas la Recolección" originally from Villanueva's poetry collection *Shaking Off the Dark* (1984/1998) is translated by the editors as "Barely Remembering" (Anderson, Slovic, & O'Grady, 1999, p. 219) The editors' translation of the title suggests the grasping of threads of memory, a faint remembrance that needs more work. The use of "barely" also carries connotations of scarcity and insufficiency, suggesting that there are only scarce or insufficient memories. But that is not the case. "Haciendo apenas la recolección" can also be translated as "Barely Making Recollection" or "*Just Now Making Recollection.*"⁷

The key to understanding the real significance of this title and the poem is by recognizing the theoretical and cultural discourses Villanueva's narrative has created. Alfonso Rodriguez (1998) suggests, "As a former migrant worker, [Villanueva] has personally experienced the struggle, and he has developed a way to deal with his attitudes and frustrations through the creative process in the form of poetry of social commitment" (p. 84). Furthermore, in "Haciendo apenas la recolección," Villanueva retraces the routes of his childhood and reality as a migrant worker in Central Texas. The journey he undertakes in the poem is the recovery of his story—one that provides a "sense of peace and liberation" through the process of retelling his story (Rodriguez, 1998, p. 85). As such, in either of my suggested translations, the speaker is not grasping at faint memories but is instead *just now initiating* the process of recalling these events. Additionally, there is a significant difference between *Recolección* and *Recordar*, which is the literal translation of "to remember." *Recolección*, to recollect,

has a more physical and active presence. The act of physically bringing things together and, even more pointedly, bringing things together that *have been together* and somehow *belong together*.

So, despite the editor's translation of the title and by association the poem itself, Villanueva's memory is not failing. He is just getting started. The distinct difference between the text and the imposed reading creates a rhetorical space, an intermediate space, that exists between the original text and the imposed text. One in which we must ask, how much of the language we use cannot be translated with words alone but requires an embodied and lived understanding of the text beyond language? And what happens in the space created between the text and its mistranslation? Whose story are we really hearing in a translation? And, how can we tell the difference?

Within the space, the space created between the original and translation of a text, the audience can interrogate the imposition of a translation, the colonial gaze of a text, and denounce it. Allow the text to speak for itself. But doing so calls for an alternative discourse and rhetorical framework. As Haas (2008) & Gonzales (2018) explain, in order to begin the interrogation process, we must consider Villanueva's cultural underpinnings and position the text in the borderlands. In *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, Gloria Anzaldúa (1987/2007) describes the borderlands as rupturing spaces where time, history, and peoples collide. To live in the borderlands is carrying the weight of history on your back, to carry the "*hispana, india, negra, española, [y] gabacha*" on your back (Anzaldúa, 1987/2007, p. 216). To live in the borderlands is to recognize that in this space

you are the battleground
where enemies are kin to each other;
you are at home, a stranger,
the border disputes have been settled
the volley of shots have shattered the truce
you are wounded, lost in action
dead, fighting back; (Anzaldúa, 1987/2007, p. 216)

It is within this context that the rhetoric of the borderlands emerges. It is rhetorically informed by history, bodies, tongues, scars, and open wounds. It is rhetoric challenging presence over absence, erasure, and denial. As the child of migrant workers, Villanueva expresses these precise feelings of being stranger at home and carrying the weight of his people's history on his back. In addition, Adela Licona (2005) terms this as a "(b)orderlands' rhetorics," which she argues "move beyond

binary borders to a named third space of ambiguity and even contradiction” (p. 105). Strategically, Licona places parentheses around the “b” in borderlands in order “to materialize a discursive border” and to “interrupt any fixed reading of the notion of (b)orderlands” (p. 105). The materialization of this discursive space is necessary for stories like Villanueva, both to materialize and counter the narratives that have been written about marginalized communities, in this case migrant workers. Villanueva’s story is a borderland story where the weight of history and the oppressive education system seek to consume him. In a state of ambiguity, he is led to feel like a walking contradiction. Ni de aquí, ni de allá. But as he negotiates history and the imposition of history upon his body and memory, Villanueva shows that borderland stories challenge *us* to consider how these spaces are and should be about decolonial work. However, Hoggard’s imposed translation undermines its capacity, ignores the decolonial work, and perpetuates a colonial imposition and erasure upon brown bodies.

Through Hoggard’s translation, Villanueva’s story is trapped and bound by colonial practices. Emma Pérez (1999) in *The Decolonial Imaginary* discusses this third space as the “practice that implements the decolonial imaginary” (p. 33). It is within this space of the decolonial imaginary that we as scholars can interrogate and renounce the colonial presence within academia. Furthermore, Pérez argues that a decolonial imaginary utilizes third space feminisms to contradict and challenge dominant discourse (1999, p. xvi). She says, “the decolonial imaginary in Chicana/o history is a theoretical tool for uncovering the hidden voices of Chicanas that have been relegated to silences, to passivity, to that third space where agency is enacted through third space feminism” (Pérez, 1999, p. xvi). The decolonial imaginary is a tactic by which to challenge the colonial history embedded within the lands, bodies, and stories. Additionally, Chela Sandoval (2000) shows that third-space feminism is “a theory and method of oppositional consciousness” and that such theory is “not inexorably gender-, nation-, race-, sex-, or class-linked” (p. 197). Utilizing third space methodology, we can build theory to illustrate the intricate process of decolonizing the translation of a text. By purposefully reading Villanueva’s work through these methodologies, we are enabled then to recognize the different colonial histories that are embedded within this bordered space, trapped by coded languages and colonizing legacies. Our task is to actively resist this colonial history by reclaiming and recovering Villanueva’s history. Enacting this process of reclamation and recovery is mediated by positioning ourselves in direct opposition in theory and in practice to the colonial history of the border. We must carve out a space to make this work happen. Other scholars, such as Licona (2005), have also articulated the intricacies and complexities of third space sites that can also shift from not only a practice, as Perez (1999) argues,

but also a location (p. 105). Licona writes, “As a location, third space has the potential to be a space for shared understanding and meaning-making. Through third-space consciousness then dualities are transcended to reveal fertile and rhetorical performances into play (2005, p.105). Third spaces as practices and locations for the decolonial work provide the methodology for oppositional thinking that, in the Villanueva’s case, can be enacted in both capacities. Within Villanueva’s collection, readers have multiple narratives that overlap and counter each other: his original text and Hoggard’s translation. Teasing out the embedded story, as I have performed in my own translation, provides an alternate narrative, and this third space allows us to transcend beyond the text and engage the decolonial process as a performative action.

Additionally, Villanueva’s role within the Chicano movement speaks to his positioning within the context of this third space. Heralded as a Chicano poet, Villanueva’s work, shaped by Chicano activism and the Vietnam war, was foundational to the Chicano Renaissance (Lee, 2010, p.174). Within Chicanismo, scholars have problematized the invocation of indigenous identity or a *mestizaje* as central to identity formation or legitimacy.⁸ This is important to note since Villanueva self-identifies as a Chicano and asserts his position within the Chicano movement. And within his collection, Villanueva includes poems that interrogate and reclaim his Indigenous heritage, such as “Cuento del cronista,” where he invokes Tlacuilo, an Aztec scribe, and chastises Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca as a “maldito explorador” (“Cuento del cronista,” 1987/1994, p. 42). In this poem, he asks Tlacuilo for a blessing, to keep him honorable, to keep him from forgetting his lineage, and in the end, Villanueva comes to terms with the violence of his heritage and history. Iris Deana Ruiz (2018), for example, explains this instance as the invocation of “La indigena” trope which, she says, “seeks to revisit and revitalize the knowledges ... and cultural practices of Pre Columbian indigenous peoples in MesoAmerica [who]...left behind priceless, even metaphysical, remnants for those of us here in the U.S. who seek decoloniality of the mind, decolonial agency, and a decolonial consciousness” (2018, p. 223). However, in line with scholars, such as Gabriela Raquel Rios (2016) and Eric Rodriguez & Evarardo J. Cuevas (2017), Ruiz explains that invoking “La indigena” trope is dangerous “because it confronts the purist argument of indigenous authenticity and advocacy and rejects the modernist subject positions already imposed upon her that do not allow her to identify with her indigenous, decolonial self” (2018, p. 224). There is also a risk of rejection, Ruiz explains, placed in a third space “in-between her indigenous and European self...” (2018, p. 224). In this way, the walking in-between identities, unable to really claim one identity over another or choosing not to for ethical reasons, places Villanueva in this third space subjectivity. This third space created by the fringes of

the colonial history of the borderlands is precisely that rupturing space created by discordant languages that have not learned to speak and hear one another. This third space subjectivity is the space for interrogation and renunciation.

Working from this third space, I begin teasing out the embedded story in Villanueva's collection, allowing me to differentiate between the layers of storying taking place. My capacity to do this work is initiated by both recognizing Villanueva's positionality *within third space* and by rhetorically analyzing the text and translation simultaneously *from the third space*. Aja Martinez (2014) articulates the difference between stock stories and counterstories. She argues that these differences are fruitful, and this notion may help us to understand Villanueva's moves. She says, "Stock stories feign neutrality and at all costs avoid any blame or responsibility for societal inequality. Powerful because they are often repeated until canonized or normalized, those who tell stock stories insist that their version of events is indeed reality..." (Martinez, 2014, p.70). I would argue that in Villanueva's collection, the stock story would be the translations. The translation and the work of translators, as previously discussed, usually go unchallenged and their biases unchecked. As such, the stock story created by the translation will supersede the actual story the author wrote. Martinez explains that the counterstory "is a method of telling stories by people whose experiences are not often told, ...as methodology thus serves to expose, analyze, and challenge stock stories of racial privilege and can help to strengthen traditions of social, political, and cultural survival and resistance" (2014, p.70). The counterstory in Villanueva's poetry is partially the original story and the story to be teased out in the third space. He examines the experiences of migrant Mexican children in Texas' educational system during the 1950s. Their stories are rarely if ever heard. However, I will argue, the counterstory for Villanueva's collection is complicated and nuanced because it's coded and largely unwritten. Readers will need not only both versions of the poems but also may need to be heritage Spanish speakers with an understanding of migrant worker history in Texas in order for them to work in reading what is not written. Readers must make meaning in the absence of language. Make do.

Lastly, I must shed some light on the fact Villanueva is certainly not the only author that can and has had his narrative colonized by the "creative freedom" of a translator. While I am not suggesting that all translations and translators are wrong, I am suggesting that a more critical approach to conducting said translations is necessary. I am also far from suggesting that writers of color have no agency over their texts or that they enact no heavy resistance on their part. In fact, I'm arguing quite the opposite. Additionally, as previously noted, I will maintain that it is within the third space of the borderland created between the actual text and the imposed translation

that we, as the audience, can utilize to interrogate and denounce the coloniality of the translation itself and enact decolonial rhetorical strategies.

Decolonial Praxis: Rhetorics of Defiance & Resistance

Within *Crónica de mis años peores*, Villanueva confronts the racist and colonialist education system he survived as a child in Texas. This system denied his humanity and questioned his presence. His attempts to remedy the situation further silenced him. Villanueva's experience speaks to many of us with a similar background, and I can attest the perpetuation of such practices even in graduate school. This dehumanization is widespread and deeply entrenched within the education system and academia at large. So much so, that writers and educators of color speak often of challenging the systems from within. For example, in "The New Mestiza Nation," Anzaldúa (2009) speaks of "want[ing] our histories, our knowledge, our perspectives to be accepted and validated not only in the universities but also in elementary, junior high, and high schools" (2009, p. 204). Working within the academy to engage this type of work seems hopeful. However, working within the decolonial imaginary and a third space reminds us that our strategies must be precise and intentional. Here I am reminded from Audre Lorde's (1984/2007) famous text, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," that "survival is not an academic skill": the "master's tools" will not lead to real and radical change (p. 112). This leads two to questions, how can writers of color interrogate and challenge the oppressive systems without perpetuating the same problems, and as scholars and writers of color, what tools do we have at our disposal to dismantle such systems?

Recognizing Villanueva's positionality within a third space, as previously discussed, allows us to understand that he too is working from within the system. He could have written the whole collection in English, translated the work himself, or requested revisions on the translation, but he didn't. Non-Spanish speakers will ultimately resort to the translation, never questioning its authenticity. Anzaldúa (2009) makes a provocative call when she says, "We need to create poetry, art, research, and books that cannot be assimilated, but is accessible" (p. 210). While the text is accessible, at least a version of it is, the real story is coded and tightly embedded within itself. Villanueva's work cannot be assimilated and subsumed. And in doing so, Villanueva shows how we can work within the system to show its purpose and hypocrisy, and through that act, we reclaim our own history and humanity.

Villanueva's rhetorical play and performance undermining academia's expectations while still following the rules to tell his story is reminiscent of Native

American scholars, especially those who have been talking about this very methodology for quite a while now. For example, in *Narrative Chance*, Gerald Vizenor (1989) explains that the trickster is always present and never silent; it is not bound to text or language. Furthermore, the trickster exists in the spaces between the real and the imagined, breaking down paradigms and binaries, and trickster discourse is the means by which to subvert a dominant discourse, according to Vizenor. In line with Vizenor, Malea Powell (1999) in “Blood and Scholarship” says, “Trickster discourse is deflative; it exposes the lies we tell ourselves and, at the same time, exposes the necessity of those lies to our daily material existence...” (p. 9). Thus, I can suggest that the trickster discourse is present within this third space, a space which forces us to see the two texts; challenges us to seek the original meaning within its cultural, historical, and linguistic context; and warrants us to recognize the purpose of the mistranslation.

Powell (1999) moves the discussion further when she argues for “trickster, or mixed-blood rhetorics” that reconfigure the connection between rhetor and academy allowing the rhetor to “[follow] the Academy’s, the discipline’s, ‘rules’ by transgressing them, not just to oppose them but to transform them, to change utterly the grounds upon which our scholarship exists” (p. 10). Mixed-blood rhetorics, according to Powell (1999), are a methodology in both how we approach a text and interrogate how a text is constructed to subvert colonial impositions (p. 10). In other words, to engage mixed-blood rhetorics is not only to read against the grain but rather an active practice of defiance. Translations are expected to accurately represent the original text. Villanueva’s approval of a translation leads readers to assume its accuracy. These are the rules. To recognize and acknowledge Villanueva’s strategies as a trickster’s rhetoric is to allow the possibility for us to see how he is working within the system to dismantle it. Furthermore, this process of seemingly working the system on one’s own terms to radically alter it, speaks back to Lorde. It’s not so much about refusing to use the same tools to dismantle academia, but rather retooling the methodologies. A sort of making do with what we have.

Making do, or as I prefer doing a *jale Chicano*, is the process of finding a way to accomplish your goals. Growing up, I too heard often my mom saying, “Necesitamos un *jale Chicano*,” especially when things broke down around the house. This meant that we needed to fix it by finding a way that was inexpensive but efficient. Kelly Medina-Lopez (2018) refers to this type of process as a “*rasquache*” and argues that this process of making do can be understood within rhetoric and composition. She says that *rasquache* “presents a robust approach to meaning making by allowing users to pull from the compendium of theories, ideas, experiences, tangible tools, and

intangible epistemologies they can access. Recycling, upcycling, making do, and making new meaning through whatever is available is an explicit performance of rasquache” (p. 2). As previously noted, Villanueva is a prolific writer in English and Spanish, but he made the choice to use exclusively Spanish for *Cronica de mis años peores* and have Hoggard translate the text. In doing so, Villanueva shows the reader how the oppressive nature of colonialism can function by allowing it to manifest within the text via Hoggard’s translation. In one way, he is following the academy’s rules. But by coding the narrative not simply in his own text but in the space between the two texts, Villanueva enact a trickster rhetoric, a rasquache, un jale Chicano.

Within *Crónica de mis Años peores*, Villanueva engages an exclusively Spanish text to define his childhood and to recover his history. Villanueva explains (as cited in Lee, 2010, p. 176) that in this poetry collection memory should:

serve as inspiration--memory as muse, and ultimately, memory as identity. So you see, memory, for me, becomes a useful device to go back in time to recover a history which would otherwise be lost--a personal or communal history, no matter how lackluster or unsettling that history might have been.

The rhetorical use of Spanish to relate this painful childhood illustrates the complexity of his story. Villanueva utilizes not only his memory to build a story, but by allowing readers to see the perpetuation of such oppressive practices he speaks of, he builds theory. At times, the lack of action is action and is necessary for us to witness.

By allowing the two narratives to exist side by side, Villanueva forces us to recognize the artificiality of language itself. While they are seemingly a mirror reflection of each other in a different tongue—the reflection is distorted; the reflection is incomplete. Thus, we must question the source of the reflection. Whose voice do we hear? Who is the witness and who is the storyteller? In the process of forcing us to think about these questions, Villanueva asserts (as cited in Lee, 2010, p. 175) that a text is always a reflection, always a translation:

I would say poems are what they are; they do what they do. Some of them, if deep-textured enough, will admit multiple interpretations, and the latter are left up to each reader, as you know. One is not privy to what each reader may or may not derive from what they read--you get out of literature what you bring into it.

As readers, we are always in the process of reception, interpretation, and ingestion. We are hearing and feeling the stories, recognizing the power of these stories on our own memories and bodies, and utilizing these moments to build more stories and theories. As such, stories can also be a point of danger because of what we can bring into the narrative. We have the capacity to suppress it, misinterpret / mistranslate it, and even to colonize it. Thus, the space that Villanueva creates between his text and the translation of his text is the third space. It is from this space that we simultaneously look forward and backward, centered in the fluidity of the “now,” hearing and feeling and responding to the multiple voices speaking all at once and hearing and listening to our own bodies and memories respond to convergent and divergent narratives. We are in this third space or what Pérez (1999) refers to as the decolonial imaginary, as previously discussed. We are in the process of decolonizing the text, decolonizing history, and decolonizing ourselves simultaneously.

Rhetorical & Translational Analysis: “*Crónica de mis años peores*”

Traditionally, the English language has served as one of the master’s tools, and, as Lorde (1984/2007) reminds us, we need to re-tool and reinvent the tools we will use to suit our needs (p. 112). Our use of the English language must go beyond just pronouncing words correctly. In *Borderlands/La Fronteras*, Anzaldúa (1987/2007) says, “I am participating in the creation of yet another culture, a new story to explain the world and our participation in it, a new value system with images and symbols that connect us to each other and to the planet” (p. 103). It is within this space of the borderlands that we have the capacity to dismantle the master’s house re-utilizing the tools available to us. We might be using the same language, but we are blending it with our tongues, bodies, memories, and stories. We are re-tooling and building a methodology. The tools to dismantle the master’s house are ours. They are culturally and locally based. They are embedded within our stories. Our stories must carry the weight of all those who came before us and all those who depend on us. Those who did not get the privilege of going to the university. Those who stand with us in the struggle. Those who did not finish la primaria. Those women who crossed over every week every day to clean and to cook and to take care of other peoples’ homes and families. Those men who crossed over every day to do anything to take money home. Those who worked in factories here and in Mexico or who worked in the fields, in the kitchens, in the shadows of existence. Our stories must carry the humbled recognition of our common plight and our need to fight. Our stories need to undo the history that is written upon us.

Rhetorics of Translation in Tino Villanueva's *Cronica de mis años peores*

Because Villanueva knows and understands this history by having grown up in the 1940-1950s in San Marcos, Texas prior to the Civil Rights Movements, he is able to undo the history written about him and others like him (Lee, 2010). After he is indoctrinated with the same colonizing history that had marginalized, erased, and dispossessed Native Americans, Villanueva, as a child, is forced now to hear the same demoralizing stories about his people, Mexicanos. Villanueva begins *Crónica* with “Clase de historia” (“History Class”) to initiate an act of rhetorical resistance. He says:⁹

Entrar era aspirar	<i>To enter was to aspire</i>	To enter was to breathe in
la ilegítima razón ¹⁰ de la clase,	<i>The illegitimate truth of the class,</i>	the illegitimate idea of the class,
ser solo lo que estaba escrito.	<i>be only that which was written.</i>	only what was written was valid.
Sentado en el mismo	<i>Seated in the same</i>	Seated in the same
predestinado ¹¹ sitio	<i>predestined place</i>	prescribed place
me sentía, al fin, descolocado	<i>I felt myself, finally, dislocated.</i>	I felt myself, finally, dislocated.
(Villanueva, 1987/1994, pp. 2, 3).	(<i>My translation</i>)	(Hoggard's translation)

In this example, Villanueva's story deals with the colonizing goals of the education system that serves to erase and/or to criminalize Chicax¹² students within the history classroom. In the selection and subsequent translations above, Villanueva utilizes “aspirar” to mark the action his body takes as he enters this space. “Aspirar” has two possible translations.¹³ One is like Hoggard's translation, as in “to breathe in,” “to inhale.” Another common definition of “aspirar” though is “to aspire.” The act of aspiring to a dream requires more than a fleeting thought of a set goal but rather that the actual process of aspiring is where one begins to believe in the actualization of said dream. But this does not mean that one achieves it or simply attains this dream by aspiring to it. For example, Chicax folks are told to aspire to the American dream, an achievable dream to all who enter its ivory towers, while failing to recognize that within this space we are reduced to nothingness. Hoggard's translation, however, suggests that within this educational space we become a part of the fraud. Because to enter is to breathe, to enter is to internalize or accept and suggests that we all become complacent within this educational system. Poisoned by it, perhaps, but stuck, nonetheless. The process of entering this space allows us to ingest the illegitimacy as a reality and accept the fraud as our reality. But that is not the case.

In addition to the problems with translating “aspirar,” it is also important to identify the subtle shifts that the second part of this line creates. Villanueva refers to “la ilegítima razón de la clase” (1987/1994, pp. 2, 3). Hoggard translates this line as

the “illegitimate idea of the class.” While Hoggard’s translation suggests that the idea of the class is illegitimate, voiding the capacity of the members of this class to achieve anything, Villanueva asserts that he was trained to aspire to the illegitimate reason or *truth* of the class. *La verdad de la clase*. Essentially, Villanueva says that from the moment he enters these educational spaces he conditioned to desire something that does not exist, that cannot be attained, and that will always be withheld from him. Villanueva recognizes that the *verdad* is a fraud and thus separates what he knows and accepts as truth from the history he is told to accept as his. This separation is the only way he can survive.

As Villanueva continues, Hoggard also continues to tell his version of the story, and it becomes increasingly significant to distinguish the presence and effect of colonizing ideologies in the rhetorics of translation upon the original text. Villanueva (via Hoggard’s translation) says:

Era cualquier mañana de otoño, o primavera del '59, y ya estábamos los de piel trigueña sintiéndonos solos, ...	<i>It was some morning in autumn, or the spring of '59, and already we were the wheat-colored people feeling ourselves alone, ...</i>	It was some morning in autumn, or the spring of '59, and already we were the wheat-colored people who felt alien, ...
el estado desde arriba contra nosotros sin el arma de algún resucitable ¹⁴ dato para esgrimir contra los largos parlamentos de aquel maestro de sureña frente dura, creador del sueño y jerarquías, que repetía, como si fuera su misión, la historia lisiada de mi pueblo.	<i>the state from on high against us with no weapon of any resuscitable date to wield against the long speeches of that teacher with the hard Southern mien, creator of the dream and hierarchies, who repeated, as if it were his mission, my people's crippled history.</i>	the state from on high against us with no weapon of a retrievable date to wield against the long speeches of that teacher with the hard Southern mien, creator of the dream and hierarchies, who repeated, as if it were his mission, my people's crippled history.

(Villanueva, 1987/1994, pp. 2, 3) *(My translations)*

(Hoggard's translations)

In this example, Hoggard’s use of “alien” to translate Villanueva’s “solos” asserts that Chicanxs exist within America in a perpetual state as foreigners, outsiders, and possibly from another world. Hoggard’s translation labels Chicanxs’ inability to use history as a weapon as a result of an inherent “alien-ness.” This perpetual state of an “outsider” makes history inaccessible and invalid for Chicanx because it asserts that they do not

belong, and therefore, history does not belong to them or rather does not include them. This translation perpetuates problematic and dangerous ideologies that not only impact the translation but the original text as well. Accordingly, Hoggard's translation assumes that Villanueva accepts his foreignness as a given. But the fact remains that "solos" means "alone" not "alien." Thus, under Hoggard's translation, Chicax history is inaccessible because they do not belong, and such history is utterly non-existent. In Hoggard's version, Chicaxs have no recourse to the dreams and hierarchies forced unto them.

However, in the process of denying the speaker any date to wield as a weapon, the teacher alludes to his "lisiada historia." In doing so, the speaker realizes that the history of his people exists but has been rendered inaccessible in the shadow and fraud of the American dream and history. He realizes that he must work to recover and give new life to the Chicax history that paints all those "de piel trigueña" as criminals, failures, and foreigners. Such a new life is achievable by allowing this suppressed history to be told and heard. Under this oppressive education system, Villanueva reminds readers that they must find a way to tell their story even if they must resist, defy, and utterly change the system from within to start the process of decolonizing academia and history books.

By the end of the poem, while both Villanueva and Hoggard are seemingly talking about the same thing and basically using the same variations of the same words, the liberties Hoggard takes with both translation choices and even word order changes the overall meaning of the text. Villanueva (via Hoggard's translation) says:

Aquí mi vida cicatriza
 porque soy el desertor,
 el malvado¹⁵ impenitente que ha
 deshabitado¹⁶
 el salón de la demencia,
 el insurrecto
 despojado de los credos de la
 negación.
 Sean, pues,
 otras palabras las que triunfen
 y no las de infamia,
 las del fraude cegador.

(Villanueva,
 1987/1994, pp. 8-11)

*Here my life scars over
 because I'm the deserter,
 the wicked impenitent
 who left
 the classroom of madness,
 the insurrectionist
 stripped of the creeds of the negation.
 So let there be
 other words that are triumphant
 and not the ones of infamy,
 those of the blinding fraud.*

(my translation)

Here my life scars over
 Because I'm the deserter,
 the profane impenitent
 who quit
 the crazy class,
 the insurrectionist
 stripped of the creeds of
 negation.
 So let there be
 other words that are
 triumphant
 and not the ones of infamy,
 those of the blinding fraud.

(Hoggard's translation)

Hoggard creates a “good” translation in the sense that it is lyrical and poetic, but there are nuances in the language that are unaccounted for. At times these nuances are very subtle, but within this subtlety, lay the difference. In the example above, the primary shift lies in the word “deshabitado,” which translates as “left” rather than “quit,” as Hoggard suggests. This subtle shift automatically carries a negative connotation of loss and defeat. The shift within one word on its own does not change the entire story. However, identifying the shift as part of a much larger rhetorical pattern that builds upon each other begins to radically alter the story. Hoggard’s translation tells the story of someone who has healed despite the fraud of American history and suggests that there is nothing to be done about it. History gets blamed as the problem. And history is a problem. But Villanueva illustrates that history’s continued erasure, dispossession, and abuse of Chicanxs is perpetuated in the American education system, and while Villanueva does note a healing process has occurred, he, like Anzaldúa, carries the scars upon his body and recognizes that there is still much work to be done to rid ourselves of the blinding mentality of such a universalizing history.

In “Clase de historia,” Villanueva loudly denounces the education system’s complacency and perpetuation of an indoctrinating colonial history, and in “Convocacion de palabras,” he interrogates the institutionalization of language itself (“Convocation of Words,” 1987/1994, pp. 22-27). Here again, Hoggard feeds into the rhetorical pattern as his translation largely deviates from and is dismissive of Villanueva’s story. Villanueva begins with:

Yo no era mío todavía. Era 1960... y recuerdo bien porque equivocaba a diario el sentido de los párrafos;	<i>I was not my own yet. It was 1960... and I remember well because I would mistake daily the meaning of the paragraphs.</i>	I still wasn’t free. It was 1960... and I remember it well because every day I got the sense of the paragraphs mixed up:
(Villanueva, 1987/1994, p. 22)	(my translations)	(Hoggard's translations)

Villanueva voices the frustration that comes from not speaking the dominant language and explains that the inability to communicate is dangerous and de-moralizing. Villanueva says, “Yo no era mío todavía.” “Todavía” can translate as “still” as Hoggard suggest, making the speaker recognize that he is “still not free.” But this is wrong for a few reasons. “Todavía” can also mean “aún,” which is closer to “yet,” which suggests that this is in the process up to this point. Additionally, while “yo no era mío” could mean the lack of freedom, as Hoggard suggests, it could also mean that as a child,

which the speaker is at the time, was not in control or command of himself. Here we can see a marking of time that while he may not feel in control of his life or understanding his purpose now, there is a sense that this can change in the future. Additionally, the speaker is referring to having trouble understanding this new language, and therefore, he could feel a lack of control over the written word. And depending on the purpose of his exchange, this could be terrifying. Early on, when I translated for my mother, there was lots of fear. For her, I imagine, because she had to rely on a child to help her navigate. For me, because there was so much I did not know and making a mistake could jeopardize my family. The point is that without ethically engaging Villanueva's text, taking into consideration both Chicana history, regional language nuances, and other rhetorical strategies of storytelling practices among Chicana, we have a different story altogether. In such a situation, the original story is withheld within the text, within the language, within the imposition of the translated version of the story.

As Villanueva continues, he displays frustration in his inability to hear or fully understand the information contained which leads him to recognize the need for himself and for Chicana to reject the imposed colonizing indoctrination by taking an active role in self-education. He says:

Irresoluto adolescente, recién graduado y tardío para todo, disciplinado ¹⁷ a no aprender nada, harás de ti lo que no pudo el salón de clase.	<i>Indecisive adolescent, recently graduated and late for everything, disciplined to learn nothing, you will do for yourself what the classroom couldn't.</i>	Indecisive adolescent, just graduated and habitually late, taught to learn nothing, you will do for yourself what the classroom couldn't.
(Villanueva, 1987/1994, pp. 22-23)	(<i>My translations</i>)	(Hoggard's translation)

By saying “disciplinado,” Villanueva suggests that he was disciplined or trained to learn nothing, suggesting that this is an ongoing process but one that he can control. He can cease to follow, cease to be disciplined. Hoggard, however, translates this as the speaker has been “taught” to learn nothing, indicating that this is an established situation, an event that occurred in the past, and that perhaps he is beyond hope. This noted agency is again repeated and accurately translated in the end where he sees that he will do for himself what the classroom could not. He realizes that the classroom was not meant for him or those like him to succeed. This realization is significant because Villanueva suggests that within this education system different standards are set for Chicana and students of color in general. This distrust of the educational system

is a recurring theme for Villanueva. For example, in Villanueva's (1984/1998) poem "I Too Have Walked My Barrio Streets" from *Shaking Off the Dark*, he says:

I too have walked my barrio streets,
gone among old scars and young wounds
who, gathering at the edge of town, on nearby corners,
mend their broken history with their timely tales.
 (I've been quizzed on Texas history—
 history contrived in dark corridors
 by darker still textbook committees.
I've read those tinged white pages where the ink
went casting obscurantism across the page:
the shadows had long dried into a fierce solid state.
And Bigfoot Wallace had always been my teacher's hero,
and what's worse, I believed it,
oh, how we all believed it.) (p. 52).

In this poem, Villanueva asserts that Chicaxns are forced to learn and are quizzed on the history of their alleged ancestors' demise, forced to repeat the words that criminalize, erases, and invalidates their presence within the classroom for a grade. There are multiple systems in place to ensure their failure. Sadly, this is an occurrence that is not limited but is extensive and widespread across all educational levels ranging from elementary education through graduate school. While there are certainly excellent educators, schools, and districts/departments that reject such discriminating practices, the fact remains that these are almost the standard.

In order counter the power of language and diffuse the authority that is bestowed on the translator/translation, Villanueva invokes a convocation of words that primarily illustrates the archaic and hierarchical construction of knowledge as it also initiates the process of the decolonizing the language. He says:

Rhetorics of Translation in Tino Villanueva's *Cronica de mis años peores*

Esta será tu fe:	<i>This will be your faith:</i>	This will be your faith:
<i>Infraction</i>	Infraction	<i>Infraction</i>
<i>bedlam</i>	bedlam	<i>bedlam</i>
<i>ambiguous.</i>	ambiguous.	<i>ambiguous.</i>
Las convoqué ¹⁸	<i>I've convened them</i>	I summoned them
en el altar de mi deseo,	<i>in the altar of my desire,</i>	at the altar of my desire,
llevándolas por necesidad	<i>taking these out of necessity</i>	raising them by necessity
a la memoria.	<i>to my memory.</i>	into memory.
En la fecundidad de un	<i>In the fertility of an instant</i>	In the fertility of the moment
instante	<i>I multiplied myself:</i>	I was multiplying myself:
me fui multiplicando:	affable	<i>affable</i>
<i>affable</i>	prerogative	<i>prerogative</i>
<i>prerogative</i>	egregious.	<i>egregious.</i>
<i>egregious.</i>		
(Emphasis in original, Villanueva, 1987/1994, pp. 22-25)	(<i>My translations</i>)	(Hoggard's translations)

In this convocation, Villanueva begins by inserting particular words in English. What's significant about this weaving of words is both the meaning and story these few words tell, which I will attempt to convey. Villanueva asserts that these words will become his faith (p. 22). Convening them upon an altar, the words become either his sacrifice or his offering in his active renunciation of the domination that has plagued his story and in the hopes of decolonizing this space. His story becomes his faith, and thus, in this creed like recitation of his/story, Villanueva argues that we must utilize multiple languages as we utilize multiple spaces to engage the process of decolonization. The story Villanueva tells begins by recognizing the problem with the system ("Infraction / bedlam / ambiguous"), a system in which the violations against people of color in a backdrop of chaos makes their humanity uncertain. Villanueva brings these words to his altar of desire and invokes them to his memory out of necessity ("llevándolas por necesidad / a la memoria"), out of the necessity to remember, to revisit, and to reclaim the history that is denied and from which his people are erased.

As Villanueva continues to build his history, the English words begin to pile up into a mound containing stories and bodies. In a poetic retelling of history, Villanueva explains both the lure of the American dream, the eminent danger Mexican people experience ("affable / prerogative / egregious.") and how recent immigrants are instilled with the desire to assimilate to reach some form of acceptance but are only shunned and end up living in an impoverished state ("priggish / eschew /

impecunious”). Villanueva asserts though that in the process of attempting to accept the indoctrinated history, of attempting to demonstrate that they belong, there is also an ongoing process of recovery that is occurring. In other words, Villanueva demonstrates that our histories are interconnected. Our histories, as a people of color, lie at the foundation of this nation. If we can recognize how our histories build on each other, then we could map our interconnected struggles. Villanueva’s play with words here then is demonstrative of the mapping that occurs with language, the way language has been given the power to divide, categorize, and erase. He shifts it to show us how can wield their power.

As Villanueva continues, we see the shift that the placement of the words on the altar creates to build a new story. This difference is utterly missed by Hoggard’s translation. Villanueva says:

Cada vez tras otra asimile ¹⁹ su historia, lo que equivale a rescatar lo que era mío: <i>priggish</i> <i>eschew</i> <i>impecunious.</i>	<i>Time after time</i> <i>I understood their history,</i> <i>which was equivalent to</i> <i>rescuing</i> <i>what was mine:</i> priggish eschew impecunious.	One after another I made their history mine, which was equivalent to redeeming what was mine: <i>priggish</i> <i>eschew</i> <i>impecunious.</i>
(Emphasis in original, Villanueva, 1987/1994, pp. 24-25)	(<i>My translations</i>)	(Hoggard’s translations)

This instance is another example of the subtlety in the translation. “Asimile” could be translated in various ways. One of which would be to assimilate. This version would be more in line with Hoggard’s suggestion that this is making something your own as in the history Villanueva speaks about. But to “asimilar” also means something else. In this case, I’m prompted with my mother telling me as a teenager: “Asimilate o no vas a salir.” This meant that my inability to understand what she was telling me indicated that I would be going out that night. As such, “asimilar” means to “comprender,” to understand, to have learned the lesson. In this example, Villanueva is not making this colonizing history his own, but he understands that learning this colonizing history is important to be able to recover his own. In the same way that we can see multiple stories in the poem, the original, the translation, and my teased-out narrative within this rhetorical third space, Villanueva too can see the different histories building on each other and understands that he must work actively to recover

his history. We utilize this rhetorical third space, as Licona (2005) shows, to negotiate meanings between histories and provide an alternative methodology for decolonial work to happen through poetry.

The convocation of the words in this poem is beautiful and rhetorical. He builds an altar of English words in a Spanish poem that will serve to protect him. Early on, children like myself and Villanueva learn the shame of mispronouncing words and feel in academia that words like doctorate, professor, educated and so forth will protect us. They won't. He says:

Porque las hice doctrina
repetida horariamente,
de súbito
yo ya no era el mismo de
antes:
assiduons
faux pas
suffragette.

*Because I made them a
doctrine
repeated hourly,
suddenly
I already was no longer the
same as before:
assiduous
faux pas
suffragette.*

Because I turned them
into hourly repeated doctrine,
suddenly
I was not the same as before:
assiduous
faux pas
suffragette.

(Emphasis in original,
Villanueva, 1987/1994, pp.
24-25)

(*My translations*)

(Hoggard's translations)

There are a few significant shifts in translation here. In this example, Villanueva makes the words a doctrine that he repeats daily. A key point in these lines is "las hice" in which he takes ownership of this action and marks himself as the creator of such doctrine. Then, we have the placement of this odd shift in time that is difficult to translate. "Súbito" means suddenly and in the placement on the page should mark a revelation as in, suddenly it dawned on me. But an interesting shift comes in the following line: "yo ya no era el mismo de antes" (Villanueva, 1987/1994, p. 24). The word "ya" is past tense and so the phrase is not "I was not the same as before" but rather "I already was no longer the same as before." This clunky translation marks an instance that is beyond translation, but the "ya" and the "already" are important as a realization that he was already not the same as before. The insertion of the "ya" changes the sentence and makes the translation sound wrong but it's right. In fact, I missed it the first time. This insertion marks this moment as a sudden internal awakening. Of figuring out that which was already known. A realization as in figuring out that you knew it all along. This is an empowering realization, and in the context of

Villanueva's story, it shows that he is in full control and self-aware of the wordplay taking place. He knew it all along.

As this poem draws to a close, Villanueva recognizes that the process of reclaiming history requires authority and control over the text. He argues that this process begins by both dispelling misconceptions and misinterpretations of who Chicax are and learning to be the creators of our own history. He says:

Tenaz oficio el de crearme en mi propia imagen cada vez con cada una al pronunciarla:	<i>A tenacious task that of creating myself in my own image each time I pronounced one of them:</i>	A constant effort, creating myself in my own image each time I pronounced one of them:
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(Villanueva,
1987/1994, pp. 26-27)

(*My translations*)

(Hoggard's translation)

Villanueva explains that the power to write our own history has the power to create ourselves. As he moves through the convocation of each of those words, he creates himself repeatedly in his own image. Here, Villanueva marks a rejection of the imposed history and colonization. He will be his own person and is wielding himself into fruition one word at a time. Furthermore, he says:

<i>postprandial subsequently</i> y de escribir por fin con voluntad las catorce letras de mi nombre y por encima la palabra libertad.	<i>postprandial subsequently and finally writing willingly the fourteen letters of my name and over it the word libertad.</i>	<i>postprandial subsequently</i> and finally willing myself to write the fourteen letters of my name and over them the word libertad.
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(Emphasis in original, Villanueva, (*my translations*)
1987/1994, pp. 26-27)

(Hoggard's translations)

Villanueva theorizes that to write down his own name has the power to release him which we can argue would be to write his own history. This *libertad*, however, transcends that of any physical bondage but a recognition that bodies and minds can be consumed and confined by the history that they believe. In the case of a history that consistently seeks to revisit the exploitation and oppression of people of color,

they will continue to be both victims and criminals. In either of these views, they always have been seen as less than human and become unreal. Their bodies, stories, victories, and defeats become unreal. And within the realm of the unreal, it becomes increasingly easy to ignore, abuse, or deny their human rights and liberties. Villanueva's final act of inscribing "*libertad*" over his name teaches readers that they are all responsible for their freedom and to find this *libertad* they must actively seek it and defend it.

Conclusion

Villanueva's interrogation of both how we are written and how we are translated are interconnected. Whether a text attempts to tell Chicana history or translate it, as rhetoric scholars, we must question their ethical engagement with the text and with the history. There is a text and there are words and then there is a space that transcends these—a rhetorical third space. Villanueva challenges the way history is written, what history is written, how bodies are written and criminalized within it, and how students of color within the American classroom continue to be subjected to the same discriminating practices both in how they are taught and what they are taught. Ultimately, however, Villanueva recognizes that our complacency with this system as scholars and educators is part of the problem. If we want to change the system, if we want to truly build a better society where humanity is not measured by the color of skin, by the accent in our stories, or by the "foreignness" of our surnames, then we have to be willing to write down our own names, tell our own stories, and inscribe *libertad* over all of it.

Villanueva's work forces us as rhetoricians to recognize the danger that constitutes the interpretation, the analysis, and even the translation of texts, especially those texts by people of color. His work forces us to recognize that despite our best efforts, we will always bring something of our own into the texts—our own agendas, our own ideologies, and epistemologies. Recognizing this potential then, Villanueva asserts in these collections that we must ethically approach all texts. We must recognize both the spaces which the text inhabits and the center of our understandings of the text and the discourse that is being engaged. Furthermore, Villanueva helps us to recognize the fluidity of language, the capacity of language to destroy, and the need to speak multiple languages. The fact remains that even when the text is in English, the language might not be "English." Essentially, speaking of decolonial approaches, attempting to decolonize our classroom, our bodies, and our minds often leads us to learn and speak another language. It is a decolonial discourse that presents itself in the

third space. In the space created by the “text” and the translation / interpretation / analysis and imposition of the new story. As such, our approaches must demystify colonial tactics and practices so that we can recognize them as such so that we have a chance to decolonize our spaces, our stories, our bodies, and our minds.

Endnotes

1. Land acknowledgement – California State University, Chico, Office of Tribal Relations. (2019). Retrieved February 23, 2020, from <https://www.csuchico.edu/tribalrelations/>
2. My use of “text” is not in exclusive reference to an alphabetical written text but rather used to imply the multiple forms of “texts” we read that do and do not use any form of alphabet and do include performative and other forms of material texts. All of these texts require a reading of some form and the transfer of information from the original text to a level of understanding requires an act of translation. Later, I shift to using “story” and “stories” when I speak specifically about the narrative Villanueva creates in his poetry collection and the translation.
3. This collection was originally published without the translation as *Crónica de mis años peores*. La Jolla: Lalo, 1987.
4. Laura Gonzales (2018) would refer to this instance as a “translation moment,” as “instances in time when individuals pause to make a rhetorical decision about how to translate a word or phrase from one named language to another” (p. 2)
5. Leslie Marmon Silko (1977) in *Ceremony* writes: “I will tell you something about stories. [he said] They aren't just entertainment. Don't be fooled. They are all we have, you see, all we have to fight off illness and death. You don't have anything if you don't have stories” (p. 2).
6. Malea Powell quotes Lee Maracle's 1990 article titled on “Oratory: Coming to Theory” in her 2012 *CCCC Chairs Address: “Stories Take Place: A Performance in One Act”*: “Among European scholars there is an alienated notion which maintains that theory is separate from story, and thus a different set of words are required to “prove” an idea rather than to “show” one. We [indigenous people] believe the proof of a thing or idea is in the doing. Doing requires some form of social interaction and thus, *story*, is the most persuasive and sensible way to present the accumulated thoughts and values of a people. . . . There is story in every line of theory. The difference between us [indigenous] and European scholars is that we admit this, and present theory through story.” (qtd in Powell, “Stories Take Place...”, 2012, p. 384). In an interview with Liz Lane & Don

Unger (2017) titled "Malea Powell on Story, Survivance & Constellating as Praxis" Powell explains: "For me, that practice of story is about engaging in multilayered historical and experiential events that happen in a space or place and trying to represent them the best you can or representing them from your point of view but not in a way that implies nobody else's point of view matters."

(*4C4Equality, Writing Networks for Social Justice*

<http://constell8cr.com/4c4e/introduction>)

7. Manuel M. Martin-Rodriguez (1993) also translates Villanueva's "Haciendo Apenas la Recolección" as "Just Beginning to Remember" in "Aesthetic Concepts of Hispanics in the United States" *Handbook of Hispanic Cultures in the United States: Literature and Art* (p. 118).
8. Eric Rodriguez & Evarardo J. Cuevas (2017) speak of the dangers of Chicana people taking on the mantle of mestizaje without recognizing how this process is a nationalistic agenda that makes a problematic and dangerous claim and erasure of Indigenous identities, lands, epistemologies, and ontologies (p. 230-232). Additionally, Gabriella Raquel Rios (2016) explains that in claiming and or rather seeking to verify an indigenous background leads to locating "indigeneity and Indigenous peoples vis-à-vis racist, eugenicist state-sanctioned logics or we locate it vis-à-vis racist, eugenicist biological logics. Both matter (however paradoxically) for the same reason: (ongoing) genocide" (2016, p. 120). Instead, Rios explains that one should "simply claim our identities through our politics, and that we align ourselves with Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies" (2016, p. 120).
9. At the start of this section, I thought it would be worthwhile to explain a few things. First, the citations will be provided under Villanueva's original works. In the book, the original work appears on the left page and Hoggard's translation appears on the right. Second, although I discuss my analysis in the paragraphs following the poetry, I thought it was imperative to show readers all versions of the text. Third, I provided my full translations in the middle column in italics. Lastly, my translations presented here are certainly not beyond reproach. I am not a translation expert. However, what I have tried to showcase is the kind of work required necessary for us to ethically engage the translational of such works. In my own translations, I not only relied on dictionary definitions, but infused Mexican American and Chicana history, Texas history, regional understanding of language nuances, embodied experience, and memory.

10. “Razón” means motivo & argumento (reason), acierto & verdad, (to say something is right) juicio (reason), información (inquire within), ratio (at the rate of), and recado (message) (*Webster’s* 410).
11. “Predestinado” literally translates as “predestined” not “prescribed,” which asserts claim over an object for an undetermined length of time (*Webster’s* 389).
12. While I typically prefer to use Chicax as a gender-neutral term and since it is in use with public and activist spaces, I will defer to Villanueva’s use of Chicano when referencing his own use. As such readers may notice a shifting between the use of Chicax and Chicano.
13. My initial approach to translating were from my own bilingual upbringing. My first language was Spanish and still the primary language my family speaks at home. I also verified all translations using Webster’s New World. Concise Spanish Dictionary. 2nd ed. 2006. (45)
14. Resucitable comes from the conjugation of resucitar which means either “to bring back to life”; “to resurrect, to revive” or “to rise from the dead” (*Webster’s* 427 (S)). Retrieve is to recuperar, which is to recuperate, recover, reclaim, and regain (*Webster’s* 383(E); 415 (S)).
15. Malvado translates as evil, wicked, or a villain (*Webster’s* 308 (S))
16. Deshabitar means “to leave, to depopulate, to empty of people” (*Webster’s* 157 (S)).
17. Disciplinado literally translates as disciplined (*Webster’s* 169 (S)), which carries connotations of being trained to do or not do something, of self-control and/or imposed to be self-controlled.
18. Convocar means reunión (to convene); huelga, elecciones (to call) (*Webster’s* 121 (S)).
19. Asimilar means idea, conocimientos, alimentos (to assimilate); compartir (to compare); equiparar (to grant equal rights to) (*Webster’s* 45 (S)).

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