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Notes for Framing Feminist Translation Studies in Latin America

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Translation[1]: Luciana Carvalho Fonseca

Feminist Translation Studies has been established as a topical and necessary field. The trail-blazing theories of the Canadian School have been taken forward by the European School of Feminist Translation Studies, which driven by professor Olga Castro, has mobilized and brought together a wealth of researchers[2]. The contours of Feminist Translation Studies have extended to Latin America[3] and other geographical regions[4]. Exchanges have been fruitful, thanks, above all, to advances in feminist thought and to movements propelled by women's activism (Cypriano, 2013). Meta-theoretical notions of "intersectionality", "transnationalism", "decoloniality" and "post-colonialism" have increasingly illuminated and further elaborated on the categories of analysis of feminist studies (Sánchez, 2018), such as "woman", "identity", "difference", "gender", "patriarchy", and "pedagogies".

2 See: Castro e Sportuno (2020); Castro, Ergun, Flotow e Spoturno (2020); Castro e Ergun (2017); Castro-Vázquez (2009); Alvira (2010).

3 Whenever mentioned, Latin America encompasses the Caribbean.

4 Works such as *Translating Feminism in China: gender, sexuality and censorship*, by Zhongli Yu, published in 2015. In addition to outlining an overview of Feminist Translation Studies based on the Canadian School, the book denounces specific cases of the censorship of translations of feminist works into Chinese.

According to Harding (1986) feminist analytical categories should be unstable since the world itself is unstable and incoherent: stable and coherent categories would be obstacles to social understanding and practices. On the other hand, for Latin American theorists such as feminist sociologist Heleieth Saffioti (2015, p. 59), ignoring such categories as that of "patriarchy" (in favor of the category "gender", for example) and placing it "in the shade means operating in accordance with patriarchal ideology, which normalizes exploitation-domination", thus rendering the patriarchal system invisible. Saffioti also invites the question: "who gains from the theory of gender when used to replace the theory of the patriarchy?" (2015, p. 147).

Catherine Walsh (2013) and Rita Segato (2018), theorists of decolonial thinking, use the term "pedagogy" to signify the strategies, practices and methodologies which interweave and construct—on the one hand-resistance and opposition and on the other insurgency and *cimarronaje*, affirmation, (re)existence and (re)humanization. Decolonial pedagogies, developed in the struggle against subalternity, in which the rationalism of modernity and colonial power were questioned and challenged, strive to transgress and disrupt from within their existential-ontological negation and propose a reinvention of society. "The decolonial" therefore stands for a continuous pathway of struggle in which one may identify, make visible, and promote alternative constructions and places of exteriority.

Segato (2018) writes that *las pedagogias de la crueldad* are defined as acts and practices that teach, habituate, and program subjects to act in the "reification" of life, above all in the sexual exploitation of women, and she also draws attention to gender relations and the patriarchy as playing leading prototypical roles in this era. When considering that forms of domination from colonial history still exist in the present day, and that these forms result in man —whether native or peasant man, or the working, precarious man of the urban masses—tending to follow the same hierarchical and social pattern, it is apparent that the new forms of war[5] in Latin America are intervening within the scope of domestic gender relations. Segato takes as her starting point the debate on patriarchy in Latin American societies and puts forward a proposal for counter-pedagogies to cruelty, all related to the issue of gender: to act, therefore, in a counter-pedagogy against the power of the patriarchy; to explore the historic experience of women in order to find another way of thinking and acting collectively; to speak out about the mandate of masculinity which makes even men themselves no less the hostages of this violent structure, and finally to reflect upon a historical project of creating bonds, introducing a reciprocity that produces community and affects. In this sphere, cultural mediation takes on a substantial role in cultural encounters that result from the aspiration to build a more receptive and less violent society, as we release into circulation feminine narratives and experiences, through the practice and study of translation, in order to construct decolonial gender-related pedagogies.

Translation has been essential for the theoretical, analytical and critical dislocation of feminisms. Geopolitical location, the positioning of the subject (Mouffe, 1993), situated knowledges (Haraway, 2009) and the particular standpoint (Collins, 1997), in a movement of theories (and equally of activism and militancy), come together to make up the horizon

5 Characterized by the proliferation of oligarchic control by organized crime in many sectors of society, including politics and the economy.

of feminist translation6. And since more than one unequivocal horizon of feminist translation exists, there remains the labor of identifying, or at least signaling, what might come to be "the Latin American horizon of feminist translation". This threshold enables one to reflect on and sketch out a Feminist Translation Studies within and about Latin America and its multiple designations Abya Yala, Anáhuac and Tawantinsuyu.

To reflect on women and translation in the southern axis of the American continent, we shall make use of the concept of "experience" as elucidated by Joan Scott (1999). 'Experience' in this case is anchored in three historical strands that have impacted on Latin American women— colonization, Catholicism and authoritarianism —which are then interwoven with the thematic knot proposed by Heleith Saffioti, with a view to highlighting how experiences of oppression have always been marked by resistance in the form of translation.

Experience

According to historian Joan Scott (1991, p. 747):

> *Experience* is not a word we can do without, although, given its usage to essentialize identity and reify the subject, it is tempting to abandon it altogether. But experience is so much a part of everyday language, so imbricated in our narratives that it seems futile to argue for its expulsion. It serves as a way of talking about what happened, of establishing difference and similarity, of claiming knowledge that is "unassailable[7]." Given the ubiquity of the term, it seems to me more useful to work with it, to analyze its operations and to redefine its meaning. This entails focussing on processes of identity production, insisting on the discursive nature of "experience" and on the politics of its construction. Experience is at once always already an interpretation and something that needs to be interpreted. What counts as experience is neither self-evident nor straightforward; it is always contested, and always therefore political. [...]
>
> Experience is, in this approach, not the origin of our explanation, but that which we want to explain. This kind of approach does not undercut politics by denying the existence of subjects; it instead interrogates the processes of their creation and, in so doing, refigures history and the role of the historian and opens new ways for thinking about change.

Latin American women have worked out their individual and collective experiences on the basis of historical, social and cultural experiences that mark(ed) and mold(ed) generations of them. Below, we highlight three of these historical experiences (colonization, Christianity and authoritarianism), but not without first stating that any sweeping or monolithic attempt to encompass these experiences is doomed to failure, because there is no such thing as "the Latin American woman" in a geography populated by 626 million inhabitants within a territory of 19.2 million square kilometers, and comprising 25 countries[8].

Although it is not possible to speak of all Latin American women, we acknowledge that their experience is qualitatively different from that of men. In other words, we cannot merely affirm, for example, that the laboring black woman is triply discriminated against (owing to her gender, race and class), but we must also acknowl-

6 See Araújo, Silva-Reis (2019); Costa (2006, 2014); Costa, Alvarez (2013, 2014); Alvarez et alii (2014).

7 Reference in Scott's quote: Pierson (1989, p. 32). See Pierson (1991) in references.

8 Counting English and French-speaking countries. In addition to some ten non-sovereign states.

edge that gender, race and class are qualities that make the situation of these women much more complex (Saffioti, 2013, p. 123). In Heleieth Saffioti's theory of the knot, elaborated in the 1960s, these three categories (racism, gender and social class) are not simply cumulative in their impact, but make up a "new and composite reality stemming from this fusion" (2013, p. 122).

Before Kimberlé Crenshaw had coined the term "intersectionality" in 1989, Heleieth Saffioti had already published her study *Woman in Class Society* in 1969. In this work she developed the metaphor of the knot to account for the reality of the fusion between patriarchy, racism and capitalism and to demonstrate that it is impossible to separate (patriarchal) domination from (capitalist) exploitation. Saffioti's knot is made up of three substructures, three interwoven strands: gender, race and social class. Gender is the oldest of these substructures and, according to her, social classes and races have, since their genesis, been gendered phenomena, because the treatment dispensed to men and women has been different. The fusion of the three contradictory substructures is governed by a logic distinct from that which governs each substructure separately:

> What is important is to analyze these contradictions [substructures] as they are blended, or entangled, or interwoven together to make up a *knot.* Not the theory of the Gordian knot, nor a tight knot, but a loose knot, which allows each of its components some mobility. (Saffioti, 2015, p. 133)

At no moment does race, gender or class act independently, since in the dynamic of the knot, each one is conditioned in accordance with the circumstances[9]. Analyses which attempt to separate them do not take into consideration the power structure in which the knot is constantly moving:

> This mobility is very important to retain, so as not to take anything as a fixity, including the organization of the substructures within an overall structure: in other words, of these

9 One example of the knot in action within an individual experience is the story of the "uppity black girl" narrated by Lélia González (1983, p. 233): "Some okay white people invited us to a party, saying that we could come along. Something about a book about black people. They were really nice to us and treated us with a lot of consideration. They even asked us to sit at their table, and what they had to say was very fine, telling us that we were oppressed, discriminated and exploited. […] And so, we sat down at their table. Except that the table was so full that we could not next to them. But we pulled up some chairs and sat down right behind them. They were too busy teaching the black folk in the audience all kinds of stuff to notice that if they had squeezed together it would have been possible for everybody to manage to sit around the table together. […] We just kept on trying to be polite. Speech after speech, rounds of applause. Right then this black girl who was sitting with us plucked up some courage. They had asked her a question and were waiting for her to answer. She stood up and walked over to the table to pick up the microphone and started to complain about some things that were happening at the party. That set up turmoil. All the black people in the audience seemed to have been just waiting for an excuse to shake things up. Everyone was raising their voices, yelling, booing, and you couldn't hear yourself think. Obviously, the white people were livid, and rightly so. […] If they seemed to know more about us than we did ourselves? There was a moment when no one could take any more of the ruckus those ignorant, badly educated, black people had caused. It had gone too far. Just then a white guy picked a fight with a black guy who had grabbed the microphone to bad-mouth the whites. It turned into a brawl... If you want to know who I think was to blame: *That uppity black girl*, obviously. If only she had just kept her mouth shut... Now the white people don't even want to hear her name. They still go on about her. But then why didn't she behave? […]"

> contradictions in the bosom of the new reality —the tangled skein of patriarchy, racism and capitalism—that has been constituted historically. (Saffioti, 2015, p. 134)

Having acknowledged that it is impossible to make sweeping statements and having exposed the influence of the structuring categories in society, we now move on to the three historical experiences that have molded what it means to be a woman in Latin America: (a) colonization, (b) Christianity and (c), authoritarianism. All three impinge simultaneously upon the women of the region, in their multiple complexities as defined by Saffioti's loose knot by which they operate patriarchal domination and capitalist exploitation with a great deal of efficiency and precision. However, it is important to remember that "whenever there are relations of exploitation and domination, there is resistance, and there is struggle" (Saffioti, 2015, p. 139), and translation is an expression of both resistance and struggle.

a) Colonization: women's bodies and languages

The exploitative colonization that is the hallmark of the history of all the countries of Latin America reaches its deepest level in the mindset of Latin Americans, which is shaped by the colonizations of being (Maldonado-Torres, 2007), of power (Mignolo, 2010, 2013), of knowledge (Maldonado-Torres, 2006) and of gender (Lugones, 2014). Coloniality resulting from the experience of colonialism in the region is felt in the exploitation and regulation of behaviors, bodies and cultures. The sexualization of this exploitation meant that

> For centuries, the uncertain continents—the Americas, Asia—were figured in European lore as libidinously eroticized. Travelers' tales abounded with visions of the monstrous sexuality of far-off lands, where, as legend had it, men sported gigantic penises and women consorted with apes […] (McClintock, 1995, p. 22).

The tales brought back by the colonizers produced an image of the world with a woman's body and "Columbus' breast fantasy [...] draws on a long tradition of male travel as an erotics of ravishment" (McClintock, 1995, p. 43). Dissolute women and black bodies with an insatiable sexual appetite made the colony a place where sexual excesses and aberrations needed to be reined in, and "knowledge of the unknown world was mapped as a metaphysics of gender violence" (McClintock, 1995, p. 47). Nature was to be controlled by science, and this included the subordination of women and of blacks, both of which are the fuel that is burned by the engine of mercantile capitalism. The work of indigenous women as translators and interpreters is evident from the very outset of the Spanish "Conquest", the historical narratives of which are recorded in official documents that praise male adventurers who travelled to the New World in pursuit of wealth that was unattainable in a conservative, ailing Europe racked by territorial disputes and wars, where life was constrained by an array of forces from the Holy Inquisition to the Black Death. According to McClintock, "In myriad ways, women served as mediating and threshold figures by means of which men oriented themselves in space, as agents of power and agents of knowledge" (1995, p. 24).

The best-known and one of the very few to be immortalized in official records was Malinche, Malintzin, Malinalli or *Doña* Marina, also referred to as *La Lengua* (The Interpreter). Her role was to interpret the exchanges between Moctezuma and Hernán Cortés during their meetings. The result was the sack of the capital of the Aztec Empire by the Europeans. To this day, *Malinche*'s name is used to signify a kind of inferiority complex, known to Mexicans as *ma-*

linchismo[10]. For many centuries she was invoked only as a symbol of treason against the motherland, exacerbated by her relationship with the Conquistador Cortés, and only in contemporary times has the image of *Malinche* as a traitor been disrupted so that she can now be seen as a symbol of racial intermingling, and her importance as an interpreter at that brutal moment in Latin American history be reinforced[11].

Researcher Ana Rona, who pursued records of indigenous women translators in the colonial era in her doctoral thesis, entitled *Formación de intérpretes y políticas linguísticas en la província jesuítica del Paraguay* (2014), states that there were frequent cases of women interpreters in the Misiones region. Even when they had not been formally educated or received training from the Company of Jesus[12], these women could be paid for their services, as can be observed in the *Relación de la fundación del Pueblo de San Javier de Mocobíes (1743–1762)*. In this account, there is one passage in which the Jesuit missionary Francisco Burgués explains his difficulty in working with the interpreters, and complains, among other things, of their reluctance both to teach the Mocoví language to the Spaniards, or to speak to the indigenous peoples. What is striking in his account is the emphasis he gives to a woman interpreter - whose name we do not know - questioning both the quality of her work, and his own doubt as to what the woman is really saying:

> From the beginning two were with me: a young married woman and a single man; but I can assure you in all truth that the unfaithful and barbaric Mocobíes did not give me so much work and as many unpleasantness as these two Christian and Spanish tongues. The woman who knew the language best and was well paid for her trade had me beg her to teach me a few words and to say to the Indians what I said; and even after being begged, she did it reluctantly and God knows what she was saying. (Furlong, 1938, p. 34 apud Rona, p. 120)

The Eurocentric standard becomes the apex of what "being a woman" would mean within the context of the colonial. The phenomenon has consequences: the legacy of the colonizing languages as national languages[13]; the death or virtual extinction of the languages of the native populations; the overvaluing of European cultural instruments[14]; and the hierarchical position that women are forced to assume within the women's world, that is, the whiter and more bourgeois she is, the closer she is to the European standard, whereas the poorer and blacker she is, the further she is from a European ideal.

10 The Real Academia Española states that the term derives from Malinche, "esclava mexicana que desempeñó un papel importante en la Conquista española de México como intérprete, consejera y amante de Hernán Cortés, e -ismo.". RAE says that the term signifies "Actitud de quien muestra apego a lo extranjero con menosprecio de lo próprio." (RAE, 2020) Note that the entry, despite pointing out that she played an important role in the Spanish Conquest, stresses her relationship with Cortés.

11 Malinche has left no record of her life or her having been an interpreter; she is always referred to by third-parties. Only with the advent of the twentieth century and the practice of rewriting history from the point of view of the defeated, of the invisible ones, and in turn, with the increasing access of women to literature, has Malinche been repositioned in her place as a (virtual) head of state, and valued for possessing the gift of the Word. See Aguiar (2013), a wide-ranging study on the historical and literary representation of Malinche/Malinalli.

12 Official translators and interpreters underwent training because their tasks included negotiations with natives, evangelization, the administration of the sacraments, being scribes for official communications, instruction and guidance in the opening of new trails, etc.

13 Above all Spanish, Portuguese and French.

14 Such as clothes, hair styles, beauty products, domestic utensils, arts and crafts, sexualized professions.

The after-effects of colonialism are present today despite advances in decolonial theories.

Regarding translation, coloniality at first sight denies all *traductographie*[15] carried out by women, above all native women[16]. Coloniality then calls into question the asymmetry between translators and translation theorists of the South and of the North. As a result, monolingualism – both in educational policy and in scientific research and proposals – remains the standard. Many of the driving forces of movements in the history of translation have resulted from coloniality, as well as those of movements for a theoretical emancipation of feminist translation theories, which are becoming increasingly de-colonized and fixed within the Latin American context.

b) Christianity: Mary, Oxum and subversion

Along with colonization, Christianity — through Catholic Marianism — is another collective feminine Latin American experience. Marianism refers to the worship of the Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus (Stevens, 1973), which is manifested in the veneration of local figures such as *La Virgen de Guadalupe* in Mexico and *Nossa Senhora de Nazaré* in the State of Pará-Brazil, all of whom represent the sanctity of woman. Catholicism swept Latin America holding up Mary as its paradigm of womanhood: silenced by the story of one man, voiceless in her own narrative, the symbol of motherhood and of femininity, passive, submissive, and fulfilled in her role. Like Mary, the Latin American woman is socialized to be docile[17], and tied down to the bosom of the household, motherhood and family. And when not associated with the figure of a saint, or when they diverge from the ideal, Latin American women are assigned the role *Malinche*, and called a traitor, concubine, and mother of bastard children. Thus, in the traditional imagination, in this case illustrated by Mexican culture (Alarcón, 1983), being a Latin American woman[18] is a journey between extremes, and, on this journey, women themselves operate patriarchy against other women, mothers turn against their daughters.

In cruel societies in which motherhood is a burden, and criticism of the woman-mother resides in guilt, Latin American women are largely orphans from living mothers, because the latter will annihilate their daughters politically by socializing them. In this dynamic, daughters are also orphans from a "matrilineal community of political affects" (Santos, 2013, p. 220). In the absence of "mothers", we need to dig deep to find our multiple "symbolic mothers[19]", our mothers in literature and in translation so as to connect women to a genealogy of translation. The metaphor

15 The term is a concept used in recent historical studies of translation and signifies pieces of the history of translation for which there is no available narrative, or to paraphrase Jean-René Ladmiral (2014, p. 256), the science of translation that has always included observation and description (*traductographie*) of the actual practice of translation, just as ethnology presupposes ethnography.

16 See Metcalf (2005) and Silva-Reis, Fonseca (2018).

17 Saffioti (2015, p. 37) refers to women who are brought up to be docile as "amputated women"— suffering from the amputation of the use of reason and the exercise of power.

18 Gender "is not only social, because the body takes part in it: whether as labor or as a sexual object, or even as a reproducer of human beings, whose destiny if they were men would be to participate actively in production, whereas if they were women they would bring into it the three functions of the aforementioned mechanism" (Saffioti, 2015, p. 133).

19 For Tatiana Nascimento (2013, p. 220), the symbolic mother is "far from the mothering-burden myth of an ineluctable heterocentric biology. She celebrates the creative process among women writers, rewriters and translators, forging a matrilineal community of political, literary and even sexual politics".

of translation practiced by women as a quest for symbolic mothers was articulated by Pilar Godayol (2011) in the context of an absence of literature and translation practiced by lesbian women in Catalunya, but Latin American women may also be deemed the orphans of living mothers.

Even today, religious experience helps keep many Latin American women at some distance from the public and political spheres, locking them away in situations where the most socially dignified option is devotion to motherhood[20] and to the family (Saffioti, 2013, p. 151). Religion values women who have been brought up to suffer, lest they achieve pleasure in sexual relations, and in order for them to put up with sexual abuse from companions and progenitors (Saffioti, 2015).

Reinforced by male sexism, Marianism shapes the everyday experience of Latin American women. The metaphor of the upper room —or Cenacle—in the Bible shows how men and women receive the tongues of the holy spirit:

> 13. And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James 14. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. 1. And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. 5. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. 6. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language (Acts 1: 13-14; 2: 1-6, King James Version)

The apostles receive the tongues of fire, and each begins to speak different languages and to speak to the different peoples. The same happens to Mary mother of Jesus. She was also present at this moment and on the same spot, where the apostles began to preach in the languages of the peoples of the world. But nothing more is narrated about Mary. Is this a metaphor showing how invisible translation by women is? Whatever the explanation, what can be stated is that Marian behavior is identified and re-examined in the lives of all women, including those of translation theorists and translators in Latin America21. Despite all the hegemonic strength of Catholicism, the figures of Mary and of other holy women have been received, but also syncretically subverted and transformed to become Yemanjá (Virgin Mary, Our Lady of the Seafarers, Our Lady of the Conception), Oxum (Our Lady Aparecida), Iansã (Saint Barbara), Nanã (Saint Ann), etc.

Another metaphor arises out of the syncretic force of Umbanda and Candomblé, and is applied to translation by Tatiana Santos in her doctoral thesis on translation and black lesbian

20 Motherhood implies an increase in unpaid domestic labor and reproductive work. The latter corresponds to the production and socialization of a work force for capitalism. The church has an important role to play in the perpetuation of this labor: for example, it prevents women from having complete control over their bodies and their sexuality.

21 In Brazil, studies such as those of de Blume (2010) and Dépêche (2000, 2002) are counter-examples to the historical and theoretical invisibility of women translators.

theory. Santos understands translation as Oxum's mirror, the *abebé*:

> Oxum, the *orixá* or deity reigning over flowing fresh water (rivers, waterfalls, springs, streams) always carries a mirror with her, the *abebé*. She is therefore very often called vain. Rather than this traditional reading in which the mirror is associated with vanity and physical beauty, I propose the understanding of the mirror as a source of self-knowledge and self-recognition, into which one gazes the better to understand oneself [...]
> Oxum is also an *orixá* who is closely associated with discourse, because she is the one who looks after those who are about to be born, until they can "use reason and express themselves in a language" (Buonfiglio, 1995, p. 65). As the divinity of the fresh waters of rivers and waterfalls she is frequently associated with fertility. (Santos, 2014 p. 14-15)

But Oxum is not associated with fertility "in a heterocentric reproductive sense" (Santos, 2014, p. 15), but rather with the fertility of self-knowledge and also of affection between women, because the deity Oxum lay with the deity Iansã and she then took refuge in the waters. According to this metaphor, translating is a woman looking within herself, and also a woman who gazes at another woman. Translating is a woman seeking to know herself and to be known. Translating is to look inside Latin American women, to gaze at Latin American women; it is knowing and making known Latin American women. And when every woman holds her *abebé* and reflects herself in the *abebé* of another woman, the reflected images and possibilities for knowledge are infinite.

And thus, to revisit the nineteenth century and to recognize women who subverted Marianism by traveling within Latin America, reflecting, writing and publishing on social, political and historical processes, and occasionally being penalized for their writings with political persecution or expulsion from their countries (as in the case of Juana Manuela Gorriti and Clorinda Matto de Turner, among others) means engaging in the recovery of texts and feminine narratives of women who thought critically about the subcontinent and made their voices heard. In this respect, the travels of Argentinian writer Juana Manso stand out: she went into exile in the Uruguayan capital, because her father was being politically persecuted for opposing the dictatorship of Juan Manuel de Rosas. She published in the *El Nacional* newspaper in Montevideo, and founded the *Ateneo de Señoritas*, an educational space where French and Geography were taught, thus beginning her life's great project: the moral emancipation of American women. Owing to the political alignment of President Oribe with the ideas of Rosas, her family migrated again to another country, this time to the city of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, where she married a Brazilian violinist. According to Souza (2017), it is unknown whether, on arrival in Brazil, Manso already knew Portuguese or if she had picked it up it from her earlier contacts with Brazilians and Portuguese.

After living in the United States and Cuba, she returned to Brazil, and, some time around 1852, founded the *Jornal das Senhoras: Modas, Literatura, Belas-Artes, Teatros e Crítica*, a magazine which set out to educate the female readership and invited them to become active through writing. Over a two-year period in which publication was periodical, with each edition of the *Jornal*, she presented a chapter of her first novel *Misterios del Plata: romance histórico contemporâneo*. When she returned to Argentina in 1854, she founded a *Porteño* version of her previous *Jornal*, called *Album de Señoritas. Periodico de Literatura, Modas, Bellas Artes y Teatros*. However, the city of Buenos Aires did not buy into Manso's idea: neither women readers nor

women authors showed interest. Manso published all her texts under pen names or anonymously because she received no outside contributions, and the *Album* petered out after only eight editions.

Souza (2017) points out that in the *Album de Señoritas* Manso published the first chapters of her second novel —*La familia del Comendador,* which is about Rio de Janeiro slave society. Hence, she astoundingly publishes chapters of a novel about Argentina in a Brazilian newspaper and chapters of a novel about Brazil in an Argentine newspaper. This is an example of decolonial pedagogy —long before the term was coined—, an instance of a practical and effective case of cultural mediation, since Manso "translated" Argentina for Brazilian readers and Brazil for Argentine readers. By publishing both socially-denouncing novels outside the societies she was denouncing and through her own newspapers, she works the press as a mediator of intercultural exchanges. This enables Manso, as both a writer and editor, to exert influence over different literary systems. *La familia del Comendador* takes place in the streets and dwellings of Rio de Janeiro; however, it is a means to denounce slavery and the cruelty of rich men and women, topics that do not only concern Brazil, but also the young American nations being born. The subject matters are relatable to Argentine readers, familiar with these issues. Likewise, the Brazilian readership was also drawn into *Misterios del Plata*, which addressed a future project for their young country, in which there was also significant inequality between the most educated cultural centers and the many Brazilian regions which had not yet reached "illustration." Manso, whether consciously or unconsciously, tirelessly driven by importance of founding and propagating newspapers for women, connects the South of Latin America, reverberating central themes across the region (Souza, 2017, p. 25).

In sum, the many forms of transforming and subverting the ideal of woman preconized by Catholic Marianism represent resistance to the domination and exploitation of Latin American women and give rise to agency and connection among women as they struggled for their rights in the region.

c) Authoritarianism: Dictatorships, the Return of Democracy and the Renewal of Authoritarianism

The third cross-cutting issue of the experience of Latin American women in this text—authoritarianism—tackles periods of dictatorship in several countries of Latin America from the 1960s to the 1980s. Translator, author, journalist, literary critic, and university lecturer, Ida Vitale—who has been interviewed specially for this issue (Smaldone, 2020)—as one of the intellectuals forced to go into exile in Mexico with her husband, owing to the military coup in 1973 in Uruguay. In 1984, she returned to her country when the military regime came to an end, and continues to produce to this day. The trajectory of Vitale shows how impossible it is to speak of authoritarian periods without relating them to resistance movements and to the recent waves of authoritarianism that are sweeping the region.

The years following the 1964 *coup d'état* in Brazil, for example, are known as "the Leaden Years" owing to the violence of the military government, with an institutionalized practice of torture, thousands of "missing" citizens, and murders that never faced trial under the country's rigged justice system. Clearly the period constrained any advance in women's

rights[22], and in this context, it is essential to point out that the violence of the military state was also characterized by sexualized torture against women (Teles, 2011). Indeed, being a politicized woman challenging the regime in the 1960s and 1970s, was, as feminist sociologist Heleieth Saffioti points out, equivalent to being at best a prostitute:

> Any unmarried woman was directly called a whore, while a married woman was not given this soubriquet, but was at best a Communist, unless she was a complete reactionary in order not to be deemed a Communist. (Gonçalves; Branco, 2011, p. 77)

The first years of the military dictatorship[23] in Brazil coincides with a period in which the Brazilian Marxist feminist sociologist, Heleieth Saffioti, was concluding her work *A mulher na sociedade de classes*[24], released in 1969[25] (1978, 2013). In an interview in 2011, Saffioti made the following detailed statements on references to which she had access when writing the 500-page-long work which circulated in translation in the United States and France:

> What was I reading? What was there to read in Brazil? It was hopeless. What there was, were books like *Grandes damas do II Império* and so on in that style. There was one book by Rose Marie Muraro, [...] adopted by the convents run by nuns. [...]. So, the ideas did not add up (Gonçalves; Branco, 2011, p. 77)

Saffioti specifically mentions the absence of translations in the following passage:

> What did I read? There was nothing interesting to read in Brazil. I read *The Second Sex* by Simone [de Beauvoir]; I read a book by Alva Myrdal and Viola Klein26. These texts were either in French or in English, but there was nothing in Portuguese. The Second Sex was in Portuguese. But the book by Alva Myrdal and Viola Klein was not. And the other one [...] was in French. Her name was Evelyne Sullerot[27]. And there were those classical texts by [Alexandra] Kollontai, [...]; and Clara Zetkin, [...] (Gonçalves; Branco, 2011, p. 77)

Ida Vitale also highlights the absence of translations in the interview she has given in this issue, showing the parallel there is between the Brazilian and Uruguayan experiences: "If I wanted to read a book, because I was interested, but because it was in French, Italian, English or Portuguese, for example, I had to translate it to know what it said" (Smaldone, 2020, p. x). She also mentions that the editions and translations found in Uruguay were produced in Argentina and Mexico, which points up the isolation of Brazil in terms of the circulation of texts translated in the region. However, there was an increase in the number of translations available once the military regime came to an end and democracy was restored. The restoration of democracy was a unique moment in the pursuit of the struggle for rights in every sphere of Brazilian society, as well as representing deep paradigm shifts in behavior (Jaquette, 1989; Alvarez et al., 1998).

Regarding translation, and the circulation of translated texts, the period of the restoration of democracy sheds light on the influence of the United States — both theoretically as well as behaviorally and culturally. North-South relations prevailed and the linguistic integration policies focused on English to the detriment of the national Latin American languages in terms of integrating the region. This means a less privileged movement of cultural, social, theoretical, empirical and political knowledge

26 *Woman's two roles*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltda, 1962.

27 The titles are: *Demain les femmes; La presse féminine* and *La vie des femmes*.

among Latin American women or even the denial or undervaluing of the closest other for a Latin American woman: another Latin American woman. Thus, with the restoration of democracy there was an increase in English-language material beginning in the 1980s, translated and disseminated in the region, such as books by Aline Rousselle, Charlotte Wolff, Camille Paglia.

After the strengthening of "consciousness" that came out of the aforementioned Latin American experiences, the perception of an identity was born together with the production of a knowledge and a narrative in which women have a predominant agency. The unity of Latin American women's experiences guides the determination of a subject with all the possible pluralities, and makes up a subjective singularity (Putois, 2005).

In translational terms, it is this "consciousness" of the identity of Latin American women that guides the modes of translation, and an agency that is militant, critical, analytical and protagonistic both of the act of translating and of the thinking about translation. We could possibly say that the cultural proximity of the countries of Latin America may bring benefits for mutual understanding and for the cultural, linguistic and discursive correspondences among translations carried out in Latin American languages (Silva-Reis, 2018), including the languages of the natives of South America. The benefits of cultural proximity are clear when compared to cases in which translation is based on cultures and languages far distant from the Center-South geography of the American continent. The Dominican theorist Ochy Curiel, writing about cultural proximity, says:

> I believe that although we black women should carry out more translations of other black women, this exercise must not become an imperative. There are thoughts, theories and concepts both of black women and white women that are critical and interesting to our political projects and that it is very important to translate. What I believe is that white women have greater access and privilege and very often take the experiences of black women as mere accounts or raw material for their own academic credit, and for this reason it is important that we who are the descendants of Africans and South American native peoples should translate the output of our sisters in order to avoid the use and instrumentalization of our own experiences and thoughts. (2019, p. 243)

In other words, being translated and translating in Latin America is also an ethical exercise insofar as experiences carry with them consciousness, and give due importance to, the localized and gendered translational act. The increasing consciousness among Latin American women of the experience of translation produces knowledge of the subject and awareness of how essential it is for this knowledge to be shared. And this "sharing of knowledge" coming out of an awareness produces both prescriptions (principles) and proscriptions (bans).

In this proposal for sharing knowledge, we cannot fail to recall the experience of the establishment of one of Latin America's greatest cultural institutions: the *Casa de las Américas*, in Havana, Cuba. It was founded in 1959, four months after the revolution that was to profoundly change Cuba's way of life—and the political relations of the island with other American countries. Its first director and founder was Haydee Santamaría, a leading figure in the Cuban revolution and confidante of then president, Fidel Castro. She was the director of the *Casa* from 1959 to 1980. It was the first major continental space into which the aesthetic avant-garde of Latin America flowed, and as Campuzano writes (2020), the *Casa* is identified and known as one of the busiest gateways of

communication between Cuba and the progressive political forces of Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition to coordinating the work of the *Casa de las Américas*, Santamaría also founded and directed the Latin American Solidarity Organization (OLAS) in 1967, thus confirming her role as a leading figure in the extension of the struggle against United States imperialism as well as expanding the precepts of the revolution to other Latin American countries.

Campuzano (2020) sees in Santamaría a woman able both to organize a great working team and to be the best and most highly authoritative point of reception for those who needed not only exile but also companionship and employment. Changes in historical and political contexts enabled the innovation and creation of spaces in the *Casa de las Américas* to encompass the changes that were occurring in Latin America: through the sheltering of a range of exiled artists and writers such as Manuel Galich from Guatemala, René Depestre from Haiti, the Uruguayan Mario Benedetti and others, alongside her fellow women Santamaría set up such departments as the *Dirección de Música* which included the *Centro de la Canción Protesta* with American documentary filmmaker Estela Bravo; after General Pinochet's *coup d'état* in 1977, she welcomed Miria Contreras, the secretary and companion of Salvador Allende, and introduced her and her sister Mitzi Contreras to the *Dirección de Artes Plásticas*; and, in 1994, in order to recover the history and culture of Latin American and Caribbean women, she created the *Programa de Estudios de la Mujer*, today coordinated by Luisa Campuzano. In addition to the opening of departments focusing on Latin American studies, it is important to highlight the role of the *Casa de las Américas* in publishing translations, above all from French and Portuguese into Spanish, which enabled Latin American literary exchanges in the Caribbean settings as in the case of the *Premio Casa de las Américas*, a prize which brings together a heterogeneous multilingual group of jurors and works, in a multilingual context, championing the history of literature and culture in Latin America.

Rita Schmidt in 2006 points out that beyond its circle of practitioners, feminist criticism barely exists, and when it is mentioned, it is depreciated, very often with explicit prejudice. She states that the greatest contribution feminist criticism can offer is the production of a displacement from the model of democracy existing in Brazil, which goes hand in hand with the proposal of decolonial pedagogy, thus advocating a rupture with the patriarchal social models with a view to developing a critical vision of a less violent society in regards to social, ethnic and gender issues.

For ourselves, the Brazilian editors of this issue, it is extremely challenging to imagine a less violent society when we are facing a new wave of authoritarianism. One of the earliest jolts of this most recent authoritarian blow —the dimensions of which have yet to be defined—began with the impeachment proceedings of President Dilma Roussef, who was in fact impeached and removed from office in 2016, based on unproven accusations. Beyond political and criminal charges, Roussef—as a Latin American woman—was the target of explicit misogyny aimed at her by part of the population, the media, and Brazilian political classes. A strong, determined woman without a husband, without religion, who overcame torture under the military regime, she was subjected to attacks on her physical appearance and sexuality.

In Brazil today there is a new growth of authoritarianism on the part of the Bolsonaro administration, which promotes explicitly

discriminatory policies in relation to gender, race and class. Yet another *coup d'état* is taking place in Brazil: the executive branch is marked by the massive presence of military personnel. There are accounts every day of police violence, the genocide of the black population, the genocide of indigenous peoples and *quilombolas*, violence against women, and violence against the environment. The current administration has taken the stance of denial towards the Covid-19 pandemic, refusing to take steps to protect the population, or to combat inequalities, or to ensure access to health, or to combat increasing rates of violence (whether ethnic, domestic, or police-initiated). In this way it is deeply committed to promoting a policy of death in which many bodies and subjects are disproportionately threatened: women, blacks, the poor, the native population, the *quilombolas*, the elderly, children. All of these amount to no more than statistics. However, many of these bodies do not even make it into the statistics, since the Brazilian government has recently decided no longer to divulge the true number of deaths in the pandemic, and to recategorize others. It is an authoritarian regime in full-blown expansion, doing precisely what defines it as such: killing and hiding bodies on behalf of the capitalist project of domination and exploitation.

Final remarks

As stated throughout this text, where there is power, there is resistance (Saffioti, 2015; Federici, 2019). And since translating means to resist, the practice of feminist translation is growing stronger as an individual and/or collective/collaborative/commoning political action. In the case of individual actions, self-translations and translations that are published by independent publishing houses with an explicit political agenda are strikingly present[28]. And in the case of collaboration, the work of several translation collectives[29] seek to engage readers and influence and transform political contexts. The collective space created by feminist translation aims at disrupting the capitalist logic according to which translation corresponds to a "rendered service" or a "product paid for", in order to establish new ways of production and circulation around which translations in print coexist with freely available online versions. In the collaborative perspective of translation, women integrate and coexist in militant and activist political movements of struggles on behalf of social justice while unblocking the path to alliances among themselves as to the flows of feminist epistemologies, and celebrate – in a new dark age for the country – the creative process of collaborative translation so as to forge a commonalty of experiences and transformative political affects.

In the field of theory, principles such as Latin American subjectivity or proscriptions on the feasibility of being a Latin woman are issues that are beginning to emerge within Translation Studies, given that subalterns not only can speak, but do speak to equals, as much as to those who are different, and among themselves[30]. Latin American feminist translation

28 As examples, Tinta Limón in Argentina; and Bazar do Tempo, Boitempo, Elefante, Ema Livros, Nosotros Editorial, Polén, Relicário, Timo, and Zouk, all in Brazil.

29 Among collectives are translations carried out by *Grupo Latinoamericano de Formación y Acción Feminista* (GLEFAS) and *Coletivo Sycorax*. The latter has been translating several works by Silvia Federeci, and these translations are available free on-line.

30 Two examples from Brazil are the reflection of Matos, Barboza, Santos (2018) on theses and dissertations produced within the Post-Graduate Translation Studies program [*Programa de Pós-Graduação em Estudos da Tradução* – PGET] and the publication of the issue on Translation and Black Feminisms [*Tradução e Feminismos negros*] (Araújo, Silva, Silva-Reis, 2019).

is intense but still comparatively unseen, above all in theoretical terms. Nonetheless the writing of its feminist translation history is gaining strength, growing at its own rate, through each new reflexive advance on the issue, and together with motivated researchers who are interested in re-imagining gender, above all the non-monolithic category of Latin American women and their relations with the patriarchy and capitalism.

Given that every textual genre is situated in a social and historical time and space and is inserted within a given practice, the texts making up this issue and the translations carried out by and of Latin American women (individually and/or collectively) are part of the Latin American feminist movement, feeding into, and dialoguing with, Feminist Translation Studies. These texts and translations, even if not declaring themselves explicitly political, help ensure that Feminist Translation Studies acquire their own Latin-American decolonized body.

The bringing together and sharing of the works in this *Mutatis Mutandis* issue are places of intersection for studies on and reflections about women and translation occurring South to North, North to South and South to South, at the same time they highlight the unique experiences of translators in the region, the receptions of translations of works written by women within this geographical space, and the circulation of texts written by Latin American women in other regions.

We are grateful to Professor Paula Montoya for providing the guest-editors with this space for discourse and thought. We also thank all the anonymous reviewers, and above all the authors who have collaborated and shared their work. It is our wish that the readers of this volume enjoy inspiration, respiration, existence and resistance.

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