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Centers of Cultural Gravity: Cultural Translation in *Nublares*

William Foster Carr

A thesis submitted to the faculty of  
Brigham Young University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

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December 2012

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## ABSTRACT

Centers of Cultural Gravity: Cultural Translation in *Nublares*

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In the novel *Nublares*, Antonio Pérez Henares presents a caveman who typifies the modern, fragmented subject. The protagonist, Ojo Largo, a hybrid child of various cultures, crosses the boundaries between those cultures and negotiates the in-between space as a cultural translator. The concept of the fragmented, hybrid self reflects modern cognitive science. Daniel Dennett's Multiple Drafts model of consciousness presents a fragmented self characterized by "disaggregated agency," a subject consisting of the center of gravity between disparate mental processes and accumulated "narratives." Taking this model as point of departure, this thesis finds a consensus between three novels of prehistory, recent paleoanthropological theory, and modern literary criticism on the cohesion of subjectivity, language, and culture. It then examines the fundamental obstacles that complicate translating between languages/cultures, proposing a new model of the translator as a kind of multicultural outcast who creates equivalence from the center of gravity between cultures.

Keywords: translation studies, translator subjectivity, cultural translation, *Nublares*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First I must thank my wife, the person who has probably exercised the greatest patience and definitely provided the most love and support during my months of servitude to the cause of this thesis.

Second, I thank Daryl Hague and Dale Pratt, whom I blame for my decision to pursue postgraduate studies and for much of the good that has happened since. They, like my wife, have provided patience and support; unlike my wife, they are required to read further.

Third, I thank Lin Sherman, Valerie Hegstrom, Alan Meredith, Doug Weatherford, Russell Cluff, Greg Stallings, and Jeff Turley for being teachers and friends when I needed both.

Fourth, I thank Jasmine Talbot, who doubtless did not realize that the position of Graduate Secretary meant that she would have to secretary every graduate student. Her persistent assistance and cheerful optimism (despite previous experience) have helped this thesis to take each evolutionary step from prospectus to published work.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

We are always inclined to that naïve concept of a primordial period in which a complete man discovered another one, equally complete, and between the two of them language was worked out little by little. This is pure fiction. We can never get back to man separated from language and we shall never see him inventing it. We shall never get back to man reduced to himself and exercising his wits to conceive of the existence of another. It is a speaking man whom we find in the world, a man speaking to another man, and language provides the very definition of man.

—Emile Benveniste, “Subjectivity in Language”

It is tempting to say that humanity has tried to define itself ever since human beings began to talk. After all, the first question that philosophers ask is the same one that (according to philosophers) babies ask: Who am I? From the beginning, scripture, mythology, philosophy, and science have sought to understand humankind and our place in the cosmos. So it should be fair to say that as soon as humans had the words to ask the question, they asked it.

But as Benveniste explains, there was no moment when humans “learned to talk.” Language makes humans human, and so humanity before language was not humanity. Early women and men did not try to define the human subject with stilted Tarzan-speak—”Me think, ug me am”—because until they had complex language, they were not what we consider to be

women and men. Paleoanthropologists and cognitive scientists support this view, arguing that “fully modern language and higher-order consciousness [are] linked: it is impossible to have one without the other” (Lewis-Williams 189). The attempt to articulate subjectivity is, then, a kind of performative, self-fulfilling prophecy: when we ask who we are, the very act of using language constitutes who we are. Descartes might just as well have said, “I say ‘I think, therefore I am,’ therefore I am.”

Language defines us in other ways as well. Narratives about the origin of man—be they scientific, philosophical, scriptural, or mythological—say much about the people and times that produce them. The narratives that we create within our brains and those that we choose to receive there tell others and ourselves who we are as individuals. The language in which those narratives are written/spoken/thought and the culture that fosters their creation complement each other so intimately that structuralist theorists and translation scholars have questioned whether any of the narratives can be translated without bringing the entire language and culture with them. The very idea of equivalence between languages—the foundation of modern translation—seems impossible.

Antonio Pérez Henares addresses translation and subjectivity in the context of prehistoric man in his novel *Nublares* (2008 [2000]). Pérez’s characters exemplify different models of the human self: the protagonist, a young hunter named Ojo Largo, attempts to redefine the concept of the individual within the social framework of a Cro-Magnon clan, while other characters strive for the complete subordination of the individual to the clan. More importantly, the protagonist crosses the boundaries of distinct Cro-Magnon cultures. The Claros (enemies of his own clan, the Nublares clan) and the Peñas Rodadas clans (allies and relatives of Nublares) each have unique cultural practices and ideologies; there are even differences in vocabulary between

Nublares and the Claros. Ojo Largo is often the point of contact between cultures, always involved in (and usually the cause of) the conflicts between them. At those points of contact, in one form or another, translation occurs.

Many translation theorists have addressed the question of translator subjectivity, attempting to define what a translator is and what factors affect his or her agency during the act of translation. About a decade ago, Douglas Robinson proposed a new model of translator subjectivity based on Daniel Dennett's Multiple Drafts model of human consciousness. Robinson's theory arises in response to his own questions about the role of the translator, the agency that s/he exercises within the process of translation, and the "forces of 'otherness' that wield the 'self' from within or without" (17). These forces, nicknamed "demons" within the pandemonium architecture that Dennett proposes, make each translation decision through a chaotic, almost evolutionary process. The sum total of internal and external forces constitutes the "pandemonium self" of the translator in the process of translation.

The point of Dennett's Multiple Drafts model is that there is no central point in the brain where all the other parts present information and receive orders—no "Cartesian Theater" and no "Central Meaner" as Dennett says (253)—and Robinson's pandemonium translator is similarly center-less. Translators and normal humans alike sense a coherence and cohesiveness, a single agent, that for Dennett is as fictitious as a center of gravity: not really there, and yet useful, even necessary, as a concept. So for Robinson, the translator's self is the center of gravity between all of those demons. This idea of a center of gravity—essential for maintaining equilibrium—helps us to understand translator subjectivity in *Nublares*, specifically in acts of cultural translation by individuals who find themselves at the contact point between different cultures.



Cultural translation presents a translator whose defining feature is hybridity. The protagonist of *Nublares*, Ojo Largo, is a hybrid of every culture within his sphere: he is a child of two warring *Homo sapiens sapiens* clans raised in a third by a Neanderthal-esque step-mother. At different points in the novel he is shunned, persecuted, and cast out. His experiences with different cultures place him near the center of gravity between those cultures and make it possible for him to negotiate or translate within the inter- and intra-subjective pandemoniums that define him.

Viewed as a translator, Ojo Largo's subjectivity raises important questions about translator subjectivity and translation theory. What does Ojo Largo's hybridity say about translators and translation, and vice-versa? At various points he is rejected by factions and entire cultural groups; what does his status as an outcast say about translators and translation? If we follow Dennett's model of the self, where do we posit the center of gravity of Ojo Largo's hybridity? If we follow Robinson's inter-subjective application of pandemonium, what is this translation, this translator, this Ojo Largo in the middle space between these cultures? These are the questions that this study will attempt to answer.

### **Thesis Overview**

Our exploration into subjectivity and translation will begin with the prehistoric subjects in *Nublares*. Chapter two will take Dennett's model of human consciousness as its point of departure and then study the depictions of Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon subjectivity in two other novels, William Golding's *The Inheritors* and Lorenzo Mediano's *Tras la huella del hombre rojo*, viewed through the lens of David Lewis-Williams's book on cave paintings, *The Mind in the Cave*. As those books lean on a strong correlation between language and thought, we will also discuss the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis with its faults and its merits. This chapter will

establish the cohesion between culture, language, and the formation of the human self, setting the groundwork for our study of translation as negotiation between cultures and languages.

Chapter three will provide an overview of various translation paradigms and opposing models of translator subjectivity, including Douglas Robinson's application of Dennett's theories on pandemonium. We will examine the binary tendencies of the classic debates within translation studies and follow Homi Bhabha's thoughts on cultural translation to a possible middle ground, an in-between space where the translator as an outsider or outcast negotiates between languages/cultures.

Chapter four will then articulate the principles of cultural translation as practiced in *Nublares* by the prototypical translator-outcast, Ojo Largo. It will take a closer look at the principal instance of cultural translation in the novel and illustrate the ways in which Ojo Largo's subjectivity contributes to his ability to create equivalence between warring cultures. It will also demonstrate how this model of translator subjectivity approaches a reconciliation of the binary debates in translation studies.

But before we dive into human consciousness and translator subjectivity in *Nublares*, I need to give a brief synopsis of *Nublares*. This will provide a narrative framework to which the reader can connect the points of theory as they are presented. This synopsis will of course be a skewed reading of *Nublares*, filtered by the hermeneutic framework of a reader seeking instances of translation in the text, and will therefore emphasize the plot points that give the best examples of subjectivity and translation. Hopefully, though, that the story will remain coherent.

### ***Nublares* Synopsis**

The novel *Nublares* is named after a cave in the Alcarria region near Guadalajara, Spain.. In Pérez Henares's literary creation, the Nublares cave is the spiritual center of the clan: one

chamber is the home of adolescent males until their rite of passage, which takes place in another chamber; and a third chamber is the exclusive domain of the shaman, where he communes with spirits among the remains of powerful enemies and sacrificial victims. There is no place for women in the cave, and in this Nublares is unique among its sibling clans: the other clans have powerful priestess matriarchs—Ojo Largo’s paternal grandmother, La Torcaz, is perhaps the most powerful—but in Nublares there is no matriarch who leads the clan with the chief and the shaman. The closest thing is Ojo Largo’s stepmother, La Velluda, who retains many of the Neanderthal features of her great-great-great-grandmother; or perhaps Mirlo, the shaman’s young wife, who is the clan’s healer.

Ojo Largo is in many ways unique among the people of Nublares. Neither of his parents comes from the clan. His father, Halcón en la Llanura, was the second son of the matriarch of the Peñas Rodadas clan, La Torcaz, and left his clan to avoid competition with his brother and to become chief of Nublares. His mother, Arroyo Claro, was a daughter of the enemy tribe, the Claros, who was kidnapped during a raid. When the novel begins, Ojo Largo’s parents have long been missing and presumed dead, and he and his sister have been raised by their father’s other woman, La Velluda, along with their half-siblings, Cara Ancha and his sister.

Independent of his parentage, Ojo Largo is unique because of his desire to be different. He talks more than anyone in his clan. He is the first in his clan (though not the first among the Arcilloso River family of tribes) to domesticate a wolf pup. As Sombrío, the clan’s silent tool-maker, notes from hours of observation, Ojo Largo has the mind of an innovator.

When the novel begins, Ojo Largo lives in the Nublares cave as an uninitiated male; his companions include his best friend, Viento en la Hierba, and his half-brother, Cara Ancha. Ojo

Largo dreams of becoming chief so that he can have all the women he wants, beginning with Mirlo, the clan's healer, whose sensual hints have him completely obsessed.

His desire for Mirlo is coupled with disdain for her man, the shaman Huesos, and for the chief, Paso de Lobo. Ojo Largo's father had impressed upon his son his contempt for the shaman and his practices, and Ojo Largo naturally dislikes his father's successor as chieftain, Paso de Lobo. At every opportunity he indirectly rebels against the chief; ignoring Paso de Lobo's counsel, he opts to hunt the great boar alone, refusing to participate in a collective horse-hunt. He manages to kill the boar, and he throws his success and prowess in the chief's face. Treatment from a tusk wound requires daily attention from Mirlo, and she takes advantage of their proximity to initiate a sexual relationship with Ojo Largo behind Huesos's back. With each encounter Ojo Largo falls more under her dominion, always searching for some indication that she belongs to him.

He recovers in time to participate in the great deer hunt, where his dog, Nariz, plays a crucial role in the hunt's success. The rest of the hunters begin to see the wisdom of domesticating wolves; previously they had considered Nariz as nothing more than one of Ojo Largo's selfish whims. But the chief and the shaman still cast their votes against Ojo Largo after his trial of initiation (spending one month alone and returning with a kill large enough to feed a family), citing his selfishness and disregard for tradition. However, Ojo Largo wins a majority of the vote, thanks to the chief's second woman, Cielo en los Ojos, and the shaman's woman, Mirlo. This makes the two leaders resent Ojo Largo even more, a resentment that will soon be shared by most of the clan.

Winter brings with it the annual separation of the clan; there is not enough game around the settlement to support the whole group, so smaller, family-based groups spread out across the

clan's territory until spring. Ojo Largo and Cara Ancha go with La Velluda and the group looks to spend the winter in relative comfort until Ojo Largo brings disaster upon them. While out on supposed scouting and hunting excursions, he searches for his parents' last camp, straying into Claros territory. He finds the site but is then immediately captured by a Claros party that is seeking a sacrificial victim for their rite of fertility. Ojo Largo commands Nariz to flee during the struggle; the dog's return gives La Velluda and Cara Ancha enough warning for them to strike camp and escape before a larger Claros party can destroy them, but this means that they must march non-stop to Nublares and pass the rest of the winter there with much less food.

Meanwhile, as future victim of the sacrifice to the Burning Sun, Ojo Largo lives a life of comfort and solitude. He learns three crucial items of information from his captors: first, the location of the caves where the last of the Ancient Ones were massacred; second, that a powerful taboo prevents the Claros from entering that place; and third, that his mother was not killed by the Claros but lives among them. Ojo Largo manages to speak to her during the months of captivity leading up to the summer solstice. With her help he persuades Sauce, one of the girls who brings him food, to help him escape. The Claros celebrate the solstice with a feast and orgy through Midsummer's Eve; Ojo Largo, as the honored guest, is given the woman of his choosing to pass the night. He chooses Sauce, and she helps him to escape during the general hangover. He runs to the only place where the Claros will not follow: the caves of the Ancient Ones. There he hides until he can slip away by night, and after several days' journey he arrives at Nublares on the verge of starvation.

The people of Nublares feed and shelter him, but they are no longer his people. Except for his sister, Oropéndola, and his friend, Viento en la Hierba, the clan ostracizes him because his selfishness endangered La Velluda's camp. Ojo Largo passes through weeks of tortured solitude,

receiving only contemptuous stares from Mirlo. With Nariz as his companion, he begins to grow emotionally independent of the clan and has regained his self-respect when Paso de Lobo tasks him with guiding the Nublares expedition that will bring back a daughter of the Claros to be sacrificed to the Morning Star. Ojo Largo has a clear choice: if he does not act as their guide, he will be permanently exiled from the clan.

He complies with their wishes and the expedition is a success, but with the sacrifice approaching Ojo Largo again goes against tradition: he asks that the clan spare the girl's life for the sake of his own blood that the Ancient Ones protected from the Claros' sacrifice. The chief once again gives Ojo Largo a choice: compliance with tradition or exile. Ojo Largo again relents, but Viento en la Hierba surprises everyone by declaring that he will not participate in the sacrifice. The fertility ritual takes place; Ojo Largo is the last to fire his arrow into the girl's now lifeless heart, but Viento stands firm. Ojo Largo, ashamed of his own cowardice, leaves with Viento. Though he himself is not exiled, the clan once again loathes him because of his individualism.

The two companions seek asylum with the Peñas Rodadas clan. Despite the influence of Ojo Largo's grandmother, La Torcaz, the clan's shaman and chief are reluctant to accept two hunters who disregarded the taboo of their native clan. They are allowed to stay but not given full membership; that decision is postponed until the gathering of the three Arcilloso River tribes, which will be hosted by the Río Dulce clan, the clan of the legendary beauty, La Garza.

At the gathering, the council of priestesses, chiefs, and shamans grants Ojo Largo and Viento en la Hierba full status as members of the Peñas Rodadas clan, despite Paso de Lobo's and Huesos's objections. Ojo and Viento will enjoy an even greater rise in status that night. During the performance portion of the celebration, the Peñas Rodadas hunters, rather than depict

some great triumph of one of their native sons, choose instead to reenact Ojo Largo's escape from the Claros. And during the orgy that follows, Viento en la Hierba is chosen as companion by La Garza. Ojo Largo, after rejecting Mirlo's unequivocal invitation and being flatteringly turned away by La Garza, gets drunk and wanders off to sleep by himself. Soon, though, he is awakened by Cielo en los Ojos, Paso de Lobo's second woman, and the two pass the night together.

After the gathering ends, Ojo and Viento return to Peñas Rodadas and take their place among its hunters. While acting as scouts for a hunting party, they come across the Claros horde on its way to attack Nublares. The pure heart that won the love of La Garza shows through again: Viento sacrifices himself as a decoy so that Ojo Largo may warn Nublares. When he arrives, many do not believe his report and others contend that they can wait out a siege in the cave, but Paso de Lobo follows Ojo Largo's counsel and orders the clan to pack what they need and flee. They take the forest path through the rainy night and arrive at Peñas Rodadas the next evening. Runners take the news to the Río Dulce clan, and the Arcilloso tribes prepare to meet the Claros.

The Claros attack and the Arcilloso warriors defend the heights of Peñas Rodadas. After the first wave of Claros is killed, they breach the perimeter only to be beaten back definitively by the defenders. At noon the next day La Torcaz convokes a council of the leaders of the Arcilloso and Claros tribes. The Claros cite, as justification for attempting to wipe out Nublares, that clan's practice of kidnapping Claros daughters and sacrificing them; the Nublares clan offers as counterargument the Claros practice of kidnapping young Nublares hunters and sacrificing them to the Burning Sun by cutting out their hearts. La Torcaz brokers a peace agreement where both sacrifices will cease and both tribes will stay within their borders. The Claros take their dead and

leave, but not before Ojo Largo learns that his mother has been killed by Rayo, the warrior that led the party that captured him during the winter.

Ojo Largo collects what is left of Viento en la Hierba's body and takes it to Nublares to bury him. He then stays to help the clan through the oncoming winter, as they have lost half of the hunters that brought them through the previous winter. When game becomes scarce, Ojo Largo and Cara Ancha range farther and farther afield on their hunts, and it is thanks to these two—now equally selfless in serving the clan—that Nublares is not completely wiped out by starvation.

When spring comes, Ojo Largo turns his thoughts to Tórtola, a girl in the care of his grandmother, La Torcaz. He returns to Peñas Rodadas and, with his grandmother's help, begins courting Tórtola. The courtship ends when she accompanies Ojo Largo to Nublares. There they will start their family and help the clan recover from war and starvation.

The novel ends with the mystery of Tórtola's past. She tells Ojo Largo that among the men of Nublares she recognizes the man who years before abandoned her near Peñas Rodadas after beating her almost to death. She warns Ojo Largo that one day she will ask him to break the clan's most basic taboo—to kill a fellow member of the clan—and he promises to do so.



## CHAPTER 2

### PREHISTORY AND PANDEMONIUM

Pérez Henares sets the questions of subjectivity and translation during the tail end of the Upper Paleolithic (approximately 25,000 to 30,000 years ago) at the end of the coexistence between Cro-Magnons and Neanderthal man. Other works, both of fiction and non-fiction, explore more thoroughly the dynamic between those two species during their coexistence, delineating the boundaries of modern human subjectivity. These works supplement Pérez Henares's depiction of subjectivity in *Nublares*, illuminating the various models of self portrayed in *Nublares* and informing the discussion of translator subjectivity, both in the general conversation within translation studies and in the narrow context of the translatorial acts in *Nublares*.

For a modern definition of the human self we turn first to Daniel Dennett's Multiple Drafts model. His theories are important in this thesis not only as the groundwork for a discussion on subjectivity but also because the terms that he employs—demons, memes, pandemonium, and centers of gravity—will also be put to heavy use throughout the discussions of language, culture, and translation.

#### **Daniel Dennett's Multiple Drafts**

Dennett presents the Multiple Drafts model in his 1991 book *Consciousness Explained*. Using a combination of neuroscience, Artificial Intelligence theory, and philosophy, he seeks to refute Cartesian dualism and any other theory of the human self as a single, central executive that reviews and directs the brain's perceptions and thoughts—whether that monitor and decision-maker be located outside of the brain (e.g., a person's spirit according to religious doctrine) or somewhere within it (e.g., the pineal gland, as Descartes believed). Dennett instead proposes

Multiple Drafts, a model where “all varieties of perception—indeed, all varieties of thought or mental activity—are accomplished in the brain by parallel, multitrack processes of interpretation and elaboration of sensory inputs. Information entering the nervous system is under continuous ‘editorial revision’” (111).

The specialist neurological circuits that carry forward our mental activities in “parallel pandemoniums” (253) came into being as a part of primary consciousness, the survival-oriented, lower-order mental processes and “awareness” that we share with many animals. Dennett compares the nervous system of primary consciousness to a ship that only has the bare minimum of sailors working on critical, survival-related tasks. But in higher-order consciousness “[t]hey are often opportunistically enlisted in new roles, for which their native talents more or less suit them” (254). Within the brain they produce “fragmentary drafts of ‘narrative’” (254) that often have little bearing on conscious thought and action. Many, in fact, “die out almost immediately, leaving only faint traces—circumstantial evidence—that they ever occurred at all” (275).<sup>1</sup>

These decentralized, parallel circuits compete for resources, and something has to discriminate between them. Dennett has discarded the possibility of a Central Meaner, a captain to direct the crew (and decide which narratives will walk the plank) when the crisis arrives and “all hands are on deck . . . so conflicts between volunteers [have] to sort themselves out without any higher executive” (189). For this discrimination process Dennett adapts Pandemonium, an architecture created by Artificial Intelligence theorist Oliver Selfridge (1959). Dennett’s version describes a “competition among many concurrent contentful events in the brain” (275), “events” expressed in the form of those “fragmentary drafts of narrative” mentioned above. Some of the specialist circuits or “demons” that carry these narratives unite with other demons and “contribute to subsequent sayings, both sayings-aloud to others and silent (and out-loud) sayings

to oneself. Some lend their content to other forms of subsequent self-stimulation, such as diagramming-to-oneself' (275).

This pandemoniac competition does not result in total chaos because “trends . . . are imposed on all this activity . . . by microhabits of thought that are developed in the individual, partly idiosyncratic results of self-exploration and partly the predesigned gifts of culture.” The “microhabits” are codified by “virtual machines” that are “not a ‘hard-wired’ design feature” (254) but more like software that runs on the brain’s parallel-processing architecture. One such virtual machine is language. When we acquire a language we go through the work to install its virtual machine and, like Java or iOS or Android OS, the machine allows other users to send us data as well as other virtual machines (applets or apps) (Dennett 2009, 439). These apps allow the brain to download the “predesigned gifts of culture” referred to above, many of which are also known as “memes.”

Memes are laterally- and vertically-transmitted bits of culture, self-replicating “rogue cultural variants” (Dennett 2009, 436). Richard Dawkins first coined the term in *The Selfish Gene* (1976), defining the meme as “a unit of cultural transmission, or a unit of *imitation*”; Dawkins lists a few examples of memes: “tunes, ideas, catch-phrases, clothes fashions, ways of making pots or of building arches” (qtd. in Dennett 1991, 202, emphasis in original). In Ojo Largo’s world we find memes such as good designs for tools and weapons, the domestication of wolves to be used as hunting companions, methods of transporting fire, and the stories of Ojo Largo’s escape or Viento en la Hierba’s saving sacrifice. Each of these is replicated within new cultures. Dawkins and Dennett both argue that memes for the most part follow evolutionary protocols, but since they can be transmitted laterally (neighbor to neighbor) as well as vertically (from one generation to the next), the concept of “fitness” does not always determine the

survivors. Dawkins gives the example of a suicidal meme that can spread, “as when a dramatic and well-publicized martyrdom inspires others to die for a deeply loved cause, and this in turn inspires others to die, and so on” (qtd. in Dennett 1991, 203). Less profound memes like the “humorous” cat video also survive and replicate despite their complete uselessness.

For Dennett, many of the most important memes have no inventor of record; we do not know who to blame for the memes that are most fundamental in our culture we are left to attribute the origin of important ideas like “words or arithmetic or music or maps or money” to “indefinitely many not-so-intelligent designers” (2009, 437). The most important unit of cultural transmission in his list of unpatented memes is, for Dennett, the word. He argues that the totality of word-memes that we mentally download have an almost Whorfian effect on our brains. “Thousands of memes, mostly borne by language, but also by wordless ‘images’ and other data structures, take up residence in an individual brain, *shaping its tendencies and thereby turning it into a mind*” (1991, 254, my emphasis).

Word-memes define the self because they are the building blocks of our own personal narrative. We use words to create our “extended phenotype,” another concept that Dennett picks up from Dawkins. An extended phenotype is the artificial outer boundary of the self, like beaver dams, snail shells, and spiderwebs—all “constructions for extending . . . territorial boundaries” (Dennett 1991, 415).

*Our* fundamental tactic of self-protection, self-control, and self-definition is not spinning webs or building dams, but telling stories, and more particularly concocting and controlling the story we tell others—and ourselves—about who we are. And just as spiders don’t have to think, consciously and deliberately, about how to spin their webs, and just as beavers, unlike professional human

engineers, do not consciously and deliberately plan the structures they build, we (unlike *professional* human storytellers) do not consciously and deliberately figure out what narratives to tell and how to tell them. Our tales are spun, but for the most part we don't spin them; they spin us. Our human consciousness, and our narrative selfhood, is their product, not their source. (1991, 418, emphasis in original)

We spin a “web of discourses”<sup>2</sup> about ourselves, “organized around a sort of basic blip of self-representation. The blip isn't a self, of course; it's a *representation* of a self” just like a blip on a radar screen is only a representation of an object; and the “*me*-blip” derives its identity from its function: the blip “gathers and organizes the information on the topic of *me*” (Dennett 1991, 429).

We might compare the subject-blip to Roland Barthes's concept of the proper name in literature: “the person is no more than a collection of semes . . . . What gives the illusion that the sum is supplemented by a precious remainder . . . is the Proper Name . . . . As soon as a Name exists (even a pronoun) to flow toward and fasten onto, the semes become predicates, inductions of truth, and the Name becomes a subject” (Barthes 191). Dennett's description of his blip is eerily similar:

[The *me*-blip] gathers and organizes the information on the topic of *me* in the same way other structures in my brain keep track of information on Boston, or Reagan, or ice cream. And where is the thing your self-representation is *about*? It is wherever you are. And *what* is this thing? It's nothing more than, and nothing less than, your center of narrative gravity. (429, emphasis in original)

So the narratives that define our selves are built of cultural units that we receive in large part through language. Any single culture—be it American or Spanish, Neanderthal or Cro-Magnon, from Nublares or Peñas Rodadas—will contain opposing ideologies and memes; where many cultures converge within an individual,<sup>3</sup> as they do within Ojo Largo, the competing narratives will intensify the pandemonium, and at the center of gravity between those cultures we will find the precious remainder: the translator-subject.

### **Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon Minds in the Cave**

To understand Ojo Largo's subjectivity we must first understand the cultures that surround him in *Nublares*, and to understand those cultures we have to begin with a culture that is not, precisely speaking, present: Neanderthal man. Unlike the Nublares, Peñas Rodadas, and Claros cultures, there is no camp or dwelling where a living group of *el Pueblo Antiguo* carry on their cultural practices. Yet there are actually three physical manifestations of the Ancient Ones in *Nublares*, the first two being La Velluda and Cara Ancha (excluding Nutria, La Velluda's daughter, whose role is less than minor). The third manifestation is the site where modern man massacred what they believed to be the last remaining Neanderthals, the place where Ojo Largo seeks protection during his escape from the Claros. (We find out in the sequel, *El hijo de La Garza*, that there are at least two Ancient Ones still living, perhaps the last members of their race.) These manifestations have a direct effect on Ojo Largo's hybridity, an effect that we will delve into later; here it is enough to say that their effects justify a certain amount of study directed toward Spanish, Mousterian (i.e., Neanderthal) societies.

Within the last few years science has dropped at least two bombshells where Neanderthals and their relationship with Cro-Magnons are concerned: genome studies have produced evidence of interbreeding between the two species (Yang et al.), and more advanced

dating techniques have suggested that some cave art may have been produced by the supposedly artless Neanderthals (Pike et al.). These revelations, though not unforeseen by some camps, question much of the characterization of Neanderthals both in scientific studies, such as David Lewis-Williams's *The Mind in the Cave*, and in novels, such as William Golding's *The Inheritors*. (The only possible point of conflict with Lorenzo Mediano's *Tras la huella del hombre rojo* is his Neanderthals' complete inability to understand art or any symbolic representation, but many paleoanthropologists still agree with him on that point.)

However, these scientific findings do not invalidate those books as guides to the Neanderthal psyche in *Nublares*. The two novels, as works of fiction, set up a world according to the rules of the authors; writers of high fantasy such as J.R.R. Tolkien or Ursula K. LeGuin build their own worlds for their stories, but the creator of every story is the creator of a fictitious world, regardless of how much it may resemble the "real world" in which that creation exists as a text to be read. Nor is world-building exclusive to the fiction section of the library; many historiographers would argue that every history does the same thing as any novel, "emplotting" a world—reputed to be The World—according to the hermeneutic framework of the author(s).<sup>4</sup> The paleontologist Juan Luis Arsuaga comes at this common nature of art and history from a different direction; as he wrote in his book *El collar del Neandertal*, "[a] fin de cuentas los poetas y los paleoantropólogos compartimos el mismo objeto de estudio: la naturaleza humana en su dimensión más profunda y más misteriosa" (qtd. in Pratt 15). Both classes—scientists and writers—build worlds that they hope or believe will portray the truth of humanity, and if they build well, that truth stands even when "real world" views evolve and skeptics jeer at supposed cracks in the foundation.

These books and their depictions of Neanderthal culture will provide a case study for consciousness, language, and subjectivity in general. In these accounts of contact between species, the authors use Neanderthals as a mirror for modern humans; the differences define us. And so to study contact between Neanderthals and Cro-Magnons is not to focus on only one aspect of Ojo Largo's hybridity; instead, it is to explore both the culture of the Ancient Ones and the culture of the anatomically-modern humans of *Nublares*, the cultures of both his biological and his adoptive parents.

In *The Mind in the Cave: Consciousness and the Origins of Art*, David Lewis-Williams constructs a world that reflects the prevailing characterization of Neanderthal society among scientists at the time when both that book and *Nublares* were published (2002 and 2000, respectively). As I stated above, the evidence of interbreeding and the re-dating of important artworks might be said to undermine the strength of Lewis-Williams's excellent work; but he himself acknowledges in the first chapters that the jury is still out—not all the data have been collected, not all the discoveries have been made. And he argues quite persuasively that because the jury will always be out, in the meantime we need theories and ideas both to help us make sense of the data that we already possess and to give us a framework that will allow us to recognize relevant data in the future. He cites Darwin, who wrote in a letter, “without the making of theories I am convinced there would be no observation” (25); and Lewis-Williams goes on to say that scientists

do not collect data randomly and utterly comprehensively. The data they collect are only those that they consider *relevant* to some hypothesis or theory. Otherwise they, like de la Vialle [an explorer who did not recognize cave art when he saw



it], would not even recognize that some, not all, of their observations . . . can be used as data in a sustained argument” (25, italics in original).

Lewis-Williams, then, does not aim to provide a definitive answer but to arrange the data around a cohesive theory—to build a world that stands on its own even if it turns out not to be The World. I believe that he achieves that aim with *The Mind in the Cave*, but that is secondary; what matters is that the ideas in his work reflect (or are reflected by) much of the fiction that addresses the topic of inter-species contact with any seriousness, especially when it comes to language and consciousness in the Upper Paleolithic.

Lewis-Williams lays out the critical difference between Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon subjectivities, (based on all of the data available in 2002<sup>5</sup>): the limited consciousness of the Neanderthal versus the higher-order consciousness of European Early Modern Humans (EEMH). He argues that Neanderthals had only “primary consciousness,” defined by the neuroscientist Gerald Edelman as “a state of being aware of things in the world” with no “sense of a person with a past and future” (Lewis-Williams 187). He also suggests that “fully modern language and higher-order consciousness were, as Edelman argues, linked: it is impossible to have one without the other. . . . When we speak of the acquisition of fully modern language, we are in effect also speaking of the evolution of higher-order consciousness” (189). Modern language also seems to have facilitated what Lewis-Williams calls the “package deal” of “image-making, religion, and social discriminations” (10), cultural practices that set anatomically modern humans apart from their Neanderthal neighbors during the Upper Paleolithic in southwestern Europe.

Lewis-Williams argues that religion played an important part in stratifying EEMH culture, and that Neanderthals lacked the psycholinguistic wherewithal to produce religion and thus continued in a simpler social structure.

Neanderthals could not [...] conceive of a spirit world; nor could they construct social and political relations founded on different degrees of access to that world. The Neanderthals' social and political distinctions were of the here-and-now and founded on sex, physical strength and age. Without fully modern consciousness and language with its developed handling of time past and time future there can be no gods. (285)

Elsewhere, Lewis-Williams specifies that the Neanderthals' lower-order consciousness made it impossible for them to conceive of "social hierarchies that extended beyond the immediate present (in which strength and gender ruled)" (190).

### **The Structuralist "Package"**

This argument—that language, subjectivity, and ideology are a package deal—seems to follow if not the letter then the spirit of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. Benjamin Lee Whorf, in his amplification of Edward Sapir's theories, argues at a minimum that language shapes the way in which we perceive reality; the "strong" interpretation of Whorfianism insists that language determines and confines thought. Whorf's statement that "[w]e dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages" (Whorf 1973, 213) became a pillar of structuralist dogma. It also falls near the center of gravity between ideas put forth by Emile Benveniste and Louis Althusser about language, ideology, and subjectivity.

Benveniste would have agreed with Lewis-Williams's "package deal" of fully modern language and higher-order consciousness, judging by his essay "Subjectivity in Language," which provided the epigraph for this thesis. I quote it again here in part:

We can never get back to man separated from language and we shall never see him inventing it. We shall never get back to man reduced to himself and

exercising his wits to conceive of the existence of another. It is a speaking man whom we find in the world, a man speaking to another man, and *language provides the very definition of man*. (728, my italics)

Compare this to Althusser's declaration that "ideology interpellates individuals as Subjects" (84) (*interpellate* means "bring into being or give identity to"); or to his famous declaration that "man is an ideological animal by nature" (84). If we combine Benveniste's statement that "language provides the very definition of man" with Althusser's "ideology interpellates individuals as Subjects," we see that in the two sentences 'ideology' and 'language' might be interchangeable. Language as ideology fits perfectly with Sapir's and Whorf's assertions that language organizes the ideas that define the subject, and it dovetails with Dennett's concept of meme-narratives installed by the Language Virtual Machine, with the distinction between the *parole* of memes rather than the *langue* of the LVM as the language that composes the self.

Whorfianism considers translation to be impossible. Anthony Pym, perhaps the foremost translation theorist working today, paraphrases the argument thus: "since different languages cut the world up in very different ways, no words should be completely translatable out of their language system. Translation should simply not be possible" (Pym 2010, 10). Donald Davidson addresses Whorfianism in his investigation into the possibility—or impossibility—of translation between languages that do not share a conceptual scheme (which for Whorf was the "thought world" that a given language creates within an individual (Whorf 1986 [1939], 717)). Davidson summarizes Whorf's position as saying that if there is no translating between schemes, then "the beliefs, desires, hopes and bits of knowledge that characterize one person have no true counterparts for the subscriber to another scheme. Reality itself is relative to a scheme: what counts as real in one system may not in another" (Davidson 5). He argues, however, that there is

“no intelligible basis on which it can be said that schemes are different” (20), that neither a total nor a partial lack of translatability can establish differences, because there is no extra-lingual and thus extra-schematic vocabulary by which they may be compared (7, 12); if they allow comparison within a native language, they are similar, and if they do not, then there is no way to determine definitively that they are different.

Opposing voices have all but silenced Whorfianism; since the advent of post-structuralism, scholars have mostly abandoned the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, especially in its “strong,” deterministic form. But the notion that language shapes the subject’s perception persists; cognitive science is even beginning to validate it to a certain extent (Winawer et al.).<sup>6</sup> And many translation theorists have arrived at the conclusion that translation is indeed impossible (though not for Whorf’s reasons). Problems in translation point us to chapters three and four of this thesis, but they also return us to Lewis-Williams, Lorenzo Mediano, and William Golding and the question of cross-cultural communication between Neanderthals and Cro-Magnons (EEMH).

### **The Package Deal in *The Inheritors* and *Tras la huella del hombre rojo***

As I have said above, Golding’s *The Inheritors* and Mediano’s *Tras la huella del hombre rojo* display the linguistic and cultural implications of Lewis-Williams’s distinction between Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon consciousnesses. That is not to say, however, that they never cross the lines that he has drawn. Each strives to depict the otherness of Neanderthals while “humanizing” them; to achieve this they deviate from the prevailing scientific model in different ways.

Both novels allow for interbreeding, though there was little evidence at the time they were written—especially for *The Inheritors*, published in 1962. Golding merely leaves

interbreeding as a possibility, with a Neanderthal child carried off by the “new people” to be raised among them. But in *Tras la huella* the interbreeding becomes an explicit part of the novel’s resolution, beginning with the birth of the protagonists’ hybrid child.

The novels also depart from the model where religion is concerned. Lewis-Williams emphasizes that religion is a product of higher-order consciousness, but in each novel the Neanderthals either have or gain some form of theology, though limited. In *The Inheritors* the Neanderthal women worship female deities on behalf of the tribe, leaving offerings for the fearsome “ice women” and handling the rites of Oa the earth goddess (which include burial). Their only approximation to art, in fact, is “the little oa,” a root or branch that they found whose form apparently symbolizes Oa for them.

Mediano’s Neanderthals seem to have absolutely no religion. The idea of spirits for each body of water, and of gods of fire and ice and blood and thunder, initially seems ridiculous to Bid, the Neanderthal whom the girl shaman, Ibai, takes as a sign from the spirits. Bid’s inability to contemplate a spiritual life is connected to his collective-oriented subjectivity: “¿Cómo iba a existir un yo, si no había nada antes de nacer, y el ser humano se extinguía al morir?” (146). Even when he becomes the interpreter for the invading *oscuros*, transmitting their demands that the Neanderthals worship Cro-Magnon gods, he merely transliterates without comprehending, like Umberto Eco’s example of the radio operator who can “translate” any language into Morse code without understanding the language (Eco 9). But at the moment of crisis, when Ibai bears her hybrid son and cannot interpret the meaning of this obvious message from the gods (neither species understands the concept of paternity), Bid understands that the baby is a sign that the gods want the two tribes to become one. From that point on he adopts Ibai’s theology as his own.

Despite these deviations from the views in *The Mind in the Cave*, the novels do adhere to the doctrine that Neanderthals had a limited consciousness, matched by a simpler language and social structure. In *The Inheritors*, William Golding presents both cultures from both points of view. For the final 17 pages the narrator takes up modern language, first as a neutral, almost cruelly clinical observer, then focalizing through one of the “new people.” In those pages the new people use language that is nearly indistinguishable from modern English. But for the first 216 pages we see the story through the Neanderthal point of view. The narrator uses limited expressions and vocabulary as well as thoughts that often do not quite connect, all to portray Lok’s language and consciousness. The narrator describes, for example, a Neanderthal sprinting by saying that “for a moment he leaned forward then as he fell [*sic*] his feet caught up with him and he was flashing across the open space” (17). Lok’s people have no apparatus for discussing and thinking of past and future events other than the phrase “I have a picture,” which they utilize in the taxing labor of describing the occasional visual memory. Their language is a basic tool, as unsophisticated and unwieldy as the rocks that they pick up to use for hacking and scraping. Some of the most vivid prose comes not when Lok uses language but when he observes the physical world with his senses; his sense of smell is a better tool for understanding than his language.

Golding’s prose representation of Lok captures Lewis-Williams’s description of the Neanderthal’s lower-order consciousness. Lok can “entertain a mental picture of the present and, by learning processes, sense the presence of danger or reward,” but he is “locked into what Gerald Edelman calls ‘the remembered present’: without developed memory and the kind of fully modern language that must attend it, [he is] unable to enter into long-term planning . . . and speak of and construct mental ‘scenes’ of past and future times” (285). Golding does a

remarkable job of conveying this biologically- and socially-imposed mental barrier in his Neanderthal chapters; but as Philip Redpath reminds us, the words are not original but a translation. In technical terms it is not an idiomatic translation, as if Lok had been raised in an English-speaking household; it is a foreignized translation, where the translator tries to convey foreign rhythms and structures—it feels like a translation. But that overt foreignness that advertises the translation also conceals the truth.

[Focalizing through Lok] presents the physical immediacy of the world. It represents the Neanderthal perception and is mimetic of their conscious awareness. But it only represents and mimes, it is *not* a presentation of their perception or consciousness. In other words, it is not the Neanderthal point of view but an approach to *their* perspective represented in *our* language. (Redpath 34, emphasis in original)

Redpath argues that Golding's translation purports to be what it is not. The overtness of the translation distracts us from the truth that Lok's language "would have been 'unalterably alien' to us and therefore so would the world presented through it" (ibid.). Lok's language borders on a non-linguistic system of signs, which would make Golding's translation an inter-semiotic translation, a probability that the foreignness conceals. In other words, the translation is so overt, it's covert.

In *Tras la huella del hombre rojo*, Lorenzo Mediano makes no effort to model his prose after Neanderthal language, opting instead for a completely covert translation. Because of this choice, there is no jarring shift in style when we change from the Neanderthal to the anatomically modern human point of view, and Bid's language comes off as much more modern than Lok's. In many ways, Bid and his people do not fit Lewis-Williams's mold of "primary

consciousness”; they discuss past events and future possibilities, they often sustain complex conversations, and they use logic. And yet their language is not fully modern, and their ability to use it is limited. The backbone of Bid’s language is the proper name, a one-to-one correlation of words to things. As his chief says, “[c]ada cosa tiene un nombre y cada nombre, una cosa. Si no, no hay manera de entenderse” (465).

That name-based structure hinders comprehension of abstract concepts and symbols (Pratt 26) such as religion, lies, and the concept of “yo.” Bid struggles with “yo” for the exact reasons pointed out by Emile Benveniste in his essay “Subjectivity in Language”: “these pronouns are distinguished from all other designations a language articulates in that *they do not refer to a concept or to an individual*. . . . There is no concept ‘I’ that incorporates all the *I*’s that are uttered at every moment in the mouths of all speakers . . .” (730, emphasis in original). The idea that “yo” only corresponds to whomever is speaking at the moment, that the referent for that signifier switches or expands as interlocutors take turns or speak over each other, is especially difficult for Bid.<sup>7</sup> The moment when he finally comprehends the Cro-Magnon concept of “yo” gives him a glimpse of a completely alien subjectivity:

Bid se asombró de que los oscuros se considerasen seres individuales y separados de los demás. Era este un sentimiento tan ajeno a su ser, que simplemente no podía concebirlo. Cualquiera sabía, desde la infancia, que lo único que existía era la tribu. Los hombres y mujeres nacen y mueren, y durante un instante cazan, caminan, comen, copulan y duermen. Pero solo la tribu permanecía siempre, igual que las altas montañas. (146)

Benveniste supports Mediano’s demonstration of the importance of “yo” in subjectivity. He explains that “I,” a slippery symbol, is required to create a reality in discourse that allows for the



speaker to become the subject. “It is in the instance of discourse in which *I* designates the speaker that the speaker proclaims himself as the ‘subject.’ And so it is literally true that the basis of subjectivity is in the exercise of language” (730). Benveniste thus amends Descartes’s maxim as “I speak, therefore I am,” or, in more general terms, “*I* speaks, thereby *I* is.”

As we have seen above, Bid does make the leap to understanding symbolism and religion. But his epiphany does not occur until he has spent months learning how to lie—how to sever the connection between words and reality—first when he tries to prevent the *oscuros* from invading his people’s territory, then as the interpreter in their conflicts (which we will discuss later). Bid learns to lie only with great effort; “solo intentarlo le provocaba un terrible dolor de ojos. Para mentir, hacía falta dar forma a una realidad diferente, aun a sabiendas de que no existía, y eso era muy difícil. Los oscuros vivían en un mundo de dioses, de símbolos, de leyendas, de canciones, de poesía . . . . En el idioma de su propia gente, ni siquiera había palabras para nombrar esas cosas” (470). Bid senses that lies are somehow part of the “package deal” that includes gods, symbols, legends, songs, poetry, javelins, taboo, and laughter (*ibid.*). He understands that the culture and language of the *oscuros* are inextricably linked because his own language and culture form a holistic unit that molds the collective subjectivity of the Neanderthal.

For Bid and Lok, the tribe defines life. After Lok’s first encounter with the “other,” he becomes conscious of “the strings that bound him to Fa and Mal and Liku and the rest of the people. The strings were not the ornament of life but its substance. If they broke, a man would die” (Golding 78). Contrast Lok’s concept of self with those of Tuami or Marlan or Vivani, “new people” who work out a spot for themselves in the upper stratum of their society. Vivani, the young beauty, wears a bearskin coat that cost the lives of two men and asks that the men stow a

pile of useless pelts in the boat rather than the large sail so that she can be comfortable. Marlan drives men with words and whips in the reckless pursuit of his dream: a new life in a new land where he will rule and have Vivani at his side. And Tuami has the power to create but plans to kill Marlan to take Vivani from him. They clearly do not feel connected by subjective “strings” as Lok does.

When Bid first comes in contact with a modern, individualistic human, the new race is just as incomprehensible to him as it is to Lok. Bid meets Ibai, and the Cro-Magnon girl asks first for Bid’s name, then his mother’s name, then his tribe’s name (Mediano 74, 76)—moving from the individual to the collective. Later, when she asks him again for his name, Bid, who does not understand her language but recognizes it as such, tries to see things from her perspective. “¿Qué sería lo primero que preguntaría él a un desconocido? Sin duda, de dónde venía y el nombre de su tribu” (83). Ibai wants to know the identity of the individual; Bid would ask the identity of the tribe. When Bid finally understands that Ibai is telling him her name, he is taken aback. “¿Y por qué le decía su nombre personal antes que el de su tribu o el de su madre? ¡Un egoísmo absurdo! ¿Acaso no era más importante la tribu que cualquiera de sus miembros?” (85). Bid’s reaction to “yo”, quoted above, bears mentioning again in this context: “[l]os hombres y mujeres nacen y mueren, y durante un instante cazan, caminan, comen, copulan y duermen. Pero solo la tribu permanecía siempre, igual que las altas montañas” (146). This collective subjectivity, apparent in both Bid’s and Lok’s Neanderthal cultures, forms part of Ojo Largo’s cultural heritage as received through his stepmother, who carries the last fragments of the oral history of the Ancient Ones.

## Culture and Subjectivity in *Nublares*

Ojo Largo inherits part of the ideological and subjective legacy of the Neanderthals because he is their adopted son. He is raised by La Velluda, and during his escape from the Claros he becomes the protégé of the spirits of the Ancient Ones, protected and granted sanctuary within their tombs. But *Nublares* presents a Neanderthal ideology that is more complex than the collective-centered ideologies presented in *The Inheritors* and *Tras la huella del hombre rojo*. The collective or anti-individualist current does have its champion in Cara Ancha, whose criticisms of Ojo Largo reveal his own subjectivity. His first salvo echoes Lok's tangible connection to the clan: "Ojo Largo no siente el clan. El clan le da toda su fuerza, pero él cree ser más. Pues no es nada. Un hombre no lo es si no se siente clan" (36). La Velluda, however, shows a more individualistic subjectivity even while presumably conveying a clan-centered perspective to her son, Cara Ancha. As Ojo Largo's mother explains, La Velluda transformed his father from "un forastero sin poder" into the chief of Nublares, a man who received his strength "de esa mujer de la estirpe del Pueblo Antiguo" (147-48). Ojo Largo, then, as the *ahijado* of the Neanderthals and inheritor of their cultural memory, already carries both collectivist and individualist ideas within him.

His biological and cultural heritage as an anatomically modern human duplicates this dichotomy and multiplies his hybridity. As we have seen, higher-order consciousness with its ability for symbolic thought makes larger and more complex societies possible, and those societies promote a more individualistic subject. But each of the Cro-Magnon societies in *Nublares* falls at a different point along the individual-collective spectrum.

As I mentioned in the introduction, Ojo Largo is by no means a homogenous modern man. He is a mixed-race child raised in a culture to which neither of his parents was born. This

hybridity means that Ojo Largo's cultural-subjective heritage comes from three different EEMH societies: the Claros, Peñas Rodadas, and Nublares.

The Claros clans form a tribe much more numerous than the three Arcilloso River clans (Nublares, Peñas Rodadas, and Río Dulce). Such a large society suggests greater stratification and individuality, but there are also factors that unite them. Their race unites them—as their name suggests, they are light-skinned and many have blond hair and blue eyes (which is part of why other clans covet their women). And their common enemy, Nublares, unites them. In *Tras la huella del hombre rojo*, Lorenzo Mediano suggests that large alliances require some symbol to unify them (490); with the Claros that symbol is the Burning Sun, the deity to whom they make human sacrifices, victims of “la guerra florida” (Pérez Henares 143). The sacrifice is attended by the entire tribe, literally uniting them (not to mention the many physical unions that occur during the orgy that precedes the sacrifice).

The Claros also seem to be more warlike than the Arcilloso tribe, but this perception may simply be the result of their function within the story. We only meet them as enemies of Nublares, first when they capture Ojo Largo for their sacrifice, and then when they unite to attack Nublares. And the principal voice among the Claros characters belongs to Rayo, a warrior who takes no pains to hide his hatred of Ojo Largo and his clan. Pérez Henares provides some justification for that hatred when one of the characters explains to Ojo Largo that Rayo had a sister who was stolen away for Nublares's sacrifice to the Morning Star.

That antagonism toward the Nublares sacrifice is mirrored in his Peñas Rodadas heritage. At the beginning of the story La Torcaz has already abolished human sacrifice in her clan, and Halcón en la Llanura did the same when he became chief of Nublares. (Huesos and Paso de Lobo

started it again when Halcón disappeared.) But that is only one of many differences between Nublares and Peñas Rodadas.

One of the first differences that Ojo Largo and Viento en la Hierba notice when they arrive at Peñas Rodadas is that its people are much better artisans and more advanced in their crafts. Their clothing is more colorful and supple; their tools and weapons are better designed and have finer and more colorful carvings and decorations; their pots are more durable, and artistic as well as functional. This artisanal creativity reflects the general culture of the clan. “La vida en las Peñas Rodadas discurría tranquila, mucho menos tensa que en Nublares. Había una mayor relación entre todos, menos rigidez en las maneras que tanto compartimentaban y regulaban la existencia de las gentes de Nublares en la cueva. Allí todo parecía discurrir del agua al fluir, amparados bajo las alas protectoras de la Torcaz” (182).

Much of this cultural flowering is due to the leadership of La Torcaz. She leads the clan, delegating only warfare and the hunt to the chief, her son Azor en el Bosque (175). As the priestess to the Mother Goddess, she has no need to defer to the clan’s shaman in spiritual matters; and the cult of the Mother Goddess, unlike the shamans’ patriarchal cults to male deities like the Burning Sun or the Morning Star, is recognized by other clans and tribes and thus serves as a unifying force. As the leader of the largest clan of the Arcilloso tribe, her non-authoritarian style leaves a clear impression on the individual freedom and creativity characteristic of Peñas Rodadas.

Ojo Largo begins to express his individual freedom and creativity in Nublares as a child. First of all, he talks more than anyone else in the clan. “La gente de Nublares hablaba poco, y él le hablaba hasta a su perro” (11). Second, the fact that he has a dog is a break from tradition (and

it is something else that he inherits from Peñas Rodadas). “Pero los del clan de Nublares se aferraban a la costumbre y no amansaban animales. Ellos los cazaban y se los comían” (9).

These expressions of individuality set Ojo Largo apart from the rest of Nublares. Paso de Lobo’s and Huesos’s patriarchal rule—unique among the clans of the Arcilloso—makes the culture of Nublares rigid and regulated (182). The clan’s smaller size contributes to the collective-oriented culture, and within the cave of Nublares we find a powerful socializing influence for Ojo Largo: the wall of hands, where every hunter of the clan for generations has left his handprint after completing his initiation. This wall represents the clan’s principal tool for reining in Ojo Largo’s individuality; without the chief’s approval he cannot undertake the initiation trial, and he cannot pass the initiation without receiving approval from the majority of the hunters and women of the clan.

The hunter who receives unanimous approval in the clan is Ojo Largo’s half-brother, Cara Ancha, in part because he is the champion of collective subjectivity. After the great deer hunt, in which Cara Ancha wins praise for taking down a great stag and Nariz proves the worth of a dog in the hunt, Ojo Largo insinuates that he and Cara Ancha, as sons of the previous chieftain, have begun to inherit the prestige of their father. Cara Ancha’s rebuke, the longest utterance he has ever produced, draws clear ideological lines between them.

No hables por mi boca. Mi corazón no es el tuyo. Es mi mano quien ha herido al ciervo, pero es el clan quien lo ha cazado. Tú, Ojo Largo, no quieres al clan, solo deseas subir sobre él. Tu perro es mejor que tú. Él caza y no exige otra cosa que su ración. Tú pides poder. Quieres ser jefe, pero no tienes corazón de jefe. Paso de Lobo lo tiene. Él daría todo por el clan. Tú quieres coger todo el clan. (79)

The chieftain and the shaman also chastise Ojo Largo throughout the novel because of his disregard for tradition and his stubborn individuality. He repudiates their censure because he sees them as men who preach service to the clan while enjoying all the advantages of their position (41). But he cannot rationalize away Cara Ancha's words with ad hominem attacks; as an uninitiated youth, Cara Ancha has no power within the clan yet serves wholeheartedly.

The truth is that Ojo Largo's subjectivity consists of much more than the components that we have mentioned in our brief survey of the cultures within *Nublares*. Individualism, creativity, conformity, desire for approval, respect for matriarchy, respect for patriarchy, respect for tradition, defiance of tradition, altruism, and hatred are only a handful of the ideological drives that the cultures instill in Ojo Largo. Many others are not culture-specific. For example, as with any adolescent male, sexual desire steers his thoughts quite often; in fact, for the first half of the novel, every decision he makes is calculated to bring him closer to possessing Mirlo, the shaman's woman.

What should be obvious, though, is that each culture has its own influences on Ojo Largo, on his ideology and subjectivity (though of course Althusser would say that the two are the same). No two cultures are polar opposites; we cannot consider, for example, *Nublares* and the *Claros* in binary terms. Each culture is distinct, yet in terms of ideology and cultural practices, the cultures overlap. And their myriad influences overlap and compete within Ojo Largo—actually, Dennett would argue that these overlapping and competing narratives and memes *create* the subject known as Ojo Largo.

## CHAPTER 3

### CULTURAL TRANSLATOR SUBJECTIVITY

Having established Ojo Largo's hybrid subjectivity, we must now study translation theory so as to approach his role as cultural translator. The history and theory of a practice as old as language obviously would not fit within an entire library let alone one thesis; but by the end of this chapter the reader should have a basic understanding of some of the major paradigms and dilemmas in translation and catch a glimpse of the applications of translation theory to literature in general. To begin our study of translation we should address the question already brought up more than once in this thesis: is translation even possible?

#### **Equivalencia Constreñida: Major Trends in Translation Theory and Subjectivity**

During our discussion of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis we saw that more than one theoretical camp has argued that translation does not actually occur. This assertion may seem ridiculous, given the fact that all theory at some point requires translation. After all, if someone takes the time to learn Greek, Latin, French, German, and English well enough to read and understand Plato and Jerome and Saussure and Benjamin and Whorf (and Derrida, and Benveniste, and Quine, and . . .), that person should not have time to produce her own theory. If she does and she produces a theory that says translation is impossible, how can she claim even to have understood what she read in those foreign languages? And if translation is impossible, what is it that all those so-called translators have been doing since shortly after the invention of writing?

Despite the obvious responses to the "anti-translation" critics, the question of "untranslatability" is not ridiculous, precisely because of what those translators purport to have been doing. The traditional ideal of translation (both as a process and as a product) inspires



skeptical criticism. In the most basic theory, there are really only two elements of a translation: deep meaning—the idea that is reflected in the text—and surface meaning—the text, a written reflection of the deep meaning. Ostensibly the texts are split into two, the source text and the translation; but in this utopian construct, since the translation is merely (and miraculously) another linguistic reflection of the deep meaning, the source text and the translation are essentially twins—incarnations of the same spirit whose births happen to be separated by space and time.<sup>8</sup> Douglas Robinson calls this model of translation “spirit-channeling” after the mystical notion that “the discarnate spirits of authors . . . take over the translators of their works and dictate the translations through them” (25). In other words, the translator is a high-fidelity “medium” whose subjectivity does not interfere in the process of producing a perfect translation. This is the idea behind the modern, less mystical construct of equivalence: that two texts—the source and the translation—can have the same value (hence *equi-valence*) (Pym 2010, 6-7).

The equivalence camp arose within structuralism as an answer to the insistence by Whorf and others that translation was impossible (Pym 2010, 10). When poststructuralism took over, equivalence not only lost vitality, it came under attack. Poststructuralists called into question the very foundations of equivalence. Equivalence depends on the translator’s ability to uncover the deep meaning of the source text through analysis, but that becomes problematic as soon as Barthes, Derrida, and Foucault, call into question the connection between the author and his words or even between those words and reality. Equivalence then becomes a collective belief in a system that has no anchor or center, like money or language itself. Belief (or suspension of disbelief) holds the system up like a house of cards; and more often than not it is the translator who best knows the weaknesses of the structure, who knows that one skeptical, prodding finger could bring the whole thing down.

If a translator has been educated in theories that highlight uncertainty in translation,<sup>9</sup> then she understands the truth behind the Italian pun *traduttore, traditore* (“translator, traitor”): the translator is lying to someone, whether it be the source author or the target audience or herself. Or, rather than a traitor, we might go with the Spanish *farsante*, which can mean either an actor or someone who is faking something. The American translator William Trask used the concept of translator-as-actor to describe his personal translatorial subjectivity: “I realized that the translator and the actor had to have the same kind of talent. What they both do is to take something of somebody else’s and put it over as if it were their own. I think you have to have that capacity. So in addition to the technical stunt, there is a psychological workout, which translation involves: something like being on stage” (qtd. in Venuti 2008, 7).

So according to various theories which run the gamut of structuralism and poststructuralism, translation is impossible and/or a lie, and consequently the translator is at best naïve, or at worst a liar. But those theories might be kinder to the translator as a subject than dynamic equivalence, the professional standard in the English-speaking West, because dynamic equivalence, according to Anthony Pym and Lawrence Venuti, has effectively effaced the translator’s subjectivity.

Dynamic (or “functional”) equivalence seeks to capture the effect or function that the text had in the source culture and create the equivalent effect or function within the target culture; this is idiomatic translation, whose product feels like an original text written in the reader’s language, and it is by far the most common type of translation produced by professionals. When a translation is declared the dynamic equivalent of the source text, the translation is perfect and the translator is nonexistent, subjectively speaking. If the translator existed as a subject, the new text would exhibit some difference (or *différance*?) from the source, some signature of the

translator's hermeneutic framework, perhaps a flattening of the original's polyvalence. Or, conversely, the translator might add new meanings to the text, strengthen themes and downplay imperfections—in short, she might improve upon the original. But if the translator intervenes in the process, how can the translation be the equivalent of the source text?<sup>10</sup>

The kernel of functional equivalence predates Jerome, who explained that he preferred the “sense-for-sense” technique unless he was translating “Sacred Scripture, where the very order of the words is a mystery” (Jerome 23). In that explanation, though, Jerome points to another kind of equivalence: formal equivalence, where the translation sacrifices clarity of meaning to maintain the source's structure. This is the paradigm that Jerome apparently used when translating the word of God, specifically because of his respect (or awe) for the Author and his fear of losing some of His complexities.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, German translators would promote formal equivalence or “foreignized” translations, ostensibly out of a desire to preserve the complexities of the source language and culture. Translations of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, for example, introduced hexameter into German culture rather than recasting them in the accepted format for epic poetry (Venuti 2004, 19). Most notably, theorists such as Friedrich Schleiermacher attacked the French tradition of Frenchifying everything (texts as well as countries), which for Schleiermacher was the expression of a language “confined within the narrow bounds of a classical style beyond which all else is deemed reprehensible” (Schleiermacher 55). He championed the idea of enriching the German language and culture by accepting the best of foreign cultures. In recent years Antoine Berman (ironically, a French translator) has echoed Schleiermacher, insisting that formal equivalence is the antidote for “ethnocentric, annexationist translations” (Berman 278).

Lawrence Venuti, a professor of English and well-known translation scholar, also sees idiomatic translations as propagating ethnocentrism or “cultural narcissism” (Venuti 2008, 308), but he advocates foreignized translations for reasons related to translator subjectivity as well (and economics and politics, as we will see<sup>11</sup>). Venuti argues that idiomatic translations, which he calls “transparent discourse,” maintain the translator’s invisibility in society and the inferior status of translations versus original works: “translation is required to efface its second-order status with transparent discourse, producing the illusion of authorial presence whereby the translated text can be taken as the original” (Venuti 2008, 7). It is almost as though the translator is a subaltern, a colonized worker bee who will remain voiceless as long as he submits to the cultural norms of the English-speaking West; those norms pressure the translator to produce the “illusionistic effect” of “fluent discourse . . . to insure easy readability by adhering to current usage, maintaining continuous syntax, fixing a precise meaning” (Venuti 2008, 1).

Venuti advocates a revolt against these pressures, but producing foreignized translations or otherwise foregrounding the translator’s subjectivity does run afoul of dominant translation practices and professional standards. The result would be a higher profile and a drastically reduced workload. As Anthony Pym points out, the translators who “have expressed and exerted strong personal identities” cast doubt on “whether their particularity was not in conflict with their work as translators” (qtd. in Robinson 157). For example, “active appreciation of the subjectivity and work of Jerome or Luther effectively blocks the reading position necessary for ideal equivalence to what might be projected as ‘the’ Bible” (qtd. in Robinson, 158). If one of the terms in “translator subjectivity” goes up, the other must go down, like a well-balanced oxymoron. In other words, if we believe (or pretend to believe) in equivalence, then translators

must be to literature as offensive linemen are to football: we only notice them when they're not doing their job properly.<sup>12</sup>

Daryl Hague situates Pym and Venuti on opposite sides of the humanist-versus-anti-humanist debate on agency and subjectivity (18). They both agree that readers' belief in equivalence leaves the translator as a perceived (or unperceived) non-agent; what distinguishes them is that Pym seems to accept this as a norm that shapes translators' work while Venuti encourages translators to actively challenge the "domesticating translation that currently dominates Anglo-American literary culture" (Venuti 2008, 309).

Pym and Venuti limit their studies to "how a translation's *readers* construct translator subjectivity" (Hague 18, emphasis in original). Other paradigms have touched on translator subjectivity in the same indirect manner. *Skopos* theory studies the various hats that a translator can and does wear in negotiating the *skopos* or purpose of the translation; it allows the translator greater freedom outside of the actual task of translating, where the success or failure of the translation is based on whether it accomplishes the pre-defined purpose. Another paradigm, descriptive studies, examines the target-culture framework within which the translator operates. Gideon Toury's "norms" and André Lefevere's "constraints" thus restrict the freedom of the translator—though at no point do Toury or Lefevere suggest that their observations should be taken as prescriptive.<sup>13</sup> Descriptive studies thus constitute a paradox where the translator's agency is concerned; they free the translator from the tyranny of source-text equivalence at the expense of indentured servitude to the target culture. Sameh Hanna, for instance, highlights the case of the first published translation of *Hamlet* for Egyptian audiences, in which everyone sings and dances and lives happily ever after because "theatre in its western definition was not yet palatable" (183). Such major departures from the source text no doubt required the translator to

use enormous creativity; yet the translator can really only justify those changes as forced upon him by “the multiple socio-cultural factors that condition the translation in its target milieu” (174).

This superficial survey of translation studies has many lacunae, but it has laid the foundation for the discussion that will follow. The basic dichotomies of translator subjectivity—source versus target and active versus passive—are more complex than they initially seem, as Lawrence Venuti’s impassioned call to action demonstrates:

The translator . . . may submit to or resist dominant values in the target language, with either course of action susceptible to ongoing redirection. Submission assumes an ideology of assimilation at work in the translation process, locating the same in a cultural other, pursuing a cultural narcissism that is imperialistic abroad and conservative, even reactionary, in maintaining canons at home. Resistance assumes an ideology of autonomy, locating the alien in a cultural other, pursuing cultural diversity, foregrounding the linguistic and cultural differences of the source-language text and transforming the hierarchy of cultural values in the target language. (2008, 308)

These dichotomies obviously carry a lot of political and philosophical baggage. The “source versus target” opposition might also be termed “foreignized versus idiomatic” or “other versus self.” And “active versus passive” might also be called “resistance versus submission,” “subjectivity versus invisibility,” “freedom versus captivity,” “to act or to be acted upon.” Venuti, addressing the norms of Anglo-American literature, correlates target-oriented translation with passivity and assimilation; but the source can be just as much a tyrant, demanding submission to its structures. (Perhaps American translation norms reflect a persona of

independence—”Don’t Tread on Me”?) Translators can hide equally well behind the source text or target-culture norms. As Pym puts it, they can either be “a mechanical extension” of the source text, or a “bearer of functions” within the target system (qtd. in Hanna 169).

As Hague notes, few scholars have addressed translator subjectivity directly, much less explored the middle ground between these polarities that would require “a relation of mutual permeability between subjectivity and its surrounding world” (Sonia Kruks, qtd. in Hague 18). But Moira Inghillieri, in her use of *habitus*, is one exception.

*Habitus* is part of Pierre Bourdieu’s sociology; Douglas Robinson summarizes the concept as “all the many practices of our social lives, including talking and interacting with others, [that] shape who we are” (143). Like Dennett’s extended phenotype (the broadened subjectivity that we build around us), “[w]e inhabit the social spaces of our lives through what we do; what we do socially constitutes a kind of social personality, stretched both psychologically and socially over all the networked people and places and occasions in and around and with whom / which we interact” (*ibid.*). The theory was introduced into translation studies by Daniel Simeoni (1998), who argues that translators are “nearly fully subservient” (qtd. in Hague 19) to behaviors imposed by the profession’s norms.

Inghillieri takes exception to this supposed subservience, contending that “in translational/interpreting activity, both constancy and shifts in normative practices . . . can and do occur. At these points—where the sayable and the unsayable can be either challenged or maintained—translators / interpreters often do play a pivotal role” (250). Thus the *parole* (specific translations) affects and is affected by the *langue* (translation norms created by the entire corpus of translations). Her assertion that “norms both shape and are shaped by practicing translators” (Hague 19) resembles Whorf’s statement that language and culture have “grown up

together, constantly influencing each other” (1986, 722) and, as Hague points out, approaches “a middle ground between anti-humanism and humanism—the ‘mutual permeability’ of subjects and social structures” (19). Hague also insists that this permeability “is vital in Douglas Robinson’s account of subjectivity, although he clearly favors anti-humanists’ emphasis on socially constructed subjectivity” (*ibid.*).

### **Douglas Robinson and the Pandemonium Translator**

Douglas Robinson admits that *Who Translates? Translator Subjectivities Beyond Reason* presents an anti-humanist model of subjectivity, but he insists that he is only balancing out his previous works. His books *The Translator’s Turn* and *Translation and Taboo*, he says, present “only half a critique” (25) and thus oversimplify the debate between the translator as “personally and experientially creative” or the “translator as automaton” (4). In those books, Robinson argues for what he calls the “progressive” view of the translator subjectivity: “that translators are the active interpretive agents in the act of translation and control the entire event” (25). And so for *Who Translates?* he decides to examine the “modern conservative” position, “that the translator should ‘submit’ to the source author and/or source text” (*ibid.*). Interestingly, Robinson sees this position as a middle ground “between two or more distant poles: the modern rationalist one according to which the translator controls the entire process, constructing an image of the author and the text imaginatively and then pretending to ‘submit’ to it, and an ancient one based on spirit-channeling . . .” (*ibid.*). As mentioned in the first section of this chapter, Robinson’s spirit-channeling model is based on the idea that “the discarnate spirits of authors . . . take over the translators of their works and dictate the translations through them” (*ibid.*).

*Who Translates?* follows a logical progression, working its way from “the ‘highest’ level of unmetaphorical spiritualism, the level at which translators actually do claim to be channeling



the spirits of their dead source authors” to the level at which “the ‘spirit’ that the translator ‘channels’ is an internal psychic agent . . . or an invisible but quite living human voice at the end of a phone line or e-mail correspondent . . .” (23). In the first chapters Robinson defines his spirit-channeler model with such translators as the seventy-two rabbis who supposedly produced the seventy-two identical copies of the Septuagint, and Joseph Smith, who claimed to have translated *The Book of Mormon* from an ancient record “by the gift and power of God” (qtd. in Hague 21). In the last two chapters, in order to model the translator who channels “an internal psychic agent . . . or an invisible but quite living human” (manifest via telecommunications), he turns to Daniel Dennett’s concept of pandemonium in the Multiple Drafts model.

Robinson adapts pandemonium to translator subjectivity in two ways. First, on the micro level, he posits an extensive variety of translation-related specialist demons—syntax-demons, lexicon-demons, imagined-source-author-demons, imagined-target-reader-demons, even personality- and anti-personality-demons (which we might dub Venuti demons and Pym demons, respectively)—“thousands of individual demons, . . . all of them overlapping, conflicting, fine-tuning each other, suppressing or resisting each other” (165). As Dennett explains, these parallel streams flow through consciousness; most of the streams flow out again instantaneously, discarded, while other streams swell with the attention of other specialists. “The demons just continue to compete until a coherent and (hopefully) accurate or otherwise successful translation emerges” (Robinson 169). Each demon can veto or support submissions by other demons, and as the interactions repeat, preferred combinations become habit, helping the pandemonium to become less chaotic and more efficient.

Robinson also adapts Pandemonium on a macro level, specifically analyzing the disaggregated subjectivity of a translation agency (emphasizing the connection between ‘agency’

and ‘consciousness). He draws on Robert Nozick, who renamed Dennett’s Pandemonium “disaggregated agency” and applied it to socioeconomic theory, searching for “decentralized competing processes” within societies and economies that “would give rise to a (relatively) coherent decision-maker” (qtd. in Robinson 183). Robinson examines the inter-personal networks that produce translations—whether those networks consist of legal entities and the translator(s), editor(s) and other specialists hired by the agency, or ad hoc translation groups thrown together for one job—and says that it makes sense “to treat the whole transient assembly . . . as a single (if disaggregated) translation agency” (189), keeping in mind the multiple meanings of “agency.” He extends “translation agency” to corporations that commission the translation, corporate editors and technical writers who influence the translation—essentially any person or entity that affects the translation process.

The most important points for our study of *Nublares* are Robinson’s adaptations of disaggregated subjectivity on the levels of the individual and the collective, where competing paradigms or memes take the form of “demons” that produce narratives—in this case, translations. As far as I can tell, though, Robinson ignores Dennett’s “center of narrative gravity” metaphor, a concept that I find essential for understanding one of the newest translation paradigms: cultural translation.

### **Bhabha’s Cultural Translation**

Over the years translation has proved useful as a tool for literary and linguistic theory, since it provides examples of where the textual and linguistic rubber hits the road (or exactly how it doesn’t, depending on the theory). It should come as no surprise, then, that the activity and profession that transfers texts from one culture to another would be picked up by cultural studies and postcolonial theorists to examine what happens when people cross cultural borders

(or when borders cross people). The various instances of border-crossings all come under the broad paradigm—some would say limitless paradigm—of cultural translation.

Pym (2010) starts his discussion of cultural translation with the eleventh chapter of Homi Bhabha's book *The Location of Culture*: "How Newness Enters the World: Postmodern Space, Postcolonial Time and the Trials of Cultural Translation." Pym seems to approach Bhabha with reluctance; he gives the impression of a world-renowned computer scientist who has decided to seek professional inspiration from the author of poststructuralist texts on computers as defined by the Stanley Kubrick film *2001*. Bhabha is not a professional translator; he is in no way addressing inter-lingual translation or "translation proper," writing instead "as a professor of English discussing a novel written in English" (Pym 2010, 146); and he ignores the wealth of translation scholarship written by actual translation scholars about the problems he is addressing, instead focusing "only" on Walter Benjamin's essay "The Task of the Translator"—"which has been fetishized by English-language literary criticism" (Pym 2010, 116)<sup>14</sup>—and Derrida's somewhat creative commentary on it.<sup>15</sup> (In Bhabha's defense, his chapter title includes "the Trials of Translation," suggesting that he is at least familiar with Antoine Berman's "Translation and Trials of the Foreign," which discusses the degree to which texts can and should retain their foreignness when crossing borders). Pym also agrees to disagree with Bhabha on the interpretation of Benjamin's throwaway line, "translations themselves are untranslatable" (qtd. in Pym, 145), and gives clear justification for doing so.

Pym lists many objections to Bhabha's treatment of translation. Bhabha ignores various theoretical angles and moves that Pym finds more interesting, more logical, more viable, and more productive. Bhabha strips "translation" of everything that defines it. Bhabha justifies using the term via a convoluted chain of interpretations that invests "the previous theorization of

translation” (including Derrida and Benjamin) “in one word (‘survival’) and [applies it] to an entirely new context” (146). And Bhabha makes “no explicit attempt to relate the notion of survival to anything we might find in [other] paradigms of translation” (ibid.). Despite all these issues, Pym, like our hypothetical computer scientist, does indeed find inspiration in Bhabha. Specifically, Pym suspends his disbelief and accepts that cultural translation can inform inter-lingual translation studies, and discovers valuable contributions to translation paradigms, three of which are particularly germane to this thesis.

Pym lists as Bhabha’s first contribution his focus on the translator rather than the translation. This assertion is somewhat disingenuous of Pym given that in Bhabha’s analysis of Salman Rushdie’s *The Satanic Verses*, the protagonist *is* the translation. Still, the “view of translation from the perspective of the (figurative) translator” (Pym 2010, 147) is unique among the paradigms that Pym considered important enough to include in his study (with the partial exception of *Skopos* theory, as he himself states (*ibid.*)). Bhabha specifically addresses the subjectivities of migrant communities (Bhabha 316-317) and colonized insurgents (292-296) as people who find themselves in a “contingent, borderline experience” that “opens up *in-between* colonizer and colonized” (295-296, emphasis in original). He approaches members of the “migrant culture of the ‘in-between,’ the minority position” (321) as translations and as the site of translation. This approach allows scholars to examine translator subjectivity in that same space, between cultures, because the site of translation, the place where inter-lingual translation occurs, is obviously the translator himself.

Bhabha’s second contribution is his refusal to fall into binary thinking in regards to translation. As Pym states, “Bhabha sees that [the material movements that cause translation]

cross the previously established borders and thereby question them. No other paradigm has so vigorously raised the problem of the two-side border” (2010, 148). Elsewhere Pym remarks that

Bhabha’s text does not choose between the alternatives it presents. Should migrants remain unchanged, or should they integrate? What should be their home language? How should mainstream Western culture react to cultural hybridity? Such questions are not solved; they are dissolved. Bhabha simply points to that space between, elsewhere termed the “third space,” where the terms of these questions are enacted. Once you see the workings of that space, the questions no longer need any kind of “yes” or “no” answer. (147)

Third, Pym appreciates Bhabha’s focus on hybridity, which he says cannot help but inform “the general position of translators, who by definition know two languages and probably at least two cultures” (*ibid.*). From a certain point of view, though, hybridity encompasses the other two contributions: it allows us to focus on the translator and to choose the middle ground between supposedly binary options.

Hybridity is, in my reading, the dominant theme of Bhabha’s work. Hybridity is “[t]he indeterminacy of diasporic identity” (322). Hybridity is the result of “mass migrations and bizarre interracial relations” (Guillermo Gomez-Peña, qtd. in Bhabha 313). Hybridity is “where cultural differences ‘contingently’ and conflictually touch” (296). Hybridity destroys “negative polarities” and opens up “a space of translation [and] construction of a political object that is new, *neither the one nor the other*” (37, emphasis in original).

Hybridity is the connection between the pandemonium translator and cultural translation. It is the inter-personal center of gravity in Robinson’s macro-level model of translator agency. On the micro-level, it is the space between cultures where we find the center of gravity, the blip

that Dennett says represents the subject without being the subject. Different cultures have different gravitational forces, some with a stronger pull than others, like the attraction that one's native culture normally has. But this cultural gravity does not attenuate as distance increases because it depends on the force of the culture-demons, the memes (Dawkins's "units of cultural transmission") that make up the Self-defining narratives within the brain. The center of gravity between those cultural narratives is what I read when Bhabha writes of the projection of "an international space on the trace of a decentered, fragmented subject" and states that "[c]ultural globality is figured in the *in-between* spaces of double frames" (309, emphasis in original); or when he writes of "the interstitial passages and processes of cultural difference that are inscribed in the 'in-between'" (310). The many times that he writes of cultural hybridity—defining the migrant or the insurgent who is situated outside of both the native (often colonized) culture and the economically powerful (often colonizing) culture—I read Ojo Largo and the competing meme-demons transmitted to him by mother figures (his Claros mother, his Neanderthal-Nublares step-mother, his Peñas Rodadas grandmother and matriarch); or I read Mediano's and Golding's Neanderthals, Bid and Lok, caught in the space between the colonizing Cro-Magnon culture and their own culture.

This in-between space at the center of cultural gravity is the site and subject of translation and the translator. André Lefevere states that translators "are at home in two cultures and two literatures" (Lefevere 1992, 6); the translator-outcast *was once* at home but is now an outsider. Pym says that along with "the 'between space' of languages and cultures . . . one could also talk of 'overlaps'" (Pym 2010, 147); one interpretation of "overlaps" is that the cultures overlap within the translator and she is simultaneously "at home" in both of them. Another interpretation is that the cultures themselves overlap or partially coincide in that they share memes/narratives,

which would make a strong case for equivalence. The concept of a center of cultural gravity suggests that it is not the cultures themselves that overlap but their gravitational fields: a subject can be disconnected from two (or several) planets, separated from them, yet still feel the pull that each exerts.

### **In-Between Spaces**

Various theorists before and after Bhabha have pointed to an in-between space—some with fear, some with skepticism, some with longing. Friedrich Schleiermacher insists that “just as they must belong to *one* country, so people must adhere to *one* language or another, or they will wander untethered in an unhappy middle ground” (qtd. in Pym 2010, 34, emphasis in original). We can equate the two languages with the French and German translational norms in the early nineteenth century, and he patriotically refuses to entertain any method other than the German—bringing the reader to the source culture by preserving the source text’s structures. Schleiermacher considers the “unhappy middle ground” an unpleasant limbo to be avoided, and nowhere in his remarks does he give any hint that he believes that such a place actually exists.

Donald Davidson and Thomas Kuhn see a theory-independent vocabulary as a pipe dream that would be useful. Kuhn states that “[p]hilosophers have now abandoned hope of finding a pure sense-datum language . . . but many of them continue to assume that theories can be compared by recourse to a basic vocabulary consisting entirely of words which are attached to nature in ways that are unproblematic and, to the extent necessary, *independent of theory* . . .” (qtd. in Davidson 12, emphasis in original). Davidson rejects the possibility that such a neutral ground exists. “Languages we will not think of as separable from souls; speaking a language is not a trait a man can lose while retaining the power of thought. So there is no chance that someone can take up a vantage point for comparing conceptual schemes by temporarily shedding

his own” (Davidson 7). A middle ground outside of language, free of thought-constricting schema, would allow Davidson to prove or disprove definitively the untranslatability of languages. But according to his logic, such a space remains a pipe dream.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak strives in one of her essays on translation to show “how the post-colonial as the outside/insider translates white theory as she reads” (Spivak 381). The “outside/insider” connects us back up with Bhabha and hybridity, but does not explicitly reference an outside space in-between cultures or languages. Actually, the essay cited here contains a wonderful line about translation being “where meaning hops into the spacy emptiness between two named historical languages” (370), but that line is more difficult to extricate from its paragraph. It illustrates the dangers of using solitary phrases from Spivak. The dense cohesion of her prose makes some threads impossible to pull out without making a mess; intra-textual connections and allusions continually defer the completion of meaning, so tugging at one thread brings the rest of the paragraph and most of the essay with it. The paragraph surrounding “spacy emptiness between languages” also refers to the boundaries of language and of the self, and the ways in which translation frays those boundaries. Any paraphrasing flattens and skews her argument too much, so I cannot in good conscience use that line without quoting the whole paragraph, and the paragraph would not work without the rest of the essay. (“Pierre Menard” suggests that even reproducing the entire essay would be taking Spivak out of context.)

In defense of this “outside/insider” sound bite, however, it does follow a (less quotable) reference that Spivak makes to cultural translators as “inside/outside”; and it precedes an intriguing observation about “sympathetic reading as translation, precisely not a surrender but a friendly learning by taking a distance” (381). Clearly she allows for translation to occur from an



outsider perspective, from a certain “distance,” though we cannot say if that vantage point happens to be located in the “spacy emptiness between languages.”

In “The Task of the Translator,” Walter Benjamin mentions or alludes to in-between spaces several times and thus exerts the strongest gravitational pull in this survey of theorists. Various times he refers to the “realm of reconciliation and fulfillment of languages” (Benjamin 79) where the “the totality of their intentions supplementing each other” realizes “the intention underlying each language as a whole . . . : pure language” (78). He makes it clear that translation is the key that grants access to this realm: “In translation the original rises into a higher and purer linguistic air . . . . [I]t points the way to . . . the predestined, hitherto inaccessible realm of reconciliation and fulfillment of languages” (79). Thus we have a space outside of any one *langue*, on a separate plane and perhaps not even in the same dimension, where signifier and signified are one, safe from the ravages of *différance*—and translation gives us a glimpse of that space from the outside, according to Benjamin. “Unlike works of literature, translation does not find itself in the middle of the language forest but on the outside facing the wooded ridge; it calls into it without entering, aiming at that single spot where the echo is able to give, in its own language, the reverberation of the work in the alien one” (79-80). To Benjamin’s thinking, a literal translation gives us the clearest echo. “The interlinear version of the Scriptures is the prototype or ideal of all translation” (83). With interlinear translation, in the space between the lines—where the source language structure breaks up the translating language and the comparison illuminates the original—the ideal translation and pure language await. As with sonar, the translator bounces the translating language off of the original and sees the truth in the way the language comes back broken and refracted. The problem is that, like Spivak, Benjamin gives no indication that the site of translation is the same as the space where the ideal translation

hides. He situates translation outside of the “language forest” rather than somewhere in the middle, where presumably the synthesized intentions produce pure language (perhaps in the form of a “world tree”). Thus a translator knows what to hope for but has no way to attain it.

Translators view “The Task of the Translator” with twofold ambivalence (ambivalence?). First, they tolerate it as locals do a tourist attraction: it brings a certain legitimacy to their lives along with a certain amount of capital (they may even be fond of it), but it also brings tourists. Its “fetishized” status among literary critics, noted by Pym above, can be a turn-off to working translators. Second, translators approach the essay as portrait artists might a cubist: they might appreciate the problems of representation that he addresses—they know what is lost in the gap between the original and its translation—but the proffered solution falls outside of their genre. The rank-and-file portrait artist, seeking steady employment, cannot present Mr. Baker with a cubist rendering of Mrs. Baker. And the hungry translator cannot give to his client—whether the latter be a large corporation or a novelist of the most theoretical bent (Umberto Eco, for instance)—a word-for-word translation that strives toward pure language.

Benjamin’s radical stance conceals the possibility of a practical middle ground in translation. “The Task of the Translator” does, after all, contain the motif of reconciliation between opposites. We can search for a reconciliation of the supposedly binary opposites that dominate translation theory: source and target, or the mirage of idiomatic translations versus the impracticality of foreignized translations. Bhabha has opened a space where we might syncretize those oppositions; at the center of gravity between Benjamin, Pym, Venuti, Schleiermacher, Inghilleri, we can create a subject to mediate between opposites. We can propose a new model of translator subjectivity: the translator-outcast.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE TRANSLATOR-OUTCAST

#### **“. . . as if he were a stranger or an enemy”: The Defamiliarized Protagonist**

In each of the three novels of prehistory that we have examined, the protagonist becomes a translator-outcast by a process of cognitive distancing tempered by affective attraction. Ojo Largo, Bid, and Lok all find themselves distanced from the cultures around them, though they still have a connection—they have not burned the bridges (or scuttled their ships a la Cortés) even if those cultures have rejected them.

In Golding’s *The Inheritors*, the “new people” completely mystify Lok; no matter how much he observes them, he never understands them—except for one instance early in the novel, when the medium of communication is his sense of smell. Lok catches the scent of a new person, who he describes as “other,” and is transformed by reading the sign as he follows the scent.

There built up in Lok’s head a picture of the man, not by reasoned deduction but because in every place the scent told him—do this! As the smell of a cat would evoke in him a cat-stealth of avoidance and a cat-snarl; as the sight of Mal tottering up the slope had made the people parody him, so now the scent turned Lok into the thing that had gone before him. He was beginning to know the other without understanding how it was that he knew. (Golding 77)

“Lok-other” then proceeds to approach his home from a strange route, snarling and stealthy, as if he were a stranger or an enemy. The sight of the home fire pulls him out of this trance, yet when he hears a friend’s words, they are “strange words and [mean] nothing to him” (77-78). When the old woman, who in Lok’s mind knows everything, does not see him looking down at her, he is frightened. “He was cut off and no longer one of the people; as though his

communion with the other had changed him . . . . [H]e was different from them and they could not see him” (78).

We then read Lok’s concept of collective subjectivity about “the strings that bound him” to the members of his small clan (78, quoted in full above), but we discover that “[t]he other had tugged at the strings that bound him to Fa and Mal and Liku and the rest of the people” (ibid.). Lok’s “communion with the other” pulls him for a brief moment into the middle space between cultures, where he does not belong to either people but can follow the strings or the scent back to understanding. In that moment and that space he is a translator-outcast *in potentia*.

In Lorenzo Mediano’s *Tras la huella del hombre rojo*, the Neanderthal Bid literally becomes an interpreter-outcast. He spends an entire year with the *oscuros* trying to understand their culture so that he can adopt their weapons and tools. When he discovers that they are planning to take over his people’s hunting grounds, he leaves to warn his people (and the Cro-Magnons attempt to stop him by sending warriors to kill him). But when he reaches his “home” he cannot convey the dangers of the impending invasion because his Neanderthal compatriots cannot grasp the same concepts that eluded him for so long—symbolic thought in language and social constructs such as religion that unite many tribes into one overwhelming clan.

Bid eventually becomes the interpreter for the *oscuros* in the diplomatic initiative that he convinces them to pursue, but the conceptual barrier persists. As interpreter, he lies to both sides a la *traduttore-traditore* in a doomed attempt to maintain peace. He is unable to forge equivalence—by either definition of the word ‘forge’—between the two cultures but finds in the end that violence is the only sign that needs no interpretation: when he presents the severed heads of various chieftains to the chief of his home tribe, his people find the motivation to reach an agreement.

After the conflict, Bid begins to teach “his people” the religion and language of the colonizing Cro-Magnons, but he comes to a realization: “Al fin y al cabo, ya no se entendía bien con su propia gente. Le parecían toscos como una punta de sílex a medio tallar; le irritaba la simpleza con la que tomaban la vida. En realidad, él ya no era ni un hombre rojo ni un hombre oscuro” (Mediano 470). Because of his efforts to learn and understand the culture of his enemy, Bid finds himself in that middle ground between cultures. He is not accepted as one of the *oscuros* and no longer identifies himself as a *rojo*. As opposed to Lok, whose primary consciousness gives him no control over his moment of communion, Bid’s status as outsider among his own people is in many respects self-imposed.

Like Bid, Ojo Largo owes some of his outsider status to biology and some to his own choices. As a person of mixed race, he stands out in any culture; to the mostly swarthy people of Nublares and Peñas Rodadas he looks like a Claros man, and to the Claros he is a maiden-stealing coward from Nublares. But his choices isolate him more than his heritage. The habits of innovation and comparative garrulity distinguish his personality (or subjectivity) from that of anyone else in his clan. And every time Ojo Largo leaves a culture, he does so by choice. He chooses to leave Nublares with Viento en la Hierba even though he has not been banished. He chooses to leave Peñas Rodadas twice to help the people of Nublares, most of whom have shunned him on more than one occasion. Even in the case of the Claros, he “chooses” to leave (before they can cut out his heart and eat his brains).

But Ojo Largo never separates himself completely from any culture, including the Claros. When he leaves Nublares he promises his sister that he will not abandon her; because he is not banished he can return. When he leaves Peñas Rodadas he does so as a full-fledged member of the clan in good standing, and with a stronger connection to his grandmother, uncle, and cousins.

And when he escapes from the Claros, he leaves behind his mother and Sauce, the girl who has helped him escape; and his impossible flight most likely earns him cultural capital in the same way that Viento's epic and final race becomes part of Claros lore (222). Ojo Largo comes and goes between cultures, never severing affective connections—on the contrary, he has a lover from each of the cultures, so he actually strengthens those connections. But also he never declares allegiance to only one; even when he establishes his home in Nublares with Tórtola, he is willing to kill another man of that clan for her, an act that would banish him forever (178).

In all of these border crossings, Ojo Largo, like Lok and Bid, comes to see each culture as an “insider/outsider,” including the cultures to which he is connected by blood. Pérez Henares does not narrate Ojo Largo's defamiliarization process explicitly as Golding and Mediano do with Lok and Bid, but he does give some hints. Ojo Largo's hybridity is one indicator of his status as a perpetual outsider; as often occurs with mixed-race populations in any culture, he occupies a middle ground, not belonging to one culture or the other. Ironically, Ojo Largo also becomes an outsider because of his father's point of view as an *insider*; before he disappeared he taught Ojo Largo about the clan's power structure, the ways in which a chief and a shaman use each other to maintain power (65, 69). By awakening his son to the fact that clan leadership is a construct, Halcón en la Llanura endows him with a skeptical eye, one that “sees from a distance” as the name Ojo Largo suggests. This is the same eye with which translators examine the construct of language; that kind of awareness takes a man or a woman from the ranks of those who do not question the reality of their lives and removes him or her to the vantage point of the outcast.

### Cultural Translation in *Nublares*

At the heart of Ojo Largo's development in *Nublares* (and at the literal center of the novel, chapter five of nine) we find the Claros' sacrifice to the Burning Sun. This sacrifice catalyzes Ojo Largo's progression not only in the sense of his character arc but also in his function as cultural translator. We get our first inklings that he has the capacity to recognize equivalents in an enemy culture when he begins to suspect the reason why his captors have not killed him: "Ojo Largo sospechaba cuál sería su suerte el día del Burning Sun. Alguna similar a la de las muchachas de los claros en Nublares para el día de la Estrella Vespertina" (139).

Another indicator of Ojo Largo's translatorial ability comes when the "foreign" shaman visits him to instruct him about the sacrifice. Ojo Largo recognizes that the Claros shaman serves the same purposes as Huesos, the Nublares shaman, despite the fact that they belong to different cults (Burning Sun versus the Morning Star). And he has the same reaction to both.

Odió al chamán [de los Claros] como odiaba a Huesos, pero intentó extraer algún provecho. Los brujos eran poderosos en todos los sitios. Dominaban la voluntad de las gentes, aunque también aquí se dio cuenta de que el chamán era un instrumento del jefe, Hacha Negra, lo mismo que Huesos de Paso de Lobo. Entre ambos se apoyaban y mantenían sus respectivos poderes. (144)

It would be difficult to deny that Ojo Largo has established strong functional equivalence between the two cultures, and the key to his ability to perform this translatorial act lies in his contempt for the Nublares shaman: Ojo Largo's hatred—the hybrid result of his desire for Mirlo, his reaction to the shaman's character, and especially his father's instruction—acts as a defamiliarizing force.

After Ojo Largo escapes from the Claros and returns to Nublares, he explicitly creates cultural/functional equivalence between the two sacrifices. The chief and shaman convoke a meeting of the clan's hunters; Huesos informs them of the date of the sacrifice, and before the group disperses Ojo Largo speaks out. "Este cazador dice que el sacrificio no debe realizarse. Este cazador iba a ser sacrificado por los claros, pero los espíritus del Pueblo Antiguo se lo impidieron. Por mi sangre que no se derramó pido que no se derrame esta" (163).<sup>16</sup> He doesn't know it, but he has hit upon the foundation of equivalence between the two sacrifices: blood.

In an article surveying the "yo" and the "otro" of Spanish literature about prehistory, Dale Pratt applies the theories of Rene Girard to the human sacrifices in *Nublares*. Pratt summarizes Girard's argument in *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World* (1987) as follows: "en los momentos primarios de cualquier cultura hay un homicidio fundador ['foundational'], un acto de violencia común contra una víctima específica, cuya muerte constituye el primer acto significativo de unidad de la nueva cultura" (Pratt 28). Pratt then recounts Girard's example of Biblical tradition, where the murder of Abel creates two civilizations—the descendants of Cain versus the heirs of Adam—and throughout the Old Testament we see the series of "reiterations" of that homicide in ritual sacrifice (Pratt 29).

Pratt postulates that the foundational violence in *Nublares* is the genocidal war, still recounted in Cro-Magnon societies, when anatomically modern humans united to exterminate the Neanderthals. He suggests that the "serie aparentemente interminable de violencia, guerra, y esclavitud" among Cro-Magnon tribes and clans is the form in which those cultures reiterate their foundational homicide (Pratt 30); we have to assume that in that violence and war he includes the tradition of human sacrifice among the Claros and the clans of the Arcilloso River. As stated in chapter one, the Peñas Rodadas and Río Dulce clans have abolished human sacrifice



during La Torcaz's lifetime, but Nublares and the Claros have not. The Claros sacrifice an enemy warrior each summer solstice so that the sun can recover its strength and fill the mountain valleys with life (144), and the people of Nublares sacrifice a Claros maiden at the end of each summer so that the Morning Star can mate [*aparear*] with the girl's spirit and bless the clan with fertility (168). The choice of victims (young warriors versus maidens) perhaps indicates something about each culture or at least each clan's subconsciously-remembered role in the massacre, and the blessing and protection of the Ancient Ones during Ojo Largo's escape may be a reward for his role in ending those sacrifices.

Despite the obvious similarities between the two rites, few of those who participate in or witness them see any equivalence. Among the Claros it is a question of different identities: "Vosotros los del clan nos robáis mujeres. Sois cobardes. Nosotros los de las Grutas capturamos guerreros para ofrecérselos al sol. Somos valientes" (142-143). And when the Claros go to war with the Arcilloso tribe over the Nublares sacrifice, there are few who recognize the hypocrisy of decrying the enemy's ritual (220):

—Las gentes del río Arcilloso vienen a nuestra tierra, raptan a nuestras doncellas y les quitan la vida junto a su cueva de Nublares . . . . Los claros no permitirán más que los del Arcilloso les arrebatan a sus hijas.

[. . .]

—Los claros bajan hasta nuestro río, capturan a uno de nuestros jóvenes y le arrancan el corazón en la pradera de su gruta. . . .

—No criamos hijas para que los de Nublares las desangren.

—No hacemos cazadores para que los claros les arranquen el corazón.

During a presentation in Madrid, I asked Antonio Pérez Henares about the equivalence between the two sacrifices. He responded by declaiming the arrogance of humanity and our unwillingness or inability to see humanity in the Other. Referring to this kind of violence he said, “todos lo hacen, y todos acusan a los otros de hacerlo” (“La traducción inglesa de *Nublares*”)—exactly the situation between the Claros and Nublares, where no one within the cultures can see clearly the equivalence between the self and the other. Pérez Henares noted that we have the same problem today, both in the way we view our ancestors and in our relationships with our neighbors: “estamos haciendo lo mismo . . . somos malditos cromañones” (*ibid.*).<sup>17</sup>

Pérez Henares provides a foil for Ojo Largo as translator in the protagonist’s true enemy, the Claros warrior Rayo. We first meet him when Ojo Largo regains consciousness as the Claros’ prisoner. Rayo treats the future sacrificial victim with cruelty and brutality, contravening his chief’s orders and his own clan’s custom. He also presses the others to lay their mission aside temporarily so that they can find Ojo Largo’s camp and kill his companions before they know of their danger. His companions respond that their only mission was to capture someone for the Burning Sun ritual and that no other errand should jeopardize that mission’s success. Through Ojo Largo’s thoughts we see that Rayo, the leader of this expedition, is going against the chief’s orders for his own reasons (138). This is exactly what Ojo Largo has done on several occasions; in fact, he is in his current predicament precisely because he ignored La Velluda’s wisdom and went off on his own errand. Pérez Henares thus establishes Rayo as an equivalent of Ojo Largo, though their equivalence is directional—Rayo is an acceptable translation of Ojo Largo’s individualism, but Ojo Largo is not an acceptable translation of Rayo’s hatred.

Ojo Largo has reason to hate Rayo, the man who killed Viento and murdered Ojo Largo’s mother after her son escaped. And we know the reason for Rayo’s fierce hatred: his sister was

one of the many Evening Stars taken from the Claros. But the hatred that drives Rayo is not the same hatred that enhances the clarity of Ojo Largo's outsider understanding of shamans; Rayo refuses to see equivalence in the Other, as Pérez Henares demonstrates in a dialogue between the warriors who capture Ojo Largo as they try to decide whether their captive was traveling alone (137):

—Los jóvenes a veces llegan solos. Hemos matado a algunos.

—Pero eso es en la estación fría. Cuando pasan su prueba como guerreros.

—¿La iniciación a la caza, como hacemos nosotros?

—Nosotros lo hacemos en el tiempo de la hierba nueva —contestó Rayo.

—Pero es igual.

—Dicen que hubo un tiempo en que los clanes del río Arcilloso y nosotros cazábamos juntos.

—Ahora son nuestros enemigos.

Pérez Henares gives us only one dialogue tag, but one is enough. Once we see that Rayo denies the similarities between the two clans' initiations, we no longer need a tag to know that it is Rayo who utters the last line, emphasizing incompatible difference where unity once existed. Rayo's hatred is directed at the Other; Ojo Largo's is first directed homeward and then transferred as he perceives equivalence.

There is another force that counteracts the hatred for one's enemy, a force at the root of Rayo's hatred: love. In her essay "The Politics of Translation" (reprinted in Venuti 2004), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak introduces love into cultural translation. She writes of an intimate reading where the translator must "surrender to the text" (370). What the translator surrenders is her own subjectivity ("agency") and the demands of the imagined audience (*ibid.*); surrendering

agency is possible because of the comfortable intimacy between the translator and the text, the translator's "love for the text" (371). Love permits a fraying of the "selvedges of the language-textile" (selvedges<sup>18</sup> are the borders of a woven cloth that prevent unraveling); the language-textile defines the limits of the self, and so surrendering to the text means allowing one's subjective boundaries to dissolve or "fray". Fraying allows for "facilitations" [*frayages* in French], permanently reduced resistance to mental connections (370, 387 (endnote 3)). Frayed edges of the self, of one's agency, that make it easier to connect things (people, cultures, neurons)—that does indeed sound like love; remarkably, it also sounds like Lok's "communion with the other." Spivak adds that "[t]he task of the translator is to facilitate this love between the original and its shadow" (370), and it is a task that requires work. "The translator's preparation might take more time, and her love for the text might be a matter of a reading skill that takes patience" (371).

That "love for the text" distinguishes Ojo Largo from his counterpart, Rayo. (It also raises *Viento en la Hierba* to messianic status; physically, he never crosses the cultural boundaries that Ojo Largo crosses, yet he is the one to give his citizenship and then his life for the Other.) As mentioned above, Ojo Largo maintains affective connections with each culture: platonic love for matriarchal figures—La Torcaz, La Velluda, and his mother, Arroyo Claro—as well as for his sister; and sexual love for the women he has had relations with—Mirlo and Cielo en los Ojos of Nublares, Sauce of the Claros, Tórtola of Peñas Rodadas. These connections strengthen his hybridity and transfer it to the affective plane. As his grandmother says of him, "[M]i nieto tiene fuego y hielo en el corazón al mismo tiempo. . . . Sus pasiones son fuertes. Para todo, para el amor o para el odio; para la generosidad o la ambición; para matar o para dar la vida" (226). Love counteracts the skepticism and antagonism toward any culture and provides

equilibrium to the center of gravity; love for each culture allows the translator-outcast to maintain that middle ground. Ojo Largo displays that hybridity; Rayo shows only one side of each dualism, full of ice, of hate, and of death.

We can thus count Rayo among those who fail or refuse to perceive any equivalence between the Claros and Nublares sacrifices, while we have a clearer picture of the reasons for Ojo Largo's capacity for cultural translation. His antagonism pushes and his love pulls on the connections to the cultures around him. He creates cultural equivalence between both sacrifices because of his viewpoint from the space in-between the cultures. His specific mold of hybridity, cast by nature and nurture and reinforced by his choices, prevents any single meme or culture-demon from throwing off his center of gravity and pulling him out of the site of the translator-outcast.

### **Hybrid Texts and Practical Middle Grounds**

This outcast model of translator subjectivity establishes a theoretical middle ground between the binary oppositions in translation studies as well as a practical middle ground in the act of translation. Translators and translation scholars have always sought answers to the debate between naturalness in the target text and fidelity to the source text. Each new development puts a different spin on the question—sense-for-sense versus word-for-word, domestication versus foreignization, constraints versus the trials of the foreign, submission versus resistance. That last set comes from Venuti, whose emphasis on perceived translator subjectivity (or lack thereof) comes through in the terminology—pointing to precisely who it is that submits or resists. Bhabha seizes Benjamin's "untranslatability of translations" sound bite and interprets it as "resistance, a negation of complete integration, and a will to survival in the subjectivity of the migrant" (qtd. in Pym 145). In a back-translation, then, Bhabha's concept of hybridity becomes something very

close to Schleiermacher's foreignization and Venuti's resistance to target-culture norms. But we have been using hybridity as a middle ground between domestication and foreignization. Where is that middle ground?

During the late 1990s Christina Schäffner and Beverly Adab developed the idea of the hybrid text,<sup>19</sup> a new model of translation (descriptive rather than prescriptive).

A hybrid text is a text that results from a translation process. It shows features that somehow seem “out of place” / “strange” / “unusual” for the receiving culture, i.e. the target culture. These features, however, are not the result of a lack of translational competence or examples of ‘translationese’, but they are evidence of conscious and deliberate decisions by the translator. (325)

Here is a middle ground of sorts between domestication and foreignization, though defined too narrowly. Schäffner and Adab state that the hybrid text “results from *a* translation process,” not “*the* translation process”; but within the bounds of practical translation—between adaptation and transliteration—*every* translation is a hybrid text, though its heterogeneity may be subtle. No translation is entirely idiomatic; even if the translator reads the story once and burns the book before he translates, source forms and styles and cultural practices will seep through. And no translation is entirely foreignized; at some point, the translating language imposes itself, if only at the word level.

The true middle ground that Schäffner and Adab introduce consists of real-world translator subjectivity, the hybrid translator who makes those “conscious and deliberate decisions” as she negotiates the space between the source and target cultures. Her hybridity consists of stable though flexible connections to the cultures whose contact she mediates. The word ‘mediate’ describes her actions better than ‘negotiate.’ A negotiator represents one party’s

interests, and his main interest is that his side gain as much as possible and/or lose as little as possible. But a mediator by definition intervenes as a third party, and her only goal is that the parties come to an agreement or *reconciliation*.

As we saw with Ojo Largo, the translator-outcast holds his middle-ground position because equal forces of defamiliarization (antagonism, skepticism) and “love for the text” maintain that equilibrium. The two parts of the term ‘outcast’ connote these balanced forces. ‘Out’ implies that the outcast was once included within the group; ‘cast’ implies a specific action that distanced him from the group. The translator-outcast’s defamiliarization often takes place within his own consciousness rather than externally, as a physical banishment: for Ojo Largo it begins when his father teaches him to discern the social constructs that uphold power; for Bid, his acquisition of a second language and culture alters the lens with which he views his own. The translator outcast maintains this relationship with multiple cultures, including his native culture, and that multiplicity contributes to the hybrid and/or fragmented nature of his human consciousness.

The outcast model of translator subjectivity acknowledges the lack of integrity in translation; both meanings of ‘integrity’ are valid here. On a practical level, no translator adheres unequivocally to one paradigm or one method; as each problem presents itself, the translator’s pandemonium process starts afresh, and though experience and habit streamline the chaos, different demons win out depending on the usefulness of their solutions. The translator might be trying to foreignize her translation, but for a particular sentence where a domestication-demon offers by far the best solution, will she force the issue? Or, if her goal is an idiomatic rendering, will she deny the perfection of a particular foreignized phrase (which might someday become part of the vernacular)? The translator-outcast only seeks reconciliation. Where translators accept

the “best” solutions without prejudice, the texts will lack the integrity or wholeness that theorists preach but the practice actually approaches the ideal mix of form and meaning.

On the theoretical level, translation lacks integrity in that it misrepresents itself, and the outcast model acknowledges this as well. The translation profession holds up a facade for the reader and the client—the equivalence illusion that so many theories point to. Pym states that “[p]eople believe in [equivalence] just as they believe in the value of the money they carry in their pockets; we believe in these things even when we know that there is no linguistic certainty behind equivalence and not enough gold to back up our money.” His requirement for any paradigm is that it help us “to understand the way *equivalence beliefs* work” (2010, 165, emphasis in original). We have already studied this question from the inside out, starting at the point where equivalence is created: within the translator. It seems logical to assume that the translator-outcast fabricates cultural equivalents using the same process by which, according to Dennett, he fabricates a self. By arranging multiple, parallel discourses around a center of gravity, the translator creates the illusion of a cohesive, central entity, as the makers of bilingual dictionaries do when they place an “equivalent” after a given lemma.

Lev Kuleshov, a Russian filmmaker, famously demonstrated the tendency of the human mind to create equivalence between juxtaposed memes. He spliced shots of an expressionless man between shots of food, an attractive girl, a coffin, etc. With each set, the audience perceived that the man’s expression changed from hunger to lust to grief and so on.<sup>20</sup> This is known as the Kuleshov Effect in film theory, but in translation studies it might be called equivalence.

The pandemoniac translator-outcast thus points to solutions in translation practice and theory. In practice, he provides a model for what translators actually do—they use whichever tool in their toolbox will work best for the problem at hand; ideally, by straddling the line



between source and target, they approach the impossible: a translation that loses neither form nor meaning. The translator-outcast's hybrid, disaggregated makeup also models the "forging" of equivalence at a center of gravity. The rub, of course, is that in practice the translator-outcast is a fully-realized subject exercising agency in every translation problem, but in theory, the translator-outcast's subjectivity is as intangible as any center of gravity, as illusory as the phantom of equivalence that he creates. Here is another iteration of the subjectivity dilemma, and the answer, though perhaps too facile, is the same that I have always proposed, that the truth lies somewhere in the middle.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION: CENTERS OF GRAVITY

This thesis has presented a variety of narratives. Some have addressed the relationship between thought, language, and culture; others have presented the spaces where different cultures come in contact and require mediation; still others have examined the agency of intercultural mediators and the decisions that they face. With hope, the narratives in each category have coalesced around their center of gravity and produced at least the illusion of coherence. Now we face the task of the translator, which is to compress each narrative into an essential meme and find or fabricate the center of gravity for them all.

In the thought-language-culture narratives we find the theories of Daniel Dennett and David Lewis-Williams. Lewis-Williams, in *The Mind in the Cave*, bundles prehistoric language, culture, and subjectivity together as a “package deal” where the language reflects the complexity of the culture, and the complexity of the culture is determined by the race’s consciousness. The Neanderthals’ “primary” consciousness allows only a simple social structure which would be reflected in their language; and the inseparable pair of higher-order consciousness and fully modern language allows Cro-Magnons to create a more complex, stratified society. In Dennett’s Multiple Drafts model of consciousness, language is a virtual machine that is overlaid on our brain’s parallel-processing architecture; it does not affect our thought and subjectivity except by introducing some of the “microhabits” that shape pandemonium. Many of those habits are memes (“units of cultural transmission”), and many of those memes are words or narratives; the narratives accrete around centers of gravity, and the network of narratives *about* the self *defines* the self. But we must presume that each mind uses different sets of narrative units in varying combinations; so we might say that while *langue* does not define the self, it creates the receptor

sites in our brains for the *parole* that does.

In arguing that language both reflects and shapes our mind and our culture, these two experts offer refractions of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. Structuralists such as Emile Benveniste and Louis Althusser support that hypothesis with their own statements that language and ideology define and give identity to man. Although Whorfianism has largely been discredited, it obviously exerts influence still, at the very least in cognitive science and paleoanthropology.

These theories are played out and challenged in the narratives of cross-cultural communication that we have studied. The two novels that depict intercultural contact between Neanderthals and Cro-Magnons for the most part support Lewis-Williams's assertions. Both William Golding's *The Inheritors* and Lorenzo Mediano's *Tras la huella del hombre rojo* depict a biologically- and socially-imposed divide between Cro-Magnons and Neanderthals. In both novels the members of each species find the culture and language of the other species to be completely alien (or unrecognizable as culture or language). Both books suggest that the sophisticated language and society of Cro-Magnons is conducive to a more individualistic subjectivity, while the simplicity of Neanderthal language and society fosters a collective-oriented self. And together these authors support Whorfianism's claims that these ties between language, culture, and thought make translation extremely problematic (Mediano) if not impossible (Golding).

Antonio Pérez Henares's novel *Nublares* deals with only one species and one language, so the interplay between cultures is more subtle but no less complex. Structuralism suggests that a shared language would encourage shared conceptual schemes, but this is not so. Interpersonal and intercultural conflicts arise, not from different languages or different levels of consciousness but from different conceptual schemes within the same language and often the same culture. At

the center of these conflicts (many times as the cause of them) we find the protagonist, Ojo Largo. Multicultural pandemonium creates in him a complex, hybrid subject that is influenced by the narrative-memes of several cultures. Ojo Largo's diverse heritage imbues him with a multiplex set of demons: individualism-demons, creativity-demons, conformity-demons, social-approval-demons, matriarchy-demons, patriarchy-demons, tradition-demons, defiance-demons, altruism-demons, and hatred-demons, to name just a few. These competing and overlapping cultural demons form a cultural pandemonium that defines Ojo Largo, but his center of narrative gravity is never subsumed by the meme-constellation pertaining to any one of the cultures whose boundaries he has crossed. That subjective independence makes him a prototype of the translator-outcast, able to create equivalence between cultures.

The concept of equivalence pertains to the last set of narratives, that of mediation between conflicting cultures and languages, also known as translation. Equivalence is the core of professional translation in western civilization, but current translation theory considers that foundation to be a necessary social illusion that elides the translator's subjectivity from society's consciousness. Many theorists suggest that if translators do not wish to be invisible slaves to the target culture, they must become zealots who resist behavioral norms to emphasize the otherness of the source. The theories leave very little subjective middle ground in between. Moira Inghilleri offers such a position for the translator as one who affects/effects norms and is affected by them; Robinson, in *Who Translates?*, establishes the two poles of translator subjectivity—the automaton and the creator—and seeks a compromise where external forces combine with internal and internalized forces to produce a translation.

Bhabha establishes a middle ground between polarities when he uses translation to conceptualize resistance in the hybrid migrant. He situates this middle ground on the plane of

cultural and post-colonial studies rather than on the plane of “translation proper,” but the concepts of resistance, hybridity, and in-between space have applications to translation studies. Various theorists have addressed the possibility or necessity of a space between languages and cultures; Walter Benjamin in particular refers to translation as existing outside of language and proposes a space where different languages reconcile into pure language. So although Benjamin preaches radical foreignization, his spaces of reconciliation allow for a middle-ground between the normally polarized questions of translation practice and translator subjectivity. That middle ground is personified by the translator-outcast.

*The Inheritors* and *Tras la huella del hombre rojo* demonstrate part of the genesis of the translator-outcast. Lok and Bid both become self-made outcasts; instead of being cast out by their societies, they become defamiliarized by contact with and comprehension of the Other. In *Nublares*, Ojo Largo’s hybridity allows him to see each culture from an insider/outsider’s perspective, while the skepticism he has learned from his father exposes the constructs behind societies. As with Lok and Bid, Ojo Largo’s contact with the Other plays a pivotal role; after a Claros girl helps him escape a ritual sacrifice to the Claros god, he can no longer support the sacrifice of Claros maidens to Nublares’s patron deity.

Defamiliarization and skepticism (along with a dash of hatred) distance Ojo Largo from his inherited cultures, but “love for the text” counteracts that repelling force. These two forces provide equilibrium to the translator-outcast’s center of gravity and keep him from being subsumed by any of the cultures with which he is in contact. That equilibrium gives him the ability, rare in *Nublares*, to create equivalence between the different religions that bring the Claros and Nublares to war with each other.

Hybridity in the translator-outcast finds an echo in Schöffner and Adab’s “hybrid text,” a

theory that attributes departures from transparent idiomaticity in specific texts to the conscious agency of the translator. The outcast model of translator subjectivity acknowledges the hybrid nature of *every* translation; the translator-outcast is freed to make use of pandemonium, alternating between multiple paradigm- and theory-demons in the mediator's quest to forge agreement or reconciliation between source and target cultures.

The model of the translator-outcast addresses the difficulties of cross-cultural translation presented in the narratives of connectivity between thought, language, and culture. It foregrounds and gives further definition to the spaces where cultures come in contact. And it suggests a resolution to the polarities within the theory and practice of translation, proposing a middle-ground of mediation. The translator-outcast sits at the center of gravity between all of these narratives, with Ojo Largo as its prototype. The hybridity given him by nature and nurture contribute to his ability as a cultural translator, but his mental hybridity as an outsider/insider of various cultures is what defines the translator-outcast. Multi-cultural equilibrium allows him to 'forge' equivalence between cultures—whether that forging be “the labor-intensive work of shaping” connections or, as post-modern theory suggests, “the fabrication of copies for the purpose of deception.” Equivalence may indeed be an illusion, but as Pym affirms, it is a “necessary social illusion” (2010, 165), especially when mediating conflicts between cultures. As all three novels can attest—most vividly with Bid's bag of heads—when social illusions fail, violence steps forward.

## **Appendix A – The Interpreter-Outcast: Historical Models**

The historical model for the translator-outcast begins in Hispanic culture with Gerónimo de Aguilar and “La Malinche” as represented by Bernal Díaz del Castillo in *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España*. Aguilar’s and La Malinche’s common language, Maya, was the relay language between the Nahuatl of Moctezuma and the Castilian Spanish of Hernán Cortés. The temptation to search for the center of gravity in this four-person chain of discourse is difficult to resist, but the important points for this thesis are found in the subjectivities of the two interpreters and the degree to which we might consider them outcasts.

Jerónimo de Aguilar spent approximately eight years as a slave to the Mayan people of the Yucatán Peninsula. By the time he was rescued by Cortés’s expedition he had learned the language at least well enough to act as an interpreter. Díaz del Castillo and others give us no evidence to suggest that Aguilar harbored any pro-Mayan sympathies or that he was their advocate in his interpretation; but his implicit loyalty to the Spanish cause is made explicit by his foil, Gonzalo Guerrero, the only other survivor of the shipwreck that stranded them both on the Yucatán Peninsula. Guerrero, when the newly-freed Aguilar tried to recruit him for Cortés, explained that he could not go back to being a Spaniard, specifically because of his wife and three kids, his pierced ears and tattooed face. He also mentions that he had risen to the rank of cacique and that he acted as a military leader in times of war; in fact, if all the reports are true, he led Mayan campaigns against his former countrymen on at least three occasions, eventually giving his life in battle. Guerrero was no outcast among the Mayans, while Aguilar never moved above the rank of a slave and thus jumped at the chance to return to his life as a subject of the Spanish crown. When contrasted with Guerrero, Gerónimo de Aguilar’s actions demonstrate a

clear rejection of the colonized culture in favor of the colonizing culture; consequently he does not occupy the center of gravity that the classic model prescribes for an interpreter.

Malinalli, better known as La Malinche, has been the focus of many studies both as a historical figure and as an archetype in Mexican culture. By the time she met Cortés she was an outcast of both the Aztec and Mayan cultures. In the centuries since her intervention in the conquest of Mexico, Mexican tradition has cast her as a traitor who chose the invading enemy over her own people; that characterization has penetrated the culture to such an extent that Mexicans now label the preference for anything foreign over anything Mexican as *malinchismo* and anyone who betrays such a preference as a *malinchista*. In Sabina Berman's play *Águila o sol* (1984), La Malinche as interpreter has clearly abandoned that supposed center of gravity between cultures: she assiduously bleaches Cortés's discourteous register and vocabulary, translating a crass and greedy conquistador into an innocuous visitor. Given the lack of first-hand documentation of her interpretation, it is impossible to pinpoint the space (or habitus) that Malinilla occupied between the colonizing Spanish culture and the to-be-colonized Aztec and Mayan cultures, although she enjoyed the highest status within the conquistador culture (despite being a non-European woman). This does not negate the possibility that many among the colonizing culture saw her as an outcast or that she herself did not feel that she was an outcast of all three cultures despite the power she may have had among the Spaniards; but it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine whether she occupied a middle ground (the center of gravity) in her interpretations.

A third historical model is Álvaro Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, the Spanish conquistador who was one of four survivors of the 1527 Narváez expedition to La Florida (in the sixteenth century, "Florida" referred to the Florida peninsula and the Gulf coast) in 1527. Cabeza de Vaca spent



several years in the area near Galveston, Texas, first as a trader, then as a slave, and finally as a holy man and healer. He took on this last role as he and his three companions walked west across North America, finally coming into contact with other Spaniards near what is now Culiacán, Mexico. As a trader and a slave he learned the dialects of the indigenous tribes with whom he worked; as one of “Los Hijos del Sol,” his own record indicates that his followers did most of the talking as they came to new villages. His most important work as an interpreter occurred when he reencountered Spanish culture; his first contact with Spaniards after his odyssey was with a troop of soldiers who claimed to be in dire straits because they had not been able to take any natives as slaves. From that point on, Cabeza de Vaca attempts to protect the colonized people from the Spanish colonizers, arguing for the rights of the former as subjects of the Spanish crown. Unlike Guerrero and Aguilar, he chooses the middle path by rejoining the colonizing society but maintaining the perspective he gained while living in the colonized cultures. In 1537, several months after his arrival in Mexico City, he returned to Spain and wrote his account for the king, who named him governor of the Río de la Plata region and sent him there in 1540. In this new role, Cabeza de Vaca continued arguing for the rights of the colonized peoples, to the point where the Spanish landowners combined against him and sent him back to Spain in chains.

Each of these three historical figures—Malinalli, Gerónimo de Aguilar, and Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca—found themselves at the point of contact between two cultures without occupying the assumed neutral space of the interpreter. Circumstances and their own ethics pulled them out the center. As we have seen from Robinson’s Pandemonium Translator and the theories that lead to it (Dennett’s Multiple Drafts, Badiou/Simeoni’s *habitus*), the translating self is not only supposed to be a non-existent non-agent in order to produce a faithful translation, the translating self *is* a non-existing non-agent, as incorporeal as a center of gravity.

## **Appendix B – Hivers and Auditors: Pandemonium Selves in Discworld**

In *Tras la huella del hombre rojo*, Bid's Neanderthal ideology tells him that individual subjectivity would require a soul that precedes birth and continues after death, a concept that he finds absurd. In the universe of Terry Pratchett's Discworld, the Auditors come at this idea from the opposite direction. As the nebulous group of discarnate beings who ensure that physics continue to happen (gravity, chemical reactions, etc.), they express thought only in the first-person plural; the collective subjectivity—or the bureaucratic non-subjectivity—of “we” ensures eternal existence because it precludes actually living. As soon as subjectivity occurs, as soon as a discarnate voice in Auditor dialogue utters the word “I,” the fragile framework falls apart and the newborn Ego ceases to exist. Without subjectivity there is no life, and if there is no life, there is no death. The Auditors embody (in a bodiless way) the “anti-personality” forces of Robinson's translator subjectivity, the demons that insist on perfect equivalence, where the translator leaves no trace of his or her existence in the process; when anti-personality demons face demons who strive to establish the translator as a creative (chaotic and productive) subject in the process, their creed, according to Robinson, is “Death to all these personality-demons!” (Robinson 163). The continued existence of translation, they argue, depends on the non-existence of the translator, because when the reader becomes aware of and focuses on the translator as a creator, they are no longer reading the source; without a source, there is no translation, and without a translation, there is no translator.

In his 2004 novel *A Hat Full of Sky*, Pratchett presents another collective subject supposedly devoid of subjectivity, a network of remembered selves called the hiver. The hiver is a chaotic demon, an aggregate non-self made up of the memories of many humans (and/or

animals) that it inhabited. This makes it the inverse of Dennett's Pandemonium self, a human made up of a network of demons.

The hiver has no brain or supposedly no subjectivity of its own; it is merely a craving and a fear possessing "the shape of life" (69) that uses the memories of past victims and the strength and cunning of current hosts and pushes those beyond ethical and critical limits. One wizard doctoral candidate (at the Discworld's Unseen University) claims that hivers are responsible for every evolutionary leap, where an organism made a crucial advancement, much like Ojo Largo and the breaking of tradition and even taboo by raising a wolf pup, by refusing to participate in human sacrifice, and even by simply speaking more than any of his elders or peers. In the same way, translation has broken down barriers and introduced and disseminated new paradigms into cultures, as when Wordsworth read Don Quixote and re-branded him as a Romantic champion (*The Prelude*, Book V).

As with Pratchett's Auditors, the hiver's immortality consists of its non-subjectivity. This empty form has existed since shortly after creation (according to the wizard's dissertation) and grown with each host that it has taken over and pushed beyond its limits, leaving the host dead, with a new echo of consciousness now added to its network and searching for the next alpha host. In all this process it never makes the conscious leap to thinking that there is a subject at the center of gravity between all of these relics, and as it has no existence it cannot cease to exist. But it is a torturous non-existence, a kind of extreme autism marked by the inability to shut out any input at all. As the hiver says, "Do you know what it feels like to be aware of every star, every blade of grass? [...] We have [been aware of everything] for eternity. No sleep, no rest, just endless . . . endless experience, endless awareness. Of everything. *All the time*. How we envy you, *envy* you! Lucky humans, who can close your minds to the endless cold deeps of space!

You have this thing you call . . . boredom? That is the rarest talent in the universe! [...] You look at a tree and see . . . just a tree, a stiff weed. You don't see its history, feel the pumping of the sap, hear every insect in the bark, sense the chemistry of the leaves, notice the hundred shades of green, the tiny movements to follow the sun, the subtle growth of the wood . . .” (237-38).

Pratchett thus suggests a mutual exclusivity between this infinite awareness and a concept of self, that this über-consciousness, along with its extreme opposite of zero conscious thought, is no consciousness at all; it obviates the self.

Interestingly, the heroine's task in killing the hiver (“killing” is a misrepresentation, but I don't want to give everything away) consists of helping it become self-aware, first by teaching it the correlation between its own makeup and human consciousness—with the human ability to forget and ignore—and, second, by giving it a proper name. At that point, the hiver says, “if I am, I can stop” (242). There are two interpretations of this resolution: either Pratchett feels that a self made up only of others can still be a self (or that all selves are conglomerates of other selves); or he is responding to Dennett's assertion that there is nothing at the center of gravity, no Cartesian Theater or Central Meaner, by insisting that somewhere in the middle is the kernel of self.

*A Hat Full of Sky* reads like a response to Dennett's *Consciousness Explained*; it is chock full of representations of the Pandemonium Self. In addition to the hiver, Pratchett explores the dynamics of a society of witches that has no head witch because “Mistress Weatherwax would never allow anything like that” (87). The not-head witch has the ability to Borrow, or to make her mind ride along in the brains of various animals and receive their input; her crowning achievement in Borrowing consists of piggy-backing on the brains of an entire hive of bees, with her fragmented consciousness gathering and eventually parsing information from thousands of

sets of eyes. And at one point, several score Nac MacFeegles (a band of tattooed, kilt-wearing, six-inch-high pixies whose favorite activities include cursing, thieving, drinking, and fighting) steal some clothes and use their impressive strength to take the form of a “bigjob” (human) so that they can take a stagecoach, leading to hilarious variations on the classic argument between body parts (over which part is most important).

In addition to these Pandemonium models, Pratchett also creates a subject who is almost the exact match of a case that Dennett mentions in his book, that of Greta and Freda Chaplin, identical twin sisters who live in York, England, who “seem to act *as one*; they collaborate on the speaking of single speech acts, for instance, finishing one another’s sentences with ease or speaking in unison, with one just a split-second behind” (422). Pratchett’s version of what Dennett dubs Fractional Personality Disorder is Miss Level, a woman who continuously inhabits two bodies, like Siamese twins who share an organ, except that the bodies are not connected and the organ that they share is the mind (as opposed to the brain).

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> In subsequent writings Dennett changes metaphors from “multiple drafts” to “fame in the brain” to describe the threshold where mental activity becomes conscious thought (Dennett and Akins). The shift to consciousness, argues Dennett, has no defined “finish line” just as there is no “famous line.” Famous people don’t start out famous and there is no exact time stamp that records the moment when someone becomes famous, because the transition is imperceptible. We could liken it to the continuum represented by trending topics on Twitter, which ranks topics by the number of mentions in the “Twittersphere”; any “finish line” would be arbitrary, like establishing a Fame Threshold by picking a number of tweets (or YouTube page views) when someone becomes famous.

<sup>2</sup> Dennett borrows the phrase “web of discourses” from David Lodge’s 1988 novel *Nice Work*.

<sup>3</sup> Bakhtin’s essay “Discourse in the Novel” presents the idea of “heteroglossia,” the various “languages” that exist within one language, i.e., different sociopolitical registers. Bakhtin insists that heteroglossia appears even in individual utterances and words, producing what he calls a “hybrid construction”:

What we are calling a hybrid construction is an utterance that belongs, by its grammatical (syntactic) and compositional markers, to a single speaker, but that actually contains mixed within it two utterances, two speech manners, two styles, two "languages," two semantic and axiological belief systems. We repeat, there is no formal—compositional and syntactic—boundary between these utterances, styles, languages, belief systems; the division of voices and languages takes place within the limits of a single syntactic whole, often within the limits of a simple sentence. It frequently happens that even one and the same word will belong simultaneously to two languages, two belief systems that intersect in a hybrid construction—and consequently, the word has two contradictory meanings, two accents . . . . (304-05)

<sup>4</sup> The most famous proponent of “emplotment” is Hayden White, who coined the term in his 1973 book *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*.

<sup>5</sup> Recent evidence has by no means discredited the theories on Neanderthal consciousness championed by Lewis-Williams. A large contingent of paleontologists and paleoanthropologists continue to argue that Neanderthal man had no capacity for symbolic thought—which means no ability to produce art (see Wilford 2012 for an overview of the discussion). On the subject of interbreeding, which Lewis-Williams doubted had occurred, very few scientists had categorically denied that it was a possibility before the genome project indicated that Europeans share up to 4 percent of their DNA with Neanderthals; the implications of shared DNA are still hotly debated (see Callaway 2012). And interbreeding between the two species/races would do nothing to refute the assertion that Neanderthals possessed only a “primary consciousness.”

<sup>6</sup> Winawer et al. conducted a study that measured the ability of Russian speakers versus English speakers to distinguish different shades of blue. Russian splits the English concept of blue into one term for darker shades and another for lighter shades, with no single word that covers both

groups. The study found that native Russian speakers were significantly faster at recognizing differences, suggesting that the linguistic differences have a cognitive effect.

<sup>7</sup> Mediano illustrates this problem with subjective-linguistic *Who's on First* that is provoked by a seemingly simple question from Bid (145-46).

—¿Qué es yo?  
—¿Yo? —repuso Ibai, perpleja—. Yo soy Ibai. Tú eres Bidea.  
—No entiendo. Tú eres Ibai. Entiendo. Yo es Bidea. Bidea no comprende.  
—¿Cómo puede ser? ¡Todo el mundo sabe lo que es «yo»!  
—No comprendo.  
—Dices «No comprendo». ¿Quién no comprende?  
—Bidea no comprende.  
—Luego Bidea es yo —concluyó Ibai, triunfal [. . .]—. ¿Comprendes ahora?  
—Bidea comprende. Bidea es yo. —Si además de Bidea quería llamarle «yo», él no se opondría a ese capricho femenino. Pero siempre sería Bid, el nombre que le puso su madre el día en que comenzó a andar.  
—Y yo soy Ibai.  
—¿Ibai también es yo?

<sup>8</sup> Terry Pratchett models this concept in his novel *Thief of Time* (2002), except each twin is actually one half of a complete person—but not at all like the Schwarzenegger and DeVito film *Twins*.

<sup>9</sup> See Chapter 6 of Pym's *Exploring Translation Studies* (2010) for an exhaustive presentation of theorists who create uncertainty in translation, including Plato, Augustine, Heisenberg, Quine, Heidegger, Gadamer, T.S. Eliot, Ricœur, Benjamin, Locke, Derrida, and Pym.

<sup>10</sup> Pym explores the ethics of translator/interpreter intervention in a conference presentation (Pym, *On the Ethics of Translators' Interventions I*) available at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QpDfVC0Di0&feature=youtube\\_gdata\\_player](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8QpDfVC0Di0&feature=youtube_gdata_player)

<sup>11</sup> Venuti specifically sees serious implications of cultural imperialism in idiomatic translations. Every step in the translation process—from the selection of foreign texts to the implementation of translation strategies to the editing, reviewing, and reading of translations—is mediated by the diverse cultural values that circulate in the target language, always in some hierarchical order. The translator, who works with varying degrees of calculation, under continuous self-monitoring and often with active consultation of cultural rules and resources (from dictionaries and grammars to other texts, translation strategies, and translations, both canonical and marginal), may submit to or resist dominant values in the target language, with either course of action susceptible to ongoing redirection. Submission assumes an ideology of assimilation at work in the translation process, locating the same in a cultural other, pursuing a cultural narcissism that is imperialistic abroad and conservative, even reactionary, in maintaining canons at home. Resistance assumes an ideology of autonomy, locating the alien in a cultural

other, pursuing cultural diversity, foregrounding the linguistic and cultural differences of the source-language text and transforming the hierarchy of cultural values in the target language. Resistance too can be imperialistic abroad, appropriating foreign texts to serve its own cultural political interests at home; but insofar as it resists values that exclude certain texts, it performs an act of cultural restoration which aims to question and possibly re-form, or simply smash the idea of, domestic canons. (Venuti 2008, 308-309)

<sup>12</sup> Or we might consider translators to be like Colonel Buendía in *Cien años de soledad*, who melts gold coins to produce gold fish and sell them for the exact value of the coin. If the translator puts in all that work to produce something that has the same value as the original, then what is that work worth? Pym addresses this codified worthlessness in *Translation and Text Transfer* (1992), the text that Robinson quotes extensively in the fifth chapter of *Who Translates?*

<sup>13</sup> Venuti includes prime examples of Lefevere's and Toury's works in the second edition of *The Translation Studies Reader* (2004).

<sup>14</sup> According to Paul de Man, "Benjamin was . . . being taken up by Derrida and by those University 'radicals' in Paris who were returning to their Jewish roots. Matters had reached the point where, as de Man puts it, "in the profession you are nobody unless you have said something about this text" (qtd. in Bannet 581).

<sup>15</sup> Bannet also quotes de Man as saying that Derrida "was cribbing from Gandillac's French translation of Benjamin's text, and . . . Derrida was getting the original wrong until he was corrected by someone [in a seminar he was teaching]" (Bannet 581).

<sup>16</sup> Pérez Henares's language clearly alludes to Jesus of Nazareth, but the "no" in "por mi sangre que *no* se derramó" negates Ojo Largo's ability to act as intercessor. That role is of course left to his friend, Viento en la Hierba, whose refusal to participate in the sacrifice gets him banished from his clan, and who later gives his life to save the people who rejected him.

<sup>17</sup> For more information on and quotes from Pérez Henares's presentation, see M. Bernardino's news article, "Pérez Henares denuncia la soberbia del hombre actual con la naturaleza y su propia historia."

<sup>18</sup> The British spelling, *selvedges*, works better than the American spelling, *selvages*.

<sup>19</sup> Schäffner and Adab's hybrid text is not exactly the same as the version described in post-colonial and intercultural studies, though the definition given here is applicable to the post-colonial novels normally associated with the term in literary theory.

<sup>20</sup> See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=grCPqoFwp5k> for an example that appears to use Kuleshov's original shots. There is also a variation explained by Hitchcock himself: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&v=ruoPT9JeYHA&feature=endscreen>



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