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FINDING THE AUTHENTIC VOICE WITHIN

Author: Margaret Towner

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Translating the Poetry of Graciela Huinao: Finding the Authentic Voice Within

Margaret Towner¹

ABSTRACT

This article discusses the translation of literary works by contemporary Latin American women, specifically the poetry of Graciela Huinao, a Mapuche-Williche writer from Southern Chile. Given the opportunities for travel and the development of technology such as the Internet, translators today have many ways to interact with writers in order to delve deeper into the translation of their texts. In this context, elements such as hybridity, heteroglossia, paradox, grammatical structures, cultural nuances, and the author's intention can be explored in greater detail. The translation of Graciela Huinao's poetry by the author of this article is used to share examples of the exploration of literary and conceptual elements through the use of extensive communications enabled by technology. And in the case of Graciela Huinao's writing, the relevance and overlapping of Spanish and *Mapuzugun*, the language of her people, becomes a significant part of the dialogue.

KEY WORDS: contemporary translation, Graciela Huinao, hybridity, technology, Mapuche, women writers.

¹ Margaret Towner is an educator, writer, translator, and musician, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish and a Master's degree in Latin American Studies. Margaret has worked in public schools and additionally she has taught at Loyola Marymount University and California State University, Los Angeles. She received the Jane Buel Bradley Chapbook Award for her poetry in *City by the Sea*, and her writing and translations have been published in *Latin American Perspectives*, *Americas Quarterly*, *Silver: An Eclectic Anthology of Poetry & Prose*, *Green: An Eclectic Anthology of Poetry & Prose*, *The Cancer Poetry Project*, *Serving House Journal*, *White Rabbit: English Studies in Latin America*, and *Center for Nondual Awareness*. She translates the work of Graciela Huinao, Mapuche-Williche writer from southern Chile.

The translation of literary works by contemporary Latin American women offers a unique crossroads in the exploration of language usage and contextualization. In the texts we create as writers and recreate as translators, we cross borders—both metaphorically and physically—bringing down walls, breaking old dynamics, and exploring languages to decipher and create meaning. Many authors and translators have the opportunity to communicate through use of the Internet, video conferencing, or interactions, not only about the text but also about the context—the back story—in which texts have been conceived. Direct interactions in conferences and colloquiums also enrich the translation in an environment of literary exchange and communication.

Graciela Huinao, *Mapuche-Williche* writer from Southern Chile, and I, as her translator, have utilized these opportunities. Specifically, we have sent many long emails back and forth to clarify issues like word meanings, cultural contexts, and grammatical structures. On many occasions we have worked at tables stacked with resources such as dictionaries of Spanish, English, and *Mapuzugun*, discussing the significance of phrases and dissecting texts verse by verse. And we have gotten together at several conferences and recitals where I have had the opportunity to deepen my understanding of her writing.

In the past, translation could be viewed within the context of a so-called binary relationship, in which it was sought to be a mirror linguistic image of the original text, maintaining the unequal relationship between the dominant and the subjugated language, as a reflection of the relationship between the societies of the conqueror and the conquered (Bassnett 5). We now recognize a more complex relationship as expressed in the endeavor of present-day literary translation. In a post-colonial and globalized world of complicated relationships—between individuals, ethnicities, genders, social classes, and nations—translation becomes more than a linguistic reflection of the original text; it takes on possibility beyond the original language and the receiving language.¹ Think of it as a third space that some theorists refer to in discussions of the concept of hybridity, where nuances in linguistics and culture thrive, and the otherness of diverse thought and expression

¹ There are outstanding translations of Latin American women's writing prior to the contemporary context I am writing about. What is unique about translation taking place now, with the rise of technology, is that authors and their translators can dialogue through the connotations and denotations of a text in ways not previously possible, thus enabled to better address the subtleties of culture and language in a text.

are manifested.² It is within this context that dialogue with women writers about their texts gives translators the opportunity to delve deep into historical, cultural, political, and gender issues to better understand the multifaceted and fractured relationships reflected in contemporary literature.³

The contemporary role of translation has dynamically transformed (consider the prefix *trans*—meaning movement through, across, or beyond) from a static role in contributing to the status quo of inequality in societies to a tool for recreating history, reestablishing voices of our continents, and empowering the dispossessed—those gaining a voice through the literary works of contemporary writers. The texts that translators are working with now reflect the complexity of this worldwide inequality within and between nations, in which oppression comes from both internal and external forces. It is in this otherness of diverse thought and expression that unique voices can be heard from ethnic cultures and marginalized groups that have been decimated by colonialism and neocolonialism, traditionally remaining outside the literary marketplace.

In the case of Chile and other Latin American countries, the mingling of indigenous languages with the Spanish of the conquistadors and the subsequent emergence of the regional and urban linguistic adaptations in Spanish has opened the gateway to multifarious expression. When the unique texts of Latin American women writers and their translations reach global audiences, facilitated through contact and communication utilizing technology, they often reveal a linguistically divergent voice, nurturing the exploration and specificity of ideas, the interweaving or juxtaposition of oppressed cultures, and the voices of resistance. In the era of global economics, consumerism, media, and the rise of neo-fascist thinking, literary translation is a valuable tool for marginalized people to step into the international arena with a voice of independence and authority, reclaiming their rightful presence on the world stage.

2 In this article, the concept of hybridity is seen as a key element in Latin American literature and as an intentional tool in translation to reveal the complex and interstitial relationship between languages and cultures. I do not presume to analyze the critical perspectives of theories of hybridity, but rather to highlight how the juxtapositions between subjugator/subjugated are both implicit and explicit in Huinao's writing. The linguistic nuances of juxtaposition in her writing are elements that I, as translator, have needed to pay attention to by deepening my understanding of the historical, cultural, and language context of her writing.

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Within the context of these contemporary translations, literary devices and theoretical concepts such as metaphor, personification, grammatical structures, hybridity, and heteroglossia become all the more relevant. An understanding of these devices and concepts helps inform translators as they explore texts and contexts through deep conversations with authors. By being cognizant of these elements in literary expression, translations better express the significance of the author's writing. "To translate" can be considered "to transform"; hence, translating a text does not mean solely to reproduce the source text into its reflection as a translated text. Translations are new texts that can stand alone in their creative value.

This article addresses some of the specific ways in which I have translated Graciela Huinao's writing, focusing on the literary devices and concepts that are relevant to her writing and enhanced by the use of technology to deepen understanding of and communication about her texts. Huinao began publishing her writing during the late 1980s when Pinochet's military dictatorship was beginning to weaken. With the stories that she has elaborated, she raises in the reader's consciousness the tragic loss of language and culture through the ongoing repression of indigenous communities. In translating Huinao's work, I have sought to dialogue with her about the historical and cultural context of her writing in order to best understand these elements as background to the translated texts.

A Mapuche-Williche author writing in the late twentieth century until the present, along with other Mapuche writers, Huinao has brought a *bilengual* and bicultural literary voice into the Chilean monolingual literary world. The term *bilengual*, coined in Spanish by Rodrigo Rojas, comes from his interpretation of Walter Mignolo's term "bilanguaging" (Rojas 9-10) (Mignolo 231). They are both referring to the intermediate and hybrid space that occurs when two languages unequal in status intermingle, such as the Spanish brought by the conquistadors and Mapuzugun of the indigenous people of Chile. Writers that are creating Spanish or Mapuzugun texts about their indigenous communities are using language in an empowered way, taking ownership of it to express resistance rather than assimilation to the dominant culture.

The written translations of Graciela Huinao's Spanish texts into English and Mapuzugun, the language of the Mapuche people, unfold in a context of multiple-layered transformations that had already begun before the initiation of these present-day written translations. Huinao is the "translator" of her ancestors' stories—the untold and undocumented oral history—shared in multiple, blended languages with her and her siblings in her grandparents' *ruka*, or home. The oral histories, transformed into poetry by Huinao, share the joys and sorrows of her people, the intimate familial connections to Mother Earth, and the devastating uprooting and violence that they have suffered. Huinao views herself as a conduit for the voices of her ancestors so that her people may live on and the injustices that they lived through can be known. Yet this is also the history of millions of people in the Americas and around the world, the history that cannot be found in our textbooks. It is the universality of stories that communities throughout the world can identify with, shaping the urgency of translating texts by Huinao and other contemporary women writers.

LITERARY DEVICES AND CONCEPTS IN CONTEMPORARY TRANSLATION

The Use of Literary Devices. Metaphor, personification, symbolism, and line breaks are some literary devices that enhance the styles in which contemporary post-colonial writers express themselves. Imagery, paradox, and juxtaposition are also ways in which authors show the encounter of cultures in the post-colonial hierarchy of power. These tools enable writers to manifest concepts such as hybridity, heteroglossia, and the "unsayable said" by utilizing lyrical techniques that enhance the connotations of language expression and become significant components in the translation process.

When writers employ literary devices in their writing, the original language is often not directly translatable, "resulting from the shift from the obligatory features of one language to the obligatory features of another" (Tymoczko 23). In each of Huinao's poems addressed in this article, different literary devices in her writing are discussed, particularly those elements that are not directly translatable and that serve to strengthen the literary concepts in her writing and have been carefully considered in the translation process.

Hybridity in Texts and Translated Texts. The hybridity of texts is an important layer in literature for translators to pay attention to. It may be manifested through the intersection of diverse linguistic, literary, and cultural elements in written language, with literature in post-colonial societies often revealing an intimate overlap between languages (Bakhtin 358-360). Organic hybridity is present in texts as a result of linguistic adaptations to external influences over time; however, authors may also intentionally express the intersection of dominating and dominated cultures through oppositional relationships that cross over boundaries of space, time, and contexts (Bakhtin 359).

In his book, *La lengua escorada: La traducción como estrategia de resistencia en cuatro poetas mapuche*, Rodrigo Rojas describes the cultural and linguistic space in which Mapuche writers and their translators reside as an intermediate territory. Culture and language for the Mapuche people have been deeply influenced by the culture and language of those that have dominated them. Languages have intertwined in an interstitial relationship in which they influence one another, becoming something unique beyond the original languages. Thus the indigenous language of the Mapuche resides in a hybrid space, both culturally and linguistically (26-27).

In his analysis, Rojas does not address how these issues are reflected in the writing of Mapuche women, given that he believes that issues of gender add an additional layer that affects the context of their writing and must be given the appropriate importance. “To address Mapuche women writers with the necessary depth, the reading of their translated works as products of the distance between the destination language and the original language must first negotiate and recognize certain icons relative to the path toward the construction of identity (Rojas 10-11, translation mine).” Yet it is true that the language of Mapuche women writers also exists in the context of an intermediate territory of otherness, with its translation taking on a distinguishing voice that is beyond the linguistic and cultural boundaries of both Spanish and Mapuzugun.

Hybridity is deeply woven into the story of Graciela Huinao’s people, whose history since the arrival of the conquistadors has been characterized by their relationship to the forces that strive to subjugate them. Huinao writes in a contemporary context of continuing social upheaval, and her texts reveal the complexities of memory across generations. Her memory is seated at the hearth of

her ancestral home where generational stories were told and beliefs shared; however, the stories that are her inheritance are inseparable from the imposing presence of colonial and post-colonial rule. The Mapuche-Williche people have struggled to survive on their own land in the face of aggressions and land seizures. In this process, the language of Huinao's people has largely been substituted with the language of their oppressors and its adaptations in Chilean culture.

It is not without irony that Huinao must use Spanish to tell her people's story. In fact, her father did not allow her to learn to speak Mapuzugun as a child because of the discrimination that he suffered when he was young. In her personal life, change (not necessarily voluntary), while simultaneously refusing to identify with the dominant forces in society, affect who she is as a writer. Huinao uses Spanish as a double-edged sword. She is a victim of neo-colonial repression through the abuses that her family suffers, with Spanish becoming her primary language. However, her context is not devoid of Mapuzugun, the language of her people, nor is it devoid of her ancestral culture. Huinao speaks in a linguistically complex and bicultural voice that rekindles the hearth fire as she searches for the voices of those that came before her. At the same time she pivots the dominant language toward the very people who have been the victims of genocidal practices, telling the history that has been omitted, looking back to put life into the ancestral stories of those whose lives were treated as insignificant.

An example of hybridity in Huinao's writing is when she tells the story of her grandfather through her poem, "Los gansos dicen adiós" (*Walinto* 47-48). In this poem Huinao is the observer, the child watching the face of her grandfather as he speaks of the loss of his kin through brutal aggression instigated by the Chilean army. Adolfo Huinao was a survivor of the massacres that took place in the late 1800s of indigenous people living on the islands south of Chiloé.⁴ In order to enable the reader to "see" the context of the poem through the eyes of her grandfather and also herself as the young granddaughter, and finally as an adult, Huinao utilizes literary devices that enhance the hybridity of the poem. For example, she uses abstract nouns that originate from the

4 Ramay describes the military incursions of the Chilean army during the "Pacificación," when the goal was to annex lands south of the Bío Bío River. Thousands of Mapuche people died or were sent to live on reservations ("Between Accommodation and Resistance" 4). This was the same time period when the southern islands were invaded and Huinao's ancestors of Chono or Kawaskar origin were killed, with only her grandfather and great grandmother surviving.

grandfather's tragic experiences and from the innocence of the child's point of view, two culturally and generationally unique people. These abstract nouns, such as fear, death, nature, and sadness, come alive as they are personified, taking on human attributes as the child uncovers the sources of her grandfather's grief. In my translation I chose to capitalize these nouns, emphasizing their personified role in the poem:

In the eyes of my <i>Williche</i> grandfather	En los ojos de mi abuelo <i>Williche</i>
Fear navigated.	navegaba el miedo.
Only through Death	Tan solo al morir
was this timid light put out.	apagó ese brillo tímido.
But Nature could not	Lo que la naturaleza no pudo
put out of my memory	apagar en mi memoria
the color of archipelago	el color de archipiélago
that took hold in his face. (<i>By the Blade</i> 52)	agarrado en su rostro. (<i>Walinto</i> 47)

The poem opens in past tense and third person, and then turns to present tense and first person as the child speaks to her grandfather as if he were there with her. The reader becomes the observer of this intimate encounter:

Grandfather, to be honest	Abuelo, para serte fiel
I don't remember the exact day.	no recuerdo el día exacto.
I just see the geese	Sólo veo a los gansos
opening and closing	abriendo y cerrando
their wings over the pampa. (<i>By the Blade</i> 52)	sus alas por la pampa. (<i>Walinto</i> 47)

An important element in the translation process of Huinao's poetry is the way in which she utilizes grammatical structures, requiring the translator to repeatedly consider how to express them in the receiving language. Before actually drafting translations, I have frequently communicated with her through emails about the ways in which she employs grammatical structures in unusual contexts. In "Los gansos dicen adiós," the changes in verb tenses and pronouns disrupt the story, augmenting the anguish in the grandfather, the child, and the reader, placing the text in an unanchored and undefined space. Although the grandfather is gone, Huinao crosses the boundaries of time, language, and cultures to connect with her beloved ancestor, putting us all in the moment. With the continuous flux of grammatical structures, we are drawn into the story and then distanced from it when the text returns to past tense and third person. Her grandfather's grief is incomprehensible

to her as a child, yet she holds on to the story. She does not know what his origins were or what had happened to him, but through the poem she shares her love for him as the child and then bears witness as the adult, revealing that she now comprehends his tragedy. The intentional hybridity evident in the poem reminds us that she is the child descendant living in a different context and also a survivor as a result of his sacrifices—the child that becomes the writer who lives to tell her grandfather’s story:

<p>My short path, Grandfather, did not understand the origin of your words. Ancient one that you were, you lifted me from the floor, and from your mouth Death was born landing on your beach. (<i>By the Blade</i> 52)</p>	<p>Mi corto andar abuelo no entendió el origen de tus palabras. Anciano como eras me alzaste del suelo y de tu boca nació la muerte desembarcando en tu playa. (<i>Walinto</i> 47)</p>
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Huinao employs imagery throughout the poem, enabling the reader to visualize the deep emotions of the grandfather and the child, who find themselves juxtaposed in their linguistic origins yet reaching out to each other in the tragedy of life. The oral languages of Mapuzugun and her grandfather’s roots in the language of the *Chono* or *Kawaskar* people hover in the background, unknown yet underpinning the hybrid context in which the story of her grandfather took place and is now told through the poem. Ironically, Huinao’s grandfather spoke Spanish, not Mapuzugun, in the family setting:

<p>Grandfather, today I know you were never Williche your <i>Chono</i> or <i>Kawaskar</i> kin never climbed on the boat that day they stole your land and your roots. (<i>By the Blade</i> 52)</p>	<p>Abuelo, hoy sé nunca fuiste Williche tu origen Chono o Kawaskar no subió al bote el día que robaron tu tierra y tu raíz. (<i>Walinto</i> 48)</p>
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My understanding of the role of hybridity as a reflection of the many-layered, multi-cultural, and juxtaposed linguistic relationships within Huinao’s family became essential to my English translation. I had to read through the poem many times with Huinao, so that I could better understand the multiple strands in the tapestry of this poem. The translation of this poem requires that the translator follow the voice of Huinao and her telling of her grandfather’s story,

weaving back and forth through the changing time frames, locations, verb tenses, and pronouns. The temptation was to make changes in the translation that would carry the trajectory of the poem through a more linear path, but this smoothing out of the grammatical disruptions would destroy the essence of the poem—that Huinao is in an intimate dialogue with her deceased grandfather as she searches for his loved ones—ultimately her ancestral roots and the possibility of her own life.

In the telling of her grandfather's story through poetry, his voice is the only thing that remains to document his family's tragic losses, as his story becomes the poet's story. Huinao holds the only path to confirm her grandfather's existence as she commits his story to perpetuity through a poem. And the translation must seek to follow the path of the relationship between a grieving grandfather and a young granddaughter attempting to make sense out of tragedy. My goal as translator was to communicate with Huinao as often as possible through emails and conversations to help me comprehend the significance of the text; my translation should conserve the complexity of these transitions across time, locations, voices, and events.

The poem "Walinto," in Graciela Huinao's book entitled *Walinto*, is another example of how she effectively uses literary devices to manifest the element of hybridity. The changes in pronoun voices and verb tenses as she speaks to her grandmother weave the story in a similar way as in "Los gansos dicen adiós," through the mystery of time and undocumented history (*Walinto* 62-63). Following my own argument in "La aproximación entre lenguas" (4), this creates a fluid yet harrowing dialogue across generations to tell the tragic story of ancestral lives that have made the present possible through their sacrifices. It takes the reader and the world on a syntactical journey that twists and turns through the text, defying our capacity to box in history. In "Walinto" the changing grammatical structures turn the world upside down, where a woman, outnumbered and pregnant, protects her land from men on horseback, pulling us into that travesty, into that personal act of heroism of this untold history:

My grandmother
Almerinda Loi Katrilef
rises up from this earth
to carve blow by blow
a macabre sculpture:
Three Chileans
assaulting on horseback
a Williche woman
eight months pregnant.
Ax in your hand Grandmother
you defended your land.
Your scars closed
and I open this poem. (*By the Blade* 46)

Mi abuela
Almerinda Loi Katrilef
se levanta de esa tierra
a esculpir golpe a golpe
una macabra escultura:
Tres chilenos
embistiendo a caballo
a una mujer williche
en su octavo mes de embarazo.
Hacha en mano abuela
defendiste tu tierra.
Cerraron tus cicatrices
y yo abro este poema. (*Walinto* 62)

In “Walinto,” Huinao grapples with what Donald Hall calls “the unsayable said” (Hall 4)—that which is virtually impossible to say directly and overtly. The concept of the unsayable embraces the idea that words may not be sufficient to describe the details of an event. In order to imagine something that seems impossible to describe, the use of literary devices such as metaphor and symbolism provide a window of language to ease our access to the unsayable. In writing about the humiliations, abuses, and violence in the lives of her ancestors, Huinao uses these and other literary devices to reveal the tragic contexts without actually describing the specific details of what occurred. As the translator, I also had to grapple with this poem, asking questions of the author in order to anchor my own understanding. The scene in the poem is charged with connotative and denotative symbolism through the intentional use of language, making the unsayable tangible by using the lyrical subtleties of a poem. Huinao’s grandmother “carves a macabre sculpture,” metaphorically representing the scene of Chileans on horseback assaulting her, an indigenous woman who was eight months pregnant. As the violent encounter unfolds, Huinao alternately brings us close and then distances us from the tragic scene, like a camera lens carrying us through a torrent of emotions.

The role of the translator in a poem like “Walinto” is not only to recreate the poem in the receiving language, but also to seek out the defining energy of the poem as intended through the author’s words. I had many conversations with Huinao about this poem in order deepen my

understanding of the context in which her grandmother struggled to survive. While translating this poem, my first impulse was to change the pronouns to put the poem into first person (I) and third person (she, they). However, the elimination of the use of second person (you) removes tension from the poem and separates us from the impact of the story of Huinao's grandmother. We are no longer witnesses to the personal conversation across time and generations that the author has with her grandmother. By using the changing voices guided by pronouns in the way that Huinao does in Spanish, the reader is intimately engaged in the terrifying account, as a surge of juxtaposing images plays out. And as the energy of the poem calms down, we are witnesses to the tenderness that

Huinao shows toward the valiant figure that her grandmother was:

And from your heroic hands	Y de lo heroico de tus manos
I learned to love my land.	yo aprendí a querer mi tierra.
Walk in peace	Camina en paz
beside your grandparents. (<i>By the Blade</i> 46)	junto a tus abuelos. (<i>Walinto</i> 62-63)

It is important for the translator to maintain these literary devices in the translation of this poem because they reveal the complexity of the interstitial yet oppositional relationship between two cultures, as seen through the eyes of the author as a child. The use of literary devices also contributes to the hybrid voice and the rising and falling energy of the poem. The author's use of simple, direct language is disarming, requiring the translator to grapple with the wording and syntax to best represent the writer's complex voice.

Heteroglossia. In literary works, heteroglossia is the presence of two or more linguistic voices within a text, in conflicting discourse that may be implicit or explicit (Bakhtin 263). This concept of language plurality may show up as the use of words from another language, sometimes an ethnic language that predominated prior to colonization or a dialect created from the juxtaposed languages of the colonizer and the colonized. It may also be present in texts that include the diverse linguistic voices of different characters within a same language, revealing their particular social class or ethnic origins. Although Huinao writes in Spanish, she embeds words from Mapuzugun into her writing, which reflects the concept of heteroglossia. I choose to preserve the majority of these words in the English translations, utilizing footnotes when necessary to explain their meaning and context.⁵

5 Tymoczko elaborates on the differences between post-colonial writing and literary translation, ascertaining that the translator may add elements such as introductions or footnotes to the translated text in order to "encode and explain the source text." ("Post-colonial Writing" 22)

The use of words in Mapuzugun helps to create a text that declares an oppositional autonomy from mainstream Chilean society and helps the reader understand that there are cultural attributes essential to the story as expressed through linguistic diversity in Huinao's writing. Mapuzugun also provides a musicality, a linguistic emphasis, a visual disruption in the written poem, and an ethnic specificity to the context of the original text, contributing to the author's voice in the translation. In her poem entitled, "Ngillatun en la costa" (*Walinto* 35), Huinao maintains the following words in Mapuzugun: *Williche* (people of the south); *Ngillatun* (the most important religious ceremony of the Mapuche); *Pukatriwe* (a place on the coast where the Williche practice their religious ceremonies); and *ruka* (the traditional Mapuche home):

To bar the door from misery at certain times the <i>Williche</i> of the coast unnailed their grief from their <i>ruka</i> . They step down from history and arrive at <i>Pukatriwe</i> frightening, with the <i>Ngillatun</i> , the malignant spirit of hunger that stampedes through the mountains. The <i>Williche</i> and the sea keep vigil sharing times of suffering. (<i>By the Blade</i> 55)	Para poner tranca a la miseria cada cierto tiempo los williche de la costa desclavan de sus ruka las penas. Se descuelgan de la historia y a Pukatriwe llegan espantando con el Ngillatun al maligno espíritu del hambre que va en estampida por la cordillera. Los williche y el mar en vigilia comulgan tiempos de miseria. (<i>Walinto</i> 35)
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In translation, these nouns are maintained in the text and explained through the use of footnotes. One example is the word *ruka*; the image of the *ruka* is an icon for the Mapuche people as a place of safety, in opposition to the suffering that they face. It becomes more than a house or even a home, holding significant cultural connotations for the Mapuche people that would be lost if the word were translated into English. (Nouns in Mapuzugun do not use the letter *s* to indicate plurality; thus, the word *ruka* is maintained in the translation without the *s*.) The use of heteroglossia in translation strengthens the contextual imagery of the tragedy in this poem—the hunger and suffering that her people endured. By exalting the specificity of the indigenous words, this poem gains strength, as the Mapuche people gain strength to survive in the face of hunger and suffering caused by their subjugation.

Paradox. The relationship between the conquerors and the indigenous people of the Americas has been fraught with paradox, especially in the function of religion to convert and subvert them to obeisance. The use of paradox accentuates the contradictions in the subjector/subjected relationship, becoming a powerful tool in literary expression. Huinao's poem, "Salmo 1492," outlines the paradoxes of the colonization of the continent, as she employs intentional hybridity to manifest the encounter of two divergent yet interlaced cultures (*Walinto* 20). The symbolism of a psalm numbered 1492 and "the sign of the cross" further the imagery and paradox in this poem:

Psalm 1492

We were never

The chosen people

But they kill us

With the sign of the cross. (*By the Blade* 17)

Nunca fuimos

El pueblo señalado

Pero nos matan

En señal de la cruz. (*Walinto* 20)

This poem's title, "Psalm 1492," refers to the year that Columbus arrived in the Americas as a representative of the Spanish Crown. For indigenous people it marks the beginning of repression against their cultures, in which the Catholic Church played a significant role. Huinao transforms the religious icon of the cross, representing the power of the conquistadors, into a symbolic weapon of repression against her people. By additionally subverting the sacred spiritual form of the psalm, often a song of hope used in worship, Huinao further manifests the paradox of the tragic relationship between the Catholic Church and indigenous peoples. Writing in first person plural and changing from past tense to present tense, she places her people as the ongoing recipients of the violence perpetuated against them. While this poem is short, I rewrote its translation several times to find the best way to represent the intention of the author in English. I initially began the poem with, "Even though we were not the chosen ones;" however, it seemed too wordy, not direct or powerful enough. In the end I decided ending the first line on the word "never" better emphasizes the strength of the author's message.

Line Breaks. In poetry, line breaks can be utilized to strengthen the message of a text, and authors can intentionally use them to change meaning, pacing, or word emphasis. In "La máscara del hambre," Huinao effectively uses line breaks to speed up the text or to slow it down, increasing the impact of the development of the poem (*Hilando* 33):

I cannot get used to
this live-in lover
that today pounds my body
and tomorrow
throws open the door to my house
at my table insults
the last dignity that I possessed.
I denounce you
because I know you up close.
You have the broken face of grief.

(By the Blade 61)

Mi cuerpo no se acostumbra
a este conviviente
que golpea hoy mi cuerpo
y mañana
abre la puerta de mi casa
ultraja en mi mesa
la última dignidad que poseía.
Yo, te denuncio
porque de cerca te conozco.
Tiene la cara desgarrante de la tristeza.

(Walinto 60)

The chopiness of the lines in this poem increases the sensation of the presence of danger, anger, and fear. By using staggered line lengths, the author creates the sensation in the reader of feeling as if he/she were gasping for breath while being chased:

It was the worst enemy that arrived in my village
and stole our weapons as we defended ourselves.

We ran:
chased by a wild beast
that caught up with us in the South
and its sharp teeth tore us in our poverty.

(By the Blade 61)

Arrancamos:
perseguidos por una fiera
nos dio alcance en el sur
y con sus colmillos nos trituró la pobreza.

(Walinto 60)

I maintained the line breaks in the translation of the original poem in order to achieve the feeling of anguish and fear juxtaposed to rebellion. To even out the line breaks would neutralize the intentional unevenness of the poem and the impact of the rising empowerment of her people as they confronted the changing face of hunger:

Today
in my village
hunger is rebellion
and poetry a mask
where I hide the bitter verse
food for this song
and in the mouths of my people
the torture of each day. *(By the Blade 61)*

Hoy
en mi pueblo
el hambre es rebeldía
y la poesía una máscara
donde oculto el verso amargo
alimento de este canto
y en la boca de mi pueblo
la tortura de cada día. *(By the Blade 60)*

Like Huinao's use of line breaks, her choice of words contributes to the jarring effects of the poem, and the translation should reflect these disjunctures. For example, she uses the word *conviviente* as a symbol for hunger. The word would most often appear to have a positive connotation as in the English words of partner or cohabitant, but in the first lines of the poem it takes on threatening connotations—as in an abusive love relationship. I translated *conviviente* as live-in lover, with the Spanish and English words holding the juxtaposition of their expected connotations and context in this poem.

CONCLUSIONS

The work of translating the writing of contemporary Latin American women is an important endeavor. Sharing their voices in other languages creates the opportunity for their narratives and poems to reach people that have lived through similar contexts in the post-colonial and contemporary global world. Additionally, the translation of texts into indigenous languages enriches the literary reservoir in these languages and supports their survival. The work of translation is enhanced by the communication and exchanges that can occur between writers and their translators, using Internet technology, travel, and participation in international conferences and colloquiums.

With greater direct contact with writers, as I have been able to establish with Graciela Huinao, translators are better prepared to create eloquent literary works that honor and interpret the original texts. I have worked to be cognizant of Huinao's use of literary devices such as personification, paradox, and the unique use of grammatical structures, and concepts such as hybridity and heteroglossia. In doing so, I have sought to enrich the quality of my work on behalf of Huinao's intention to tell the stories have not been justly told. Translators of the contemporary writing of Latin American women have an ethical commitment to delve deep into texts to create thoughtful translations, authentically capturing the unique voices of these authors.

In translating the writing of Graciela Huinao and in order to stay focused on the voice of the author, I have paid attention to those particular literary devices and concepts that she utilizes in her writing. While Huinao's poetry can be disarming in that the language she uses appears simple and direct, her use of elements such as hybridity, personification, paradox, and shifting grammatical

structures make her work profoundly complex. In trying to best represent her writing in English, I have chosen to follow the literary devices that she utilizes, even when they do not always appear to be the most lyrical or clear in the receiving language, with the goal of conserving the nuances and energy of her voice. I believe that this permits the reader to fully experience not only her telling of the story of her ancestors, but also the authentic literary and historical context in which she writes.

When we have conversations about the English translations of her writing, I question Graciela Huinao about her use of changing verb tenses, line breaks, metaphors, and vocabulary usage in order to better understand her intentions as a writer. I realize that her literary expression is tied to her multi-layered and purposeful expression as a Mapuche-Williche woman writer in Chile. She is empowered through her “bilengual” use of languages to communicate in ways that break the pattern, juxtapose oppositional forces, and overcome linguistic patterns to lyrically document the histories of her ancestors. To do justice to Huinao’s writing in translation means that I must listen and ask questions to decipher her complex use of language. Her voice as an indigenous author is significant in the realm of contemporary post-colonial women’s writing, and translation creates the possibility of her work being shared in other languages throughout the world.

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