theories and methodologies

Translational Literature and the Pleasures of Exile

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Translation and the Excluded Middle

THE FUNDAMENTAL CONCERN IN TRANSLATION THEORY, FROM SAINT JEROME TO THE PRESENT, HAS BEEN THE RELATION BETWEEN A TEXT and its version in another language. This relation is often conceived in the Platonic terms of *original* and *copy*: the original is viewed as sacrosanct (especially when it is a sacred text but also when it is not), while the translation is seen, at best, as imperfect and deficient and, at worst, as an adulteration, a profanation, and a betrayal that is captured in the Italian phrase *traduttore traditore*. Conversely, that relation has on occasion also been inverted in claims that the translation can be superior to the original—for example, Jorge Luis Borges's famous declaration that "the original is unfaithful to the translation" (239) or, less radically, Gabriel García Márquez's reported remark that Gregory Rabassa's translation of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is better than the Spanish original (Rabassa 43). At other times, the relation between original and translation is seen as antagonistic, the one trying to displace the other, or as its heir and only chance of survival. In this view, the original is condemned to death and oblivion because it is written in a dead language, a rival language, or a geopolitically weak language. Think of the phenomenon that Abdelfattah Kilito cites of some classical Arabic texts—such as al-Ḥarīrī's *Maqāmāt* ("Assemblies"), written at the height of Arab civilization's power in the twelfth century—which seem to have been composed in such a way as to render their translation impossible (17–18). By contrast, notes Kilito, some contemporary Arab novelists seem to write with their translators in mind, avoiding difficult language and obscure cultural expressions that may reduce their works' chances of being translated into English or French, the gateway to international success (19n7).

In all those cases, the original and its translation are caught in a dialectic of power and resistance. Alternatively, the relation between original and translation is described in terms of a duality like that of home and exile, and the question of ethics in translation is cast in

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the derivative terms of "domestication" and "foreignization" (Venuti 81). Domestication is the bringing home of the foreign, preempting our exile through what Antoine Berman has called "l'épreuve de l'étranger" (the trial, the test, the challenge, the risk, or the danger we run by encountering something foreign). It is a strange notion, indeed, that strangeness should be experienced as a threat, as though safety or survival depended on remaining in the sphere of the familiar. This way of thinking dictates that the foreign text must be domesticated, shorn of the quality that makes it foreign: its strangeness. The opposite concept of foreignizing turns this notion inside out without disturbing the duality of home and exile: it finds virtue in estrangement and departure from the familiar, which is construed as provincial. Hugh of Saint Victor aptly expresses this attitude: "The man who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner; he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong; but he is perfect to whom the entire world is as a foreign land" (101). Much of the history of translation theory has been a negotiation between the contrasting notions of home and exile, which often share a unitary conception of self and other, differing only in the attitude held toward each and to the outcome of their encounter.

However, a class of texts that I have called "translational literature" questions that duality by explicitly staging acts of translation as formal, thematic, aesthetic, or ideological elements. I have argued that translation here does not operate externally on a single-language text that acts as a metaphor for a unified self. Rather, translation occurs in the original and is a visible part of it, at once alien and familiar, an exile at home, or a home in exile—a hybrid self that harbors the other within it. Those texts "straddle two languages, at once foregrounding, performing, and problematizing the act of translation; they participate in the construction of cultural identities from that in-between space and stage many of the concerns of translation theory." They lay "special emphasis on translation as an essential component of cross-cultural contact" ("Agency" 754). It should come as no surprise that the most visible examples of translational literature—indeed, the source of its conceptualization for me—have been a few texts by immigrant or diasporic authors writing in languages other than their native tongues. Such writers inhabit translation as a mode of being and in fact find their creative impulses in exile as a fundamentally translational condition. Among the most salient examples, for me, has been Ameen Rihani, the Lebanese American author of *The Book of Khalid* (1911), the first Arab American novel, written in English but in a style studded with Arabisms, as well as with the rhetorical strategies of, and literary allusions to, Arabic literature. The novel further claims to be based on two sources: the fictional Arabic autobiography of the titular character and his French-language biography written by a friend and disciple, such that the original, English-language novel presents itself as a double translation from, and a synthesis of, two works, one in Arabic and one in French. Another salient case is the Egyptian British author Ahdaf Soueif, whose novel *The Map of Love* (1999) maps postcolonial translation practices that range from what Abdelkébir Khatibi terms "amour bilingue" to deliberate forgery and other types of falsification in the service of colonial power. And there is the case of the Sudanese Scottish writer Leila Aboulela, whose novel *The Translator* (1999) makes linguistic and cultural transfer the main theme of the book and the profession of the protagonist, offering along the way a fascinating meditation on the relation between translation and religious conversion. In all three examples, the category of translational literature takes shape in a contest over colonial power and representation, a contest in which people emigrate from colonies or former colonies to metropolitan locations in Britain and the United States—that is,

from the East to the West or from the South to the North.[1] Translational texts confound these categories of imaginative geography, which are easily reduced to essences and identity binaries but without erasing or obfuscating the geopolitical power structures that render translation susceptible to discursive violence. The writings of Rihani, Soueif, and Aboulela represent translational literature as a subset of postcolonial literature and resist colonial epistemology, premised on binary oppositions, by inhabiting the space of the excluded middle.

Translational Literature in the Tropics

Translational literature also occurs within another dimension of world literature, that of South-South migration. This phenomenon opens up a vista beyond the usual (post)colonial North-South or East-West perspectives—not to mention the even more traditional inter-European and Euro-American (West-West) perspectives—in comparative literature, world literature, and translation studies. My focus remains on the Arab diaspora but in Brazil. Cultural, historical, and political relations between the Arab world and Latin America are long-standing and rapidly intensifying: from the Moorish legacy of Muslim Iberia, transmitted by Spanish and Portuguese settlers; to reports that Arabs piloted the ships of Pedro Álvares Cabral, who arrived in Brazil and claimed it for the Portuguese crown in the year 1500; to waves of Arab immigrants who began to arrive in the Americas in the late nineteenth century; to the prominence of Latin Americans of Arab descent in politics, economy, literature, and culture—a prominence far exceeding that of their counterparts in the United States and Canada. More recently, the Latin American–Arab summits, first convened by Brazil's former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva in 2005, have attempted to strengthen diplomatic, economic, and cultural ties between two key regions of the global South.

In this context, translational literature is well exemplified by Alberto Mussa's 2004 novel *O enigma de Qaf* (*The Riddle of Qaf*), which relates the quests of a fictional poet called al-Ghattash in fifth-century Arabia and of his twenty-first-century Brazilian descendant. The grandson of a Lebanese immigrant, Mussa wrote the novel while working on a Portuguese translation of the *muʿallaqat*, the "suspended" poems of pre-Islamic Arabia, published in 2006 as *Os poemas suspensos*. Evoking pre-Islamic Arabia and its famous poets, myths, and legends, the novel is saturated with translation as a theme and plot device, in addition to offering parables, metaphors, allegories of translation, and quotations from the author's Portuguese version of the *muʿallaqat*. In this way, this translational novel establishes a dialogue between Arabic and Brazilian literatures that highlights the South-South dimension of world literature.

I have elsewhere described the novel as a love letter to the Arabic language, since the plot unfolds in twenty-eight main chapters entitled with the letters of the Arabic alphabet and twenty-seven intermediate chapters that mix biographies of famous pre-Islamic poets with myths and legends of the period and of the author's invention ("Which Languages?" 11). The interconnected quests of the twenty-first-century narrator and the pre-Islamic poet are parables of exilic identity and translation that debunk the myth of pure origin(al)s.[2] The narrator, a Brazilian researcher and the grandson of a Lebanese immigrant (like the author with whom he shares a surname), is obsessed with the strange notion that an obscure Arabic poem from which his grandfather used to recite parts in Portuguese translation is a lost *muʿallaqa* that has been omitted from the canonical compilations of pre-Islamic poetry. Al-Ghattash, the author of the poem, belongs to the ancient tribe of Labu'a, from which the narrator's grandfather claims descent. After the grandfather's death, the narrator grows up to study the Arabic

language and pre-Islamic poetry, in the hope of one day proving the theory, which becomes the subject of the narrator's graduate thesis. He travels to Cairo and Beirut to discuss his findings with the authorities in the field, but those scholars reject his theory, since the poem in question was never mentioned in any of the ancient anthologies and commentaries. The poem is called "Qafiyyat al-Qaf," that is to say, the poem whose end rhyme is the Arabic letter *qaf* and whose subject is the mythic mountain also known as Qaf, which in pre-Islamic cosmogony encircled the flat disk of the earth and kept it balanced. Moreover, the scholars demand that the narrator reveal his sources, forcing him to admit that he has no written sources, only the memory of his grandfather Najib:

> A essência do poema aprendi com meu avô. O resto, as lacunas que a memória do velho Najib não reteve, recuperei de lendas colhidas em minhas peregrinações pelo Oriente Médio, e de toda sorte de dados históricos dispersos que fui capaz de compilar. (13)

> I learned the gist of the poem from my grandfather. The rest, those lacunae that old Najib's memory did not preserve, was recuperated from legends that I collected during my peregrinations in the Middle East and from all sorts of historical facts that I was able to compile.[3]

He also explains:

> [A]quele texto era uma reconstituição do original—tão inverídico quanto possa ser um quadro, uma escultura, um monumento recuperado pelas mãos de um restaurador. (12–13)

> [T]hat text was reconstituted from the original, as inauthentic as any restored painting, sculpture, or monument repaired by a restorer's hands.

The poem is deemed a forgery and denied publication, and a prominent literary historian publicly denounces the narrator as the biggest forger in the history of Semitic studies. The absurdity of the narrator's project lies in his claims that his poem is pre-Islamic (a claim in which he mimics notorious forgers of pre-Islamic poetry like Ḥammād al-Rāwiya and Khalaf al-Aḥmar), that it is one of the great suspended odes, and that it was lost for fourteen centuries until he discovered it in Brazil. It is a quixotic conviction, imbued with the madness and hallucination of a reader completely infatuated with a defunct age of romance, like the hero of Cervantes's novel. And like that of Don Quixote, the narrator's knowledge of his favorite genre is nothing less than encyclopedic, albeit indiscriminate, relying not only on scientific knowledge (ancient languages, archaeology, geography, ethnology, and literature) but also on pseudoscience and imagination in constructing his myth of origin:

> Foi o desejo de recuperar os fragmentos perdidos e dar forma escrita à *Qafiya* que me impulsionou a aprender o árabe clássico, o hebraico, o conjunto dos dialetos siríacos, até o extinto idioma epigráfico do Iêmen. Também me detive sobre a arqueologia do Oriente Médio; me debrucei sobre a geografia dos desertos da Síria e da Arábia; estudei a etnologia beduína; e praticamente guardei de cor a poesia pré-islâmica.
>
> Mas só quando me dediquei à ciência das estrelas, na forma primitiva em que surgiu entre os caldeus, pude recompor o poema original e chegar à solução do enigma de Qaf. (21–22)

> The desire to recover the fragments and to give the *Qafiyya* a written form spurred me to learn classical Arabic, Hebrew, the various Syriac dialects, and even the dead epigraphic language of Yemen. I also lingered on the archaeology of the Middle East, pored over the geography of Syrian and Arabian deserts, studied Bedouin ethnology, and practically learned pre-Islamic poetry by heart.
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> But only when I dedicated myself to the science of the stars, in the primitive form in which it appeared among the Chaldeans, was I able to recompose the original poem and to find the solution to the enigma of Qaf.

That riddle involves obscure references in the poem to the Qaf mountain, a cross-eyed and half-blind jinni who travels through time, and the love of al-Ghattash for Layla, whose tribe he must follow with the help of a lame, old priestess who leads him to an ancient engraving that he must decipher to reach his destination. To restore the poem, the narrator must also solve the riddle; doing so means recovering the past and securing his Arabness, which is compromised because he is not a native speaker of Arabic. If he lacks what is considered the fundamental attribute of an Arab, he can make up for it by restoring (or, more appropriately, inventing) another lack in the canon of poetry representing the fountainhead of that language. Identity construction always involves an act of invention—in this case, inventing a lack to remedy it. Thus, by restoring the poem, the narrator proves himself worthy of his descent from the mythic poet of his grandfather's tribe, and he further does so in the manner of ancient forgers of pre-Islamic poetry who, in the early ages of Islam, sought to gain glory for their tribes by attributing great poems to them.

Since the restored Arabic poem has been rejected as a forgery, it turns into a Portuguese-language novel, and the narrator likewise turns from poet (a forger of poetry is an incognito poet) to novelist. The subject matter of the poem then becomes a double story: that of the fifth-century poet al-Ghattash and that of the twenty-first-century narrator. The riddle of Qaf, likewise, becomes two riddles: the original one solved by al-Ghattash and that of al-Ghattash solved by the narrator. Finally, al-Ghattash's love story becomes the occasion for recounting the story of the narrator's love for the Arabic language. In that sense, restoration becomes a creative act in its own right that, instead of returning the poem to its original, irretrievable form, translates it formally, temporally, and linguistically: from poem to novel, from the Arab past to the Brazilian present, and from Arabic into Portuguese. The poem-turned-novel is thus a double book with two protagonists, two stories, two settings, two cultures, and two languages. This doubleness expresses what the narrator cannot accept: that no origin or original is ever restorable except through creative re-creation, which is always susceptible to accusations of deception and forgery, especially if the re-creation insists on being other than what it is, a translation. What he also cannot accept is that origins, like originals, are irretrievable, never perfect or self-identical in the way they tend to be nostalgically imagined, and that translation is the only mode of being for the exile.

The narrator's frustrated desire to reinvent himself as a pure Arab, to reestablish the broken link between himself and his lost origin by inserting himself into the Arab past, becomes a parable for the impossibility of re-creating the original, of absolute fidelity in translation. This idea reverberates on several other levels through a pattern of doubles, reflections, substitutions, and revelations in a novel that stages itself as play between redemptive translations and false originals and in which the narrator and al-Ghattash fall prey to the mirage of unattainable, pure origins. The story of al-Ghattash contains several examples of how a translational novel makes use of translation as a thematic and a structural device. The poet's name means "the myopic one," and, as is to be expected of a pre-Islamic poet, al-Ghattash is illiterate and monolingual—related attributes in the allegorical scheme of the novel. He is on a quest to gain Layla, a woman of surpassing beauty whose face he has never seen, and the most beautiful woman in the world is, precisely, the one who has never been seen, the face veil here clearly symbolizing the unknown and the unknowable, hence the perfect, the incomparable.[4] He must wrest her away from the man to whom she has been betrothed, the warrior hero of another tribe who is a mediocre poet but who fights with two hands,

hence his name, Dhu Suyuf ("of the swords").[5] Al-Ghattash especially relishes the idea of stealing two women from a man who fights with two hands, for Layla appears to have a sister called Sabah, who is first promised to Dhu Suyuf until al-Ghattash becomes infatuated with her. He wins Sabah away from Dhu Suyuf by defeating him in single combat through trickery (first demanding that Dhu Suyuf relinquish one of his two swords, then throwing sand in his eyes, thereby rendering Dhu Suyuf as visually impaired as he is).

However, al-Ghattash repudiates Sabah after marrying her and falls in love with her unseen sister, Layla, who has been betrothed to Dhu Suyuf in consolation for losing Sabah. The names of the two sisters mean "night" (Layla) and "morning" (Sabah)—or darkness and light, the unseen and the seen, the veiled and the barefaced, the unattainable and the one in reach. The "myopic one" disdains what he can imperfectly see and who is already in his possession, and he chases after her veiled and ever unattainable sister, or double. If, to gain Layla, he cannot defeat for the second time a clear-eyed man who fights with two swords, al-Ghattash must solve the riddle of Qaf, which is engraved on a clay tablet in a private writing system invented by a dead monk. Doubly disqualified by his illiteracy and by the obscurity of the alphabet, al-Ghattash is forced to rely on another Christian monk, who in turn seeks the aid of a Jewish rabbi, who manages to translate the text of the riddle into recognizable (though still enigmatic) words by resorting to the numerical value of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, which the rabbi assumes must correspond to the Arabic. The words of the riddle thus migrate, through a chain of translations, from the original obscure alphabet in which they were written by the dead monk, through a universal numerical system of mystical value, into Hebrew, and from thence into Arabic, then into Portuguese (in the grandfather's recitation), then back into Arabic (in the narrator's reconstructed poem), then finally again into the Portuguese of the novel, which thus becomes an original text.

The enigma, or riddle, of Qaf points to an astronomical phenomenon that allows the observer to witness events that have occurred a short while before, replayed or projected like a film onto a specific point in the evening sky, at a precise moment in each lunar month. However, the events reflected on the celestial screen always differ from those that have just been lived by the observer. What happens gets distorted in playback—a metaphor for the difference between historical events and historical narration and between original and translation. The final scene of the novel depicts al-Ghattash hot in pursuit of Layla and Dhu Suyuf as they flee into the desert of the Empty Quarter, where the pair will disappear forever and where al-Ghattash will perish. The poet observes the replay phenomenon in the sky, but what he sees is Sabah, not Layla, riding behind Dhu Suyuf on his horse. This distortion reveals what the myopic poet has never understood throughout his adventure: that he has been a dupe.

Layla and Sabah turn out to be one woman whom al-Ghattash sees at first veiled, then unveiled, and mistakes for two women. The girl's father (whose name, al-Muthanni, means "the doubler") exploits this misperception to extract from the poet two dowries (the second one double the amount of the first). This tale of misperception and deception contains a translational allegory. Layla and Sabah are two versions of a text: the one shrouded in obscurity is the original (mysterious, unknowable in the fullness of its epistemic field and authorial intentions), while the version that is visible, palpable, and knowable is despised and regarded as inferior, a translation. The reader who clings to a myth of origin and lusts after the unattainable original is like al-Ghattash—bombastic, myopic, deluded, and ultimately foolish. The poem he composes to boast of his heroism becomes an ironic tes-

tament to his stupidity. The narrator comes to this shocking realization at the end of the novel, a realization that shakes his confidence because he, too, might be a dupe. His quest to reinvent himself as an authentic Arab, which is a quest for a lost origin, turns out to be as vain as that of al-Ghattash, his alleged and revered ancestor. The novel as a whole, then, rejects the claims of authenticity that the revival of ethnicity in neoliberal Brazil encourages (Karam 2), laying stress instead on the fundamentally translational character of *mistura*, or the mixture, hybridity, and syncretism of Brazilian culture, in which pure origins and authenticity have no meaning.

Translating into the Original

The translation of *O enigma de Qaf* into Arabic raises questions that its translation into any other language, no matter how different from Portuguese, does not: What happens when a translational text gets translated into the language that it incorporates in itself? How does one approach the ethical dilemmas, analyzed by Lawrence Venuti, of domestication versus foreignization as strategies for negotiating cultural identity and the warnings against the perpetuation of stereotypes through translation (67–87)? As the translator of the Arabic version of the novel, *Lughz al-qāf*, I had the personal advantage of knowing the author, having spent many hours with him over several visits to Brazil discussing his work and various other aspects of Arabic and Brazilian literatures and cultures. He told me that he wanted the novel in its Arabic translation to read as though it were written originally in that language and that to him it was, among other things, an Arabic novel that he could only write in Portuguese. In theoretical terms he did not use, my task was to domesticate the novel into Arabic—to translate it into its hypothetically original language. This task may sound paradoxical, but it was indeed the case, for example, when it came to the novel's numerous quotations in Portuguese translation from actual pre-Islamic poems. Instead of translating the translation of those verses, as the English translator had done, I simply quoted the original Arabic verses so that the Arabic translation of the novel contains the original poetry, whereas the original Portuguese contains the translation. Rather than maintain the antagonistic relation alluded to at the beginning of this essay, the original and the translation complete each other like the yin-yang circle, one part containing the nucleus of the other.

To elaborate on the peculiar case of the translation of a translational text into the language it incorporates, let us recall how Gregory Rabassa describes the author's and the translator's opposite tasks:

> Within his cultural limits the author, as an individual, can and, indeed, must extend himself as far as he can to set himself and his art apart from the commonplace, showing all the while whence he comes, doing this through language most of all. With the translator we have the opposite situation. He cannot and must not set himself apart from the culture laid out before him. To do so would indeed be treasonous. He must marshal his words in such a way that he does not go counter to the author's intent. (7)

That is, to be innovative, authors move away from literary norms in their cultures, whereas translators must move toward the authors and the authors' cultures so as to carry out, insofar as it is hermeneutically possible, the authors' projects. Like other literary texts, a translational novel sets itself apart from its culture, but it does so by moving decidedly toward another culture so as to straddle the two and to occupy the space between them as a bridge. As such, per Rabassa's ethical injunction to follow the author's intent, the translator must disregard Rabassa's instruction to move toward the source culture. Instead, a translator who renders a translational

text into the language it gestures toward must move in the same direction that the author has chosen: away from the source culture and toward the target culture. Thus, the Arabic translation of a Brazilian novel about the Arabic language must seek to Arabize, rather than Brazilianize, the text, to domesticate rather than foreignize it. Mussa's declared intention was to write an Arabic novel even though he had to do it in Portuguese; my task, therefore, was to carry his intent further in the same direction, not in the opposite one, similar to a relay sprinter who is handed the baton by a teammate. Differently put, my task was to strive to disalienate the novel, to end the linguistic exile in which it was written, to bring it home, so to speak—or, indeed, to translate it into the original. Arguably, this is an impossible task that runs the sorts of risks dramatized in the novel, but it is a necessary risk, since without it the translation would not conform to the author's intent.

What mitigated that impossible task was my conviction that neither the author's nor the translator's intentions can be fully realized, and that knowing that fact does not invalidate the need for authors and translators to have intentions or to act on them. The novel remains Brazilian, in both its Portuguese and its Arabic versions, despite the author's and the translator's efforts. Not only does paratextual information such as the author's and translator's names and biographies, the copyright notice, marketing blurbs, shelving practices (e.g., "Foreign" and "Domestic Literature," as in Brazilian bookstores), and the imprint of Egypt's National Center for Translation (the publisher) reveal the real national affiliation of the text, but the novel's self-staging leaves no doubt about it, for the narrator identifies himself as a third-generation Brazilian of Lebanese descent, and the entire plot derives from that biographical fact. Domestication here runs no risk of erasing cultural difference or obliterating the identity of the text, the unethical practices against which Venuti warns. Translational texts bear their double identity on their skin and in their fibers, and no amount of domestication could alter that reality, short of amputating the text by removing the narrator from the story and falsifying the text's authorship.

Venuti's preference for foreignization as a guarantee of ethical translation derives from the kinds of materials that he and Antoine Berman work on (German, French, and Italian literatures) and the inherent risk involved, for example, in homogenizing the various Romanticisms found in those traditions. The situation is different when translating from non-European to European languages, through the inevitable prism of orientalist, racialist, and other discourses of difference. As Tarek Shamma and Marilyn Booth have argued in the context of English and French translations of Arabic texts, foreignization can exoticize the foreign, perpetuating and underscoring the sense of unbridgeable difference on which hegemonic discourses depend. Neither foreignization nor domestication offers any guarantees; rather, the key to ethical translation lies in the translator's commitment to limiting "ethnocentric negation" (Venuti 81) and to practicing a "translation ethics of difference" that "reforms cultural identities" occupying "dominant positions in the domestic culture" (83). The translator's rigorous understanding of the stakes involved determines the choice of the appropriate translation strategy in each instance.

For me, the celebration by a Brazilian novel of the Arabic language, as well as of Arabic literature and culture, was a gesture of solidarity that had to be transmitted to Arab readers in Arabic. The author was keen on my transmitting this gesture as well. But there were also two theoretical objectives that I wanted to pursue in this project. First, the direction of translation from one language of the global South to another was a way of strengthening the South-South dimension of world literature and of imagining a dif-

ferent configuration of comparative studies that eludes the center-periphery paradigm of much thinking about world literature and the North-South mapping of global culture that postcolonial theory takes for granted (Hassan, "Arabic"). Second, the translation of a translational novel into the language that it incorporates was an opportunity to test the concept of translational literature and the question of ethics as it relates to the choice of translation strategy.

Finally, I confess to have found tantalizing and irresistible the fantasy of ending the novel's linguistic exile, of helping its author fulfill his Arabness, and, in so doing, living for a while my fantasy of acquired Brazilianness—impossible goals, to be sure, but some of the necessary illusions, and the many pleasures, of exile.

Notes

1. See Hassan "Agency," "Rise," and "Leila," which have been reprinted with modifications as chapters 1, 7, and 8 in my book *Immigrant Narratives.* (See also pp. 28–37 of that book.)

2. The next two paragraphs on the narrator's quest are adapted from my article "Which Languages?" (11–13), which focuses more squarely on the configuration of hemispheric American studies, Middle East studies, and South-South comparison, not on translation.

3. All translations from the Portuguese are mine.

4. Along similar lines, Amado states, "Perfect translations are those in languages the author can't read" (x).

5. There is no mention of whether Dhu Suyuf is bilingual. He may well be, although this fact is of no importance to the story.

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