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**FACULTÉ DES ÉTUDES SUPÉRIEURES  
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**FACULTY OF GRADUATE AND  
POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES**

**Lilliana Maria Montoya Martinez**

AUTEUR DE LA THÈSE / AUTHOR OF THESIS

**M.A. (Translation)**

GRADE / DEGREE

**School of Translation and Interpretation**

FACULTÉ, ÉCOLE, DÉPARTEMENT / FACULTY, SCHOOL, DEPARTMENT

**Translation as a Metaphor in the Transcultural Writing of Two Latino Canadian Authors,  
Carmen Rodriguez and Sergio Kokis**

TITRE DE LA THÈSE / TITLE OF THESIS

**Dr. Salah Basalamah**

DIRECTEUR (DIRECTRICE) DE LA THÈSE / THESIS SUPERVISOR

CO-DIRECTEUR (CO-DIRECTRICE) DE LA THÈSE / THESIS CO-SUPERVISOR

**EXAMINATEURS (EXAMINATRICES) DE LA THÈSE / THESIS EXAMINERS**

**Annie Brisset**

**Ryan Fraser**

**Gary W. Slater**

Le Doyen de la Faculté des études supérieures et postdoctorales / Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

**Translation as a Metaphor in the Transcultural Writing of Two  
Latino Canadian Authors,  
Carmen Rodríguez and Sergio Kokis**

**Lilliana María Montoya Martínez**

**Thesis submitted to the  
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies  
In partial fulfillment of the requirements  
For the MA degree in Translation  
supervised by Dr. Salah Basalamah**

**School of Translation and Interpretation  
Faculty of Arts  
University of Ottawa**

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Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
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*Your file* *Votre référence*  
*ISBN: 978-0-494-51848-9*  
*Our file* *Notre référence*  
*ISBN: 978-0-494-51848-9*

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## Abstract

More often than not, in theoretical discussions about translation, there has been a predominance of Western thought (Tymoczko, 2006). This dominance has been reflected principally in the concentration on linguistic aspects of translation, as well as in the importance given to written texts over any other form of expression. This fact has led to skepticism about metaphorical or non-linguistic studies of translation and non-Western approaches to this field. Nevertheless, there is a growing belief in Translation Studies that translation does not always involve a textual or linguistic practice, but that it can also take place within only one language, and even more, without implying any text at all (Bhabha, 1994; Venuti, 1992; Douglas, 1997; Young, 2003). Moving in that same direction, this thesis offers a metaphorical approach to translation that attempts to expand the boundaries of Translation Studies and resist certain previous Western-oriented conceptualizations of translation.

Through examination of the works *and a body to remember with* and *Le pavillon des mirors*, written by Carmen Rodríguez and Sergio Kokis, respectively, this thesis contends that their fictional characters may be considered as both linguistically and culturally “translated beings” (Rushdie, 1991). Throughout this discussion, the concept of *metaphorical translation* refers to the never-ending process of transformation and transculturation that Rodríguez and Kokis’ fictional characters undergo in their migrant experience. In other words, this thesis examines Rodríguez and Kokis’ literary representations of migrants and their experience with translation as a transformation process. The dislocation caused by migration takes the form of social, linguistic, cultural, and psychological disarticulations, which are typified through images and metaphors of

translation. These images and metaphors represent the main focus of analysis in this study. Therefore, this thesis brings about a broader idea of translation than the explicit interlingual transference of meaning. Both migration and its subsequent cultural mingling produce complex situations that are discussed in the works analyzed.

First, this thesis examines the spatial and temporal related images and metaphors of translation within Rodríguez and Kokis' works. The aim here is to determine how these characters manage to overcome the loss of their place after migration and how this fact affects their roots. Second, in an attempt to evaluate whether the metaphorical translation of Rodríguez and Kokis' characters symbolizes a successful or a failed translation, this thesis considers specific aspects in characters' identity construction throughout the stories. Finally, their discourses are evaluated to discuss the linguistic conflicts stemming from the tension between mother tongue and adoptive language.

## Acknowledgments

It is a pleasure to convey my wholehearted gratitude to my advisor, Professor Salah Basalamah, for his supervision and guidance throughout the accomplishment of my thesis. Without his advice, this work would not have been possible. Despite my cloudy moments during this process, he has constantly provided me with encouragement and support, thus inspiring my academic and professional growth.

Many thanks go to Mary McPherson at the University of Waterloo for her willingness to help me in the precise moment. She truly deserves blessings for her altruistic work and relevant comments.

My mother Luz Elena deserves my heartfelt acknowledgment of her support. Mami nunca tendré como agradecerte que hayas entregado tu vida por tus dos únicas hijas. Gracias por tu paciencia, comprensión y ayuda. Gracias por tu malgenio, tus chocolates dragones, tus palabras y tus silencios.

Lastly, I am greatly indebted to my sister. Maryluz gracias a ti también por creer en mí a pesar de todo y por siempre animarme a seguir hacia delante.

*A mi mamá Nena y mi hermana Lupe*

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**Translation as a Metaphor in the Transcultural Writing of Two  
Latino Canadian Authors,  
Carmen Rodríguez and Sergio Kokis**

**Introduction**

The shards of memory acquired greater status, greater resonance, because they were remains; fragmentation made trivial things seem like symbols, and the mundane acquired numinous qualities. There is an obvious parallel here with archaeology. The broken pots of antiquity, from which the past can sometimes [...] be reconstructed, are exciting to discover, even if they are pieces of the most quotidian objects. (Rushdie, 1991, p.12)

Increasingly, attempts are being made to critically analyze Hispanic writing in Canada and discuss its contributions to the Canadian literary world. For example, Stos (1996, 2007), Cheadle (2007), Torres (2000, 2001, 2003, 2007), Giménez Mico (2007), and Hazelton (1990, 1994, 1995, 2002, 2007) have looked at the historical background, influences, and themes of numerous Hispanic authors in Canada. Hugh Hazelton (2007) has published an outstanding anthology entirely devoted to the examination of ten Canadian writers of Latin American origin and their works. So far, however, there has been little discussion about translational aspects of Latino-Canadian writing, such as the coexistence of different languages within a text and the self-translations that certain authors have done of some of their own writing.

Among the exceptions to this omission is Carol Stos' (2007) analysis of Chilean-Canadian writer Carmen Rodríguez's auto-translations. Stos defines auto-translations not as linguistic equivalent copies but as independent transmutations of the original work. Parallel to this line of argument, this thesis examines the

relationship between translation and creative writing embodied by Carmen Rodríguez and Sergio Kokis. Since this correlation will be the subject of the research, this thesis contributes to filling the gap present in the study of translation in Hispanic-Canadian literature. These authors' artistic works represent important socio-cultural phenomena that reflect their social realities, perceptions, experiences, and influences, as well as relevant features of contemporary Canadian society.

Through its examination of the works *and a body to remember with* and *Le pavillon des miroirs*, written by Carmen Rodríguez and Sergio Kokis, respectively, this thesis contends that their fictional characters may be considered as both linguistically and culturally “translated beings” (Rushdie, 1991). In this sense, this thesis brings about a broader idea of translation than the explicit interlingual transference of meaning. Throughout this discussion, the concept of *metaphorical translation* refers to the never-ending process of transformation and transculturation that Rodríguez and Kokis' fictional characters undergo in their migrant experience.

A major difficulty with this non-linguistic approach to translation may be the underestimation of this kind of subject within the field. Skepticism about metaphorical or non-linguistic studies indicates the predominance of Western thought on every philosophical formulation (Derrida, 1976). In the case of Translation Studies, the relevance of the linguistic aspects of translation and the primacy of written texts are symptoms of the predominance of these Eurocentric premises in the formulation of traditional translation theories (Tymoczko, 2006).

Taking each philosophical system as a *structure*, a definition adopted from structuralism, Derrida states that every structure has a center that functions as a point

of origin and convergence for everything within it. The units composing the structure tend to form *binary pairs* that can be related by similarity or disparity (Levi-Strauss, 1969). In the pair *linguistic/metaphorical-translation* the notion to the right retains an inferior value with relation to the one on the left side within the Translation Studies structure. This imbalance occurs because Western thought frequently assigns a superior cultural value to one side and an inferior or second-rate value to the other one.

In addition, the center of every structure creates a “play” that determines the relationship of its units. The more restricted this relationship, the better the system functions: “Western culture, and Western philosophy, favors rigid systems over shifting systems, as it favors order over chaos, predictability over unpredictability, stability over shakiness. In linguistic terms, Western philosophy likes a single solid connection of signification [...] better than ambiguity or multiplicity of meaning” (Klages, 2006, p.56). The dominance of ethnocentric positions in Translation Studies tends to favor those projects that hold up stable definitions of translation. However, embarking on non-linguistic translation projects leads to an underlining of the plurality in the meaning of translation as a concept and signals its unstable character (Derrida, 1966). This present project is intended to challenge and to destabilize fixed ideas of translation as a linguistic operation.

The significance of enlarging the scope of translation is the central idea of Maria Tymoczko’s essay “Reconceptualizing Translation Theory” (2006). In this article, Tymoczko draws attention to the urgent need for wide-ranging approaches to

translation that can resist the extension of traditional Western European statements and improve their shortcomings for current translation phenomena.

Tymoczko also highlights the value that non-Western ideas can provide to the theorization of translation: “there is a need in Translation Studies for more flexible and deeper understandings of translation, and the thinking of non-Western peoples about this central human activity is essential in achieving broader and more durable theories about translation” (p. 14). Indeed, the incorporation of non-Eurocentric thinking has led current theorizing about translation to move beyond the deeply-rooted arguments that hinder the enlargement of translation theory.

The metaphorical approach in this thesis is partially encouraged by the work of numerous scholars who have also looked at translation beyond linguistic phenomena and thus exceeded the limits imposed by paradigms of translation. Among the examples of these attempts are the authors included in *Translation, History and Culture* (1990), edited by Susan Bassnett and Andre Lefevere. This text is one of the first endeavors to take a more holistic approach to translation than the usual linguistic view. The authors in this book point to a “cultural turn” in Translation Studies bringing to the forefront social and cultural dimensions in translation practices. As Salah Basalamah emphasizes, the cultural turn has revealed to what extent « la traduction ne peut plus se cantonner dans la tautologique ‘traduction comme texte’, mais bien plutôt s’élargir vers l’horizon de la ‘traduction des cultures’ » (Basalamah, 2005, p.49). Since this article was published, many others have attempted to expand the boundaries of Translation Studies and its interdisciplinarity.

While broadening the extent of Translation Studies, some authors have clearly associated the concept of translation with metaphorical ideas and processes. Such examinations have revealed relevant socio-cultural aspects generated by and associated with translation. Moreover, most of these approaches come from the joint endeavors of both Western and non-Western streams, not only in Translation Studies, but also within cultural studies and post-colonial and feminist theories.

The most relevant metaphor-based studies of translation can be illustrated by authors such as Wolfgang Iser (1994), who examines the relations within and between cultures from a translational viewpoint. In so doing, this author has suggested a cybernetic model consisting of recursive loops to translate otherness without employing preconceived ideas. Using political perspectives, some other theorists have focused on the close relationship between translation and power (Mehrez, 1991, 1992; Simon, 1992; Venuti, 1992; Douglas, 1997; Young, 2003). Still other authors have chosen metaphorical approaches to theorize translation as an act of resistance and foreignization (Venuti, 1992), rewriting (Lefevere, 1990), and cannibalization (De Campos, 1986; Trivedi, 1996). Translation has also been conceptualized as a medium of cultural rewriting (Niranjana, 1992), standardization (Said, 1978) or hybridity (Bhabha, 1994).

The loose definitions and interpretations in the abovementioned theoretical elaborations show that translation does not always entail a textual or linguistic practice and that, in some cases, translation can take place within only one language and without implying text at all. The theoretical works mentioned above represent daring attempts in which "la traduction [est] déplacée hors de sa niche confortable de la

textualité [pour] prétendre à la réforme sociale, ou en termes plus poétiques, à « changer la vie »" (Basalamah, 2005, p.55). Moving in the same direction, this thesis joins to these and other attempts to change the perspectives used in the study of translation.

This thesis examines Rodríguez and Kokis' literary representations of migrants and their experience with translation as a transformation process. It focuses on the perspective of migration as "a phenomenon that involves a transfer of people and, along with them, their social, cultural, and political ideologies [therefore affecting] the total identity of a person" (Sanga, 2001, p.5). The dislocation caused by migration takes the form of social, linguistic, cultural, and psychological disarticulations, which are examined in Rodríguez and Kokis' characters. Examination of the cultural transfer and transculturation processes these characters undergo prompts recognition of the inevitable "ratio of loss and gain" (Venuti, 1992, p.8) that takes place during their translation through the disclosure of their processes.

This thesis observes the images and metaphors of translation found in these authors' works, paying particular attention to those referring to certain characters' identity construction as a means to understand their immigrant experiences. Both migration and its subsequent cultural mingling represent "experiences [épreuve] of alterity" (Berman, 1992) that produce complex situations for the characters examined. The metaphorical translation of Rodríguez and Kokis' characters represents a process for assimilating new elements and reframing their own within the host environment.

This case study endeavors to explain why the literary representations under discussion here can be understood as translated beings. In other words, more than

trying to answer “what kinds of shifts must take place [if] a person to acquire, let alone accept, a new identity, a new language” and “[m]ake a home and refashion life” (Aciman, 1994, p. 14), this thesis aims to interpret the *shifts* in Rodríguez and Kokis’ characters that take place throughout their metaphorical translation experiences. This initial questioning leads to related inquiries about which particular aspects allow the reader to consider the migrant characters as metaphorical translations: what self-perception the characters have; how they are perceived by others; how they feel and think about their sense of place, language, and identity through their metaphorical translation process; and how the characters of both Rodríguez and Kokis represent the process of transformation that is at the core of translation and of individuals changing places and trying to adapt in new ones. Discussion of these multiple questionings guides the subsequent work and conclusion.

This thesis has been organized into five chapters. Prior to commencing the examination of metaphorical translation in specific characters, there is an explanation of the methodology used in this project. Chapter One lays out the theoretical dimensions of the research, discussing the main concepts and how they overlap. Using ideas drawn from anthropology, literary theory, and Translation Studies, the debate in this chapter begins by defining transculturation in order to point out its close relation to translation and its cogency to this project. It then goes on to critically trace the idea of metaphorical translation within the field. Finally, it contends that migration is a translation experience. Chapter Two presents the authors Carmen Rodríguez and Sergio Kokis and draws attention to the discourse and characters in their writing as a transposition of their cultural alterity. Thus, this examination looks

at the implicit translation nature in the narrative of both authors owing to the cultural transfer of Rodríguez and Kokis. Chapter Three analyzes the spatial and temporal related images and metaphors of translation within Rodríguez and Kokis' works. Chapter Four assesses specific characters' identity construction in order to evaluate their metaphorical translation in terms of a successful or failed translation. The last chapter examines the discourses of these characters in order to discuss the linguistic conflicts stemming from the tension between mother tongue and adoptive language.

## Methodology

The methodology in this thesis consists of descriptive and theoretical debate about metaphorical translation in specific literary representations of migrants in the texts. In discussing the adverse aspects faced by migrants, Salman Rushdie states:

A migrant suffers, traditionally, a triple disruption: he loses his place, he enters into an alien language, and he finds himself surrounded by beings whose social behavior and codes are very unlike, and sometimes even offensive to, his own. And this is what makes migrants such important figures: because roots, language and social norms have been three of the most important parts of the definition of what it is to be a human being. The migrant, denied all three, is obligated to find new ways of describing himself, new ways of being human (Rushdie, 1991, p.277-78).

Rushdie's assertion stresses migrants' struggle to recreate their culture, language, and identity in the host context. In the metaphorical translation of Rodríguez and Kokis' characters, the "source text" includes their native space, culture, and language, whereas the "target text" involves the space, culture, and language of the host context. With the aim of looking into the metaphorical translation of such source texts into the target texts, this thesis goes along with Rushdie's words and attempts to apply them to the case of Rodríguez and Kokis' characters. First, in Chapter Three, this thesis considers the images and metaphors of space, seeking understanding of how these characters manage to overcome the *loss of their place* after migration and how this fact affects their *roots*. Their physical displacement leads space to play a relevant role in the metaphorical translation of certain characters. Examining the metaphors and images of space in Rodríguez and Kokis' writing involves looking at the notion of time since these two concepts are mutually related.

Second, this study examines Rodríguez and Kokis' characters when they find themselves *surrounded by beings whose social behaviour and codes are very unlike [to their] own*. Therefore, Chapter Four explores the level to which the characters maintain their heritage culture and identity as well as their integration in the target society. This examination determines to what extent their acceptance of cultural values and an idea of the new context signifies either a failed or a successful metaphorical translation. Moreover, consideration of the images and metaphors that epitomize the conflicts between their ethnicity and the host social codes allows evaluation of the potential loss and gain in the metaphorical translation of these characters.

Lastly, the third level of this study, developed in Chapter Five, reflects on linguistic aspects of character discourses. It allows highlighting and interpretation of the conflicts they experience in the tension between their mother tongue and the adoptive language. Analysis of the images and metaphors of language provides insight into how these characters *enter into an alien language* through their metaphorical translation.

The criteria used in the selection of these authors were not arbitrary and obey a multifaceted interplay of transcultural and literary aspects. On the one hand, that both writers reveal in their works the multiple possibilities of post-colonial writing was taken into account. Their Latin American origins and encounters with Canadian culture have led them to create artistic works that are cultural hybrids. Both authors were forced to leave their motherland after the beginning of the dictatorships in their respective countries and become part of a culturally and geographically remote territory. Since their initial arrival in Canada, they have been caught in the midst of

cultural and linguistic intersections that are reflected in their writing. Such origins and experiences are echoed to a considerable extent in their writings, which in turn, have become projects of resistance for both their neglected past life and their marginality within the new environment. Moreover, these writers can be studied under the category of post-colonial authors because, according to Sanga (2001), “the post-colonial writer is [...] a cosmopolitan migrant who works within the praxis of the western cultural idioms and still maintains a profound connection to a national background” (p. 8). Indeed, although Rodríguez writes sometimes in English and Kokis writes entirely in French, their works are strongly marked by their cultural origins and contain numerous references to their homelands. Among other things, Chapter Two of this thesis addresses the links in their works to their cultural background, expressed in the cultural references within their works by means of the majority language.

In keeping with the central topic of this thesis, another decisive factor for the selection of these writers and their literary creation is the relation of their writing to the theme of migration. Many other Latino-Canadian migrant writers deal with this topic at different levels; however, Rodríguez and Kokis’ literary creations deserve special attention due to their direct thematization of migrant experience and its impacts at personal and social levels, as discussed in Chapter Two.

It has been argued that these works are artistic representations of migrant experience; they depict migrant characters and the intricacies of their adaptation to the new life as well as their constant struggle within hybrid or in-between spaces. From a critical and theoretical perspective, it is very noticeable that these transcultural

characters undergo a self-translation through and within their bilingual and bicultural identities. The literary exemplars taken from the fiction produced by these writers are the collection of short stories *De Cuerpo Entero/and a body to remember with* by Carmen Rodríguez and the novel *Le pavilion des miroirs* by Sergio Kokis. Occasionally, however, other works by these authors may be referred to when it is necessary to highlight a point.

This analysis is intended to shed light on three main aspects relevant to the metaphorical translation of the migrant representations under examination. By means of translation, those beings modify their identities and integrate elements of both the cultures they are in contact with. Furthermore, it can be inferred how these migrants feel and think about their sense of place and language in relation to where they have come from and how they produce their own specific cultures as a consequence of the process of transculturation or cultural hybridization. This thesis attempts to broaden the definition of translation and therefore replies to Tymoczko's appeal in "Reconceptualizing Translation Theory" (2006). In other words, it reflects on forms and modes of cultural interface linked to the concept of translation. Post-colonial literature and hybridized forms of cultural production stand for some of the forms interrelated with translation, and transference, representation, and transculturation are three additional modes of cultural interface. This case study examines transculturation, hybridity, and metaphorical translation in relation to the notions of time/space, language, and identity in the specific characters as representations of cultural transfer. Theoretical discussion about key concepts of this thesis provides

insight into how the relationship among the concepts is engaged in the last three chapters.

## Chapter One: Theoretical Framework

“What kinds of shifts must take place if a person is to acquire, let alone accept, a new identity, a new language? Make a home and refashion life” (Aciman, 1994, p. 14).

### Transculturation

Based on analysis of the Cuban cultural context and its post-colonial past, Fernando Ortiz (1940) defines transculturation as the process of Spanish and African cultural interpenetration in and influence over the Cuban national identity. In his book *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, this Cuban ethnomusicologist examines the historical and metaphorical connotations of two major commodities of this society, sugar and tobacco, and the social and economic dynamics that they generate. Within his analysis, he contrasts tobacco, a native plant that symbolizes independence, with sugar, a colonialist element brought by and associated with industrial capitalism. Therefore, tobacco stands for a dark color and is an indigenous element traditionally produced on small farms by individual families. In contrast, sugar represents a white color and is an imported element produced on huge plantations. Ortiz proves how the coexistence of these two elements brings cultural change and social progression to Cuban society as well as notably asymmetrical power relations. In other words, he critically discusses how these two crops generate dissimilar types of social and economic conditions in Cuba. Tobacco is usually produced with few machines by one family during the whole year, while sugar is grown with a lot of machines and by a monopolized industry.

Prior to Ortiz's theory, Cuban culture was usually described as the result of an '*acculturation*' process because of the alleged Spanish and African cultural influence on the Cuban identity:

[Acculturation] comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936, p.149–52).

This definition indicates that acculturation takes place in situations of direct intercultural contact and may lead to changes not necessarily in both of the cultures involved but only in one of them. This unilateral definition was used in the second half of the 19th century to designate any kind of intercultural contact. In this sense, the acculturation process denotes the adaptive appropriation after cultural mingling of elements of one culture into the other; such appropriation was generally attributed to the minor culture, it was appropriated and changed (Redfield, Linton & Herskovits, 1936).

One of the first questionings of the idea of acculturation was provided by Franz Boas (1880), who stated that any culture has inevitably borrowed and adapted elements and ideas from foreign cultures. Consequently, any cultural influence between two cultures will imply two-way processes of change rather than unidirectional ones.

Fernando Ortiz demonstrates how acculturation represents a stage that makes part of the larger and comprehensive process of transculturation. Acculturation should not be confused with the notion of enculturation, which designates "a form of cultural transmission by which a society transmits its culture and behavior to its members by

surrounding developing members with appropriate models” (Berry, 2002, p.478). Thus, this process does not involve a change or relocation of the subject within a different culture but his first cultural transmission within his society of origin.

According to Ortiz, acculturation defines the one-way imposition of the culture of the colonizers, instead of a process of interaction and mutual influence between cultures:

I am of the opinion that the word transculturation better expresses the different phases of the process of transition from one culture to another because this does not consist merely in acquiring another culture, which is what the English word acculturation really implies, but the process also necessarily involves the loss and uprooting of a previous culture, which could be defined as deculturation. In addition it carries the idea of the consequent creation of new cultural phenomena, which could be called neoculturation” (Ortiz, 1940, p.102).

Ortiz undermines the homogenization force implicit in the concept of acculturation and underlines that the use of this by anthropologists has been applied generally to the study of the impact on the colonized. Instead of the exclusive sense of imposition of the dominant culture over the dominated one, Ortiz acknowledges that cultural contacts inflict changes on both sides of the correlation and are far from being one-way relationships.

In his study of Cuban culture, Ortiz denoted a first stage in the process of transculturation during which the immigrant groups, including African slaves, experienced a loss of their culture. However, this idea of “loss” should be understood as a reframing or reconstruction instead of a radical loss. Deculturation is then followed by assimilation of elements from European, Asian, and African cultures, which led to an endless construction of the “new” Cuban culture that will constantly

receive foreign influences where “the ‘new’ could be said to refer to the distance that mediates between an African in Africa and a Cuban of African-European-Asian descent” (Spitta, 1995, p.4). According to this, the resulting transcultural entity embodies an interstitial presence between the interrelated cultures.

Despite the specific socio-cultural and historical aspects that transculturation alludes to, it has been employed in different cultural contexts and geopolitical situations outside of the Cuban situation (Spitta, 1995; Mertz, 2003; Sales, 2004). Nevertheless, two major inadequacies may develop when the term transculturation is applied to the observation of the cultural change processes in the migrant characters examined in this thesis. On the one hand, and strictly speaking, transculturation denotes processes of sluggish gradual transformation over a long period of time, which is in contrast to the changes analyzed in this work. The temporal spans of the changes of the characters do not exceed the century and, in Ortiz’s study, the Cuban changes have taken place during more than one century. On the other hand, Ortiz’s theory is based on binary opposition (colonizer/colonized, sugar/tobacco, dominant/dominated) and therefore the phases composing transculturation are developed on the idea of pure cultures. Being aware of its specific aspects and context of formulation, this thesis uses the concept of transculturation in its broadest sense and independent of its chronological or binary aspects to refer to the cultural coexistence in the migrant experience of the chosen characters. The notion of transculturation marries well with the purposes of this thesis because it allows interpretation of the symbolic meanings in the present literary corpus as processes of continuity among the

“transition from one culture to another [carrying] the idea of the consequent creation of new cultural phenomena” (Ortiz, 1948, p.102).

Drawing on transculturation theory, Satyre describes that in migration the subject «se désajuste et se réajuste » (Satyre in Laplantine, 2001, p.566). Migrants’ upsetting and adjustment in the middle of two cultural spaces therefore « [c’est] entre la culture d’origine et la nouvelle culture que se situe la transculturation, ensemble de transmutations constantes, d’échanges réciproques entre les immigrants et les autochtones » (Ibid. 566). Those constant transformations from reciprocal swaps may be understood as traces of translation in the beings analyzed. At the same time, this reciprocity stems from the transculturation logic in migrant experiences. Mutual exchanges entail power and inequality between the “self” and the “other.” This imbalance is recognized by Annie Brisset in her paper “Alterity in Translation” (2003) when she tackles how inequality among languages leads to hegemonic reduction of difference. Such reduction is revealed in the tendency of the dominant to fit the other into the mainstream.

### **Metaphorical Translation**

One of the most ground-breaking definitions of translation is that given by the Indian-American post-colonial theorist Homi K. Bhabha. In his work *The Location of Culture* (1994), Bhabha introduces the concept of hybridity as a synonym for cultural translation. It denotes the mode by which migrants recreate their identities within the cultural conflicts in their lives.

Drawing on literary and cultural theory, Homi Bhabha (1994) develops this idea of hybridity with the aim of explaining the construction of culture and identity within colonialism. Such construction is based in the interrelation of elements between the colonizer and the colonized, which gives place to hybridity. This theory refutes any essentialist idea of cultural identity and thus becomes a seminal concept in post-colonial discourse. Hybridity takes place in what Bhabha calls the *Third space*; it corresponds to an “area of tension that is created by the splitting of different aspects within different cultures” (Sanga, 2001, p.81). Thus, Bhabha refers to the third space as a productive space of novelty where new forms of cultural meaning and production call into question established classifications of culture and identity. This author persuasively argues that the third space is

a contradictory and ambivalent space of enunciation [which] though unrepresentable in itself, [...] constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew (Bhabha, 1994, p.37).

Bhabha concludes that all forms of culture follow an endless process of hybridity, which in the end represents a form of in-between space. For this author, translation acquires a metaphorical dimension that establishes an association between cultural contact and translation in the contemporary globalized world and that challenges the notions of text and originality.

In spite of the significance of this conception for the study of translation, some scholars disagree with the idea of not exclusively understanding translation as a linguistic and textual activity. In effect, one of the oppositions to Bhabha’s findings

is the article “Translating Culture vs. Cultural Translation”<sup>1</sup> written by Harish Trivedi.

In this text the author states,

We have on our hands a beast of similar name but very different fur and fiber – something called Cultural Translation. [...] For, if there is one thing that Cultural Translation is not, it is the translation of culture. In fact, it spells, as I shall go on to argue, the very extinction and erasure of translation as we have always known and practiced it (Trivedi in St-Pierre, 2007, p.282).

Such comments point to the theoretical orthodoxy and ethnocentrism referred to in the introduction of this thesis and that still survives within the discipline. This view stands in contrast to the quest for more interdisciplinary and all-embracing perspectives (Tymoczko, 2006). Trivedi points out that instead of using the term translation to designate the identity rebuilding in migrant experiences, it should have been defined using other existent words like migrancy, exile, or diaspora. Trivedi considers that the notion of cultural translation is an “usurpation” (p.285), an “abuse” (p.285), and a “destructive” (p.286) form of what translation really means. Therefore, he asks “all good men and true, and of course women, who have ever practiced literary translation, [...] to unite and take out a patent on the word ‘translation’ if it is not already too late to do so” (Ibid. 285). This purist vision represents a backward looking that appears decontextualized within the contemporary scientific practices, which continually appraise and even support their arguments in relation to other academic approaches through metaphor.

Trivedi's interpretation overlooks much of the symbolic potentiality of translation and underestimates the intrinsically metaphorical connotation of this

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<sup>1</sup> This article was published in the Benjamin's series, in the volume In Translation, Reflections, Refractions, Transformations (2007) edited by Paul St-Pierre and Prafulla C. Kar. It is also available online.

activity. On the one hand, Trivedi argues that allowing this non-linguistic approach to the study of translation develops into a “semantic explosion or dilution in popular, non-theoretical usage [of it]” (Ibid. 285). This statement may be interpreted as a strict and vain proclivity to seclusion. Interdiscursivity enhances the academic discussions, and avoiding popular use might be a senseless alternative that most probably will lead to segregation. Bassnett and Lefevere have declared that “isolation is counter-productive” and that “the study of translation [...] needs a plurality of voices” (Quoted in Trivedi, 2007, p.283). The study of translation involves many other scientific discourses and more and more borrowing, exchanging, and introduction of concepts to allow others to derive benefit from dissimilar theories and improve their own premises. To give an example, both *hybridity* and *métissage* are terms used in contemporary cultural studies although they have their origins in biological discourse (Laplantine&Nouss, 1997). Within the frame of post-colonialism and cultural studies, these theoretical ideas denote cultural mingling phenomena and propose a multidisciplinary agenda to undertake their study. Furthermore, one may look at the existing cultural studies discipline to recognize another of the multiple examples of interdisciplinary approaches and interdiscursiveness within a branch of knowledge. In order to study cultural phenomena, this discipline has borrowed ideas from fields such as biology, history, linguistics, psychoanalysis, political economy, sociology, communication, social theory, literary theory, media theory, cultural anthropology, philosophy, and so forth (Berry, 2002).

Trivedi’s appreciation of the appropriateness and the postulation of cultural translation corroborates Basalamah’s opinion when he states, “il apparaît

malheureusement que dans les zones les plus institutionnalisées de la traductologie [...], le sens de la traduction tende à s'isoler et à se confiner dans une exclusivité quelque peu masochiste" (Basalamah 2005, p.53). The concerns about the "dilution in popular, non-theoretical usage" of the concept of translation may lead to a sterile academic exclusiveness.

On the other hand, Trivedi claims that without non-linguistic approaches, "the value [translation] possessed as an instrument of discovery and exchange, would have ceased to exist. Rather than help us encounter and experience other cultures, translation would have been assimilated in just one monolingual global culture" (Trivedi in St-Pierre, 2007, p.286). The radicalism in seeing translation as a phenomenon that necessarily entails two texts and two languages represents a circumscribed idea that ignores the contributions of several works in which translation is understood as a constellatory sociocultural concept and experience. Trivedi himself cites Niranjana's work *Siting Translation* (1992) as an illustration of the relevant works that have employed the concept of translation in a non-traditional connotation, which this author sees as an option "to suit [translation] to her own chosen context and purpose" (Ibid. 284). As discussed in the Introduction of this thesis, there are many other instances in which translation has been considered apart from opened approaches since they do not merely base their study in the linguistic aspects.

Lastly, it seems that Trivedi's understanding of the translation framework is questionable when his own words of just about one decade earlier are considered. In the introduction of the book *Post-colonial Translation: Theory and Practice* for which he and Susan Bassnett are the co-editors, these authors state,

In our age of [the valorization of] migrancy, exile and diaspora, the word translation seems to have come full circle and reverted from its figurative literary meaning of an interlingual transaction to its etymological physical meaning of locational rupture; translation itself seems to have been translated back to its origins. As André Lefevere suggested, 'the time may have come to move beyond the word as such, to promote it to the realm of metaphor, so to speak, and leave it there' (Bassnett & Trivedi, 1998, p.13).

In addition to highlighting the metaphorical properties of translation, these authors link it to migration in the same way that Bhabha had already done at that time. Trivedi's inconsistency undermines his current hypothesis and in general shakes belief in similar kinds of approaches. The authors and papers collected in this book consider the theory and practice of translation in post-colonial contexts using certain symbolic and metaphorical elements of translation.

A relationship exists between the concepts of transculturation and cultural translation since both of them trace and critically analyze the possible situations that emerge from cultural contact. Therefore, Bhabha's premises are significantly useful for the objectives of this thesis since they straightforwardly address different aspects and dimensions of cultural mingling in migration. Despite the concrete and unlike trajectory and evolution of Ortiz and Bhabha's theories, they overlap in their nuances and connotations and offer conceptualizations to discuss the fictional representations within this work. The dissimilar historical, geographical, and ideological contexts from which these terms emerge are not an obstacle; in fact, these differences highlight their inter-discursiveness in addressing the cultural phenomena of culturally mixed migrants.

### **Migration as Translation**

The abovementioned concepts not only set up the path to depict this hypothesis but also stand as its bedrock. Similarly, this project conveys by metaphorical translation, the series of cultural and personal transformations that, within the chosen literary corpus, a migrant character goes through after his or her physical and psychological displacement. Since this interpretation does not entail the traditional interlingual conversion from a text originally written in language A to a text rendered in language B, the approach and the findings of this work respond to the appeals for flexible approaches in translation such as those of Tymoczko (2006) and Basalamah, (2005) among other authors.

Along the same lines, in her article “Found in Translation or Edwige Danticat’s Voyage of Recovery” (2003), Anne Malena provides an explicit definition for the concept of translation within this analysis. Malena portrays migrants as metaphorical translations:

Migrants are translated beings in countless ways. They remove themselves from their familiar source environment and move towards a target culture which can be totally unknown or more or less familiar, [...] their individual and collective identities will experience a series of transformations as they adjust to the loss of their place of birth and attempt to turn it into a gain; [...] the new versions of their selves may be “perfect” translations, creating the illusion that they are native to the target culture, or retain traces of the foreign (Malena, 2003, p.9).

Therefore, a migrant symbolizes a translated subject who constantly reshapes his or her hybrid identity. Metaphorical translation becomes a process that links a past persona attached to a culture and nation to that new being located in the adoptive country. This definition of migrants in Malena’s sketch is in accordance with this

work due its precise association with translation and the intricate aspects depicted around this relationship.

Migrant characters are considered worthy of analysis in this approach because of their radical dislocation and transformation while inhabiting the target space. Individuals who are displaced within the same nation may also undergo several transformations in their personal and social aspects. However, they do maintain a similar worldview to that of their compatriots despite the possible alterations. To give an example, when people who live in Vancouver move to Toronto, the changes may be significant for their life; however, they preserve their social and individual practices and behaviors. The national history and symbols, legal system, and culture within which they grew up continue to have coherence and veracity for them. They even continue being aware of the power relations within their society. In contrast, between regions where the elements are radically different, migration entails a more drastic series of transformations and trauma because of the cultural, religious, political, geographical, and psychological disarticulation. This intensified loss in migration is because being “out-of-country and even out-of-language [entails a] physical fact of discontinuity, of his present being in a different place from his past” (Rushdie, 1991, p.12). This shocking experience and the loss it represents can be explained in terms of a change of a *habitus*, a concept defined by Pierre Bourdieu<sup>2</sup> as,

[the] systems of durable transportable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively ‘regulated’ [...] collectively

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<sup>2</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, “Structures, *Habitus*, Practices” (1994), translated by Richard Nice from Craig Calhoun et al. (editors), *Contemporary Sociological Theory*, Oxford : Blackwell Publishers, 2002, pp. 277-289.

orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating action of a conductor (Bourdieu in Calhoun, 2002, p.278).

As claimed by Bourdieu, in every society individuals share a habitus within the same group or class that is shaped by social conditions. This idea is close to the aforesaid notion of enculturation, which from a socio-cultural perspective encompasses the cultural traits and behaviors that individuals acquire within the society they were born. It embodies “the process that links developing individuals to their primary cultural contexts” (Berry, 2002, p.349). The concept of habitus comprises the behaviors of an individual and defines what is possible, acceptable, or not possible to do within a society. In addition, Bourdieu distinguishes between class habitus and subjective habitus; they entail, respectively, collective and individual dimensions and are mutually regulated. In migration, the subject is not only unaware of the several class habitus within the new society but also his own perceptions and practices are no longer suitable and he has to attempt fitting into his new space.

The proposed view of migrants as translated beings in this work entails metaphor since this idea attempts to look at the metamorphosis of the individual from a translation approach. In other words, this analysis implies an understanding and interpretation of migration as metaphor:

Migration offers us one of the richest metaphors of our age. The very word metaphor, stems from the Greek words for bearing across, describes a sort of migration, the migration of ideas into images. Migrants—born across humans— are metaphorical beings in their very essence; and migration, seen as a metaphor, is everywhere around us (Rushdie as cited in Sanga, 2001, p.13).

Migrants are themselves metaphors who, to preserve their identity, will transform and adjust themselves to their loss and will try to turn it into a gain. Their identities are crafted by hybridism while allowing newness. Salman Rushdie made a similar positive observation regarding the loss of some elements and the parallel gain of some others: "It is generally believed that something is always lost in translation; I cling to the notion ... that something can also be gained" (Rushdie, 1983, p.29). That is, although a migrant faces personal, cultural, religious, or linguistic deprivation, the addition of new practices and values must not automatically be considered an unconstructive course.

A sense of gain in the migration experience is addressed by Jaina Sanga (2001) in her analysis of Rushdie's writing. This author claims that "migrants can be seen as privileged people who can offer an alternative view of the world because they know that other perspectives exist; like Rushdie, they have seen from elsewhere" (Sanga, 2001, p.44). Notwithstanding the physical dislocation, fragmentation, and annihilation in their now hyphenated identity, migrants improve their abilities to deal with multiplicity and harmonize cultural contradictions.

The translation of a migrant will rarely give the vision that the migrant was born in the adoptive country. As with any translation, there will always be something that cannot be adapted or translated. Anne Malena (2003) concludes that migrants may "retain traces of the foreign," which may indicate the degree of their translatability. The degree of retention depends on certain untranslatable aspects of the subject, which can go from visual appearance to cultural practices and beliefs. Some external features, i.e., clothes, are culture-bound elements that will play a role in the

translatability of an individual. To give an example, clothing, which has multiple functions, such as protection, supernatural or religious safety, and conveying feelings of intimacy, may be one of the elements that reveal migrant untranslatability. . Moreover, the covered parts of the body will differ depending on the culture. Hence, a person who bears visible indicators of his religion in a context different from his own culture, will be easily noticed. In the same way, some cultural elements can also express status and intentions that will not necessarily coincide with the status or intentions in the new context. Body decorations, jewelry, makeup, or hair styles are components of adornment with marked cultural implications; and they will play a significant role in the translatability of a subject.

The untranslatable features may be interpreted as evidence of non-belonging to either of both cultures. Julia Kristeva refers to this aspect using the following words:

[...] vous avez le sentiment que la nouvelle langue est votre résurrection : nouvelle peau, nouveau sexe. Mais l'illusion se déchire lorsque vous vous entendez... la mélodie de votre voix vous revient bizarre, [...] parfois, une levée de sourcils ou un « Pardon ? » vous font comprendre que «vous n'en serez jamais» (Kristeva, 1988, p.27).

Therefore language and, in particular, accent, may represent another characteristic hindering the grade of translatability of a migrant. Pronunciation particularities as well as peculiar grammatical constructions are aspects that an individual can modify. However, perfect linguistic command may not be fully achieved because some cloudiness will remain as the unavoidable traces of the mother tongue affecting use of the new language.

In the chosen corpus, the migrant characters experience a translation of themselves within their bilingual and bicultural identities. Such bilingualism and

biculturalism may be regarded as one of the first signs of metaphorical translation because it leads them to become hyphenated beings. They start inhabiting two spaces linked to their own culture and the new one, which explains their dissimilar behavior in private and public places. The Haitian author Émile Ollivier depicts this dual behavior in terms of *schizophrenia*:

J'ai tendance à dire que je suis Haïtien la nuit, Québécois le jour. [...] c'est une situation de schizophrénie... c'est-à-dire de quelqu'un qui est coupé de la réalité. Je suis coupé de la réalité haïtienne, mais je le suis également de la réalité québécoise (Ollivier as cited in Jonassaint, 1986, p. 88).

The double life leads certain characters to a continuous social and individual reframing of their existence as they strive to become part of the target environment. Past and present influences lead these characters to be caught between two worlds as they endeavor to preserve their cultural heritage while being translated by the customs and culture of the adoptive country. This idea of schizophrenia refers to Bhabha's concept of a third space since migrants continually inhabit an in-between space. It is in this in-between where "[migrants] become bi- or multicultural along a complex translation process which, while ensuring their survival, also transforms" (Malena, 2003, p. 11). Despite that situation, in the process of translation they may be compelled to remove some traces of their identity, and translation allows them endurance.

## Chapter Two: The Authors and Discussion of their Writing

“Their words, despite their desire to appear so coolly collected and focused, are the priceless buoys with which they try to stay afloat both as professional thinkers and human beings”  
(Aciman, 1999, p. 14).

The previous chapter focused on discussing the main concepts composing the theoretical framework in this thesis and applied it to the analysis of metaphorical translation in the chosen works. Chapter Two introduces the writers Carmen Rodríguez and Sergio Kokis in order to facilitate understanding of the characters depicted in their works. This discussion also points out the authors’ transposition of cultural alterity through the discourse and characters in their writing, the latter being the primary object of analysis for this thesis.

Their transcultural works reflect some of the conflicts and possibilities in cultural mingling since they illustrate the active and reciprocal exchange between cultures. Therefore, translation represents “an element of textual dynamics” (Simon, 1994) in Rodríguez and Kokis’ works because it carries out both linguistic and metaphorical functions within them. This hypothesis can be proved through examination of the strategies that both authors employ to translate into their works the cultural hybridization that they have undergone in Canada.

Keeping this purpose in mind, this chapter focuses on examination of Rodríguez and Kokis’ narrative strategies, on the one hand, and the linguistic coexistence that they bring into play within their works, on the other hand. As these writers write in a second language, examination of linguistic juxtapositions in their works may shed light on the difficulties associated with cultural transfer in migration. It may also suggest some conclusions about the role of translation in their works and

their choices to translate or not the cross-linguistic and cross-cultural elements in their works for the non-bilingual reader.

These proposed criteria help limit the numerous aspects to be considered when the role of translation in these authors' writing is considered. In addition, this approach sheds light on how Rodríguez and Kokis reflect their own transcultural processes in their works to make possible the interplay between their native/adoptive languages and cultures.

This chapter has been divided into two parts; the first part gives the authors' biographical accounts and the second deals with a discursive examination of their self-translation experience as immigrants in Canada through their writing practices.

The works *and a body to remember with* and *Le pavillon des miroirs* are embedded in an interplay between the native and adoptive languages and cultures that they embody. The examination of the writing process of these authors represents a complementary part to the analysis of the metaphorical translation of the characters embedded in these literary texts in Chapter One. This notion of self-translation conveys Rodríguez and Kokis' metaphorical self-translation, in this case. Both Rodríguez and Kokis' transcultural works reflect some of the conflicts and possibilities in cultural mingling. They embody the active and reciprocal exchange between cultures.

## 1. The Authors

### 1.1. Carmen Rodríguez

Carmen Rodríguez was born in Chile in 1948. As a political and social activist, after the military coup of 1973, she was forced to live in exile in the company of her husband and daughters, aged five and six. Since then, she has lived in the United States, Bolivia, Argentina, and Canada, where the family eventually settled in 1974. Her educational background includes a Bachelor of Arts in Literature and a Teaching Certificate from the University of Chile, and a Master of Arts degree in Education from Simon Fraser University (Vancouver). She has worked as a writer, translator, broadcaster, editor, and educator. Notably, Rodríguez has devoted a great part of her life to work in adult literacy and popular education. Currently, she teaches Latin American Literature in Translation and literacy classes at Simon Fraser University and organizes literacy workshops at conferences and seminars across Canada and South America. Among her outstanding works, Rodríguez has produced a video and handbook for instructors of aboriginal literacy learners, called *Educating for Change: Community-based/Student-centered Literacy Programming with First Nations Adults: an Instructor's Handbook*, published in 2001 in Victoria, B.C. She is also a correspondent for Radio Canada International in Vancouver.

Her literary work has appeared in numerous periodicals and anthologies and has received accolades in Canada and Chile. Her published works include two collected volumes, one of poetry and the other one of short stories. *Guerra Prolongada/Protracted War* is the title of the bilingual Spanish/English volume of her poetry, published by Women's Press (Toronto) in 1992. Some of the poems in this

book were originally written in Spanish and others in English and were translated by Heidi Neufeld Raine with the help of Carmen Rodríguez. Her collection of short stories, *A Body to Remember*, was released by Arsenal Pulp Press (Vancouver) in 1997, while the Spanish version, *De Cuerpo Entero*, was published that same year in Santiago (Chile) by Editorial Los Andes. In 1998, this book was awarded an Honorary Mention in the City of Santiago Literary Awards and was nominated for the City of Vancouver Book Award. In most of her poetry and short stories, Rodríguez explores the relationship between place and language as well as the emotional aspects of migrant fictional characters. Her writings narrate stories related to political activism exile, immigration, memory and resistance. Her poetry, short stories, and articles have been published in reviews such as *Aquelarre*, *The Capilano Review*, *Fireweed*, *Norte-Sur*, *Prison Journal*, *West Coast Line* and *Kinesis*.

The language of Rodríguez writing illustrates her own transculturation. She describes her choice in the following terms: “my hand writes in two languages: Spanish, my mother tongue, and English, my adopted tongue” (Rodríguez, 1997, p.14). In brief, similarly to their fictional characters, both Rodríguez and Kokis are themselves transcultural beings. Rodríguez argues: “I live and work on a teeter-totter, moving back and forth between two cultures and languages. [...] For me living and writing in a hyphen implies translation... it is important to use the hyphen of my bilingualism, my biculturalism, the hyphen of my double identity as a bridge” (Rodríguez, 1997, p.14).

## 1.2. Sergio Kokis

Sergio Kokis was born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1944. This novelist and painter had a chaotic childhood that led him at a very young age to a correctional institution. Later in life, he successfully pursued his studies in philosophy at l'École des beaux-arts (Rio). In 1963, Kokis was sentenced for offences to national security due to his activism in the opposition against the dictatorship. After receiving his degree in philosophy in 1966, he was awarded a scholarship in French studies and left Brazil for Europe to complete a master's degree in psychology at the University of Strasbourg. Moving to Canada and settling in Québec in 1969, Kokis began working as a psychiatrist at l'Hôpital psychiatrique de Gaspé. He moved once more to Montréal in 1970 and, three years later, became a doctor in clinical psychology at l'Université du Québec. During that same year, Kokis studied in Montreal at the Museum of Fine Arts' School of Art and Design and at the Saidye Bronfman Centre. From 1975 until 1997, he worked part-time as a psychologist at l'Hôpital Sainte-Justine and, after 22 years, decided to devote himself exclusively to writing and painting.

In addition to his native Portuguese and because of his education in Germany, France, and Canada, Kokis is fluent in, German, French, and English. Nevertheless, Kokis is one of the few authors who decided to cease writing in his native language and write exclusively in French. Since his first novel, this prolific writer has written almost a novel per year for the same publishing house. His writings are complex metaphors of the immigrant condition and of the passage between cultures depicted through marginal and conflictive representations of migrants. Kokis' novels are *Le pavillon des miroirs* (1994), *Errances* (1996), *L'art du maquillage* (1997), *Un sourire*

*blindé* (1998), *Le maître de jeu* (1999), *Saltimbanques* (2000), *Kaléidoscope brisé* (2001), *Le magicien* (2002), *Les amants de l'Alfama* (2003), *L'amour du lointain* (2004), *La gare* (2005), *Le fou de Bosch* (2006), and *Le retour de Lorenzo Sanchez* (2008).

A notable success, the novel *Le Pavillon des Miroirs* was awarded the Prix Molson from the Académie des Lettres du Québec (1994), the Grand Prix du Livre de Montréal (1994), the Prix Québec-Paris (1995), and the le Prix Desjardins from the Salon du Livre de Québec (1995). In this novel, Kokis traces a route between his complicated childhood in Brazil and his adult life as an exiled in Canada. This novel underlines the collision of these antonymous worlds and its consequences within the protagonist as Kokis states, “dans ce livre, j'ai voulu raconter l'histoire d'un peintre exilé qui tente de récupérer les traces de son existence passée, autrefois, au Brésil. A travers les images qui l'obsèdent, voilà qu'une enfance oubliée refait surface, même si elle n'est pas tout à fait le passé auquel il s'attendait“ (Kokis, 1999).

## **2. Translation and Discursive Aspects in Rodríguez and Kokis' Writing**

This section discusses how, in the case of these authors, translation is closely linked to their lives in both the explicit and metaphorical senses. Initially, this section analyzes the linguistic translation of Rodríguez's work, while a second part examines the idea of writing as the process of translation as a common thread linking both authors. Carmen Rodríguez and Sergio Kokis have undergone a process of adjustment and re-creation in their personal lives that continues to resonate in their writing.

Translation is not only an implicit idea in their lives and works but also a process in their literary work that “nourish[es] the writing process, infusing the present with the

emotions of another time. Translation is principle and method in [their] work”

(Simon, 2007, p.108).

As in the case of Rodríguez, the linguistic elements in Kokis writing reflect his transculturation. About his writing process he states that “l'écrivain serait alors comme le batelier, celui qui s'est libéré de la matérialité immédiate, concrète, de l'utilitarisme de sa propre langue pour tenter de traduire (traducere ou übersetzen dans leurs acceptions originales) dans une langue publique les réalités d'une autre rive, d'une autre culture, d'un autre imaginaire“ (Kokis, 1999, p.59). This statement illustrates to what extent Kokis, like Rodríguez, associates his writing practice with translation.

*and a Body to Remember*, Rodríguez's book of short stories, was published in 1997 in Vancouver at the same time that its Spanish counterpart *De Cuerpo Entero* was distributed in Chile. The work was originally written in Spanish and then translated by the author. The translation of the book was a long pendulum-like process between Spanish and English languages. This going back and forth between the two languages lasted until the author was pleased with the final version, as she explained in the foreword of the English text by claiming: "I felt that both tips of my tongue and my two sets of ears were satisfied with the final product" (Rodríguez, 1997, p.14).

Moreover, the author argues that “in many ways, this process [of writing and translating the book] mirrors my hyphenated existence. I live and work on a teeter-totter, moving back and forth between two cultures and languages” (Rodríguez, 1997, p.14). Therefore, from her life and experiences as a political exile in Canada,

Rodríguez creates a series of dense stories that sometimes take place in Chile and others in Canada. Some of the characters in this text are migrants who came to Canada after the Chilean chaos of the seventies. Plunged into estrangement, those beings embody diverse migrant experiences according to their process of adaptation to the adoptive country.

On the other hand, the novel *Le Pavillon des Miroirs* comprises 27 chapters, some narrated by voice of the main character as a child in Brazil and others by the voice of that character as an adult in Canada. This novel underlines the collision of these antonymous worlds and its consequences within the protagonist. Thus, the reader goes into two dissimilar terrains depicted by the author with lively and colorful images that are consistent with his professional career as a painter. Additionally, the psychological component becomes extremely relevant in Kokis' works. In this particular novel, the principal character's introspections give a picture not only of his mental state but also of the psychological sides of the other characters. Rodríguez and Kokis' works have been selected for discussion here because both allow an examination of the immigrant experience through depictions of the characters' minds, thus providing supporting arguments for the objectives of this thesis.

### **2.1. Rodríguez's Linguistic Translation in the Work *De Cuerpo Entero***

*De Cuerpo Entero*, Rodríguez's book of short stories, was published in 1997 and was translated by Rodríguez herself. Both the English and the Spanish titles are taken from the same story, called "a balanced diet" in English and "Una Dieta Balanceada" in Spanish. Rodríguez's auto translation and parallel publication of these books may give an ambiguous impression about which one corresponds to the original

and which one to the translation. This fact illustrates translation as a mode of writing/creation.

In these volumes Rodríguez presents a group of intense stories, some of which take place in Chile and others in Canada. The narrations revolve around political activism, exile, immigration, memory, and resistance. Among her characters, the reader can find activists, torture victims of the Chilean dictatorship during the seventies and their relatives, migrants affected by that conflict, Canadian people, and others. In particular, the migrant characters disclose political and cultural aspects of migration and embody estrangement, diverse experiences according to their processes of adaptation in the host country. Moreover, in most of her poetry and short stories, Rodríguez explores the relationship between place and language on the one hand and the emotional aspects of migrant fictional characters on the other hand. These writings reflect part of her life and experiences as a political exile.

***and a body to remember with vis-à-vis De Cuerpo Entero***

In the linguistic translation of the work *De Cuerpo Entero* into English, Rodríguez presents a stylistically and organizationally different text from its Spanish counterpart volume. Some of the most relevant dissimilarities between these two works are discussed by Carol Stos (2007) in her article “I Write My Self: the Female Body as a Site of Transculturation in the Short Stories of Carmen Rodríguez.” The contrasts underlined by Stos include among others the variations in the cover illustrations, the different order of the accounts, as well as the spelling rules in the titles of both versions. With reference to the latter, Rodríguez employs a spelling contradictory to both languages; in the Spanish title she employs the English

convention of capitalizing all the letters in the title. In contrast, all the headings in Rodríguez's English translation are uncapitalized, which reflects Spanish rules. Although this is not an unusual practice for some authors, in the case of Rodríguez, such a practice not only has "a subtly unsettling effect that both anticipates the anxiety of difference and exercises the power to resist or subvert a *status quo*" (Stos, 2007, p. 156) but also reveals transculturation in her works. As stated by Stos, Rodríguez's reversed grammar is a typographic manipulation in order to undermine the accuracy of both languages. This cross-grammatical strategy symbolizes a cultural syncreticism in both texts, making them neither totally Spanish nor completely English writings. Moreover, this literary aspect becomes a symptom of the cultural co-existence in Rodríguez's identity. In a similar way to her identity, her works become "un corps comme tiers-space où se recontrent et négocient les deux pulsions [culturelles représentés par son pays et le pays adoptif]" (Nouss, 2005, p.117). Despite the cultural influences, these bodies are entirely autonomous, and their grammatical amalgamation is a sign of Rodríguez's alteration by the language and culture of the host country.

Rodríguez's translation is a twofold practice because some of the stories were originally written in Spanish then translated into English while others were written in English and translated into Spanish. This translational act is described by Rodríguez as "a long and intense creative process" (p.13). The creativity emphasized by Rodríguez in her linguistic translation process strongly favours Octavio Paz's theory that "translation and creation are twin processes [since] there is a constant interaction between the two, a continuous, mutual enrichment" (Paz, 1992, p.160). Her non-

literal translation leads her to an English work in which the cultural and linguistic differences between both contexts are not erased or harmonized. In other words, she preserves the unfamiliar cultural elements in the English translation by means of explanations, footnotes, and use of foreign terms.

To give an example, the story “I sing, therefore I am” makes frequent reference to a representative Latino American song by the Argentinean Mercedes Sosa. In the English translation it appears so: “she sang with all her soul: *gracias a la vida que me ha dado tanto*” (p.53), and there is also a footnote in which Rodríguez translates, “Thanks to life that has given me so much” (p.53). In spite of the footnote translation, the preservation of the Spanish text underlines the symbolic value of this chant within the story. This musical reference has a cultural and emotional connotation and, at the same time, it allows the Anglophone reader to perceive the presence of the other language and culture within the account.

There are a significant number of references to Latin American poetry and music, and all of them are fully rendered in the original Spanish in the translation. Rodríguez transcribes and also translates these fragments, which fills in the gaps for the reader,

<i>Levántate y mírate las manos</i>	<i>Rise up and look at your hands</i>
<i>Para crecer, estréchala a tu hermano</i>	<i>Take your brothers and sisters' hands</i>
<i>Juntos iremos, unidos en la sangre</i>	<i>Together we'll go forth, united by blood</i>
<i>Ahora y en la hora de nuestra muerte</i>	<i>Now and at the time of our death</i>
<i>Amén.</i>	<i>Amen (p.96)</i>

This strategy of inclusion for both texts draws the reader's attention to the symbolic connotation enclosed in the abstract. Instead of merely leaving the English

version, Rodríguez does not only include the original but also integrates it in the text. This stratagem discloses Rodríguez's strategy by which she can give place to the cultural otherness within the target text. Rather than literal translations, this author-translator attempts to «faire œuvre-en-correspondance» that reflects her creative subjectivity.

Her strategy can also be interpreted as an act of hospitality to hold the foreign language in the English translation. By way of illustration, in the story "Saudades," the main character is visiting her Brazilian friend, Adriana. While Adriana cooks for her guest, she plays a Brazilian *saudade* on the radio. The name of this *saudade* is *Sonho Meu* by the Brazilian singer Maria Bethania:

*sonho meu, sonho meu*  
*vai buscar quem mora longe, sonho meu*  
*vai mostrar esta saudade, sonho meu*  
*a madrugada fria so metraz maelancolia, sonho meu, samba (p.67)*

Rodríguez threads the translation of this song into the account in the sense that she makes the textual inclusion without explaining it to the reader: "Dream of mine, dream of mine, go off and find someone who lives far away. Go off and show him this *saudade*, this longing. The cold dawn only brings me sadness, dream of mine" (p. 67). Moreover, she also translates this Portuguese text in the Spanish version and integrates it in the same manner as the English work and again without warning the reader.

In addition to these musical allusions, Rodríguez's translation, *and a body to remember with*, is linguistically permeated by some Latino American elements related to Andean food, traditions, oral language, and popular culture. The "*cazuela* or

*salpicón*” (p.28), “*cazuela, charquicán, salpicón, pancuras, chupe de queso, pastel de choclo*” (p.34), “*Sunday empanadas*” (p.40), “*Brazilian feiojada*” (p.67), “*sopaipillas*” (p.88), “*Concha y Toro*” (p.89), “*picante de albacora*” (p.101), and “*mate*” (p.102) are some of the gastronomical names embedded in Rodríguez’s accounts. This survival of her mother tongue in the English translation points up the difficulty of finding equivalent food preparations and dishes among cultures. This level of untranslatability leads Rodríguez to deploy and rearrange these culture-bound words in the English translation due to the interdependence between food and language (Kristeva, 1982).

Rodríguez’s translation can be considered as a resistant translation because it emphasizes the process of translation and does not efface the cultural differences. Some other examples of Rodríguez’s method can be found in the non-translation of some oral expressions throughout the stories. Unlike the above terms related to food for which there are no similar concepts in English, Rodríguez does not try to *domesticate* some of the other expressions that could have been translated into corresponding English phrases. In one account, the characters make a toast in the English text with the words “*salud... salud por el retorno*” (p.31), which induces the Anglophone reader to attempt to construct the significance of the passage from the narrator’s speech and the context of the story. The same happens with expressions such as “*no sea malito, pui*” (p.48), “*fenómeno, che*” (p.50), and the Portuguese idiom “*Preto, preto. Oh meu Deus*” (p.112). These expressions are deliberately brought into the translation through Rodríguez’s strategy to point up the specific symbolic meaning enclosed by these kinds of turns of phrases becomes a remnant of the translation. The

above-named examples represent cultural marks that resist a "fluent" translation since the author does not resolve or synthesize the difference and offers a text tainted with foreign words. By giving place to these speeches without employing footnotes or glossaries to explain them, Rodríguez is undermining the straightforward appropriation by Anglophone hegemonic readership and giving greater legitimacy to her culture represented in the text.

Lastly, there is a significant amplification by means of additions in Rodríguez's translation of the story "bodily yearnings." In this account, the main character, Yolanda Cárcamo, a Chilean woman who works cleaning offices in a building in Vancouver, falls in love with one of her work mates, John McDonald, a young Canadian man. They get married, and everything seems to be working; however, her conflictive past life interferes so strongly in her present life that she feels she is not able to continue and suddenly decides to go back to her country without saying a farewell to her husband. The story is composed of small sub-headed sections, and in the English translation, there are lengthy sections that do not exist in the Spanish text. The added fragments correspond to three pages with charts that detail information about the reception offered by Yolanda and John on the day of their marriage ceremony. Summarized, the lengthy added material looks as follows:

*Guests who attended the wedding: [...]*

*Guests who were not able to attend the wedding but whose phantoms attended anyway: [...]* (p.131)

*Phantoms who attended the wedding without being invited: [...]*

*Refreshments and banquet items: [...]* (p.132)

*Drinks: [...]*

*Cake: [...]*

*Wedding waltzes: [...]* (p.133)

This textual and narrative addition in the translation reveals Rodríguez's reelaboration of the Spanish text forasmuch as this author considers that self-translation is a transformative experience "[in which] the result is not a copy, but rather an *other* work" (Stos, 2007, p.145). Rodríguez chooses an active translation and spares no effort to create a new text from the Spanish account rather than a passive or literal practice. Once more, the language in this sub-section is a juxtaposed language with plenty of culture-bound elements. They are composed of unfamiliar lexical items, on the one hand, and metaphorical elements that give meaning to the story, on the other hand. This fragment addition and its semantic particularities represents an amplification strategy of translation that highlights the defamiliarized elements making her translational strategy visible and destabilizing the hegemonic appropriation of the text.

Rodríguez's additions and active translation strategies can be interpreted in Ortiz's theory as a rejection of acculturation. Her English translation *and a body to remember with* represents a transcultural phenomenon in the sense that it reveals the cultural contact of both the author/translator. The text within the target language and culture does not correspond to a "copy" but a "transmutation" (Paz, 1992, p.160).

Additionally, since literary translation symbolizes “an analogous form of intercultural writing” (Tymoczko, 1998, p.36), Rodríguez’s translation becomes unquestionably a form of writing that echoes her transculturation process. Writing as a form of translation is discussed in the following section and analyzed in both Rodríguez and Kokis’ work.

## 2.2. Writing as Translation

“I have never known which my first language was, and have felt fully at home in neither, although I dream in both. Every time I speak an English sentence, I find myself echoing it in Arabic, and vice versa” (Said, 2000, p.557).

The works *and a body to remember with* and *Le pavillon des miroirs* are embedded in interplay between the native and adoptive languages and cultures that they represent. The examination of the writing process of these authors implies looking at their self-translation experience and represents a complementary part in the analysis of the metaphorical translation of the characters embedded in these literary texts. This notion of self-translation conveys Rodríguez and Kokis’ metaphorical translation as immigrants in Canada, in this case, through their writing practice. Such dimension of translation has common characteristics with the others already mentioned. In this sense, these authors’ verbal creations represent the materialization of their metaphorical translation.

Discussion of Rodríguez and Kokis’ writing processes may prompt questions about whether these authors can truly be considered post-colonial writers. Although post-colonial theory in its literal and original definition used to refer to the cultural and socio-political phenomena within the formerly colonized peoples and their gained political independences, the term has enormously evolved beyond those limits and it is

currently applied to a plurality of contexts embedded in power differential relationships or relations between powerful and powerless social groups. Indeed, in his book *Translation and Empire* (1997) Douglas Robinson discusses and exemplifies some instances in which translation has been a medium for colonization and the continuation of colonial attitudes in other spaces different from colonial contexts in the strict sense. Additional to this outstanding work on post-colonial translation theory, the author Robert J. C. Young has also supported the current broad scope of post-colonial theory and provided a concise and clear account of the history and main ideas of this theory in his work *Post-colonialism: A very Short Introduction* (2003). Young draws on fundamental ideas from the major post-colonial scholars such as Edward Said, Frantz Fanon, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Spivak and applies them to specific cultural and historical cases.

Arising from cultural anthropology, post-colonial translation theory is based on the idea that translation has served as a channel of empire. This paper's introduction to this critical approach focuses on how translation is used to colonize and how colonial attitudes survive in the translation *marketplace*. Nevertheless, it is essential to highlight that the post-colonialism concept does not imply that colonization has concluded since "the prefix 'post' conveys the idea that colonization has happened, and [that] the field focuses on the strategies indigenous cultures have developed to combat and to deal with *continuing* colonization, and on possible approaches to decolonization" (Leggatt, 2003, p.117).

To consider Rodríguez and Kokis as post-colonial writers involves looking at their experience of migration and how it has compelled them to rearrange their

identities within the target space while becoming part of minorities among the majority. In other words, “the fact of having abandoned both [their] native language and native location” (Bassnett&Trivedi, 1998, p.12) turns into a constitutive condition for them to be regarded as post-colonial writers. The translation scholars Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi also conclude that, for various writers “translingual, translocational translation [becomes] the necessary first step to becoming a post-colonial writer” (p. 12). Such circumstances locate both writers in the “third space” theorized by Homi Bhabha (1994), with all the implications it entails. As a result, their discourse is produced from that in-between space and takes into the account the expressiveness of both languages and cultures.

The great number of “trans” prefixes that can be associated with these authors anticipates the transformation nature following their physical and cultural dislocation. As post-colonial writers, Rodríguez and Kokis transpose in their works particular aspects of their languages, cognitive system, worldview, and experiences that were shaped within their culture and that are reframed in the new milieu. Discussing post-colonial writing and its relation to translation, Tymoczko claims, “the culture or tradition of a post-colonial writer acts as a metatext which is rewritten –explicitly or implicitly, as both background and fore ground– in the act of literary creation” (Tymoczko in Bassnett, 1998, p.21). The respective Chilean and Brazilian cultural background of these authors is conveyed by their literary texts.

The use of the majority language by both authors may be interpreted as a political decision to communicate their literary work to a broader audience in a dissent position towards silence. In one of Kokis’ articles about literary writing, he states,

l'afflux formidable des étrangers venus des contrées périphériques et qui ne cessent d'envahir les capitales du nord. Ces nouveaux barbares [...] possèdent de mieux en mieux la langue des colonisateurs, laquelle est la seule qui leur donne accès à l'universalisation de leur imaginaire d'origine. Ils immigreront, ils s'installent et, au fur et à mesure, ils introduisent la façon d'être de leurs mondes respectifs, leurs histoires et leur sensualité dans la structure cognitive et linguistique des métropoles (Kokis, 1999, p.135).

The hegemonic language allows minority writers the possibility of an “*universalisation de leur imaginaire d'origine.*” In particular for these authors, the fact of writing in English and French, respectively, stands for a linguistic appropriation of the mainstream code in order to introduce their imaginations and voices. This dynamic is illustrated by Rodríguez when she refers to her writing as “bilingual efforts [that] are one way of telling Canada that we Latin Americans are here to stay, that we belong here, and that we have a mother tongue, even though it is not one of the official languages of Canada” (Rodríguez 1995, p.213). Thus, working in a language different from their mother language does not strictly signify that they wish to conceal or deny their own language and imaginings but to borrow and integrate with these the possibilities of the others.

The coexistence of mother and adoptive language in the works of Rodríguez and Kokis results in a language that comes from both. In Samia Mehrez's terms, the “texts written by post-colonial bilingual subjects create a language *in between* and therefore come to occupy a space *in between*” (quoted in Bassnett, 1998, p.55).

### 2.3. Linguistic Juxtaposition

This section observes how Kokis and Rodríguez use elements from their previous culture and compares that to use of those in the new environment. The authors' Latino-Canadian identities reverberate in their hybrid texts, through which they appropriate and translate components from their acquired cultures. This fact has been theorized by authors like Jaina Sanga (2001), who highlights the fact that the mingling of two cultures joined by the hyphen leads to new signs of identity that will take elements from both of them. This hyphenated identity is explicitly recognized by Rodríguez: "I have become a Chilean-Canadian. Chilean dash Canadian. Chilean hyphen Canadian" (Rodríguez 1995, p. 211). Such a "dash condition" in both authors leads them to the possibility of reframing reality and creating a literature where we can find elements proceeding from both cultures in contact.

This section presents a lexical level since other levels of analysis (such as sentence, text, paratext or even metaphors categories) require of an extensive elaboration, and therefore might be the object of a further and comprehensive project. Moreover, this lexical analysis does not aim a comparative analysis of Rodríguez and Kokis' texts; the purpose is to interpret the significance of the linguistic coexistence in the writing strategies of both authors instead of establishing common patterns in their linguistic uses. In other words, the aim is to interpret and highlight the use of proper nouns, borrowed names, and the sporadic calqued idioms that these authors tend to leave in Spanish and Portuguese by looking at some key elements. In this examination they represent a symptom of hybridization not as discernible as other cases of the

hybrid languages, such as the Franglais or the Spanglish idioms, but not less significant.

Both literary works present several characters condensed into the voice of the main character. The linguistic problem is evident not only in the plot, where the main character embodies a complex situation of language coexistence, but also in the juxtaposed language employed. The double linguistic code or the incorporation of both languages proves how the authors create a language that is a clear sign of the cultural interaction and transfer within the author's identity.

In her article, "I write myself: The Female Body as a Site of Transculturation in the Short Stories of Carmen Rodríguez." Carol Stos asserts "physical, emotional, and linguistic estrangement, distance and struggle [...] define the existence of everyone in the state of dissociation of being in and between two cultures, acted upon by the persistence of the past within the hegemony of the present" (Stos in Cheadle, 2007, p.142). This statement summarizes Carmen Rodríguez's position within the target society, which, as has been claimed before, is reflected in the language, themes, and characters of her texts. The "physical, emotional, and linguistic estrangement, distance and struggle" may be defined as a form of self-translation through which this author as well as Kokis attempts to resolve the dislocation and in betweenness.

Both authors self-translate their dislocation/relocation experiences through the linguistic conflict in their works. These "signes d'alterité" (Simon, 1994) are placed through the lingual fusion as well as the heterogeneity in the discourse of their characters. Whereas in the work *and a body to remember with* there is a linguistic coexistence of Spanish and English, *Le pavillon des miroirs* conveys a linguistic

fusion of Portuguese and French. In both cases, Kokis and Rodríguez's mother tongues are incorporated by means of Brazilian and Chilean cultural elements and expressions. Some of these numerous elements can be briefly classified and exemplified as follows:

### **Rodríguez**

- **Geographical Landmarks:** Castillo Velasco (p. 22), Monjitas street (p. 33), Alameda (p. 34), Cerro Santa Lucia and Miraflores Street (p. 35), Avenida de Mayo (p. 50), the Andes (p. 56), Huasco, Elqui, Limari, Choapa, Petorca, Aconcagua (p. 151), Universidad de Chile, Santa Lucia, Baquedano, La Moneda (p. 152).
- **Cultural References to Popular Music and Characters:** Cortazar (p. 54), Pedro de Valdivia (p. 82), the Mapuche chief (p. 82), Mercedes Sosa, Quilapayun, Violeta Parra, Inti Illimani, Angel Parra, Victor Jara, Isabel Parra (p. 95), Antofagasta waltz (p. 133), Duerme, Duerme Negrito, La Petaquita, De Colores, (p. 162).
- **Traditions:** señoras knitting and bawling their eyes out señores watching the Colo Colo soccer game on a Saturday afternoon (p. 89), peñas (p. 159), "hunger strike in support of the relatives of the *desaparecidos* in Chile" (p. 160).
- **Oral Language and Chilean Idioms:** campesinos (p. 122), Mamita (p. 147), "salud... salud por el retorno" (p. 31), "no sea malito, pui..." (p. 48), "Malena canta el tango como ninguna/ y en cada verso pone su corazón" (p. 85), "meu Deus" (p. 111), "Chile es una larga y angosta faja de tierra - Chile is a long and narrow strip of land" (p. 122), "gringa pelotuda" (p. 154).

- **Chilean Food:** cazuela, charquicán, salpicón, pancuras, chupe de queso, pastel de choclo (p. 34), Sunday empanadas (p. 40,144), sopaipillas (p. 88), Concha y Toro (p. 89), picante de albacora (p. 101), mate (p. 102), caldillo de congrio [...] pastel de choclo, corn cacerola, or porotos granados (p. 152).

### Kokis

- **Oral Language:** dépêche (a place for macumba practices), zone (a prostitution zone), “le nègre, lorsqu’il ne salit pas à l’entrée, salit à la sortie” (p. 37), “On dit que celui qui donne un coup de pied dans un paquet de macumba va mourir dans l’année” (p. 56), “La nuit venue, ce ne sont pas nos pieds qu’ils viendront tirer” (p. 80).
- **Cultural References:** carnaval, religious festivities, religious and sorcery practices, september 7 parade, pirusão (112).
- **Geographical Landmarks:** Rio de Janeiro, towns in northern Brazil.

Both Rodríguez and Kokis use clearly different strategies to intersperse these cultural referents in their works. On the one hand, in her English version, Rodríguez presents the rewording (Jakobson, 1959) of some of the culture-specific words and expressions within her Spanish work. An example might be the sentence “*Chile es una larga y angosta faja de tierra - Chile is a long and narrow strip of land*” (p. 122), which is hyphenated to its literal translation as a way of explicit explanation for the non-bilingual reader. Yet, in some other cases, this author chooses to straight rewrite the Spanish words into the English text, as with the several Spanish terms of endearment

such as *mijita* and *mamita*, which for the Anglo reader might not have sense or emotional connotation.

Conversely, Kokis prefers in most cases to give the literal translation of the Brazilian sayings and terms instead of rendering them in their original Portuguese transcriptions. Kokis' translation yields expressions such as «vides de sens en français [par exemple] jambon (corps abandonné après avoir été assassiné)» (Figueiredo, 2000, p.7). Interpreting Kokis' translated expressions and terms, Euridice Figueiredo states: «pour le lecteur brésilien, le processus de traduction [de cet écrivain] est clair, mais il passe inaperçu aux yeux du lecteur québécois» (ibid., 2000, p.7). So for the monolingual French reader, the meaning of these expressions will be based only on the contextual ideas that guarantee the account's coherence. This situation reveals that although the works of both authors are mainly recreated in Canada, they greatly depend on their Chilean and Brazilian cultural contexts. These contexts play the role of backdrops upon which these narratives make their meaning. The moments that may evoke very little for the Canadian reader are the more cultural specific aspects in these works.

Rodríguez and Kokis' interlinguistic constituents in their works embody what Sherry Simon (1994) has described as the "effet de traduction" since in their writing "la confrontation des langues constitue un élément significatif de [...] dynamique textuelle, soit sur le plan thématique, soit sur celui du code linguistique" (Simon, 1994, p.19). They reveal a survival of the authors' native culture and are signs of their transculturation. In spite of the power play between these languages within the texts and their concrete stories, the fact of preserving those linguistic elements in their

original language produces a dynamic of cooperation between the “*altérité culturelle*” (Simon 1994) of the minor and dominant languages.

The preservation in the texts may also be explained as an unavoidable coexistence of both languages within the identities of both authors, Spanish and English in the case of Rodríguez, Portuguese and French in the case of Kokis. It reflects their growing linguistic confusion because of the impossibility of “[feeling] fully at home in neither” and the perennial “echoing” (Said, 2000, p.557) of their two languages. The simultaneous presence of their mother tongue and the adoptive language in both Rodríguez and Kokis’ texts is a situation that resembles what Said (2000) describes as a reciprocal echoing of one voice over the other.

In their writing practices, translation has become an intrinsic part of their lives for both Rodríguez and Kokis and a medium of survival, a situation aptly described by Rodríguez:

Living and working in a hyphen is not easy. Translation is hard work. You write, you translate. You rewrite, you translate again. But the fact is that as immigrants we have got used to working double to be recognized and then paid half. In this country I have been a janitor, a cook, a teacher... I have worked with brooms, mops, pots, pans. The struggle is the same. Only these days I am working mainly with words: powerful tools. Or are they weapons? *La lucha continua. Gracias* (Rodríguez, 1995, p.213).

Talking about her linguistic practice of translation, Rodríguez underlines the highly demanding continuity of this practice, interrelating it with her personal life. Her process of adaptation in Canada has been a challenge that entails a self-translation, a common condition of post-colonial and migrant subjects. Self-translation implies a carrying over of a subject’s own cultural material into the

modified identity now inhabited by elements of the dominant culture in which the subject is inserted.

To sum up, as migrant authors located in «les zones interlinguistiques [...] l'espace 'entre'» (Simon, 1990) in contemporary Canadian writing, both Rodríguez and Kokis tackle identity and cultural hybridization issues in their texts. Despite their insertion in the Canadian context, a great part of the thematic and linguistic connotations of their work relies on their Chilean and Brazilian cultural frameworks. Therefore, their works are transcultural creations that not only reflect linguistic and cultural conflicts that take place in migration experience but also depict the “caractère inachevé et transitoire” (Simon, 1999, p. 40) of migrant people's identities.

As has been noted, Rodríguez and Kokis' narrative strategies employ a series of “effets interlinguistiques” (Simon, 1994) in their narrations that juxtapose their native and adoptive languages and sparkle their discourses with ethnic elements. Their narrative strategies are based on the insertion of Chilean and Brazilian socio-cultural references by means of the above-described linguistic effects. In addition, these numerous ethnic references are thematically interrelated with aspects of Canadian culture and society.

Indeed, the linguistic elements represent an essential component of Rodríguez and Kokis' narrative strategies since they lead to the interplay of native/adoptive languages and cultures in their works. However, as has been illustrated, the ethnic socio-cultural elements in their writing appear meaningless for non-bilingual readers. To acquire connotation, these elements call for a linguistic and metaphorical translation, which will allow cultural interaction. In this sense, the

narrative strategies of both authors create «un jeu subtil de traduction/non-traduction [des] signes d'altérité» (Ramière, 2003, p.177) within their writing because of the bilingual coexistence.

One of their narrative strategies to bring the culture-specific words and expressions into their works corresponds to an appropriation of the adoptive language, with complete translations of the expression being given, without reference to any subtitles of interpretation that would be ignored by readers non-familiar with the authors' culture. In some other cases, there is a literal translation hyphenated to the original expressions. This strategy for integrating the Spanish and Portuguese terms into the English and French works gives the explicit explanation for the monolingual reader. It may relate to the re-inscription strategy, which in turn, implies the non-translation through rewriting of the cultural terms in their native language. This fact has a political and collective sense because it leads the readership to translate the text by themselves. Furthermore, as minor literature is “construct[ed] within a major language” (Guattari & Deleuze, 1986, p.16), the decision of these authors to write in the target language leads to their works being designated minor literature in the Canadian context. Therefore, the linguistic coexistence in Rodríguez and Kokis' works may be also understood as a linguistic “deterritorialization” for the English and French major languages. This dislocation reflects Rodríguez and Kokis' cultural disruption thematically and linguistically highlighted through their characters. The linguistic juxtaposition is a sign of the fragmentary condition of these authors' identity and characters as well as the identity construction processes undergone during their migrant experiences.

Rodríguez and Kokis' works are undoubtedly exemplars of the buoys referred to by Aciman in the epigraph to this chapter that promise them survival within their linguistic confrontation and their identity transculturation.

### **Chapter Three: Time and Space in Metaphorical Translation**

“The one thing exiles do almost as a matter of instinct: compulsive retrospection with their memories perpetually on overload, exiles see double, feel double, are double”  
(Aciman, 1999, p. 13).

Chapter Two sought to present the authors in this work and highlight their writing as manifestations of their self-translations. Images and metaphors of time and space in Rodríguez and Kokis’ accounts are signs of translation and mirror the transformations of their characters in their migrant experience. This chapter examines these spatial-temporal images and metaphors to facilitate retracing of the processes of translation undergone by certain characters and showing how they manage to “transcode” (Cutter, 2005) their identity.

Spatial relocation is a catalyst for the metaphorical translation of Rodríguez and Kokis’ characters as a consequence of the assimilation of new ideas and values as well as the reconfiguration of their own within the host environment. The physical displacement entails a psychological level of relocation by these migrant characters within the host socio-cultural context. Accordingly, examination of both time and space proves the above premises since these elements play an essential role in the characters’ attempts at home rebuilding.

In this chapter, space is used to refer to the physical place in which characters are located as well as the imaginary and cultural space in their thoughts. In particular, the material spaces that these characters inhabit are also referred as their external space; simultaneously, the imaginary spaces indicate their internal territories. Furthermore, throughout this analysis, the notion of time informs these characters’

allusions to their own memories since these latter facilitate distinguishing past and present experiences in their chronicles.

The title story in one of Rodríguez's collection clearly illustrates the relevance of space for the self-translation of the main character. "black hole" narrates the migrant experience of Estela de Ramírez, who leaves Chile in the company of her husband, a political prisoner, and their two little girls, Natalia and Panchi. Due to the Chilean crisis, the family asks for political asylum in Canada; once accepted, they immigrate and settle in Vancouver. They initiate a new life under conflictive situations, while their relatives in Chile have always the hope of them coming back. In their new life, they endeavor to adapt themselves as much as possible to the host society. Estela works as a nurse in a day care, Manuel starts up a garage, and their girls become accustomed to their social life at school. It might be underlined that parallel to the account of the family, the story also describes the main character's dreams; these entail a great symbolic value because they disclose the internal space of this character.

On one occasion, Estela's mother visits them in Canada, yet she leaves earlier than expected because she cannot adapt herself to the strangeness of the environment and feels terribly isolated. The situation worsens because this grandmother cannot communicate with her granddaughters because the two prefer to speak English instead of Spanish. Ten years later, Estela's mother calls to let them know that Manuel has been taken off of the blacklist and they can thus return home. Nevertheless, Estela and her family postpone the homecoming, and the story concludes with an uncertain end describing one of her meaningful dreams.

The use of the name of a celestial object for the title of the story, “black hole,” highlights its relevance as a metaphor of space-time all through the tale. Before immigrating to Canada, Estela’s daughters used to ask their mother what Canada looks like; however, she cannot answer them. Estela constantly associates this North American country with a hole, which illustrates her unawareness and highlights her uncertainty about their future there. Her limited ideas about this “hole called Canada” (Rodríguez, 1997, p.20) are based on some pictures depicting a place with snow-topped mountains in an issue of *National Geographic*, which might be located in Switzerland instead of Canada. Nevertheless, during their flight, this country becomes irreversibly a part of Estela’s identity, “a miniature Santiago disappeared beneath the clouds while the hole called Canada began to take possession of Estela de Ramírez’s stomach, chest, throat, head, ears, and mouth” (p. 21). The departure from Chile symbolically entails the arrival of the adoptive country in Estela’s mind and identity through the figurative “devouring” (de Andrade, 1928) of her body by Canada. The representation of this country *taking possession* of Estela’s body denotes the impossibility of withdrawing the metaphorical translation process from this character. Given that translation “permet à ce qui est extérieur de devenir intérieur” (Laplantine, 1995, p.505), the symbolic appropriation of Estela’s body by “hole” points out a translation of the external space into her internal one. However, this appropriation represents a problematic decoding because of the disruption it entails. Canada may be seen as an entity that alters the continuity of Estela’s body leading her to lose control of her life.

The initial uncertainty that Canada represents for Estela diminishes as time passes, and “after one week, [she] already knew a few things of [this country]” (p. 21). In contradiction, the more she knows about this new space, the more Chile becomes fuzzy in her mind. Meanwhile, she begins having recurring dreams that end when her surroundings fall “into a black hole called Canada” (p. 22). The frequent spatial confusion of both countries in her dreams suggests lack of clarity in her feelings about Canada in Estela’s mind, despite the increasing familiarity with this country in her conscious life; for instance, “instead of seeing the Santiago Cathedral, she [sees] the Vancouver City Hall building” (p. 33). From a psychoanalytic approach, the confused images in Estela’s dreams may represent displacements of meaning since “in the course of the dream work the physical intensity passes over from the thoughts and ideas to which it properly belongs on to others which in our judgment have no claim to any such emphasis” (Freud, 1989, p.34). In Freudian terms, the spatial confusion of this character maps a movement of “transvaluation” in which she unconsciously displaces her symbolic values from one space to another.

Estela’s value reassignments and her chaotic spatial mingling peak when her mother tells her that they can come back: “when Estela de Ramírez was told that she could go back to Chile, she was invaded by a mixture of excitement and terror, anxiety and nostalgia” (p. 32). Moreover, the narration continues, describing how “those first few weeks after the call, Estela lived in a thick fog” (p.33), and this fog image can be understood as an additional symbol of confusion. The call produces a crisis in the apparent harmony achieved by these characters, since at that moment, Estela not only

postpones coming back but also attempts to reconnect herself with Chile. She listens to Chilean music and prepares Chilean food for her family once more.

The mixture of the once unmistakable Chile and the now familiar Canada is the point where both the external and internal places interweave:

During the day, while she played with the children at the day care centre or drove in the Vancouver traffic, she made efforts to remember places, faces, smells, colors, accents, but she never achieves the clarity that she was looking for. Everything appeared blurred, pale, and distorted (p. 33).

This continuous switching of images introduces time as a medium of connection for external and internal fragmented spaces as well as for past and present in the life of this character. While at the beginning Canada has a blurred connotation for Estela, as time passes by, Canada becomes familiar in her mind, but as well, Canada and Chile begin to merge confusingly. The possibility of going back, announced by her mother's call, symbolically mixes up both levels. Thus, the meaning of the internal space for Estela is seen through the mingling of those places and the recurrent black blotches. For Estela, in the end, both spaces indicate confusion and converge into a black hole from which she cannot manage to escape.

This black hole in Estela's dreams accentuates her gradual confusing of scenes in Canada and Chile: "the dreams in which Chilean and Canadian scenes blurred together repeated every night. Stanley Park would show up by the ocean in Viña del Mar, or the Alameda would replace Burrard Street in downtown Vancouver" (p. 34). The *mélange* and the growing black holes in her dreams highlight the inability of Estela to separate the representation of these spaces in her mind:

In the middle of the walkway a big dark blotch appeared. Estela approached it cautiously and looked at it with curious eyes. There was nothing there. Only blackness. [...] She decided to walk back, but when she turned around, another black hole had appeared behind her. She looked around for something to hold on to [...] When she realized that she was surrounded by nothingness, she wanted to hug her own body, only she realized that her body was the hole and the hole was her (p. 35).

The black hole is thus a metaphor that spatially depicts the erratic translation process of Estela and to some extent the failure of this process. By comparing her new home, Canada, to a black hole, she is indicating to what extent her migration is an abyss. A black hole is an area of *space-time* with an intense gravitational field (Encarta, 2007). Having in mind that black holes are the aftermath of a supernova with the collapse of the star's core, within the text the metaphorical black hole represents the outcome of the collision of the two worlds. Additionally when a massive star ends its life in a supernova explosion, the remaining matter collapses in upon itself; this similarly happens when this character realizes “that her body was the hole and the hole was her” (p. 35). This fact frightens her because it reveals her self-strangeness while becoming other.

Estela's metamorphosis into a black hole, far from being an act of self-disintegration, is an act of translation since “traduire [...] c'est cheminer en dehors de soi, c'est devenir *autre*. [...] a travers la découverte du fait que j'étais étranger a moi-même, mais je ne le savais pas” (Laplantine, 1995, p. 507). At the end of the story, the character is aware of her transformation into a black hole.

Estela's back and forth movement between Chile and Canada relates to her self-transformation since in seeing, for instance, Burrard Street in downtown Vancouver instead of La Alameda, Estela has built a bridge between her inward and

outward spaces. Such spatial union shows how this character unconsciously reassigns value to the places in her life. In this sense, Estela's revaloration conveys translation since "traduire [...] c'est établir des passerelles entre le même et l'autre, traverse des espaces, revenir a soi, repartir sans jamais trouver le repos" (p. 505). The close relationship between space/time and translation in this account allows the association of the Chilean landscapes to Estela's self and the Canadian sceneries to otherness, the other being approached by Estela. In this view, the spatial and chronological puzzlement in this character suggests a negotiation between those known spaces that compose her identity and those recently recognized. Her spatial/temporal disorientations are channels that Estela uses to translate meanings from one side to the other and vice versa in an attempt to find a place where she can simultaneously be a Chilean and Canadian. Both sides are equally central components of her identity.

The connotation of space for Estela de Ramírez has some differences with the analyzed character in Kokis' *Le pavillon des miroirs*. As briefly summarized before, this novel alternates the narration of the main character's childhood and adolescence in Brazil and his adulthood as an immigrant in Canada. The main character in this novel is caught between two cultural worlds represented by the warmth and lively memories of his past in Brazil and his different life as an exiled painter in Canada. Once more, space is used to describe the real settings and the imaginary spaces in this character's mind. Similar to the discussion of "black hole," the following discussion interprets the images and metaphors of time and space that constantly fluctuate in this novel.

The external space for the main character in Kokis' *Le pavillon des miroirs* covers two macro spaces respectively located in Brazil and Canada, each of them containing certain other spaces. They are portrayed by the narrative voice in separated chapters through temporal and spatial descriptions. Thus, there is an alternation of the child and the adult's narrations that not only describe different experiences but also offer different points of view. Chronologically, the past space corresponds to Brazil, and the foreign and present space is mainly recreated in Canada, with some brief allusions to European places. Therefore, the reader may find a clear association of the child's narration with the past and the Brazilian context as well as the adult's narration with the present and the Canadian context.

Both descriptions use the present tense; however, the account of the child corresponds to the painter's memories and therefore to the past temporality. Migration represents a disturbing event in the life of this character, a topic primarily addressed in the last chapter of this thesis. This character's retrospections represent his attempts at identity reconstruction after the fragmentation produced by his migration: "m'abandonnant aux souvenirs, je reconstruis alors mes choses" (Kokis, 1994, p.71). In the present space, this character rebuilds his identity by means of his memories, which lead him to bridge his precedent and present-day spaces. The present tense in this narration gives the sensation of being in front of two well- delimited spaces, two settings meticulously illustrated.

The first of these spaces is located at home, in Brazil during the fifties; the character is a child who lives in a low-class neighborhood, which is inhabited by many marginal people, and poverty represents their common lot. Truck drivers, prostitutes,

vagrants, and children, among others, compose the human mosaic in this environment. This boy's mother is a profoundly religious and paradoxically a superstitious woman who has a brothel in their home. His father is a rational man who has a small workshop where he makes lamps and tries to improve them by inventing new forms of elaboration. After the gradual establishment of his mother's brothel, the father moves further away from his family and even buys an old house to where he moves his workshop. The past space is recreated through the child's narration of some shocking experiences that he witnessed, such as the rape of a helpless woman by four men, the corrupted and ill-intentioned requisitions by the police, the innumerable corpses abandoned in the street, etc.

Kokis' character learns about the immense poverty and hopelessness in some rural villages during his trip as a schoolboy to the north of the country. This experience becomes a causal factor for his identification with the suffering as well as a source of inspiration for his paintings, which recreate miserable characters, the decrepit and sick people he met in northern Brazil. An equally striking event, is the moment when he realizes that his house is a brothel whose leader is his own mother. In order to prevent his classmates learning his secret, this boy opts for isolation as a self-protection strategy. His childhood segregation will be continued and accentuated during his adult life because of the vulnerability that this character experiences with his migration.

This latter event represents, for him, disruption on a social and personal level. However, contrary to Estela, Kokis' character does not undergo spatial and temporal confusion. Instead, he manages to make a clear distinction between both spaces

throughout his narration. Estela unsuccessfully struggles to set apart the ongoing spatial disorientation, whereas *Le pavillon*'s character is consciously located in his present space through his nostalgic thoughts. He constantly compares the difference between the past and present spaces and temporalities by means of his recurring remembrances and rational insights about both spaces.

The second space recreated in this novel is Montreal, although there are also references to European cities that Kokis' character briefly inhabited before coming to Canada, for instance, Rome:

Les rues étaient habitées par des gens blancs; les rares Noirs me semblaient blancs, eux aussi, à cause de leurs habits et de leurs corps bien nourris. On aurait dit que les automobiles étaient toutes neuves, et elles s'arrêtaient aux feux de circulation avec une discipline presque magique. Plus merveilleux encore, elles laissaient passer les piétons! [...] tout avait l'air propre, les jardins aux plans géométriques, les ruines à leur place. Les rictus de haine, les haillons, les estropiés et les misérables faisaient défaut dans cette ville harmonieuse (p. 201-2).

The images in this passage illustrate Kokis' character's continuous comparison of both spaces. The spatial divergences between his tropical and untidy homeland and the foreign neat spaces induce this character to feel disoriented because of the unusual attitudes and behaviors potentially expected of him. However, he finds a method to overcome the spatial disorientation, which does not happen in the case of Estela. After some years of living abroad, painting develops into Kokis' character's technique to take advantage of his "dépaysement" (p.203). In this sense, his aesthetic practice constitutes a method to deconstruct and reconstruct his past and present imaginings:

Cette activité s'accompagnait fréquemment de souvenirs divers, encore désordonnés, mais chaque fois plus présents. Mon passé se faisait de la sorte plus pressant, et il

s'imposait sous la forme de scènes d'enfance, d'odeurs, de saveurs, et même de certaines expressions langagières complètement oubliées (p. 137).

The many images of brothels, macumba rituals, carnival, and dead people found in the embankments become a backdrop to the socio-cultural situations portrayed by the child and reconstructed by the adult character in his paintings, as with the painful scene of a dead man in the railway described by the child character:

C'était un homme étendu à côté des rails, comme une marionnette tombée à la renverse. [...] mon père avait déjà vu la scène à d'autres occasions, et le fait était bien connu des autorités du chemin de fer. Après tout, ce n'était que des pauvres, trop pressés d'arriver chez eux par fois après deux heures de trajet. Le maigre salaire, les trains bondés et souvent en retard, la peur des voleurs, la fatigue de la journée, la famille, la misère (p. 144).

Such a traumatic view remains strongly attached to this character's memories and is revived through his first painting in the present space. His adult voice reconstructs this same scene: "accrochés comme des fourmis autour des wagons, ils tombaient, anonymes et solitaires. Voilà mon tableau, l'image de ce que je avais vu il y a si longtemps" (p.144). These pictorial connections between past and present spaces and temporalities by means of painting signify a recovery and translation of his painful experiences "hors de [sa] tête" (p. 75) into his present space.

Translating his past memories into the present space implies a reassignment of meaning since "once translated, none of the parts involved remains the same: meanings are remixed" (Wolf in Simon, 2000, p.140). In this sense, painting might be seen as an instrument of translation that allows him to rebuild the past space. This reevaluation is tackled in this thesis' last chapter. Some of his trivial images acquire

signification, but despite this, the character is not fond of his motherland, and he finds that his paintings portray only people and objects from his childhood.

This chapter has discussed the most relevant spatial-temporal images and metaphors in Rodríguez and Kokis' texts. The spatial movement of these characters is a trigger element for their metaphorical translation because following the shift of external space; it prompts the never-ending transculturation that interweaves a complex chain of adjustments, adaptations, and appropriations. Moreover, in the new spatial setting "[these] individuals become bi- or multicultural along a complex translation process which, while ensuring their survival, also transforms" (Malena, 2003, p. 11). Thus, the unlikeness between past and present environments and conditions not only transforms both characters but also induces in them a constant reframing of their reality.

This study set out to determine the way in which these images and metaphors imply translation and reflect the examined characters' changes during their migrant experience. One of the more significant findings to emerge from this examination is that the images and metaphors alluding to space/time in both accounts are closely related to these characters' retrospections but have different connotations. In the case of Estela, they reveal the fragmented and painful condition of her identity. For Kokis' character, the images and metaphors related to space and time indicate the state of dislocation of this character as well as his attempts at identity recuperation.

The second major finding is that both Estela's dreams and the paintings of Kokis' character represent mediums discovered by these characters to "transvaluate" cultural and emotional aspects from one space into another. Comparing these two

transforming methods, it can be seen that they are attempts of both characters to harmonize their lost and present spaces within their minds with the aim of finding a home.

Both time and space are relevant elements for the development of these accounts. The images and metaphors of space/time in Rodríguez and Kokis' texts enhance the «caractère inachevé et transitoire des identités » (Simon 1999, p. 40) while illustrating the close relationship between translation and space-time within migration contexts.

## Chapter Four: Metaphorical Translation and Identity

Le fragmentaire n'est pas le fragmente. Celui-ci traduit négativement la perte d'unité idéalisée alors que le premier affirme la force d'une identité nourrie de tous les possibles, avec des racines comme autant de branches agitées par le vent » (Nouss, 2005, p. 113).

“translation typifies [...] a remaking of not only language but also racial, generational, and cultural identities” (Cutter, 2005, p.2)

The discussion in Chapter Three sought to examine the spatial-temporal images and metaphors in Rodríguez and Kokis' writing. These elements portray different aspects of the metaphorical translation in these authors' characters during their transition from one culture to another. The discussion in this chapter focuses on these characters at the present time in each story, that is to say, in the moments when they have already managed to settle in Canada despite the conflictive states they may have undergone and those that persist in their lives. In some of the accounts, the main characters narrate from their present moment, and through flashbacks, reveal the processes experienced after their migration to Canada through flashbacks, whereas in other tales, an alternative narrative voice recounts the past and current situations.

This chapter takes up these stories and considers the translation of the examined characters' identity through the images and metaphors that epitomize the conflicts between their ethnicity and the target social codes. This allows interpretation of the elements that contribute to the possible loss and gain in the metaphorical translation of these characters.

Before proceeding, this section first provides a brief explanation of the central concept to this discussion, the notion of identity. Identity denotes “a complex set of beliefs and attitudes that people have about themselves in relation to their culture group membership; usually these come to the fore when people are in contact with

another culture, rather than when living entirely within a single culture” (Berry, 2002, p.357). Therefore, this notion not only entails individual and collective levels but also becomes an essential feature for examining Rodríguez and Kokis’ migrant characters.

Culture, language, and social norms shape identity and are gradually conveyed through the enculturation process. John W. Berry defines this latter as “a form of cultural transmission by which a society transmits its culture and behavior to its members” (Berry, 2002, p.478). Therefore, when an individual moves into a different cultural setting from his own, he can no longer continue living his traditional way of life or maintain the same behavior and cultural practices. In Rushdie’s (1991) words, having to find “new ways of being human,” Rodríguez and Kokis’ characters go through transfiguration in response to the changing cultural context. This response denotes the translation of the individual’s identity allowing his or her adaptation to the host culture without losing his or her identity or core set of values.

By prompting an identity crisis, the uprootedness in migrant experiences becomes the driving force for the reconfiguration of the individual’s identity. As argued in The Introduction, the transculturation process follows three main phases: acculturation, deculturation, and neoculturation (Ortiz, 1948). In the process that both Rodríguez and Kokis’ characters undergo after their migration, the acculturation stage may imply their acquiring of the adoptive culture and the subsequent rupture from their own culture, language, and customs. The process of deculturation consists of the partial loss and uprooting of their native culture, and their neoculturation process corresponds to their creation of new cultural expressions and values. Throughout

these phases, both the spatial and linguistic relocation of these characters have an altering effect for their identities.

The stories in Rodríguez's volume depict migrant characters whose identity transformations vary significantly. As observed before in the story "black hole," Estela's daughters have a gradual and substantial loss of their cultural traits and seek to actively participate in the larger society. Their metaphorical translation entails their assimilation of the new cultural context and their unwillingness to preserve their own culture. Natalia and Panchi's cultural shedding involves aversion to their culture as represented in a scene where the younger sister comes in crying and recriminating her mother for her appearance: "she blurted out that she hated me, she hated her dad and everybody in the family because we are dark-skinned and have black hair and brown eyes and that's why she is the same way" (p. 24). This character's rejection of her physical appearance symbolizes a conflict in her identity definition. In both Natalia and Panchi, the cultural traits of the new setting are overemphasized, while their already existing Chilean traits cease to be understated. The metaphorical translation of these second-generation characters embodies an impossibility of translation of their cultural roots into the host context. Their complete assimilation of Canadian culture and language entails a translation loss because of the silence of their Chilean culture and mother tongue within them.

In the case of Estela's mother, Maura, her transculturation results in a failure of metaphorical translation. Her decision to go back to Chile epitomizes the unfeasibility of her cultural and social integration. This character relates her life in Vancouver to confinement that reduces her to aloneness and marginalization. Maura's

untranslatability is clearly characterized through the images and metaphors of language, which are discussed in the following chapter. She realizes her inability to relocate her Chilean customs and her native language into the host cultural context. In other words, this story ends with Maura's incapacity to become part of the host society even though she struggles for integration. Therefore, this character does not achieve becoming both Chilean and Canadian.

The complex transformations in Estela's identity are gradual and not as evident as those of her daughters. This mother apparently maintains her cultural heritage and at the same time tries to participate in the new society. Her Chilean culture is strongly fixed in Estela's identity. This can be illustrated with the scene in which the family receives their Canadian citizenship. Estela's mother is extremely concerned because of the possible consequences that this entails for the Chilean identity of this family. Thus, Estela tries to calm her mother on the phone by saying: "mom, you don't stop being who you are because you become a Canadian citizen, you know..." (p. 26). Yet, she is unaware of the significant cultural shedding that she has increasingly experienced and continues experiencing over time. The fact that Estela stops cooking Chilean food at home typifies her deculturation. Food being a cultural element, her new habits of preparing it symbolize a loss of her cultural heritage. Once Estela abandons cooking typical Chilean food, the younger generations represented in her daughters are metaphorically deprived of this cultural contact with their motherland.

The hyphenation of Estela's identity experiences a major crisis the moment she learns that they can return to Chile. The idea of going back allows Estela to realize the full extent of her cultural disorientation: "immigrants and exiles find themselves

neither totally at home in the new culture and place nor able to return comfortably to their old lives, which no longer are as they remember or lived them” (Davis, 2004, p.3). This character’s identity is so transformed that Chile is no longer her undeniable homeland. Both her Chilean and the new culture are now combined within her. This cultural mingling creates puzzling images and sensations that connect her past and present lives.

When Estela realizes that she does not feel attached either to Canada or to Chile, she makes use of her values, language, and cultural traits to reconnect herself to Chile. In doing so, she looks for her “Laura Amenabar’s recipe book, *Para saber cocinar*, which she has brought from Chile and buried in a box as soon as she had arrived in Canada. [...] she had also found the few Chilean music she packed in her suitcase that last night in her Santiago house” (p. 34). Since these items were abandoned and “buried” in a box by Estela, her recovery represents an attempt to make sense between what makes part of her past and what exists now. This cultural recovering portrays Estela’s attempt to negotiate her conflicting Chilean and Canadian ethnic heritages. Yet, Estela’s metaphorical translation represents a lost of translation because of her disorientation and lack of self-control at the end of the story. Her metamorphosis into a black hole epitomizes Estela’s separation from the host society because of her inability to translate the source text, her ethnicity, into the target text, her adoptive heritage. Therefore, Estela’s self-translation fails to balance her dissimilar linguistic and cultural heritages.

Another of the accounts in *and a body to remember with* recreates the story of a character called Grandma Flora. The narration takes place in the small community

of Port Hardy, a town located on the north-eastern coast of Vancouver Island. The narrator and main character is a Chilean woman who goes to visit this community. There she meets Adriana, a Brazilian instructor who teaches reading and writing to First Nations adults. Grandma Flora is an indigenous woman from a Canadian aboriginal community, who lives a solitary and marginal life. Her brother, Charlie, disappeared after their mandatory social integration by the Government of Canada. Before their legal registration, Grandma Flora and her brother used to live apart from white society and were practically hidden by their mother. Their pleasant life had a radical and harmful change after their status was changed by the Canadian government. They were compelled to become part of white society, which generates the multiple conflicts they faced. This leads Grandma Flora and her brother to crime, substance abuse, health problems, suicide, and so forth. Both Charlie and Grandma Flora were too young at that time to deal effectively with so many serious problems; and so stress led them to become alcoholics. Although Grandma Flora does not drink anymore, she firmly insists in defining herself as an alcoholic.

According to Althusser (1989) an individual is defined and constituted as subject through the dominant discourse of what he defines as the *Ideological State Apparatus*. In order to continue being a subject who functions in society, individuals must follow the set of rules and ideological narratives created by those apparatuses, including the family, the media, religious organizations, and the education system. Those who move away from such norms become “Other” and lose their condition of subject in the ideological community. The social problems of Charlie and Grandma Flora’s community illustrate a problematic insertion into the new system and

ideological apparatus. It explains their social conflicts and marginalization when they stand away from the ideological apparatuses that have shaped their desires, choices, intentions, preferences, and judgments.

Although neither Grandma Flora nor her brother Charlie have immigrated, they undergo a process of transculturation comparable to the one experienced by the other two migrant characters: the narrator and her friend Adriana. Grandma Flora and Charlie's encounter with Canadian society involves a great amount of behavioral change because of the cultural distance between the community they used to belong to and the dominant Canadian culture. The situations they face "exceed [their] capacity to deal with them"; therefore, they suffer the effects of the acculturative stress (Berry, 1970). They struggle to manage the distance between their cultural heritage and that one of the dominant society. The inability of these characters located in an in-between cultural space to reconcile their cultural ethnicity and the culture of the Canadian society represents a failure in their metaphorical translation and causes an imbalance between these two sides of their identity.

One more of Rodríguez's stories reveal a complex translation process at work in the main character, which consists of the gradual decline of her own culture in her identity and the enlargement of the adopted culture. This process may be interpreted as a strategy of "simple tolerance [which avoids] identity conflict by clinging to one's heritage cultural values, and ignoring or rejecting challenges to these from the dominant culture" (p. 359). Such is the case of Yolanda Cárcamo in the account "bodily yearnings." This Chilean woman works as a janitor in a building in Vancouver and after she falls in love with John McDonald, the two marry. This

wedding symbolizes the social and personal union to the Canadian culture represented by McDonald. This bodily action entails their transculturation since this state reframes the identity of both characters, Yolanda and John. Once again, Ortiz's theory portrays this fact:

[In transculturation] both parts of the equation are modified, [...] a new reality emerges, transformed and complex, a reality that is not a mechanical agglomeration of traits, nor even a mosaic, but a new phenomenon, original and independent (Ortiz, 1947, p. lviii-lix).

The unpredictability and independency of the new phenomenon is revealed by Yolanda's decision to leave Canada. Yolanda's metaphorical translation is manifested through her steady absorption by the adopted culture. However, «l'immigré est 'intégré' quand on ne le voit pas, [...] quand il est invisible, [...] quand il a gommé les conduites liées à sa culture initiale» (Ollivier, 1990, p.48). Her supposed integration may be interpreted as a metonym of her invisibility. Yolanda's feeling of social integration begins to weaken, and she finds herself unable to carry on with her life. Her unexpected return to Chile implies separation and reveals her agency in the process. It may be understood as an act of opposition to cultural assimilation as well as a rescue of her cultural heritage. Furthermore, this event entails a failure in Yolanda's metaphorical translation because of her inability to fully become part of the new society.

*Le pavillon des miroirs* portrays the migrant experience of his protagonist as a medium for the uncovering of his identity, which is achieved by means of his meditations about the dissimilarities between the host socio-cultural context that surrounds him and his native location. In the face of the distressing rupture with his

past environment, it is his migrant experience what allows him to achieve consciousness of his identity.

Using psychoanalytic analysis, Julia Kristeva (1994) defines the phenomenon of estrangement as an experience through which Otherness is explored within the Self. It involves conceiving of the self not as a self-contained element but as a product of reflections, absorptions, and transformations. Talking about his memories, this character asserts : « Ils sont revenus me hanter lorsque je suis devenu moi-même un étranger, pour m'aider à exprimer le fait d'être autre dans le décor des repas. Je les reproduis depuis lors sous la forme d'images plastiques, pour mieux m'approprier ma propre blessure (p. 255). His paintings give life to several Brazilian individuals whom he met during his childhood. The act of painting makes possible the estrangement of Kokis' character because when he meditates about them he is also reflecting about himself, he is *appropriating* his Self. They make part of his identity, and recognizing them allows this character to gain self-recognition. His paintings entail the reframing of his memories into his present time, and this reframing leads to the construction of his identity.

This character's search for identity symbolizes his own manner of mitigating his fragmentation between two spaces, two times, two cultures, and two languages. His memories thus become relevant to his attempts to define his identity, which, for the most part, lies in his "present" actualizing of memories. His obsession with the past and the images he portrays in his paintings symbolize the prevalence of his Brazilian culture in his identity.

Furthermore, Kokis' protagonist maintains a continuous struggle to find a place among all kinds of divergences that he finds in the host country: "l'étranger porte un masque d'apparence anodine pour être accepté, [...] Il joue un jeu pour s'intégrer. Par l'orifice des orbites il essaie d'apprendre à son corps cette danse qu'il singe mais qu'il ne ressent pas" (p. 48). Therefore, imitation embodies a medium to mitigate the cultural removal and the conflicts caused by the encounter with the new society of this character. From a sociological position, such discrepancies are produced by the dissimilar habitus of migrants and the habitus of the host society. As explained in The Introduction, Bourdieu's concept of "habitus" involves the "durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures" (Bourdieu in Calhoun, 2002, p.278) that generate the long-term, acquired schemes of perception, thought, and action developed by the individual within the environment he belongs to. The change of environment in Kokis' character entails identity conflict because of the requirements that this protagonist must follow in order to gain membership within the new society and the right to speak within the field in which he is inserted.

Using a mask, this literary character in Kokis' work pretends to accept the different norms of the adoptive environment. In consequence, during the acculturation stage, he gradually learns to imitate the routines of the individuals in the host context. The images of the *mask* and the *dance* indicate a sense of *schizophrenia* (Ollivier, 1986) in his life. In other words, they highlight his dissimilar attitudes and behavior in both private and social situations. He simulates as an actor who appropriates his role on stage. Out of the settings of socialization, this character returns to those attitudes and behaviors extraneous for the host society. However, sometimes his imitation in

social contexts is unskillful, which may be a symbol of translation failure. Instead of looking socially adapted to the new habits, this character's behavior appears as a mockery, and he is reduced to ridicule states because of his inability to be entirely Canadian.

Two main strategies guarantee social incorporation in Kokis' character: cultural shedding and cultural learning (Berry, 1992). On the one hand, cultural shedding covers both the intentional and unplanned loss of some of his existing cultural or behavioral aspects within the new environment. On the other hand, cultural learning entails those deliberate acquisitions of new conducts by this character in the target setting. This character comments: "j'apprenais des choses plus essentielle en regardant les manières des professeurs, les étudiantes parlant de leur propre vie, les gestes spontanés"(p. 204).

Similar to infant mimesis, this character accomplishes his behavioral changes by imitating the others' practices and acts. Acknowledging the social norms of the host environment, he achieves some grade of social integration.

These changes give him the faculty to conciliate his ethnicity with the culture of the new context. However, most of the changes in this character are superficial because his endeavor is not to become part of the new society but to go unseen: «cette ville où je pouvais enfin me perdre, passer inaperçu [...] l'étranger porte un masque [...] pour être accepté. Pour qu'on le laisse en paix » (p.45). The protagonist's tone reveals his migrant experience as liberation, and the mask allows this character "to go unnoticed while still protecting [himself] from the threats that hover on the horizon of all exile" (Castillo, 2005, p. 81).

Towards the end of this novel, and after several years in Montreal, Kokis' character does not feel socially integrated "toujours sans avoir l'air de le remarquer, ils lui font une place [à l'étranger]. [...] ils ne lui font pas une place à lui, personnellement; non, ils le laissent seulement combler un poste vide" (p. 355). His marginalization produces a constant feeling of not fitting. He condenses his migrant experience recognizing,

l'identité nouvelle, si durement acquise s'est révélée être un piège. Et je m'abandonne désormais, volontairement, au personnage d'une farce née dans les yeux d'un enfant solitaire. Tout ce travail pour arriver au point de départ, tous ces tableaux pour revenir au point de départ, tous ces tableaux pour revenir au petit garçon que je voulais enterrer. Les gens autour de moi ne s'en rendent pas compte puisque ma carapace est devenue extrêmement solide, polie par les frottements du hasard; mes masques successifs se sont stratifiés et mes extrémités sont coupantes. Un reptile en quelque sorte, qui se protège sous un bouclier d'écailles acérées parce que son corps caché reste trop mou (p. 88).

Kokis' character "remakes himself, by either risking everything or learning to mask himself" (Sanga, 2001, p.119), and despite the transformations in the identity of this character, he finds that after all these years living abroad, he apparently continues being the same. Yet, by associating his process with an animal metamorphosis he emphasizes that although he has the impression of being the same individual as in his childhood, all his experiences or *layers* have produced a hybrid being. This because "hybridity makes difference into sameness, and sameness into difference, but in a way that makes the same no longer the same, and the different no longer simply different" (Young, 2001, p. 26). The layers in the metaphor of his carapace involve a cultural overlapping in his identity that shields the sameness in his "corps caché [...] trop mou" by introducing difference with his "masques successifs [...] stratifiés.". His

childhood and adulthood identities are kept apart and simultaneously fused together by transmutation, the Brazilian and Canadian sides of his identity oppose and complement each other.

Kokis' character does not achieve a successful self-translation since he fails to utterly reshape his identity and relocate himself within the new context. Despite his efforts of social integration, the failure of translation produces his feeling of being out of place in the host context. This state is overemphasized with the image of the carapace, a symbol of alienation. The transculturation of this character entails a "doubleness and plurality that is characteristic of a hybrid identity" (Sanga, 2001, p.83). For this Brazilian-Canadian character, the mark of the hyphen turns into an identity that epitomizes the "something else besides" acknowledged by Bhabha (1994). Kokis' character ends not being either the Brazilian child of the past or the adult living abroad, but both. The intermingled narration of the child and the adult voices juxtapose both beings as reciprocal alter egos.

In conclusion, Rodríguez and Kokis' characters learn to translate their selves via assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization strategies. These outcomes are bound to the level of maintenance of migrants' own heritage culture and identity as well as integration in the adoptive society through social contact and participation (Berry, 2002). Furthermore, each of these methodologies configures grades of metaphorical translation of the "source text": the native culture, language, and identity of the examined characters, into the host context. The reactions and attitudes of these characters embedded in cultural contact circumstances are by no means predictable. Yet, depending on their inability or ability to integrate their

identities with the cultural values and ideas of the new context, the self transformations of these characters may be a symbol of either a failed or a successful metaphorical translation.

## Chapter Five: Linguistic Conflict in Metaphorical Translation

“One is both using language and being used by language”  
Charles Simic

Certain migrant characters in Rodríguez’s short stories are compelled to linguistically relocate themselves from their native Spanish into English, while Kokis’ character has to go through the same process from Portuguese into French. This last chapter critically traces the images and metaphors of language in Rodríguez and Kokis’ works with the aim of distinguishing their linguistic movement as well as the repercussions of this movement for their metaphorical translation.

Language plays different roles throughout both authors’ works; the use of language typifies a number of potential situations and effects brought about by the meeting of languages. Language being a “vehicle through which identity is created and maintained” (Sanga, 2001, p.30), examination of its role in these stories allows the understanding of some relevant aspects in the characters’ translation processes. This section deals with perceptions of these characters’ native and adoptive languages as well as the possibilities they offer to the characters. Language and linguistic transmigration (Cutter, 2005) play a significant role in the transculturation process of these characters; linguistic mingling stimulates the translation processes by modifying cultural traits.

Gradual transformations occur, prompted by both the survival strategies adopted by certain characters as well as their attempts to become part of their society. In the story “black hole,” assimilation of the adoptive language has diverse effects for the translation of the characters’ identity. On the one hand, the character of Estela’s mother, Maura, reveals to what extent language makes possible the individual’s

appropriation of cultural practices and values within the new social setting, through socialization. When this mother comes to Vancouver to visit Estela and her family, she realizes how her poor command of English bars her from assimilating the adoptive culture and interacting even with the members of her family. The lack of linguistic fluency renders her speechless and leads her inevitably to an immense isolation. Shortly after leaving Canada, she writes a letter to her daughter explaining the reasons for her sudden departure:

You probably believe I'm an ingrate, leaving Vancouver so abruptly, but I don't know, *mijita*, I was feeling like a prisoner, couldn't speak to anybody, not even to my granddaughters, couldn't go for my daily shopping, everything so different (p.27).

Not being able to talk, she feels condemned to a painful isolation and cannot adapt herself to the differences between her familiar and social context. This incommunicability might also underline the way in which “the ability to translate (autonomous practices) or be translated (heteronymous practices) can in some instances indeed be a matter of life and death” (Cronin, 2006, p.45). Failure to deal with the foreign language denies migrant characters such as Maura social interaction in the new environment. Access to educational, employment, and cultural possibilities, as well as to legal, health, welfare, and like services are to a great extent denied her.

Language is an essential element to integration during the acculturation process and is highlighted as such in the analyzed migrant representations. This character's life in the new context signifies a barrier she cannot overcome and, thus, she decides to go back to Chile. The Haitian-American writer Edwidge Danticat warns that it is “tragically painful to people who were independent linguistically,

independent in other ways, to come to a country and suddenly to be led places [...]

People say that immigration infantilizes people” (Danticat 2000, p.111). Maura’s inability to properly communicate reveals her vulnerability and loss of independence. Like a child, in the new context, she depends on somebody else to achieve the simplest daily activities. For this reason, she compares her life in Vancouver to a life in prison, where she finds herself surrounded by loneliness. The failure of this character to appropriate the local language illustrates her malfunction throughout the acculturation stage. In other words, she fails in acquiring the target culture and language. This character remains a foreigner who cannot be totally part of the host society.

Vulnerability and an infantilized condition are also represented in Rodríguez’s story “in the company of words.” After approximately thirty years of living in exile, the female narrator and main character in this account is remembering her childhood and her relationship with her best friend at that time, Pilar Vallejo. The narrator begins the account by describing the view from the thirty-second floor of a skyscraper in downtown Vancouver. She is seeing boats on the bay that resemble the boats she used to see in Bellavista, Chile, in the company of her friend. One day, Pilar’s mother died; the narrator asked many times what the cause of her mother’s death was, but Pilar did not want to answer her. Finally, when the narrator threatened not to play with her any more, Pilar said that she died from an abortion. They were so young that neither of them could understand the meaning of that word: “you were crying and whispering, *from the abortion, from the abortion*, and I didn’t understand a thing, but I comforted you anyway and made out as if I understood, and cried with you” (p.60).

This female narrator remembers that episode and tries to imagine talking again to Pilar. In so doing she states, “I’m okay –more or less. Just think, Pilar Vallejo, I’m under another sky and another sun, far from Valparaiso...in Canada, I’m learning to speak again and trying somehow to make sense out of this life here” (p.61). One might see how at different moments of her life and under different conditions this character depends on language to “make sense of life”. However, there is a bigger transcendence than that in her adult life since her survival in Vancouver is closely related to her linguistic command. Moreover, “the migrant, in order to survive, must translate himself into something different, and acknowledge, inevitably, that he lives *between* two worlds” (Sanga 2001, p.117). This character realizes that the two worlds she inhabits and her “learning to speak again” involve alterations within her. She is symbolically infantilized and must undergo the learning process to acquire the foreign language and the cultural elements it entails.

In the story of “black hole”, with the exception of Estela’s mother, the family’s proficient command of English allows its members to remake their life in the new context. Both parents manage to get a job, and the girls have success in school and with their friends. However, the incorporation of the adoptive language, while transforming them, causes some adverse affects in the characters’ identity, in particular for Estela’s daughters. For these characters, Natalia and Panchi, the social functioning and adaptation entail a striking deculturation process. In view of that, they change their physical appearance and their musical and food preferences from what they were in the beginning. Language acquisition not only allows them survival and integration but also prompts within them irreversible changes. Both

Natalia and Panchi began to imitate the new culture's behaviors and immediately shift their identities towards the novelty of the new environment.

In contrast to Maura, Estela's daughters disclose a complete metaphorical translation, to the point that they even abandon their mother tongue, as illustrated in the following passage:

Hello... hello... Natalia is that you?... yes, your *abuelita*... your grandma... yes... from Santiago, of course... I said Santiago, of course... You sound like a young woman... Doesn't matter... is your Mom there?... yes... your Mom (p. 30)

In their adjustment to the adoptive culture, these characters completely lose their mother tongue because “the shock of exile and the effects of transculturation have stolen their speech” (Stos in Cheadle, 2007, p. 152). Language has a very close relationship with culture; the characters' assimilation of the adoptive language transforms them and at the same time affects their identity. The most negative consequence is their speechless condition, which implies isolation from their family in Chile and the loss of their cultural capital (Bourdieu).

With regards to the approaches adopted by immigrants who encounter a new linguistic context, Michael Cronin (2006) identifies two main strategies: translational accommodation and translational assimilation. On the one hand, translational accommodation is adopted by those migrants who make use of translation as “a means of maintaining their languages of origin though this does not rule out limited or indeed extensive acquisition of the host-country language” (p. 52). That is to say, migrants in this category integrate the adoptive language into their life without discarding the use of their mother tongue. On the other hand, translational assimilation strategy is implemented by those migrants who “seek to translate themselves into the dominant

language of the community” (p. 52). This category covers those fictional characters in the present analysis whose willingness to insert themselves into the adoptive environment leads them to appropriate the foreign language to gain a privileged position. These two strategies are not mutually exclusive and, in different domains, at different times, an immigrant might elect to use either one of these strategies (Cronin, 2006). Estela’s daughters thus translate themselves into the adoptive language because they desire not to be socially isolated. They come to Vancouver when they are children, thus their growth in the new environment makes easier their articulation within it. The cultural values of the new context are also more easily transferred to them than to the older generations, like their parents. Their translation into English implies “an act of linguistic self-mutilation” (Hoffman 2003).

The above-mentioned linguistic aspects in the life of characters in the story “black hole” reveal to what extent their new life in Vancouver demands that they become skilled in English. The translation of both Maura and her granddaughter’s characters reveals that the implicit linguistic conflicts are necessary in their transculturation process.

Language and linguistic tensions are openly addressed by the lead character’s introspections and in her communication with other characters. The result of the endless transculturation process is always unpredictable and may lead to chaotic or harmonious situations, depending on the process and reactions of the individual. In Estela’s case, language acquisition does not seem to be problematic. However, in her adaptation to the new context and reality, her life in a new language follows a complicated course. Before coming to Canada, Estela has a reasonable command of

English because of her academic background in Chile. Although she is anxious about the unpredictable future, she imagines that she will be able to communicate in the new environment. Nevertheless, when she arrives and tries to communicate, “nothing would come out” (p. 21) from her mouth. This muteness reflects her perplexity and lack of self-confidence in the new environment. She will need time to overcome those feelings. The symbolic silence as she arrives indicates also her marginality because as a newcomer she is rendered speechless. The geographical transition and the confrontation with a dissimilar language lead certain characters to a compulsory personal and cultural transformation with the aim of fitting into the adoptive society. Addressing the correlation between exile and language, Robert Brodsky claims that, “the condition we call exile is, first of all, a linguistic event: he is thrust from, he retreats into his mother tongue” (Brodsky, 1995, p. 32). In this sense, the migration process compels characters to abandon their native language in their social life and use it only in their private contexts. In this linguistic transition, they make a great effort to live in between two cultures and two languages while translating themselves by those dual conditions.

At the end of the story, Estela’s painful transformation into a hole indicates confusion; “the hole was her. The only clear thing in the midst of total darkness was her voice, trapped in her throat, trying to remember how to cry for help... but, in what language?” (p. 35). The dramatic transformation of this character allows her to realize that she is not only totally at home in the adoptive environment but also that she is no longer able to return to her life in Chile. Estela’s orientation has depended on

language, and it symbolizes for her the medium of survival and existence in the adoptive environment.

Furthermore, the symbolic confusion in the metaphor of the black hole is accentuated by the linguistic uncertainty in asking for help. Estela exists in two languages, which means being split in half and belonging to no one (Marjorie, 2003). The mutation of this character into a dehumanized state, the black hole, shows the alienation of Estela as well as her in-betweenness and lost identity. Estela typifies that “one never can abandon fully one’s life and live another; the relics of past lives will remain always, mixing with the present and clouding the future. [...] In such murky terrain, knowing which path to follow and what to say, when to say it, and in what language, make the life of an exile a constant struggle for orientation (Davis, 2004, p.99). This critical moment in Estela’s metamorphosis and her hesitation in knowing which language is the appropriate to call for help epitomize the duality engendered by exile (Davis, 2004). The black hole represents Estela’s doppelganger and vice versa. Both entities shape Estela’s identity.

The examination of language as well as its influence in the translation process of Kokis’ character allows observation of the existing tension between both his mother and his adoptive language. The narration of this character is a medium for this narrator’s search and attempt to discover and understand his identity. He interweaves his childhood and adolescent experiences with the present life as an exile in Canada. For this reason, all his memories help him to continue living and reflecting upon his present situations.

In order to discern the relationship between the identity transformations and language, there are some preliminary aspects in the linguistic shift. Critically analyzing the work of migrant Quebec writers, Louise Gauthier makes clear the inherent troublesome condition of the migrants' linguistic relocation. Gauthier contends that, "quitter sa langue ne se fait pas instantanément. Il faut, pour y parvenir, changer son rapport à la réalité, [...] il s'agit d'une tâche plus difficile que de changer de pays" (Gauthier, 1997, p.99). In *Le pavillon des miroirs*, the main character gradually undergoes a linguistic change. It implicates a re-elaboration by this character of his sense of reality. The change of language is one of the major factors that induce his metaphorical translation. The movement from his mother tongue into the mainstream linguistic code entails awareness of the socio-cultural differences he is facing.

His native language has a great influence on the adaptation as well as on the attitudes of this character in the transculturation process. Such influence is particularly acknowledged in a fine passage of the novel *La traduction est une histoire d'amour*:

[...] bien souvent les exilés n'emportent pas de terre aux semelles de leurs souliers ; ils n'emportent rien d'autre qu'un nuage de poussière dorée et dansante qui nimbera tous les êtres, tous les choses, tous les paysages sur lesquels se poseront leurs regards, s'attarderont leurs caresse ; et ce poudroiement infime, impalpable, fait de cendres mortes et de pollen fécond, s'appelle la langue (Poulin, 2006, p.87)

Poulin's description signals the implication of the native language upon the migrants' judgement and behaviour within the adoptive world. This assertion is undoubtedly typified by Kokis' character. Along with his memories, this characters' mother tongue constitutes some of the most substantial possessions that he carries

during his journeys. The use of the mother tongue is socially restricted, but it continues having influence on his thoughts. Despite the incorporation of the foreign language during more than ten years in exile, this character underlines the significant presence of his mother tongue in his identity:

Maintenant que je suis allé partout, je me rends bien compte que la langue n'a aucune importance. Je peux dire mon malaise ou mon désir en plusieurs idiomes, mais tout cela n'est que forme, simple algèbre. [...] Et je sais désormais que, jusqu'à la fin, les rêves, les caresses et les cris de douleur jaillissent uniquement dans la première langue. Dans celle qui a compté, et qui nous a posé à en apprendre d'autres (p. 170).

His native language continues being an active code for him. It entails motivation for him to approach other languages, and the language represents for this character a way for accessing Otherness. With reference to this he asserts, "les langues étrangères me semblaient pleines de promesses, d'intonations pénétrantes, de racines propres à dévoiler l'inconnu. Ou encore, je les croyais riches d'un savoir millénaire, duquel je me trouvais coupé par ma situation tropicale"(p. 120).

However, the possibility of encountering Otherness has its shortcomings. As it is the case with Rodríguez's characters, when the main character emigrates from Brazil, he finds himself in the confusing position of not having language. Even though he knows French, his transit through Rome, Strasbourg, Paris, and his definitive settling in Montreal confronts him with different linguistic and social realities in comparison to what he calls his tropical condition. Unable to comprehend those cultural realities, he writes "malgré ma compréhension du français, je me rendais sans cesse compte de mon incapacité à dire les mêmes choses que les autres"(p. 203). His failure to communicate in the same way that the other members of the society do elucidates what Homi Bhabha (2004) labels the radical incommensurability of translation. To

quote this author, “immigrants’ desire to ‘imitate’ language produces one void in the articulation of the social space –making present the opacity of language, its untranslatable residue” (Bhabha, 2004, p.238). Bhabha implicitly highlights that language is communicational code bonding and unbonding quality of language as well as a manifestation of culture. Therefore, there cannot be a complete equivalence between languages; there is always a possibility of miscommunication due to the cultural nuances attached to language, a phenomenon that can also occur among individuals who use the same language since “we are all, always, on some level caught in the process of translation. Language is not a perfect medium, and it is not transparent. At some point of our lives everyone has to learn to translate. I say something to you. You do not understand. I must reword it, rework it–translate it, in a sense” (Cutter, 2005, p.11). This character’s awareness of his inability to fully express himself in the second language can be interpreted as his lack of knowledge of the culture bound elements in the host language.

Moreover, the target language represents for this character a borrowed code as he expresses, “tant pis, c’est là le lot de l’immigré; il n’a de langage que celui qu’il emprunte, pour montrer des choses qui ne sont pas montrables“(p. 74). He considers his mother language as the real language. Therefore, the adoptive one represents a fake language whose complete dominance does not promise full communication. Addressing the interrelation of language and culture, Cronin states, “language itself becomes a metonymic representation of the culture as a whole. To truly understand the language is to fully know the culture” (Cronin, 2006, p.54). In the same way that he cannot comprehend and apprehend some culturally determined aspects of the

adoptive language, he is not able to fully express certain aspects of his own culture and language when using the new language. Therefore the set of “choses qui ne sont pas montrables” can be related once again to the concept of the residual cultural unassimilability of the migrant (Bhabha, 2004).

In summary, there is an isomorphism between a particular language and a certain cultural reality. Since language represents a social construction that “shapes our distinctive ways of being in the world,” it functions as “the carrier of a people's identity, the vehicle of a certain way of seeing things, experiencing and feeling, determinant of particular outlooks on life” (Bell, 1993, p.159). Therefore, the appropriation of the adoptive language by the analyzed characters implies the recognition of a different cultural reality and the translation of their personal interpretation of world.

In the adoptive environment, Rodríguez and Kokis' characters “transpose [themselves] into a new verbal and cultural idiom” (Hoffman in De Courtivron 2003, p.49). Furthermore, taking into account the significant close relationship between language and culture in migration experiences, Michael Cronin asserts that

[t]he condition of the migrant is the condition of the translated being. He or she moves from a source language and culture to a target language and culture so that *translation* takes place both in the physical sense of the shift from one way of movement or displacement and in the symbolic sense of the shift from one way of speaking, writing about and interpreting the world to another (Cronin, 2006, p.45).

In this perspective, the translation of migrant individuals involves the transformations produced by both the material dislocation and the symbolic transfer from a native language to an adoptive one.

## Conclusion

This thesis has sought a deconstruction of the concept of translation going beyond standard definitions strictly focused on its interlingual transference of meaning connotation. The discussion throughout this thesis has proposed translation as an endless process of transformation and transculturation experienced by the examined characters throughout their migrant experience. These alterations produce puzzling identities with a culturally and linguistically mingled identity. For “le fragmentaire n’est pas le fragmenté. Celui-ci traduit négativement la perte d’unité idéalisée alors que le premier affirme la force d’une identité nourrie de tous les possibles, avec des racines comme autant de branches agitées par le vent » (Nouss, 2005, p. 113), the fragmentary condition of the identity of Rodríguez and Kokis’ characters represents a productive result to the same degree that it may be in a linguistically based translation.. Despite the conflicts that these characters experience because of the cultural and linguistic dissimilarities, their migrant experience provides them an altered identity with wider viewpoints and ideas.

The idea of translation in this thesis has challenged the underrating of metaphorical approaches to translation highly influenced by the predominance of Western thought on translation studies. In other words, this thesis has highlighted the plurality in the concept of translation, prompting a dislocation of the term and defying reductionisms that support traditional approaches to translation. To this end, it has been fundamental the theoretical contributions and findings of scholars concerned with translation as a *cluster* concept (Tymoczko, 2006, p. 26) that involves representation and transculturation. Moreover, the analysis in this thesis has relied on

certain contemporary Western and non-Western scholars from translation studies as well as from cultural studies, literary, and post-colonial theories.

In its analysis of some aspects in the *shifts* undergone by Rodríguez and Kokis' characters during their metaphorical translation experiences, this thesis has been organized into five chapters. After explaining the methodology applied, which consisted of analysis of the elements that typify the metaphorical translation of specific characters, the discussion has focused on three main factors within the texts: space/time, language, and the aspects related to identity. The interpretation of the images and metaphors that typify these elements in the chosen literary works made possible the recognition of the metaphorical translation in the examined characters.

Chapter One explained and discussed the theoretical framework for this thesis. Both transculturation and metaphorical translation symbolize the bedrock to define migration as a translation phenomenon. On the one hand, the migrant characters in Rodríguez and Kokis' texts undergo a process of transcultural translation that bridges both cultures: that of the beloved homeland and that of Canada, their adoptive country. Therefore, the native space, culture and language of the examined characters stand for the "source text" and the space, culture, and language of the host context symbolize the "target text." Native and adoptive contexts are related by means of these characters through a transculturation logic. On the other hand, metaphorical translation entails new ways of being human (Rushdie, 1991) and becomes a process that links their past persona attached to their culture and nation to that new being located in the adoptive country. These migrant characters are themselves metaphors of the "something" lost and gained in translation (Rushdie, 1983, p.29).

Rodríguez and Kokis' biographical accounts were discussed in Chapter Two. Moreover, this chapter examined some discursive aspects in the works of these writers that illustrate the inherent presence of translation in them. The linguistic juxtaposition and the narrative strategies of these writers reflect the fragmentary condition of both authors' identity as well as the interplay between their native and adoptive language/culture in their writing. Both lexically and thematically, translation represents a strategy for emphasizing the hybridity of the characters in their works.

Chapter Three discussed how the physical displacement of these characters caused a psychological dislocation that enforces adjustments, adaptations, and appropriations in their identities. The images and metaphors of space/time denote signs of translation since they mirror these characters' transformations. As has been discussed, these elements reveal the fragmented condition of their identity and their state of dislocation. Yet, Rodríguez and Kokis' characters continuously attempt to harmonize their home and adoptive spaces within their minds with the aim of finding a home. In so doing, they transvaluate cultural and emotional aspects from one space into another. Both time and space embody significant elements to underline the transitory nature (Simon, 1999) in these migrant representations.

Chapter Four considered the level of maintenance of heritage culture and the social integration of Rodríguez and Kokis' characters. The images and metaphors that typify the conflicts between their ethnicity and the host social codes were useful to judge their metaphorical translation as a failed or a successful translation. Similar to transculturation, metaphorical translation is a process that gives rise to altered

identities through cultural and linguistic transformations, even though there can be losses.

The last chapter examined the discourses of these characters in order to discuss the linguistic conflicts emanating from the convergence of their mother tongue and adoptive language within their lives. The conflicts that these characters experience in the tension between their mother tongue and the adoptive language become necessary steps in their journey into the alien language. In this sense, the infantilization embodied in the incorporation of a new language signifies a rebirth within the host society. Their initial silence in the new society guarantees their transfiguration and, to some extent, the death of their past identity and the beginning of their hybrid self.

The character in *Le Pavillon des miroirs* explores his sense of identity through memories of his childhood and adolescence in his country of origin, Brazil. The narrator uses his memory and reflections about his past in order to question his identity through remembrance and by using artistic appreciations of his paintings. Moreover, *Le pavillon* acts a metaphor of his mind for which each of the mirrors represent a memory. While this character moves through this passage, these mirrors not only reflect his experiences but also allow him a reconstruction of his identity: “c'est moi-même que je cherchais à travers tous ces moments du passé, pour savoir qui je suis, d'où je viens. [...] Je ne suis rien d'autre que le contenant d'un contenu de souvenirs, la forme qu'ils prennent en s'agençant en récit. Sans eux, je suis vide et sans volume” (p. 367). Every mirror is a fragment of his Self.

The characters in Rodríguez's work culturally reframe their identity through the creation of new cultural expressions and values containing components of each

side of the cultural mingling. The migrant characters in Carmen Rodríguez's *and a body to remember with* typify "translated beings" (Rushdie, 1991) for whom translation represents a linguistic and cultural experience in their struggles to survive in a foreign environment. In order to recognize the analyzed literary representations as translated beings, the analysis in this thesis has taken into account aspects related to their self-perception, their sense of place, language, and identity in their metaphorical translation and cultural hybridization processes.

The spatial-temporal and linguistic images and metaphors in Rodríguez and Kokis' writing depict the complexity of translation and the need of identity recreation in migrant experiences. As stated by Young, "translation is a way of thinking about how languages, people, and cultures are transformed as they move between different places" (Young, 2003, p.29). The main purpose of the transformations in metaphorical translation is to build a hyphenated identity where both cultural and linguistic sides within an individual reciprocally give breath, complement, and remake each other. Disparate *roots* and *branches* go together in their Latino-Canadian identity shaping translated beings. The images and metaphors of space/time, language, and identity in Rodríguez and Kokis' texts were extended on as palimpsests from which this study deciphers the metaphorical translation of their characterizations.

Still, questions remain. Rodríguez and Kokis' writings are inhabited by many other characters that have not been discussed in this thesis because of the requirements of this kind of project. It would be remarkable to analyze their metaphorical translation processes towards a deeper reading of these Latino-Canadian writers. Moreover, among many other aspects, it would be significant to explore the

implications in the metaphorical translation of those characters that briefly return to their homeland and then come back to the host context. Do these provisional sojourns postpone some aspects in their metaphorical translations? Or, on the contrary, do they enhance the progress in their processes? What could be the long-term possible consequences in the identities of those characters that definitely leave the adoptive country? If migration compels metaphorical translation, would it be possible to consider returning as a retranslation process?

Another relevant aspect to consider, from a postcolonial perspective, might be the level of “reparation” (Bandia, 2008) or “re-membering” (Bhabha, 1994) in metaphorical translation. These kinds of approaches allow considering psychological aspects in the necessary reconstruction process after the fragmentation that migration entails. Living in translation might represent a way in which migrants manage to overcome the different degrees of separation that migration and its subsequent cultural mingling produce.

The idea of metaphorical translation developed all over this thesis represents a deconstruction of the concept of translation since it is a “patient attempt to trace what has not been read, what remains unread or unreadable within the elaboration of concepts and workings of institutions” (Royle quoted in Wolfreys, 1999, p.270). This metaphorical meaning allows the removal of translation from compact definitions that traditional approaches support.

Undoubtedly, Rodríguez and Kokis’ works have contributed to the enlargement of contemporary Canadian writing. Their transcultural literary creations are worthy of analysis and contain many thematic and linguistic connotations that

typify the continual transformative nature in migrants. In their writing, the spatial-temporal and linguistic images and metaphors mirror the migrant experience of these characters. The metaphorical translation of Rodríguez and Kokis' characters represents their process to assimilate new elements and reframe their own within the host environment. The series of struggles and conciliations of these characters in the host space constitute essential experiences for their permanent identity reconstruction.

Discussion of the metaphorical translation of Rodríguez and Kokis' characters has given a new breadth to the understanding of translation and supported the call for enlarging the concept of translation. The most obvious finding to emerge from this study is that translation embodies neither an exclusively linguistic experience nor a textual entity. This was precisely the main focus of this study, to heighten how translation turns into a daily experience for the migrant representations examined. Metaphorical translation represents their symbolic rebirth into the new culture.

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