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Translation Review is published twice yearly by The Center for Translation Studies at The University of Texas at Dallas and the American Literary Translators Association (ALTA). Articles in Translation Review are refereed.

The publication of this issue of Translation Review is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Subscriptions and Back Issues
Subscriptions to individuals are included with membership in ALTA. Special institutional and library subscriptions are available. Back issues may be ordered.

ISSN 0737-4836
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FIVE TRANSLATORS TRANSLATING: READING BLOOD MERIDIAN FROM ENGLISH INTO ENGLISH, SPANISH INTO ENGLISH, AND ENGLISH INTO SPANISH

By Michael Scott Doyle

Can a translation ever communicate to its readers the understanding of the foreign text that the foreign readers have?

“Translation, Community, Utopia,” Lawrence Venuti

What will he do with the rebellious text? Isn’t it too much to ask that he also be rebellious, particularly since the text is someone else’s?

“The Misery and Splendor of Translation,” José Ortega y Gasset

The task of the translator is surely to work out a strategy that allows the most insistent and decisive effects of that performance to resurface in the translated text and to assume an importance sufficient to suggest the vital status of stratified or contrapuntal writing in the original.

“The Measure of Translation Effects,” Philip E. Lewis

God don’t lie, he said.
No, said the judge. He does not. And these are his words.
He held up a chunk of rock.
He speaks in stones and trees, the bones of things.

Blood Meridian

The desert wind would salt their ruins and there would be nothing, nor ghost nor scribe, to tell any pilgrim in his passing how it was that people had lived in this place and in this place died.

Blood Meridian

To read Blood Meridian, “the major esthetic achievement of any living American writer,”1 in its original English is to become already engaged in the act of translation. Whether to translate or not is rhetorical. The reader of this apocalyptic gothic-esperpento-picaresque2 novel — a pilgrim struggling through the desert-wind words of the author-scribe who has indeed left us a written account of people and place3 — has no choice in the matter. Set mainly in 1849–18504 in the profitable frontier “bloodlands”5 (138) of westward expansion between the porous Texas-Mexico border and California,6 where the “receipts”7 against payment are in principle aboriginal scalps8 and all protagonists are “trammeled to the chords of rawest destiny” (154), the complexities of this lyrically gory American English masterpiece9 press into service the first-among-readers, the native-language English reader, as an intralingual translator10 of the source-language text (SLT), anticipating the work of the interlingual translator, who in turn will later enfold the intralingual translating process into that of the subsequent interlingual re-creation, translation proper across two languages, English into Spanish. Because the typical or average reader, or even the accomplished amateur or professional, does not share Cormac McCarthy’s precise knowledge and unprecedented use of words in Blood Meridian — the breadth of his
lexicon and taxonomies; his play across different languages, especially English and Spanish but also Latin, French, and German; the juxtaposition of registers and discourse domains; the diction he creates and extends from his earlier Appalachian novels; his sheer imagination with language (syntax, punctuation, pacing, collocation, alliteration, images, similes, and metaphors) — we often only intuit and infer the meaning of many, too many, of the words themselves. We feel or float our way contextually through the reading rather than truly understanding each and every word of his exquisitely crafted writing. In this sense, the undisciplined native-language act of reading is deficient and negligent — the “at-home” reader of the SLT fulfills in neither letter nor spirit the hermeneutic contract presumed between author and reader. But when the native or SLT reader rises to the task, and takes the time to look up the meanings of unknown words and to work through the meaning of elusive images, phrases, and passages, then this fuller reading becomes that of the translator decoding, deciphering, and recoding internally what are familiar yet alienating markings in one’s own native English. In sum, to read Blood Meridian as a “translator” is to give this baroque, bizarre, and harrowing narrative a thorough read. It fulfills the hermeneutic contract presupposed by Cormac McCarthy.

Translation is inscribed as part and parcel of Blood Meridian, a metaphorical “rider to the tale” (145), concretely within the narrative itself, as both intra- and interlingual requirement of the act of reading; prescriptively and procedurally by the author himself; and interlingually as translation proper from English to Spanish, from Blood Meridian to Meridiano de sangre. A distinctive thread woven into the fabric of the novel, it has five principal translator protagonists:

1. The native-language reader who must engage in intralingual translation (a re-Englishing of the English) for the sake of comprehension and thereby enhanced appreciation of McCarthy’s writing;


3. A Reader’s Guide to Blood Meridian by Shane Schimpf, a most useful intra- as well as interlingual reference work;

4. Cormac McCarthy, who frequently provides his own intra- (Englishing the English) as well as interlingual translations (Englishing the Spanish and vice versa), a within-the-narrative glossing of sorts that illustrates various tactics of literary translation such as compensation, explicitation, and interpolation; and

5. Meridiano de sangre, the Spanish translation (Spanishing the English) by translator’s translator Luis Murillo Fort.

The first of Blood Meridian’s translators is the native English-language reader, the “assumed” or supposedly “at-home” or “informed” reader. But it is very difficult to attain such a comfort zone of reading with McCarthy because of what he relentlessly does to and in American English when writing (a style characterized by a certain idiosyncratic “rebellion,” “subversion,” and “radical courage” in the face of convention), his speech mimesis (time- and place-bound voices, diction, registers, tone, pacing), and his strategic use of Spanish and other non-English languages. In order to maximize one’s potential for appreciation of all that is being made to occur in the language of Blood Meridian, the reader must first understand the actual words that McCarthy chooses while writing in English. The native-language SLT reader must pause to look them up in a dictionary or reference work, just as students or readers of a foreign language text do when learning a foreign language. McCarthy turns his readers into students of his “foreign” language, even when they are reading in what is (mis-
taken as) a common native or first language. To define is to express in other words, i.e., to translate. To re-English McCarthy’s English is a most rudimentary form and application of translation for the essential purpose of making comprehensible that which is not. This exercise in clarifying or creating meaning represents a vital drudge- and pony-work aspect of translation, for words not understood breach the contract presumed to exist between author and reader (and narrator and narratee). At the same time, there is a ludic quality to this devoir, as discovering or uncovering the meaning of unknown words is a problem-solving activity, challenging and gratifying, and we are hardwired to problem-solve and delight in mastering language. To re-English or re-engineer in this manner, which is where translation and interpretation-understanding-exegesis-hermeneutics brush up against one another and fuse into synonyms for one and the same activity, imposes an antecedent question on Venuti’s assumption in asking “Can a translation ever communicate to its readers the understanding of the foreign text that the foreign readers have?” In order to arrive at Venuti’s speculation, the “informed” and “at-home” native-speaking SLT reader must first fully understand the language of Blood Meridian. Although lexical comprehension will vary according to the literacy and literary competence of each reader, the following are examples of the time-consuming intralingual translation groundwork required by the SLT reader, who must first engage in “gap” and “trace” reading (filling in the blanks of indeterminacy that represent a lack of knowledge and comprehension) as part of the process of becoming McCarthy’s “virtual,” “hypothetical,” or “ideal” reader.

Page after page, Blood Meridian teems with uncommon nouns such as the following sampling, itself to be read for the pure enjoyment of the language deployed, the reading of which will also simulate the feeling that McCarthy creates in his reader who stumbles across a startling abecedarium of lexical unfamiliarity: apishamore (106: saddle blanket made of buffalo hide); archimandrite (273: abbot, the head of a monastery); are (26: a surface measure equal to 100 square meters, or 119.6 square yards); azimuth (151: gunnery: angle of horizontal deviation, measured clockwise, of a bearing from a standard direction, as from north or south); benjamin (125: slang for “a man’s close-fitting overcoat,” Schimpf 175); bumper (170: a drinking vessel filled to the brim); cassinette (254: a cloth with a cotton warp, and a woof of very fine wool, or wool and silk); catafalque (190: a raised structure on which the body of a deceased person lies or is carried in state); chert (173: a compact rock consisting essentially of microcrystalline quartz); chorine (220: a woman who dances in a chorus line); clackdish (72: dish with a movable lid, formerly carried by beggars, who clacked the lid to attract notice); comber (304: a long wave that has reached its peak or broken into foam; a breaker); deadman (253: an object or platform fixed on shore to hold a mooring line temporarily); die (310: an engraved stamp for impressing a design upon some softer material, as in coinng money); doggery (189: slang for saloon); dunnage (253: personal baggage); fard (274: archaic for facial cosmetics); farrier (49: from archaic French for one who shoes horses; once related to blacksmith but now a separate trade); filibuster (42: adventurer who engages in a private military action in a foreign country); gibbet (263: a gallows or device used for hanging a person until dead; an upright post with a crosspiece, forming a T-shaped structure from which executed criminals were formerly hung for public viewing); gill (264 and 325: unit of volume or capacity, used in dry and liquid measure, equal to \(\frac{1}{4}\) of a British Imperial pint; both pages are given: the first is for dry and the second is for liquid measure); Gondwanaland (172: hypothetical protocontinent of the Southern Hemisphere that, according to the theory of plate tectonics, broke up into India, Australia, Antarctica, Africa, and South America); harrow (4: farm implement consisting of a heavy frame with sharp teeth or upright disks, used to break up and even off
plowed ground); helve (275: handle of a tool, such as an ax, chisel, or hammer); holothurian (243: echinoderm, which includes the sea cucumbers; echinoderms are radially symmetrical marine invertebrates of the phylum Echinodermata, which includes the starfishes, sea urchins, and sea cucumbers, having an internal calcareous skeleton and often covered with spines); jakes (316: an outdoor privy; outhouse); Katabasis (122: a march from the interior of a country to the coast, as that of the 10,000 Greeks after their defeat and the death of Cyrus the Younger at Cunaxa; a descent, a journey downward which can mean moving downhill, a sinking of winds, a military retreat, or a trip to the underworld); knacker’s yard (189: area where dead, dying, and injured farm animals and horses are collected; the collector in the knacker trade is called a knackerman [kancer.com]); legbail (86: escape from custody by flight); lemniscate (229: a curve in the form of the figure 8, with both parts symmetrical; the word is perfect for the image that McCarthy wishes to convey: “the Apache struggled to keep his seat [on his wounded horse] and drew his sword and found himself staring into the black lemniscate that was the paired bores of Glanton’s doublerifle”); looming (172: a mirage in which objects below the horizon seem to be raised above their true positions); man jack (125: a single individual); mansuete (293: tame; “in beasts mansuete”); mare imbrium (105: a dark plain in the second quadrant of the face of the moon); merestone (125: old term for a landmark that consisted of a pile of stones surmounted by an upright slab); ogdoad (204: a thing made up of eight parts; the number 8); osnaburg (21: a heavy, coarse cotton fabric, used for grain sacks, upholstery, and draperies); pampooty (298: cuaran, “a shoe of untanned cowhide,” Schimpf 298); pap (97: teat, nipple); parallax (108: the apparent displacement of an object as seen from two different points that are not on a line with the object); paraselene (241: a luminous spot on a lunar halo, also called moondog); polar isomer (303: of or pertaining to the North or South Pole, opposite in character or action; any of two or more substances that are composed of the same elements in the same proportions but differ in properties because of differences in the arrangement of atoms; a complex image in Blood Meridian: “the shrubs were like polar isomers of their own shapes”); pritchel (82: tool employed by blacksmiths for punching or enlarging the nail holes in a horseshoe); ratchel (57: gravelly stone); Rick (324: a large, usually rectangular stack or pile); sap (155: in Blood Meridian a primitive blackjack made of river rocks covered with leather); scurf (214: scaly or shredded dry skin, such as dandruff; the striking image created by McCarthy is that of “a solitary flame frayed by the wind that freshened and faded and shed scattered sparks down the storm like hot scurf blown from some unreckonable forge”); skelp (266: a wrought-iron plate from which a gun barrel or pipe is made by bending and welding the edges together, and drawing the thick tube thus formed); spirit level (42: an instrument for ascertaining whether a surface is horizontal, vertical, or at a 45° angle, consisting essentially of an encased, liquid-filled tube containing an air bubble that moves to a center window when the instrument is set on an even plane); stive (263: pouch); sulky (78: light carriage with two wheels [1756], a noun use of sulky [adj.] based on “standoffishness,” because the carriage has room for only one person); suttee (275: the now illegal act or practice of a Hindu widow’s cremating herself on her husband’s funeral pyre in order to fulfill her true role as wife; the image in Blood Meridian is that “They’d tied his dog to his corpse and it was snatched after [into the flames of the bonfire] in howling suttee to disappear crackling in the rolling Greenwood smoke”); taw (277: the making of a long shot, as in a game of marbles or shooting someone with a rifle from a great distance); tektite (188: any of numerous generally small, rounded, dark brown to green glassy objects that are composed of silicate glass and are thought to have been formed by the impact of a meteorite with the earth’s surface; the image in Blood Meridian is that “in pockets on the north slopes hail lay nested like tectites among the leaves”); thews (78: sinew); thunderstone (303: any of various
stones or fossils formerly thought to be fallen thunderbolts; archaically, a flash of lightning or thunderbolt was conceived as a stone); **thwart** (273: a seat across a boat on which a rower may sit); **tug** (283, 298: meat; a rope, chain, or strap used in hauling, especially a harness trace; in *Blood Meridian*: “Toadvine gestured with his chin at the strings of meat. I reckon you want to trade some of that tug for it” and “a parasol made from scraps of hide stretched over a framework of rib bones bound with strips of tug”); **Vandiemlander** (81: a person from Tasmania); **vidette** (196: sentinel); **weal** (131: a ridge on the flesh raised by a blow; a welt; the image in *Blood Meridian* is of “a weal of brimstone all about the rim of the caldron”); **whang** (159: thong, rawhide); etc.

*Blood Meridian*’s strange “common nouns” wash over us like relentless combers of interwoven high- and low-register discourse domains, ranging fluidly from the anatomical to the architectural and the legal, from the archeological, geological, and geographical to the cosmological and intertextual, from taxonomies of tools and tool parts, containers and vessels to apparel, trades and guilds, drinking establishments, gaming… Words lead to other words, as the reader must also know or learn what the words used in a definition mean. Words taken for granted as known and familiar, as precisely definable,20 frequently are not what they appear to be. The reader is pounded relentlessly by a language he thought he knew, but the reading itself — often disruptive and fatiguing at the lexical level — is redeemed by McCarthy’s plotting and art of storytelling, which lure the reader through the pages of *Blood Meridian* despite the hurdles represented by its language.

Numerous nouns in *Blood Meridian* are those proper to native American Indian tribes: **Anasazi** (a Basket Maker–Pueblo culture of the plateau region of northern Arizona and New Mexico and of southern Utah and Colorado, dating probably from a.d. 100 to 1300); **Diegueño** (also known as the Kumeyaay, a Native American people of the extreme southwestern United States and northwest Mexico; they reside in the states of California, Baja California, and Sonora; in Spanish, the name is commonly spelled *kumiai*); **Gileño** (one of the eleven major Apache tribes who inhabited the areas now known as Arizona and northwestern sections of Mexico); **Karankawa** (a member of an extinct tribe of North American Indians who lived in southeastern Texas until the mid-nineteenth century); **Lipan** (an Apache tribe formerly inhabiting western Texas, with a present-day population in southern New Mexico); **Maricopa** (a member of a North American Indian people of the Gila river valley in Arizona); **Papago** (227: native American people inhabiting desert regions of southern Arizona and northern Sonora, a state of northwest Mexico); **Tigua** (the Spanish for Tiwa [English], one of the pueblo peoples of New Mexico); **Tonkawa** (a people native to central Texas); and **Yuma** (Native American people inhabiting an area along the lower Colorado River, formerly on both banks but now mainly on the California side).21 As expected, these native American peoples inhabit the Texas-to-California setting of *Blood Meridian*. But it is useful for the reader to actually know who they are and not confuse them with tribes such as the Sioux, Cherokee, Algonquin, Huron, Lumbee, Seminole, etc. Not acknowledging the differences between indigenous Americans is as inappropriate as not recognizing that Spanish-speaking peoples are not all Mexican, but rather are composed of distinctly complex, geographically disperse nationalities and “ethnic” groups such as Cuban, Guatemalan, Panamanian, Venezuelan, Peruvian, Chilean, Argentine, and Spanish.

Other nouns include names of characters and classical or intertextual allusions: **Blasarius** (94: the “kid”: an incendiary, a person who stirs up strife, sedition, etc.; an agitator, which is exactly how the judge views the kid at the end of novel when he accuses him whisperingly with: “… you were a witness against yourself. You sat in judgement on your own deeds. You put your own allowances before the judgements of history and you broke with the body of which you were pledged a part and poisoned it in all its
enterprise… and you turned a deaf ear to me” (307); **Boaz and Jachin** (94: the name of the two pillars that stood in the porch of Solomon’s Temple, the first Temple in Jerusalem [1 Kings 7:21; 2 Kings 11:14; 23:3]; Boaz [“in strength”] was on the left, and Jachin [“he establishes”] was on the right; Boaz and Jachin are depicted on some variants of the Tarot card **The High Priestess**, a trump card in which the figure of the high priestess is seated between the two pillars of B and J, which is the referent marked by McCarthy in the telling of fortunes)\(^2\); **gorgon** (172: any of the three sisters Steno, Euryale, and the mortal Medusa who had snakes for hair and eyes that if looked into turned the beholder into stone); and **yahoo** (160: a crude or brutish person, from a race of brutes in *Gulliver’s Travels*, having the form and all the vices of humans).

Other parts of speech — adjectives and verbs — press the native English-language reader into frequent service as an intralingual translator as well. The adjectives often generate striking images: “dry *bistre* land” (48: yellownish to dark-brown color); **“broomed hooves”** (166: surmised as frayed or splintered; yellowed like broom; both meanings apply); “Spaniards helmeted and *bucklered*” (139: protected by a small, round shield either carried or worn on the arm); “a *chary* light” (74: cautious, wary; sorrowful; a wonderful image); “nicely *chased* blades” (168: engraved or embossed with ornamentation); **“crenellated heat”** (172: indented or notched); **“devonian dawn”** (187: yes, the reader will understand the reference to an earlier epoch, but how many will know that it refers specifically to “the geologic time, system of rocks, or sedimentary deposits of the fourth period of the Paleozoic Era, characterized by the development of lobe-finned fishes, the appearance of amphibians and insects, and the first forests”); **“discaled”** (107: barefoot or wearing only sandals, “the headless man was sitting like a murdered anchorite discaled in ashes and *sark* [chemise or nightshirt]”); “the *duledge* pegs worked loose” (45: one of the dowels joining the ends of the fellies which form the circle of the wheel of a gun carriage, but how many readers will also know what dowels [dowel: a usually round pin that fits tightly into a corresponding hole to fasten or align two adjacent pieces] and fellies [felly: the rim or a section of the rim of a wheel supported by spokes are?]; “the mules’ back *galled* and balding” (21: having a skin sore caused by friction and abrasion); **“heliotropic plague”** (78: an organism or plant that follows the sun, “itinerant degenerates bleeding westward like some heliotropic plague”); **“priapic leer”** (254: phallic); **“rimpled plates”** (130: wrinkled or crumpled); **“serried planes of heat”** (109: pressed or crowded together, especially in rows); **“silkmullioned sulky”** (78: windows divided by vertical curtains); “his mind had come *uncotted* by the acts of blood” (305: disconnected, unhinged, as a cotter pin inserted through a slot serves to hold parts together); **“sprent with stars”** (15: archaic for sprinkled); and **“withy cages”** (189: made of pliable branches or twigs, esp. of withes [a tough, supple willow twig]). Verbs such as **bate** (61: to flap the wings wildly or frantically; “they bated and hissed and flapped clumsily”); **cut** (137: to change direction abruptly; the Delaware scouts who “cut for sign” zig-zag searching for the tracks of those being pursued); **dap** (117: to dip in and out of water, “dap their hooves”); **foul** (53: “some had fouled themselves,” soiled, defecated on themselves); **grit up** (46: “grit up on this sand like chickens,” eat); **rebate** (139: “faces averted from the rock wall and the bakeoven air it rebated,” rebounded against them, like sun off the surface of the water); **recruit** (161: recuperate, restore, or recover; “Glanton carried him on the pommel of the saddle until he could recruit himself”); **spancel** (151: “horse and rider spancedel to their shadows,” to be fettered or hobbled); **squail** (58: to throw awkwardly, “he picked up a stone and squailed it at them”); **strike** (151: “they had struck the shoes from their horses,” removed with a hammer or other tool); **suck** (14: “they went sucking out past the old stone fort,” difficult to surmise: weakened, bleeding?); and **tonsure** (54: “tonsured to the bone,” the part of a monk’s or priest’s head that has been shaved).
Throughout *Blood Meridian*, McCarthy’s discourse-domain taxonomies force both the intra- and interlinguistic reader-translator into areas of nonliterary technical translation contained within the novel. Landscape, flora and fauna, and guns and weapons exemplify his stylistic penchant for precision and thoroughness (the essential naming of “stones and trees, the bones of things”) over generic and vague lexical alternatives.

The features of the physical terrain range across “regions of particolored stone upthrust in ragged kerfs and shelves of traprock reared in faults and anticlines” (50); “trunks of great stone treeboles” (50); “trapdykes of brown rock running down the narrow chines of the ridges” (50); talus slides (56), rimrock, and high rimland (213). We travel through a world of seeps, draws, and vadose water (57), traces, whinstone, and monocline (61), cairns (62), sinks and washes (66), swales (86), fens (88), benchland, “the gaunt rill of water,” and canyon floors (90), foreplains (106), along the edge of a playa (108) and on a “flat and barren pan” (109). We ride “in a fold among the barren scrag” (112), through marl and terracotta and rifts of copper shale … out upon a promontory overlooking a bleak and barren caldera (113), past slag (114) and arroyo (119) and through malpais (122), caldron (131), and sliglands (131); “down the pitch of the inner rim to where lay the terminus of that terrible flue” (133), across “blue coulees of the north slopes” (136), on switchbacks (136) and across “a high saddle at sunset” (136). We ride “up steep eskers” (175) and “down a broad green race over sheets of polished rock into the pool below” (193). We bench out with muleteers in a “swag on the trail where the precipice was almost negotiable” (195), and we cross basins (208), open parkland (211), and through snow lying “in deep pockets on the slope” (213). We encounter gravel slides (214), fulgurite (215), a barren bajada (219), a series of narrow defiles (220), rolling sandhills (277), “a vast mosaic pavement cobbled up from tiny blocks of jasper, carnelian, agate” (286), a “vast and broken plateland” (286), loose shale (293), wallows (299), skiffs of snow (302), snowy reeks (303), and a bed of thunderstones clustered on a heath (303); a wooded boss (303) and a gravel strand to the beach (303), the broken scree of a fan washed out of the draw (314), and are “laid up in a sag on some rise” (316). The lexical journey stamps the landscape in our minds and, while the reader understands more or less the types of terrain being traversed, an intralingual exercise in translation clarifies for us what the terms mean: that a kerf is a mining term for a deep cut a few inches high, used to undermine a portion of a coal or mineral seam; an anticline is a fold of rock layers that slope downward on both sides of a common crest; a seep is a small spring, pool, or other place where liquid from the ground has oozed to the surface of the earth; a sink is a depression in the ground communicating with a subterranean passage (especially in limestone) and formed by solution or by collapse of a cavern roof; a trace is a path or trail that has been beaten out by the passage of animals or people; a wash may be either a stretch of shallow water or alluvial matter transferred and deposited by flowing water; a playa is a dry lake bed at the bottom of a desert basin; a pan is a natural depression in the ground, as one containing water, mud, or mineral salts; and a coulee is a deep gulch or ravine with sloping sides, often dry in summer. McCarthy uses these terms with geological precision; it is the reader’s duty to intralingually translate them in order to understand the terrain of *Blood Meridian* exactly as the author is describing it.

The flora and fauna of *Blood Meridian* are equally strict in their taxonomy. McCarthy wants the reader to know exactly what kind of tree or plant or bird or animal he has in mind. We encounter “scattered clumps of buckbrush and pricklypear” (42), “dry solts” (49), a “vast world of sand and scrub shearing upward” (50), monkeyflowers and deathcamos (57), the “broken stobs of a mesquite” (57), “a bare dirt yard fenced with ocotillo” (60), pyracantha (86), cholla and nopal … blooming artemisia and aloe (88), “a broad plain of desert grass dotted with palmilla” (88), wild lavender or
The main charge of powder then explodes and sends the projectile out the barrel. It should be noted that this is a purely modern term. In historic times, the component now known as the frizzen was referred to as the hammer. In historic times, the component now known as the hammer was referred to as the cock. A sergeant carries “in his saddle scabbard a heavy Wesson rifle that used a false muzzle (...) The rifle carried a vernier sight on the tang and he would eye the distance and gauge the wind and set the sight like a man using a micrometer” (43). We encounter smallbore fiveshot Colt’s revolvers and dragoon pistols and the mold and flask they came with, and learn that the mold for the kid’s sawed-off rifle was so small that he had to patch the balls with buckskin and that the forestock was much worn beneath (43). Other gun-related terminology (large- and small-bore) includes grapeshot (48: a cluster of small iron balls formerly used as a cannon charge); gangmolds (82); charging the bores and seating a bullet driving it home with the hinged lever pinned to the underside of the barrel (82); a small pig of lead (119); the checkpiece (125); a brace of pistols (125); a swivelbore (133); charger (133); capping the piece (133); cocking the hammer (133); ramrod and thimbles (158); set triggers (158: a trigger that may be fired with a conventional amount of trigger pull weight may be “set” by usually pushing forward on the trigger. This takes up the creep in the trigger and allows the shooter to enjoy a much lighter trigger pull. A double-set trigger accomplishes the same thing, but uses two triggers: one sets the trigger and the other fires the weapon.); cheekpiece (158); loading lever (158); wiping stick (164); vent of the barrel (220); gunstones (221); buttplate (224); twelvepound demiculverin (231); Tower muskets (243); howitzer (262); touchhole (262: the opening in early firearms and cannons through which the powder was ignited so that the weapon could be touched off or fired); barrels welded up from triple skelps, a small springloaded silver capbox in the toe, wadcutter, powderflask, cleaning jags and capper (266); shotpouch (280); seating the
balls with the **sprues** down (281); hammer set at **halfcock**, **chamber** (288), and **derringer** (305). During the reading of *Blood Meridian*, one learns much about firearms in the first half of the nineteenth century. All of the related terminology, technical in nature, begs for intralingual translation as an aid to fuller comprehension.

McCarthy puts his reader back in touch with the expressive treasury of the English language. The novel requires an expansive and expanding vocabulary on the part of the reader, whose indolence in this regard McCarthy does not brook. He expects his reader either to already know or to learn his English. Until we translate his language, and thereby make it our own through this intralingual reengineering, we do not know — we have not acknowledged — what we do not know about language and meaning. Intralingual translation, then, is not only a crucial part of the reader’s contract with the author, but it serves also as a preventive against taking one’s own native language for granted.

II

The second of *Blood Meridian*’s translators is represented by the partially complete interlingual work done from Spanish to English in *The Official Web Site of the Cormac McCarthy Society* online glossary, provided as a readily available e-resource for today’s readers. McCarthy’s use of Spanish in the novel is knowledgeable, subtle, varied, and extensive, at times highly problematic for the native English-language reader (as evidenced by the provision of online translations into English), ranging from idiomatic English-Spanish to Spanish proper. By English-Spanish (ES) I mean the idiomatic use of Spanish that has become embedded in American English, that Spanish which has become part of national and/or regional discourse in English in the United States, historically in 1849–1850 through today. It refers to the Spanish that is frequently used while speaking English (a reverse “Engspan” variant precursor of today’s widespread Spanglish), such that the Spanish has lost its Spanishness or foreignness, it has become naturalized within the English language. In the context of the novel, this is the Spanish that would have been generally understood as part of the normal border discourse at the time. On the one hand, we have an ES that is widely shared among speakers and readers of American English today; on the other, there is the more challenging ES that would most likely have been understood by the characters in that particular setting at that time in history. While the reader of *Blood Meridian* recognizes that McCarthy’s use of the latter lexical embedding is a communal cultural patrimony (or linguistic matrimony) in the desert southwest in 1849–1850, and thus poses greater problems in terms of comprehension, it is the Spanish proper — Spanish that appears as a foreign language per se — which most disrupts the act of reading, introducing foreign difficulties to what to begin with is a demanding read in English. This cross-linguistic enhancement of the possibilities for misunderstanding and misreadings (missed readings if the Spanish is not understood) only adds to the heteroclite expressive turbulence that McCarthy has unleashed in his novel. The best reader might in principle be the bilingual-bicultural-biliterate Mexican-American or American-Mexican with a historical knowledge of mid–nineteenth-century Mexican Spanish.

Examples of ES, in ascending order of difficulty, begin with Spanish words that form part of today’s American English code (there is no code switching between the two languages; rather, the Spanish now forms part of the English-language code), such as “a Mexican **cantina**” (15); “**Está borracho**, said the old man” (24); “great pale **lobos**” (45); “**tortillas**” (60); “The kid pulled the stopper and drank and stood panting and drank again. The leader reached down and tapped the canteen. **Basta**, he said” (64); “the **jefe**” (70); “**dusty pueblos**” (71); “**vendors of tamales**” (73); “**a hacienda**” (81); “They did not noon nor did they **siesta**” (88); “**Tortillas**, said Bathcat” (101); “**Centavos**, said Bathcat” (101); “there is another **caballero**” (103); “a slender black **cigarillo**” (107); there were no **paseos** (171);
and serapes (199). These are words that add touches of local color and authenticity to the novel and whose definitions are at hand in English-language dictionaries. Closely related in terms of ease of reading are the cognates that the English-language reader should be able to comprehend without too much difficulty, e.g., “Los heréticos” (74), “An ambusado” (108: coined term), and pistola (301).

It becomes increasingly disruptive for the monolingual English-language reader when the ES lexicon shifts to words that would be used more typically by English-speaking residents of the desert southwest, either on ranches or in towns or cities today or especially during the time of Blood Meridian. Here, the reader who is not from that geographic location — and therefore not familiar with its peculiar blending of English and Spanish — finds that the momentum of the reading in English is more frequently interrupted. The novel’s readership becomes more exclusive as the ES becomes culturally denser and deepens its geographical and temporal imprint of local color and authenticity. From easily recognizable ES, the reader is moved to more time—place-bound ES, which begins to require a greater knowledge of Spanish, such as: “High walls of the cárcel” (38: jail); “They pass along a ramada in the courtyard” (39: shelter, hut); “To the south the blue cordilleras stood footed in their paler image on the sand like reflections in a lake” (46: mountain ranges); “They took to riding by night, silent jornadas” (46: journeys); Sopilotes (55: turkey buzzards); “The carreta” (55: wagon); “They carried escopetas” (63: shotguns); “women in dark rebozos” (69: shawls); “their faces stained red with almagre” (69: a fine, deep red ocher, somewhat purplish, found in Spain); “they had us in the calabozo” (70: jail, dungeon); “the azoteas” (76: terrace roofs); “feet tucked into tapaderos slung nearly to the ground” (80: leather hoods that cover the stirrups of a Mexican saddle); “He fired upon a clay garraffa” (83: demijohn, bottle; oddly misspelled with a double “ff,” given McCarthy’s attentiveness to Spanish orthography); “a few old pelados” (97: conscripts); “The sereño” (100: night watchman; again, a surprising misspelling of sereno); “Toadvine pushed the few tlacos toward the barman” (103: Mexican coins); “The ciboleros” (108: Mexican buffalo hunters); “only three animals left in the caballado” (111: string of horses); “remuda” (115: herd of horses from which ranch hands select their mounts); “the smoke spread along the sagging vigas above them” (117: rafters or roofbeams whose ends project from an outside adobe wall); “He entered the cuartel” (118: barracks); “we filled our wallets and panniers and our mochilas” (127: a flap of leather on the seat of a saddle, used as a covering and sometimes as a base to which saddlebags are attached); “El virote” (151: issue, matter, subject); “Un hacendado” (151: landowner, ranch owner); “hogskins filled with pulque” (189: drink made from fermented cactus sap); “nothing remained of the poblanos” (216: a dark-green, mild or slightly pungent chili pepper, which yields a startling consequent image: “It was the remains of the scalps taken on the Nacozari and they had been burned unredeemed in a green and stinking bonfire so that nothing remained of the poblanos save this charred coagulate of their preterite lives”); “the kid held the woven reata” (219: lasso); “bowls of guisado” (221: stew); “raw brown peloncillo sugar” (221: little cones of unrefined sugar, Schimpf 238); “estancia” (227: ranch); “a fibre morral filled with coins” (264: nosebag for feeding horses and mules, from the Spanish “morro,” snout); “As he was crossing the plaza from our yard” (270: mayor); “in the alcalde’s house” (270: mayor); “in the juzgado” (271: court); and “dried carcasses of mules with the alparejas still buckled about” (287: packsaddles). Here is where “A Translation of the Spanish in Blood Meridian,” the online glossary in The Official Web Site of the Cormac McCarthy Society, becomes more useful for the monolingual English-language reader, as it does also for yet a higher degree of ES difficulty, that
of the blended dialogue that now requires an intermediate level of Spanish in order to be able to read with limited disruption.

When ES dialogue appears in *Blood Meridian*, the typical monolingual English-language reader is forced to move beyond a simple recognition of Spanish nouns to include that of verbs, tenses, and moods as well. This type of reading disruption begins early in the novel when Toadvine, who had “left [his] mule with a Mexican family that boarded animals at the edge of town,” wheezes at the señora who meets him at the door, “Need to get my mule” (13). In an ironic inverted prefiguring of the comprehension difficulties to follow — those that the monolingual English-language reader will soon stumble across repeatedly in Spanish — she calls out for help from somebody who can understand Toadvine and communicate to her in Spanish what he is seeking in English: “Nito, she called. Venga. Hay un caballero aquí. Venga” (14). Now it is the English-language reader who may be in need of translation, which the online glossary renders as: “Nitto [oddly misspelled with a double “tt”], she called. Come. There is a gentleman here. Come.”

Most such passages are translated in the online glossary, usually in a literal and stilted manner rather than literally into the ES or English of *Blood Meridian*. The translations, while generally useful as comprehension cribs — similar in nature to the first form of translation discussed earlier, the native English-language reader’s Englishing of McCarthy’s English — are often rather incongruous in that they do not seek to imitate consistently the style and diction of the novel. For example, an intralingual touching up of the online translation into English might more appropriately render translations along the following lines (14)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLT</th>
<th>Online Translation</th>
<th>First Proposed Revised Translation – Seeks to Retain Spanish Flavoring (Doyle)</th>
<th>First Proposed Revised Translation – Seeks to Retain Tone and Style of McCarthy’s English (Doyle)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dígame, he said (…)</td>
<td>Tell me sir, he said (…)</td>
<td>Say to me, he said (…)</td>
<td>What’ll ye have, he said (…) [retains the “ye” spelling used throughout <em>Blood Meridian</em>]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The barman looked across the room to where two men were playing dominoes at a table. Abuelito, he said.</td>
<td>The barman looked across the room to where two men were playing dominoes at a table. Grandpa, he said.</td>
<td>The barman looked across the room to where two men were playing dominoes at a table. Abuelito, he said.</td>
<td>The barman looked across the room to where two men were playing dominoes at a table. Grandpappy, he said. [retains Spanish use of the diminutive]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The older of the two raised his head. Qué dice el muchacho? (…)</td>
<td>The older of the two raised his head. What is the boy saying? (…) [retains and plays off the name of this protagonist, “kid”]</td>
<td>The older of the two raised his head. What’s the kid sayin? (…) [retains and plays off the name of this protagonist, “kid”]</td>
<td>The older of the two raised his head. What’s the kid sayin? (…) [retains and plays off the name of this protagonist, “kid”]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiere echarse una copa, he said. Pero no puede pagar (…)</td>
<td>He wants a drink, he said. But he cannot pay (…)</td>
<td>He wants a drink, he said. But he caint pay (…) [retains spelling form consistent with “aint” used above and “caint” throughout the novel]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quiere trabajo, said the old man. Quién sabe (…)

Quieres trabajar, said one of the men at the bar.

He wants work, said the old man. Who knows (…)

You want work, said one of the men at the bar.

He wants work, said the old man. Who knows (…)

He wants work, said the old man. Who knows (…)

Who knows (…)

So ye want a job, said one of the men at the bar.

You want work, said one of the men at the bar.

He wants work, said the old man. Who knows (…)

Finally, the online glossary would also be more useful if it included translations of the Spanish used in the chapter headings: e.g., Chapter IV, The ghost manada (42: herd); V, Sopilotes (variant spelling of Mexican zopilote: turkey buzzards); The carreta (55: wagon); Los heréticos (74: The heretics); VII, Pasajeros de un país antiguo (81: Passengers from an ancient land); XII, Un hacendado (151: A landowner [ranch]); XIV, Tierras quemadas, tierras despobladas (Burnt lands, deserted lands); A bodega (saloon); Cazando las almas (Hunting for souls); The conducta (muletrain); Los po-rdioseros (186: The beggars); XVII, Tierras quebradas, tierras desamparadas (Broken lands, defenseless lands); Un hueso de piedra (241: A stone bone); and XXII, Los ahorcados (305: The hanged).

The online translation falls short in conveying the tone and diction of the SLT, either in Spanish or English, delegating this task of the translation to the reader’s imagination, as illustrated by the two proposed alternatives. It would be strengthened considerably by rendering the translated passages as literary translations, with a Spanish ring or remnant to them, which would enhance the consistency and authenticity of the novel’s reading while still serving as a comprehension tool.

Incomplete as it is, the online glossary remains a work in progress whose utility to the monolingual English-language reader can also be improved considerably by providing the translations that are missing. For example, on p. 120, the glossary provides the following translation: “Friends, we’re friends.” The full text of the Spanish (with missing translation added) on that page is:

Who are you?

Amigos, somos amigos. / Friends, we’re friends.

They were counting each the other’s number.

De dónde viene? called the strangers. / Where are you coming from?

A dónde va? called the judge. / Where are you going?

Or the translations are missing on pp. 202–203:

Joven, said the judge. / Youngster.

The boy leaped up.

Eres mozo del caballado? / Are you a stableboy?

Sí señor. A su servicio. / Sí señor, at your servicio.

Nuestros caballos, he said. / Our horses, he said.

The third translator is Shane Schimpf in A Reader’s Guide to Blood Meridian, which also could be retitled or subtitled “The Blood Meridian Dictionary.” This book is a valuable resource for the reader, or re-reader qua translator, of the novel. A Reader’s Guide in truth provides us with the cumulative work of two researcher-translators, as it builds upon the earlier work of John Sepich’s seminal Notes on Blood Meridian. The back cover announces that “With this Reader’s Guide, Shane Schimpf has gone a long way toward defanging the novel.” The corollary to this statement is that the “defanging” definitions, translations, and notes in the Reader’s Guide, “the kinds of things that could not easily be looked up[,] although a dictionary is certainly a good place to start,” only make us marvel all the more at McCarthy’s wondrous writing. The cover also states that the book “has much to offer the returning reader,” whom Schimpf in his Preface addresses as his primary beneficiary:
I want to make one suggestion on how best to proceed and that is to read the novel one time through without any aid (…) *Blood Meridian* is an exquisitely written novel above all else and one need not understand every term and allusion to appreciate this (…) I do not want these notes to detract from the novel’s beauty. Once having read the novel, read it through a second time with the notes.\(^{30}\)

There [is] a wealth of clever allusions and references McCarthy has packed into his masterpiece and it will only deepen one’s understanding to be made aware of them. With a firm grasp on the trajectory of the novel and its characters, one will be able to get the most out of the research contained herein. The end result will be a more complete understanding of McCarthy’s project. (iv)

Given the complexity of *Blood Meridian*, Schimpf’s *Reader* must also be considered a work in progress,\(^ {31}\) as is the online glossary discussed earlier. In the face of the seemingly inexhaustible novel, and the fact that each reader requires different translations and types of translation, such a work may never reach a state of completion. A few examples serve to recommend the welcome utility of *A Reader’s Guide to Blood Meridian*.

*Blood Meridian* opens with three epigrams: the first by Paul Valéry, the second by Jacob Boehme, and the third a quote from a 6/13/82 report in *The Yuma Daily Sun*. Schimpf’s notes (brief essays) on the first two epigrams, which themselves have been translated into English in the novel, provide the reader of *Blood Meridian* with the full contexts of when and why the lines were written. The result, as Schimpf indicates, is that the epigrams thus make more initial sense. When the kid “keeps off the king’s road for fear of citizenry” (15), the translatorial explicitation provided by Schimpf is useful: “Also known as The Old San Antonio Road, the Camino Real, the King’s Highway and the San Antonio–Nacogdoches road. It was a major artery into Texas as early as the late 1600’s” (72). The “king’s road” is a translation of the Spanish, and we now understand that the cultural referent is not to any King William or King George. When the captain says to Sergeant Trammel that “we don’t want to look like bobtails” (35), the *Reader’s Guide* provides the following intralinguistic translation for “bobtails,” such that the reader doesn’t erroneously envision the referent as an animal with a shortened tail or bobtail deer bounding away: “Slang: A dishonorable discharge from one of the armed services” (86). When we take “heretics” as a facile cognate for “heréticos,” explicitation clarifies that it is not as straightforward as it appears, as “heréticos” is a mid–nineteenth-century Mexican reference to protestant Anglos (Schimpf via Sepich, 119), gringo heretics in terms of Roman Catholicism. In the heading of Chapter V, “Adrift on the Bolson de Mapimi,” the latter three words remain a mystery for the monolingual English-language reader until Schimpf translates bolson as “a flat-floored desert valley that drains to a playa” (107), such that we now recognize it as an ES word (derived from the Spanish for “pocket”) just as is playa. On p. 97, we read that “a few old pelados sat mute in the doorways,” earlier translated as “conscripts,” which fits the context, but which the *Reader’s Guide* nuances or better translates by explaining that “a pelado is a person suspected of criminal activity; in particular, cutting the hair of a Mexican prisoner. This meaning also ties into the novel’s scalphunting theme” (151).

**IV**

The fourth of *Blood Meridian’s* translators is Cormac McCarthy himself, who assists the native English-language reader, the primary reader for whom he has written, by means of his own intra- and interlingual translations within the novel. The extent to which McCarthy makes self-translation visible as an integral part of the narrative is somewhat surprising, given McCarthy’s high expectations of his readers’ lexical knowledge and his general refusal to provide assistance when it comes to the English language, as illustrated by the following brief
dialogue, in which the captain (metaphorically McCarthy as author) denies lexical aid to his sergeant (metaphorically the reader):

And see if there’s any forage here for the animals. 
Forage? 
Forage. (48)

The blunt message here is, “If you don’t know the word, go look it up.” Yet with unexpected frequency, McCarthy himself engages in three types of translation within the novel’s writing: intralingual Englishing of his own English, interlingual translation from English to Spanish, and interlingual translation from Spanish to English. He does this by means of complete direct translation as well as indirect partial translation, the latter of which is the technique of providing just enough translation for the reader to be able to glean meaning obliquely from the context. While auto-translation, McCarthy uses traditional translation strategies and tactics that provide a procedural and prescriptive blueprint — a modeling and licensing — for his eventual interlingual translators proper in techniques of compensation, explicitation, and interpolation.

Examples of McCarthy’s intralingual translation technique in Blood Meridian include synonymic rewording and explicitation (direct and indirect) of words in English: “the riders wearing scapulars or necklaces of dried and blackened human ears” (78); “he’d took out his pizzle and he was pissin’ into the mixture” (131); “they took what they required by way of commissary” (172); and “old muskets and miquelets or guns fabricated out of parts rudely let into stocks of cottonwood that had been shaped with axes like clubhouse guns for boys” (220). At times, in order to provide sufficient context for the meaning to be inferred, the explicitation lengthens in terms of cohesion and coherence: “They wanted to know from me if you were always crazy, said the judge. They said it was the country. The country turned them out” (306: turned them out = drove them crazy). The intralingual self-translations can be quite specific, reinforcing the nuanced precision with which McCarthy chooses his words, as when the judge expounds on his “point of view for his work as a scientist” (186):

Only nature can enslave man and only when the existence of each last entity is routed out and made to stand naked before him will he be properly suzerain of the earth.
What’s a suzerain?
A keeper. A keeper or overlord.
Why not say keeper then?
Because he is a special kind of keeper. A suzerain rules even when there are other rulers. His authority countermands local judgments. (198)

Intralingual self-translation also helps McCarthy’s reader to comprehend the meaning of his idiosyncratically stylized lexicon, as in the use of the verb “find” to mean “to come up with the necessary funds” to pay for Glanton’s protection. Only when the adverb “adequately” is shifted32 to its adjectival form in the phrase “adequate in money” does the reader comprehend clearly the previously oblique meaning of “provided they find themselves adequately”:

He’s willing to take a few passengers under the protection of his company provided they can find themselves adequately.
Well now yes. Got some money. How much money are we talking about?
How much have you got? Said Glanton.
Well. Adequate, I would say. I’d say adequate in money. (233)

McCarthy’s self-translation also ranges from English into Spanish and from Spanish into English, depending on the directionality needs of the dialogue between characters:

What about my boots? said the kid.
Y sus botas, said the Texan. Botas?
Sí. He made sewing motions (38)
We’ll get out. It aint like the cárcel. What’s the cárcel? State penitentiary. (75)

Who can ride against the Tejanos? They are soldiers. Que soldados tan valientes. La sangre de Gómez, sangre de la gente… He looked up. Blood, he said. This country is give much blood. This Mexico. This is a thirsty country. (102)

All dead save me, he called. Have mercy on me. Todos muertos. Todos. (134)

More often than not, McCarthy’s interlingual translations take the form of contextualized explicitations or interpolations (aids to coherence and cohesion) that clarify for the monolingual English-language reader the meanings of words in Spanish: “They were ciboleros down from the north, their packhorses laden with dried meat (…) They carried lances with which they hunted the wild buffalo on the plains” (120); “men kep watchfires burning on the azoteas or roofs” (88); “a solitary jacal, crude hut of mud and wattles” (48); “A stall half filled with dry sotols in the way of feed” (49); “It was a carreta, lumbering clumsily over the plain, a small mule to draw it” (67–68: i.e., mules draw or pull wagons or carts); “Two weeks before this a party of campesinos had been hacked to death with their own hoes” (88: enough context is provided for the reader to work out the translation or meaning, as hoes are typically used by farmers); “a small steel tapadero (…) he took up the little footguard” (140); “where the indians had cooked mescal and they rode through strange forests of maguey — the aloe or century plant — with immense flowering stalks that rose some forty feet into the desert air” (147); “a conducta of one hundred and twenty two mules bearing flasks of quicksilver for the mines” (194); “reduced indians or tontos as their brothers outside the gates would name them” (239); “boletas or notes of discounted script from the mines near Tubac” (240); “They were led by a pitero piping a reed” (313); “That’s prime bullmeat, son. From the corrida. You’ll get it of a Sunday night” (77: here McCarthy brings together language and culture — the tradition of the Sunday afternoon bullfights).

At times McCarthy’s interlingual Spanish-English self-translations rely on a description of kinesics as a form of explicitation: “Andale, he said. He made a shooping motion with the back of his hand” (24: the translation of “Andale” is achieved by describing what this typical gesture in Spanish looks like); “The old man made a fist with the thumb pointing up and the little finger down and tilted his head back and tipped a phantom drink down his throat. Quiere echarse una copa, he said” (23: the description of the typical Mexican gesture for drinking serves as the translation for “He wants to have a drink”); “You are sociedad de guerra. Contra los barbaros. Toadvine didn’t know [was unable to understand the words spoken in Spanish, as would be the case with many readers], The old man put a phantom rifle to his shoulder and made a noise with his mouth. He looked at the Americans. You kill the Apache, no? (102); and “Cuánto, said Toadvine. The barman looked fearful. Seis? he said. Seis what? The man held up six fingers (101: the number of fingers held up indicates the six centavos that must be paid). Sometimes the reader of Blood Meridian is assisted by McCarthy, the online glossary and Schimpf, as McCarthy provides only a partial translation which the other resources complete:

You tell fortunes?
The juggler’s eyes skittered. Cómo [Online: What]? he said.
Glanton put the cigar in his mouth and mimed a deal of cards with his hands. La baraja, he said. Para adivinar la suerte [Schimpf: The cards… To tell fortunes].
The juggler tossed one hand aloft. Sí, sí, he said, shaking his head with vigor” (91).

An integral part of the writing of the novel — procedure, craft, art, and style — is the self-translation that permeates its pages. The extent
to which McCarthy translates in *Blood Meridian* reveals that the act of translation is a key ingredient of this particular instance of creative writing.

The fifth of *Blood Meridian*’s translators is accomplished translator Luis Murillo Fort, who renders the novel into Spanish as *Meridiano de sangre* (2001). The challenge for Murillo subsumes and far exceeds that of the native-language reader whom McCarthy first pressed into service as his intralingual translator. The movement from intra- to interlingual translation of *Blood Meridian* must surely be a translator’s delight, as the need for creative problem-solving everywhere presents itself in myriad ways.

It is not the principal job of the interlingual translator to demystify and clarify meanings of language, as in the case of the native English-language reader (the intralingual translator who Englishes McCarthy’s English) examined earlier; rather, it is to convey as fully as possible the story and manner of the SLT, including the mysterious and magnetic workings of its storytelling language and how and to what effect this is packaged and presented. The intralingual translator who works within the SLT language translates the meanings of words for the sake of comprehension; the interlingual translator translates the words themselves — their forms, messages, and esthetic effects — rather than simply their meanings. Murillo does not necessarily have to know that anchorite means hermit in order to translate it as anacoreta (whose meaning he does not necessarily need to know in Spanish, either), nor does he have to know the meaning of parallax to render it correctly as paralaje. He simply needs to find the formal lexical equivalents — the surface shells of the words — in a dictionary or other reliable source (many of *Blood Meridian*’s words are not listed in standard dictionaries such as *The Oxford Spanish Dictionary*). But in order to better understand *Meridiano de sangre*, the reader of the Spanish translation will in turn be challenged to perform his or her own intralingual translation as needed, a Spanishing of Murillo’s Spanish, repeating what was required of the SLT reader on behalf of the reading of *Blood Meridian* in English. Murillo has many other trials and tribulations to face in Spanishing *Blood Meridian* into *Meridiano de sangre*, including the thorny issues represented by the chapter headings; nicknames and surnames; dialect, diction, and register; the variety of discourse domains; lexical compounds and neologisms; and poetic and lyrical prose. The purpose here is to examine what Philip Lewis has referred to as “specific nubs” of difficulty in the original (271), applauding Murillo up front for a very fine job overall of rendering *Blood Meridian* in Spanish. Indeed, Murillo’s adroitness makes of *Meridiano de sangre* a best-practices model for literary translation of the highest standards and achievement. Backtranslation (BT), a technique of comparative and contrastive reading back across languages, will help us to explore Murillo’s handling of difficulties that arise between the distinct expressive possibilities of English and Spanish, and McCarthy’s use of English versus Murillo’s use of Spanish.

BT is a translation analysis tool that allows us to map and measure what is transformed or shifted in a translation, added or omitted, gained or lost, the translator’s visibility/invisibility, and the visibility/invisibility of the SLT vs. the target-language text in terms of form, semantics, culture, and reception esthetics. It allows us to map possibilities and limits of translatability, where the words and manners of expression in one language cancel out — culturally nullify and exclude — and therefore must be foreignized, adopted and naturalized into those in another. It allows us to explore what McCarthy does in English versus what Murillo does in Spanish, and what can and cannot be done when the English is regenerated as Spanish.

Dialectal literature does not allow one system of signifiers to successfully replace another. The target-language text cannot successfully supplant the SLT because the signifieds and referents derive from and inhabit
different, unique, and nontransferable cultural and ethnic worlds. McCarthy’s precision in English, and what he does to the English language, can never find an exact equivalence — not in the same way to the same effect — in another language like Spanish (or any other language). It is like pretending to move East Tennessee bluegrass music and lyrics and moonshine to another birthing ground, which simply cannot be done. The ethno-cultural context from which Blood Meridian emerged, and the language of its expression, its genius and lifeblood, is sui generis. Dialect, diction, and register are place-, time-, and people-bound. As such, they are uniquely resistant to the notion of transfer, even within one and the same language, because they are a one-of-a-kind cultural manifestation, an ethnicity wrapped within its own exclusive time and forms of communication. The American English of Blood Meridian belongs to this novel only as it is written by McCarthy. What, then, becomes of it when it is transported or transmuted into Spanish? What happens to Blood Meridian when it reappears as Meridiano de sangre?

The chapter headings in Blood Meridian serve as abstracts and atlases for the novel itself. In and of themselves, they make for a challenging and entertaining synoptic read. The heading for Chapter I entices the reader with the promise of revealing genealogical origins, action, adventure, violence, exotic-sounding locations, and flight. A BT table format allows us to compare the words and manner of expression in the SLT (column 1) with Murillo’s translation (column 2; italics are used in the Spanish publication), and a literal but idiomatic and natural BT of Murillo’s rendition (column 3), which can then be read against McCarthy’s original expression in the first column, serving to highlight the differences between McCarthy’s English and Murillo’s Spanish.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text of Blood Meridian</th>
<th>Murillo Translation into Spanish</th>
<th>Doyle BT of Murillo Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Childhood in Tennessee</td>
<td><em>Run</em> Le juez</td>
<td>Childhood in Tennessee – He leaves home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The differences between the idiomatic forms of expression in English and Spanish immediately begin to reveal themselves, as does Murillo’s skill in turning the English into a fitting Spanish. “Runs away” becomes “He leaves home,” which is idiomatic Spanish (“se va de casa”) for conveying the same message, and a better choice than “se fuga,” the primary dictionary entry for “run away.” “Is shot” is more problematic in terms of finding an equally concise two-word dynamic equivalence in Spanish, which perhaps could have been rendered as “Recibe un tiro” (literally “receives a gunshot” → “is shot”), but Murillo knows that the reader will soon discover that the wound of “Le hieren” (they wound him) is from a gunshot, such that his clipped rendition in two Spanish words works very well while matching the staccato, gun-like report of “Is shot.” “Affray,” a rather unusual, archaic-sounding word for “fight” or “brawl,” becomes “refriega,” a nice match for McCarthy’s unusual word choice in English. “Escape” becomes “Retirada” (withdrawal, retreat), again a felicitous change brought to bear by Murillo, as the escape under consideration is that of withdrawing from the “battlefield” of a fight. The subtle changes in the new Spanish text of Blood Meridian represent Murillo’s successful compensations, which stay on task with message, tone, pacing, and overall style, now subject to the rhetorical conventions of Spanish rather than to those of English. Nonetheless, it is interesting to note some inconsistency, as when “New Orleans” is
Spanished as “Nueva Orleans” (as is North Carolina [264] / Carolina del Norte [320]) while the same is not done for Tennessee (Tenesi), especially given that the name of the state was first recorded by Spanish explorer Captain Juan Pardo in the summer of 1567.37

The chapter headings not only augur but also encapsulate the nature and breadth of the translation difficulties to be encountered throughout the text of the novel. “Chapter IX: An ambuscado [Murillo: Emboscada] – The dead Apache – Hollow ground – A gypsum lake – Trebillones [Murillo: Torbellinos, surmised from the “dustspouts” and “mindless coils” described on p. 111] – Snowblind horses [Murillo: Caballos con ceguera de la nieve; BT: Horses with snow blindness; the Spanish language does not easily accommodate compound words as does English] – The Delawares return – A probate [Murillo: Verificación] – The ghost coach – The copper mines – Squatters [Murillo: Intrusos, rather than the more explicit but ponderous “ocupantes ilegales,” which has all the legality but lacks the threat connoted by transgressing “intruders”] – A Snakebit horse [Murillo: El caballo mordido por la serpiente; BT: The horse bit by the snake; again, the problem represented by compound words] – The judge on geological evidence [Murillo: El juez hablando de hechos geológicos; BT: The judge speaking on geological facts] – The dead boy – On parallax and false guidance in things past [Murillo: Sobre la paralaje y los equívocos a que conducen las cosas pasadas; BT: On parallax and mistakes to which things past lead] – The ciboleros” (108); “Chapter XII: Crossing the border – Storms – Ice and lightning –The slain Argonauts [Murillo: Los argonautas asesinados; BT: The murdered/assassinated argonauts] – The azimuth – Rendezvous [Murillo: Cita; does not retain the French, which has become embedded within the English language code as an English-French word] – Councils of War [Murillo: Asambleas; BT: Assemblies] – Slaughter of the Gileños – Death of Juan Miguel – The dead in the lake [Murillo: Cadáveres en el lago; BT: Cadavers or Corpses in the lake, rather than “Muertos,” dead bodies or the dead; “cadavers” works very well, and perhaps is more consistent with the gore] – The chief – An Apache child – On the desert – Night fires – El virote – A surgery – The judge takes a scalp – Un hacendado – Gallego – Ciudad de Chihuahua” (151). Clearly it has become a necessarily different read in Spanish, which in no way detracts from Murillo providing his readers with an excellent, entertaining, and artfully crafted read, still uniquely McCarthyesque, as there is no writing quite like that of Meridiano de sangre within the Spanish tradition, just as occurs with Blood Meridian within American literature. But in Spanish, McCarthy is no longer McCarthy as we once knew him in English — he is less and at the same time more, the same yet heteromorphic.

Nicknames and surnames in the SLT novel represent an interesting translation problem to be addressed (or circumvented) with consistency. One of the protagonists, the “kid” from Tennessee, distinctively spelled in small case letters in Blood Meridian, has many options in Spanish: niño, chico, muchacho, joven, rapaz, mozo, mozuelo, párvulo, chaval. Murillo settles on the latter, a ready transculturation with a fitting colloquial ring in Spanish. He does not translate or transculturate surnames such as Toadvine (124), which would be like the absurdity of pretending to translate González or García into English, or nicknames such as Bathcat and Grannyrat (Meridiano 124–125). But he does so with other nicknames both for characters and rifles: Brassteeth is refit oddly as Dientes de Bronce (99: Bronze Teeth rather than the brass in Dientes de Latón, an unusual oversight by Murillo?); Sweetlips becomes the literally coined compound word “Dulceslabios”; and Hark From The Tombs is rendered as “Oídme desde la Tumba” (Meridiano 155). Lost by not coining nicknames in Spanish for Bathcat and Grannyrat are the images evoked by the English words, “a cat in or averse to a bath” (cats are known for avoiding water, which connotes the dubious hygiene of this particular character) and perhaps “little ol’ granny with a face like a rat.”38 But when read simply as is —
in English — in Spanish, these nicknames are devoid of suggestiveness and mean absolutely nothing to the monolingual Spanish reader. The problem here is how to create a “matching equivalent” replacement in terms of form and effect, which Spanish precludes. The translator is in a real quandary with nicknames, and Murillo resolves the issue by translating and transculturating when feasible and circumventing or footnoting when not.

Most of the characters in Blood Meridian are uneducated frontier roughnecks and criminals who speak with diction reminiscent of McCarthy’s earlier Appalachian novels, set in the hills, hollers, and mountains of East Tennessee. The kid hails from Tennessee, and many of the other characters also come from Tennessee or Kentucky, or surely pass through these at-the-time outlying states, as could be expected in a story about westward expansion. The following examples of dialogue in dialectal English, with the problematic nubs highlighted, are rendered by Murillo into Spanish as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text of Blood Meridian</th>
<th>Murillo Translation into Spanish</th>
<th>Doyle BT of Murillo Translation with Commentary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seen ye smoke, said the kid. Thought you might spare a man a sup of water. (16)</td>
<td>He visto el humo, dijo el chaval. He pensado que podría darme un sorbo de agua. (24)</td>
<td>I saw the smoke, said the kid. I was thinking you might give me a sip of water. [The distinctive orthography and colloquial flavoring and authenticity of the SLT are lost to flattening conventionalities, as is the idiomatic flavor of “spare” (can you spare a dime?).]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t have no bacca with ye do ye? No I aint, said the kid. Didn’t allow ye did. You reckon it’ll rain? It’s got ever opportunity. Likely it wont. (19)</td>
<td>No tendrás tabaco por ahí, ¿verdad? No, dijo el chaval. ¿Cree que lloverá? Tiene toda la pinta. Probablemente no. (28)</td>
<td>You wouldn’t have any tobacco there, would you? No, said the kid. That’s what I thought. Do you think it will rain? Sure looks it. Probably not. [“Me lo figuraba” and “Tiene toda la pinta” are indeed fine renditions that capture the substandard quality of the SLT.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See to this man now. I got to get (...) Aint nobody sick is they? (37)</td>
<td>Ocúpese de este hombre. He de irme (...) No hay nadie enfermo, ¿verdad? (49)</td>
<td>Look after/take care of this man. I must leave (...) Nobody’s sick, right? [Murillo’s “He de irme” is a good compensation for what is lost by not being able to adequately reproduce the substandard “I got to get.”]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You best keep chewin. Don’t let it feel ye to weaken. (77)</td>
<td>Mastica bien. No te conviene perder fuerzas. (98)</td>
<td>Chew well. It’s not good for you to lose your strength. [The form, tone and voice of the expression are completely lost.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentlemens, said Toadvine, I’ll guarangoddamntee ye I know what that there is about. (79)</td>
<td>Señores, dijo Toadvine, me juego algo a que sé lo que se está cociendo. (101)</td>
<td>Gentlemen, said Toadvine, I’ll bet I know what’s cooking. [It seems impossible to find an adequate Spanish equivalent for “Gentlemens” or “guarangoddamntee ye,” but “me juego algo” works well for the latter, as does “lo que se está cociendo” for “what that there is about.”]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Ye’ve not hunted the aborigines afore.” (87)</td>
<td>Nunca has ido a cazar aborígenes, ¿verdad? (110)</td>
<td>You’ve never gone hunting for aborigines, right? [The “ye’ve” has no suitable equivalent nor does “afore,” a typical Smoky Mountain Appalachian English usage, see Montgomery pp. 5–6.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aint that the drizzlin shits.</td>
<td>Qué gansada, dijo. (113)</td>
<td>What a silly thing to do. [The correct meaning is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We thought you <strong>was</strong> <em>injuns</em></td>
<td>Pensábamos que eran indios (143)</td>
<td>We thought you were Indians [The substandard ungrammaticality and orthography are translated away.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayhaps he <strong>aint</strong> to your liking (122)</td>
<td>Puede que no sea de tu agrado (152)</td>
<td>He may not be to your liking [The archaic quality of “mayhaps” (1530–40) is lost, as is the substandard orthography of “aint.”]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every man jack of us knew that in that godforsook land (125)</td>
<td>Hasta el último de nosotros sabía que en aquella región dejada de la mano de Dios (154)</td>
<td>Every single one of us knew that in that region abandoned by the hand of God [The variant substandard spelling of godforsaken is lost.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’d <strong>doctorfy</strong> it myself but I <strong>caint</strong> get no straight grip (161)</td>
<td>me curaria yo mismo pero no puedo agarrar bien la flecha (197)</td>
<td>I’d heal/dress it myself but I can’t get a good hold of the arrow [The folksy substandard “doctorfy” is translated away into conventional Spanish as are the ungrammaticality and substandard spelling of “caint.”]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ort to of shot that one too, he said (226)</td>
<td>Deberíamos haber matado a ese otro, dijo. (274)</td>
<td>We should have killed that other one, he said. [The Smoky Mountain variant spelling for “ought” is lost.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That’s why he’s <strong>a wantin</strong> to go to Californy, said another. <strong>Account of he’s done got</strong> a satchel full of gold now (232)</td>
<td>Por eso quiere ir a California, dijo otro. Como ya tiene un saco lleno de oro (282)</td>
<td>That’s why he wants to go to California, said another. Since he already has a sack of gold [Again, the characteristic Smoky Mountain use of “a” before a verb is lost, as are the substandard orthography for California and the substandard grammar and diction of “Account of he’s done got.”]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Such culturally bound dialectal diction and its orthographic representation starkly reveal the limits of translatability across the two different languages, as the lexicon and manner of speech of the characters in *Blood Meridian* simply cannot be transferred elsewhere with authenticity and therefore to the same effect. There is no feasible possibility for transcultural translation, which through the unavoidable loss accrued exposes the brink at which translation must fall back into the more conventional conveyance of meaning, which can also be achieved artfully but which moves the interlinguistic literary translator (as writer and artist) back toward the definitional functionality of the first of McCarthy’s translators discussed earlier. To gain the fullest appreciation of *how* McCarthy writes and what he **does** to English while writing, *Blood Meridian* can only truly be read in **his** English, an inexorable capitulation before the facts of the language. It is what it is and admits of no other, yet paradoxically yields to the transformation “sameness” that we know as translation. Given the perils of pretending to find or create a parallel dialect and diction, Murillo resorts to the conservatism of convention — the safest, surest, and probably best solution. Again, this does not mean at all that the reader in Spanish is not reading a magnificent novel in Murillo’s *Meridiano de sangre*. It simply points to the expressive differences, traditions, and mutually exclusive possibilities of the two languages, what each will and will not allow, where the twain refuse to meet.

The variety of discourse domains in *Blood Meridian* adds to the pleasure of the reading and to the demands placed upon Murillo, who must remake within **his** Spanish the same broad repertoire of registers. When the judge holds forth or the narrator narrates, the lexicon, diction, tone, voice, and syntax are at different extremes from the untranslatability of substandard oral colloquialism and slang, and
Murillo’s adroitness affirms itself. Among the wide-ranging discourse typologies encountered are the philosophical, legal, and technical (different examples touched upon earlier), examples of which follow, accompanied by their deft renderings into Spanish — fitting in voice, tone, balance, structure, translator’s license (creative compensation), and idiomativeness within the context of the novel(s) as written within their respective languages. Often, excepting dialect and diction, one imagines that *Meridiano de sangre*, or at least significant parts of it, might have been written by McCarthy himself had Spanish been the language of his writing:

**Philosophical Discourse:** Moral law is an invention of mankind for the disenfranchisement of the powerful in favor of the weak. Historical law subverts it at every turn (…) The willingness of the principals to forgo further argument as the triviality which it in fact is and to petition directly the chambers of the historical absolute clearly indicates of how little moment are the opinions and of what great moment the divergences thereof. For the argument is indeed trivial, but not so the separate wills thereby made manifest. (McCarthy 250)

La ley moral es un invento del género humano para privar de sus derechos al poderoso en favor del débil. La ley de la historia la trastoca a cada paso (…) El que los protagonistas acepten renunciar a una disputa que consideran tan trivial como de hecho es y apelen directamente al tribunal del absoluto histórico indica a las claras cuán poco importan las opiniones y cuánto en cambio las divergencias que los enfrentan. Pues la disputa es en efecto trivial, pero no así las voluntades independientes que de ella se derivan. (Murillo 304)

**Legal Discourse:** He [the judge] called out points of jurisprudence, he cited cases. He expounded upon those laws pertaining to property rights in beasts mansuete and he quoted from cases of attainder insofar as he reckoned them germane to the corruption of blood in the prior and felonious owners. (293)

Enumeró puntos de jurisprudencia, citó casos. Comentó sobre las leyes relativas a los derechos de propiedad en material de bestias mansuetas y aludió a casos de muerte civil en la medida en que los consideraba pertinentes dada la corrupción de sangre por parte de los anteriores, y criminales, propietarios. (353)

**Technical Discourse (Numismatics):** There were doubloons minted in Spain and in Guadalajara and half doubloons and gold dollars and tiny gold half dollars and French coins of ten franc value and gold eagles and half eagles and ring dollars and dollars minted in North Carolina and Georgia that were twenty-two carats pure. The grocer weighed them out by stacks in a common scale, sorted by their mintings, and he drew corks and poured measures round in small tin cups whereon the gills were stamped. (264)

Había doblones acuñados en España y en Guadalajara y medios doblones y dólares de plata y pequeñas piezas de oro de medio dólar y monedas francesas de diez francos y águilas de oro y medias águilas y dólares con agujero y dólares acuñados en Carolina del Norte y en Georgia de una pureza de veintidós quilates. El tendero fue pesando las monedas en una balanza corriente, clasificadas por lotes según la acuñación, y descorchó y sirvió generosas raciones en cubiletes de estaño que llevaban marcado el nivel de una ración. (320)

Compound words (nouns, adjectives, and adverbs) and neologisms represent another immense challenge for Murillo. McCarthy conjoins words to such an extent in *Blood Meridian* that the attentive native-language
reader becomes disoriented and often must look up the synthesized words in order to confirm whether or not they are an official entry in English or a coined McCarthyism, a stylistic trademark of the novel (and of his writing, as is his eschewing of punctuation that he considers redundant, including the hyphen between lexical compounds).

Word alloys abound, as in the following representative sampling: **bloodlands** (138: sangrientas tierras [169]); **bloodloss** (293: la sangre perdida [353]); **bonestrewn** (272: plagado de huesos [329], a wonderful, powerful image in Spanish, “plagued by bones”); **bowieknives** (78: cuchillos de caza [100]); **cavefolk** (236: hombres de las cavernas [286], four words required in Spanish); **chairlegs** (171: patas de sillas [209]); **cinderland** (61: capa de escorias [78]); **closesnapped** (168: bien carmenados [205]); **cloudbanks** (154: bancos de nubes [188]); **coldforger** (310: forjador en frío [370]); **dawnstar** (152: lucero del alba [187], equally poetic-sounding in Spanish); **deathbells** (30: toque de muertos [42]); **desolatelooking** (201: con apariencias desoladas [245]); **dewsoaked** (86: empapadas de rocío [109]); **downcountry** (42: rumbo al sur [55]); **downshore** (304: playa abajo [365]); **driftlogs** (253: madera de deriva [308]); **eatinghouse** (234: casa de comidas [284]); **fishcolored** (258: color de pez [313]); **floodstained** (256: manchadas por la crecida [311]); **gamechickens** (38: gallos de pelea [50]); **gametrails** (212: caminos de caza [258]); **goathorn eartrumpet** (189: trompetilla de cuerno de cabra [231]); **gunstones** (221: piedras de río [268]); **gutcart** (112: carreta llena de vísceras [140]); **halfbroken** (201: apenas amansados [245], a wonderfully alliterative Spanish); **hardlooking** (4: de expression adusta [11]); **hatband** (87: cinta interior [111]); **hitchingrail** (22: atadero para caballos [31]); **hoopshaped** nostrils (261: hocicos dilatados [317], BT “dilated nostrils,” which completely cancels out the “hoop” image); **horsetracks** (216: rastros de caballos [263]); **inkblack** (46: negros [60], loses the image of how black); **leathercovered** (305: revestida de cuero [368]); **lifefoams** (75: formas vivas [97]); **lobeshaped** nostrils (148: en forma de lóbulo [181]); **makebelieve** (332: de ensueño [359]); **melonseeds** (149: pepitas de melón [182]); **midmorning** (220: a media mañana [267]); **moonblanced** (244: blanqueado por la luna [297]); **nightskies** (46: el cielo nocturno [60]); **nightwinds** (122: la brisa nocturna [151]); **othersea** (304: otro mar [365]); **pilotbread** (20: galleta marinera [29]); **pistolbarrel** (270: cañón de una pistola [327]); **pitchtent** (99: tienda de feria [124]); **plankboard walkway** (264: pasadera de tablas [264]); **plateland** (286: campo chapado [345]); **rainblown** bottomland (4: hoyada batida por la lluvia [10]); **rawskulled** (157: peladas [192], BT “peeled,” a nice compensation for the lost image); **redhot** (153: al rojo vivo [187]); **riverrock** (155: piedra de río [190]); **rubymeated** (281: de cara roja [340], BT “red-faced,” purely functional); **salmoncolored** (304: de color salmón [365]); **sashmilled** (264: mal ensamblados [320]); **scalphunters** (119: cazadores de cabelleras [148]); **seabeast** (251: bestia marina [305]); **silverheaded** (168: con cantera de plata [205]); **silvermounted** (168: repujadas en plata [205]); **singlefile** (113: en fila india [142]); **smelterlights** (186: luces de fundición [227]); **snaredrum** (99: tambor militar [124]); **snowblue** (151: azul níveo [186]); **sootysouled** (124: redomado [154]); **springloaded** (266: accionada a resorte [322]); **stockthieves** (54: ladrones de ganado [66]); **stoneage** (228: de la edad de piedra [277]); **tailorwise** (215: a lo sastre [262]); **tentshow** (245: circo [298], loses the image of the circus “big tent”); **thornthicket** (230: arbusto espinoso [279]); **twobarreled** (78: de dos cañones [100]); **urinecolored** (47: color de orina [61]); **viciouslooking** (78: de aspecto depravado [100]); **wagonboards** (69: tablas de carro [87]); **wagonboxes** (253: cajas de carro [308]); **wagonsheets** (228: lonas de carro [277]); **wagontongue** (278: vara de carro [336]); **wagonwheels** (47: ruedas de los carros [61]); **wagonyard** (237: de carretero [288]); **watchchain** (305: cadena de reloj [368]); **waterkegs** (48: barriles de agua [62]);
whippingpost (231: *poste de flagelación* [281]);
wickercovers (31: *con tapa de mibre* [42]);
and yessir (234: *Sí señor* [284]).

Usually Murillo’s solution is to translate away neologistic compound words into the conventions of the Spanish language, which after all is now *Blood Meridian*’s alter language, the language and culture into which the novel is being adopted and reared. The translation technique becomes one of explicitation — definitions and descriptions — such that the interlingual translator now doubles back to perform the work of the intralingual reader-translator described earlier. A longbarreled sixshot (82) is rendered as “de cañón largo y seis disparos” (106: BT, having a long barrel and six shots), a onestringed fiddle (148) is trans-explained as being “de una sola cuerda” (182: BT, having a single string), and sunchalked (317) is translated as “blanqueados por el sol” (383: BT, bleached/whitewashed by the sun). At times, Spanish trumps the limitations of English — and does for Murillo what conventional English was unable to do for McCarthy — by officially providing a single word to express what the English-language compound was created to convey: ambarcolored (303: *ambarinas* [365], a perfect word in Spanish, which expresses orangish amber/orangey amber); benchvise (267: *torno* [323]); clackdish (72: *tablilla* [92]); claywalled (227: *tapiado* [276]); deadman (253: *desembarcadero* [308]); deathsheads (191: *calaveras* [233], BT “skulls,” the traditional Mexican candy treat on the Día de Los Muertos [Day of the Dead], which is the context in the novel); footlamps (276: *candilejas* [333]); legflung (55: espatarrados [71]); melonpatch (227: *melonar* [276]); pistolfire (174: *tiroteo* [213]); pugmill (231: *machacadera* [281]); ribtines (290: costillares); shotpouch (280: *cartuchera* [339]); and tavernkeeper (4: *tabernero* [11]).

At other times, Murillo resorts to different translation tactics in which the unit of translation analysis becomes the phrase or sentence. Deadeye (281), defined by the *Oxford Spanish Dictionary* as a “tirador con buena puntería” (*tirotefijo* in slang), is how Toadvine refers to the kid’s marksmanship: “He’s a deadeye aint he?” (281). This is wonderfully rendered by Murillo in idiomatic, proverbial-sounding Spanish: “Donde pone el ojo pone la bala, ¿eh?” (339: BT, Where he puts his eye he puts the bullet / The bullet goes right where he aims). In a similar example, the judge says of Tobin that “The priest also would be no godserver but a god himself” (250), translated as “El cura prefiere ser un dios él mismo que servir a ese Dios” (304: BT, The priest would rather be a god himself than serve that God”). Murillo’s rendition contains no replacement neologism for “godserver.” It is lost, translated away. But he has retained a McCarthyish style, tone, and syntax in his Spanish, such that McCarthy is still very much alive and well in *Meridiano de sangre*, despite the permutations.

Perhaps the most enduring feature of *Blood Meridian* is its lyricism — streaming alliteration, unanticipated images, similes and metaphors, syntactic surprises, lexicon and structures that stretch our ability to read, imagine, and assimilate — the sheer poetry that permeates the prose that portrays the historically based gore and its setting. Page after page, the prose of *Blood Meridian* lends itself to being recast in verse form:

The flames
sawed in the wind
and the embers
paled and deepened
and paled and deepened
like the bloodbeat
of some living thing
eviscerate upon the ground
before them
and they watched
the fire
which does contain within it
something
of men themselves
inasmuch as they are less without it
and are divided from their origins
and are exiles.
For each fire
is all fires,
the first fire
and the last ever to be. (244)

How can a translator not revel in working on
these rewarding aspects of the myriad
difficulties at hand! Murillo’s translation of the
two sentences above is the following:

Las llamas oscilaban al viento y las brasas
palidecían y se oscurecían y palidecían y se
oscurecían como el pulso sanguíneo de un
ser vivo eviscerado frente a ellos en el suelo
y contemplaron el fuego, el fuego que
contiene en sí mismo algo de los propios
hombres en la medida en que el hombre es
menos sin él y se aparta de sus orígenes y
está como exiliado. Pues cada fuego es
todos los fuegos, el primer fuego y el último
que habrá nunca. (297)

It remains a somewhat lyrical prose in Spanish
(e.g., the rhythmic repetition of palidecían-
oscurecían / palidecían-oscurécian, although
“oscurecían” is weighed down by the reflexive
“se,” and the alliterative “fuego” of the second
sentence — particularly the “s,” “a” and “f
sounds), though considerably less so than the
English original, due to slight but significant
changes such as “are exiles” to “are like [very
prosaic] an exile/exiles” (BT: “está como
exiliado”) and the ending thud of “el último que
habrá nunca” (BT: “the last that will ever be” vs.
McCarthy’s much lighter “the last ever to be”).
Of course, neither McCarthy nor Murillo was
writing verse when they were working on Blood
Meridian, such that this recasting into verse
form merely serves a heuristic pu
rpose. But
alliteration abounds in the image-making that is
Blood Meridian:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text of Blood Meridian</th>
<th>Murillo Translation into Spanish</th>
<th>Doyle BT of Murillo Translation with Commentary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The river led a limegreen
corridor of trees down out of
the barren mountains. (90) | El río salía de las áridas montañas por un pasillo de áboles verde lima. (114) | The river emerged from the arid mountains on a
corridor of lime-green trees. [River and trees go
together in both versions, but in English the river
leads a limegreen corridor of trees out of the
mountains while in Spanish, which is more
ambiguous, it appears that the corridor of trees is the
means, the vehicle upon which, by which the river
emerges. Similar but different images.] |
| Two thick ropes of dark
blood and two slender rose
like snakes from the stump
of his neck and arched
hissing into the fire. (107) | Dos cabos gruesos de sangre oscura y dos más delgados se elevaron como serpientes del muñón de su cuello y describieron una trayectoria curva para aterrizar siseando en el fuego. (133) | Two thick ends of dark blood and two thinner ones
rose like snakes from the stump of his neck and drew
a curved trajectory to land hissing in the fire. [While
the Spanish version loses the economy of “arched
hissing’” and uses seven words in place of two, it is a
vivid idiomatic read in Spanish — a good transl
ation.] |
| (...) a buzzard labored up
from among bones with
wings that went whoop
whoop whoop like a child’s
toy swung on a string. (187) | (...) un ratonero alzó pesadamente el vuelo entre unos huesos haciendo fup fup fup con sus alas como un juguete pendiendo de un cordel. (228) | (...) a buzzard labored up in flight among some
bones going whoop whoop whoop with its wings like
a toy hanging from a string [Here we see for one of
the few times the need for the translator to work with
onomatopoeia, a difficult area of translation.] |
| (...) like the imbreachment
of some ultimate alchemic
work decocted from out of
(...) a modo de irrupción
de algún nuevo experimento alquímico | like an irruption of some new alchemic experiment
hatched in the secret darkness of the heart of the earth
[Imbreachment, from breach or rupture, is a word
He squatted on the sand and watched the sun on the hammered face of the water. Out there island clouds emplaned upon a salmoncolored othersea. Seafowl in silhouette. Downshore the dull surf boomed. (304)

difficult to locate in a dictionary, which again demonstrates the willingness of the translator to do the requisite research and intuitive surmising.]

Clearly, *Blood Meridian* epitomizes what Ortega would call a “rebellious text.” In his seminal essay, “The Misery and Splendor of Translation,” the Spanish thinker wonders rhetorically if it is not too much to ask that the translator be similarly rebellious. Philip E. Lewis, in “The Measure of Translation Effects,” echoes Ortega while springboarding off Walter Benjamin: “The task of the translator….40 Luis Murillo has written that, faced with the task of translating *Blood Meridian*, “I found myself overwhelmed…I was aware that many things sounded diminished in my translation, that they lost their unique quality, their dialectal uniqueness…But then again, Tennessee is not Almería, El Paso is not Mérida…The big question for me is, okay, you found the equivalent for a word or phrase. Now, does it have the same cultural, semantic weight as the original word or phrase has or is intended to have?”41 To engage in the honest attempt to transfer this “same cultural and semantic weight,” which includes the rebelliousness of the “contrapuntal writing in the original” (Lewis), when beset by limitations such as publishing house “correctors,” is indeed to rise to the occasion. *Meridiano de sangre* is *Blood Meridian* in Spanish, yet not the same novel or reading experience, the paradoxical outcome that represents the misery and certainly the potential splendor of translation.

Notes
1 Assessment by renowned literary critic Harold Bloom in *The New York Observer*, as published on the back cover of the 1992 Vintage Books edition used for this article.
2 *Blood Meridian* is the reverse side of the coin, an *esperpento* underbelly of the picaresque novel, a crimson American West subversion of the genre that was “originally developed in Spain, in which the adventures of an engagingly roguish hero are described in a series of usually humorous or satiric episodes that often depict, in realistic detail, the everyday life of the common people.” *Esperpento* is the subversive esthetics of the grotesque (Valle Inclán), reality reflected in convex and concave mirrors. The kid is no “engagingly roguish hero”; rather, he is a terrifying cold-blooded killer who wanders as agent, witness, and victim through a world of unrelenting mayhem and murder. What little humor there is in the novel is dark, nefarious, disturbing. The “everyday life” minutely described in *Blood Meridian* is that of the monstrous John Joel Glanton and his company of conscripts or “irregulars” (of historical record) and Judge Holden (the judge), all programmed by the “dance” to kill and kill again (whether it be people or puppies) as the novel “explores the nature of evil and the allure of violence” (Woodward). Regarding the lust for violence, the “judge on war” has the following to say: “It makes no difference what men think of war, said the judge. War endures. As well ask men what they think of stone. War was always here. Before man was, war waited for him. The ultimate trade awaiting its ultimate practitioner.
That is the way it was and will be. That way and not some other way (…) All other trades are contained in that of war (…) It endures because young men love it and old men love it in them” (249). Toward the end of the novel, the judge declares that “If war is not holy man is nothing but antic clay” (307). Dan Moos, in “Lacking the Article Itself: Representation and History in Cormac McCarthy’s Blood Meridian,” has observed that “War is the marketplace in Blood Meridian.”

3 Not only do the author, narrator, and characters tell us “how it was that people had lived in this place and in this place died,” but the story of Blood Meridian has of course been retold by reviewers, critics, and translators, all of whom, especially the latter, provide this work of literature with an afterlife (Walter Benjamin). This writing and rewriting are the novel’s record of what occurred, a fictionalized voice against historical silence and oblivion. This same irony is at work again on pp. 184–185, when the words in print emphasize that the reader is a witness to the murder and mayhem and utter depravity that has occurred:

The bodies of the dead were stripped and their uniforms and weapons burned along with the saddles and other gear and the Americans dug a pit in the road and buried them in a common grave, the naked bodies with their wounds like the victims of surgical experimentation laying in the pit gaping sightlessly at the desert sky as the dirt was pushed over them. They trampled the spot with their horses until it looked much like the road again and the smoking gunlocks and sabreblades and girthrings were dragged from the ashes of the fire and carried away and buried in a separate place and the riderless horses were hazed off into the desert.”

Despite the efforts of Glanton’s filibusters to conceal the massacre that has occurred, the reader already knows and will remember “the spot” in the road.

4 The novel covers the time period from 1833, when “the kid” from Tennessee is born, in whom by age fourteen “broods already a taste for mindless violence” (3), to 1878 when he disappears into the judge’s “immense and terrible flesh” (333) in the jakes in Griffin, North Texas. Most of the actual plot occurs in 1849 and 1850.

5 Blood is an image that flows from beginning to end of this novel commanded by historical yet “fairybook beasts” (190), with reinforcing descriptions such as “the Evening Redness in the West” (the novel’s subtitle), “the western sky was the color of blood” (152), “that immense and bloodslaked waste” (177). In his 1992 interview with Richard B. Woodward (Official Web Site of the Cormac McCarthy Society, www.CormacMcCarthy.com), McCarthy stated that “There’s no such thing as life without bloodshed.” Because of this, “His list of those whom he calls the ‘good writers’ — Melville, Dostoyevsky, Faulkner — precludes anyone who doesn’t ‘deal with issues of life and death.’” Further, in response to the observation that “Might does not make right,” the judge in Blood Meridian responds that “Decisions of life and death, of what shall be and what shall not, beggar all questions of right. In elections of these magnitudes are all lesser ones subsumed, moral, spiritual, natural” (250).

6 The essential setting, which begins with the kid’s birth in Tennessee (the setting of McCarthy’s first four novels, which take place in Appalachian East Tennessee: The Orchard Keeper [1965], Outer Dark [1968], Child of God [1974], and Suttree [1979]) and quickly follows his movement west to St. Louis, New Orleans, Frederonia, and Nacogdoches, is the length of the permeable Texas-Mexico border and west through the desert across the State of Sonora to Yuma, San Diego, Los Angeles, north to San Francisco, and back to Texas. For more, see Schimpf.

7 Glanton orders a member of his company of nineteen marauders to “get that receipt for us”: “A Mexican (…) took a shining knife from his belt and stepped to where the old woman lay and took up her hair and twisted it about his wrist and passed the blade of the knife about her skull and ripped away the scalp" (98). Later in the novel, in a cantina, it is Mexicans
themselves who represent the receipt, as Glanton incites his men: “Hair, boys, he said. The string aint run on this trade yet” (180). Dan Moos, in “Lacking the Article Itself: Representation and History in Cormac McCarthy’s Blood Meridian,” describes “genocide as a commodity” in the novel.

The character Bathcat observes to Toadvine, another character, that “Ye’ve not hunted the aborigines afore” (87). But what begins as “the furnishing of Apache [or any other Indian] scalps” (204) degenerates into an indiscriminate collection of non-Caucasian human hair — a scalp is a scalp is a scalp.

Steven Shaviro has written that “the scariest thing about Blood Meridian is that it is a euphoric and exhilarating book, rather than a tragically alienated one, or a gloomy, depressing one … Once we have started to dance, once we have been swept up in the game, there is no pulling back” (1996 précis by Rick Wallach, in the excellent Official Website of the Cormac McCarthy Society, http://cormacmccarthy.com/works/bloodmeridian.htm). The “dance” is synonymous, by McCarthy’s own definition (or intralingual translation) in the novel, with “orchestration,” “event,” “ceremony,” “ritual.” As is the judge — “the greatest fiddler” (123) — to the “dance,” so is McCarthy with his own form of fiddling or orchestration, the storytelling of Blood Meridian. At the end of the novel, the judge warns the kid and the reader that “a ritual [the dance] includes the letting of blood” and he tells the kid that “Only that man who has suffered up himself entire to the blood of war, who has been to the floor of the pit and seen horror in the round and learned at last that it speaks to his innermost heart, only that man can dance” (331).

In his essay “On Linguistic Aspects of Translation,” Russian linguist Roman Jakobson identifies the first of “three ways of interpreting a verbal sign” as “intralingual translation or rewording (…) an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language” (145). The other two types of translation he identifies are interlingual (translation proper from one language into another, e.g., English into Spanish) and intersemiotic (from one signifying system into intersemiotic (from one nonverbal expression such as literary text into musical performance or painting).

This work focuses on the translation issues involving English and Spanish, the primary languages of Blood Meridian. Other “foreign language” texts that appear in the novel certainly complicate the reading as well: e.g., Et de ceo se mettent en le pays (74: And of this they put themselves upon the country → They leave it to the jury to decide; see Schimpf, pp. 121–122), Hiccius Doccius (81: corruption of the Latin for “this is a learned man”; Schimpf, 130), Tertium quid (81: a middle course; Schimpf, 130), Sie müssen schlafen aber Ich muss tanzen (316: You must sleep but I must dance; Schimpf, 309–310).

Woodward describes McCarthy’s self-acknowledged Faulknerian stylistic debt in terms of his “recondite vocabulary, punctuation, portentous rhetoric, use of dialect and concrete sense of the world” (www.CormacMcCarthy.com). Dan Moos describes Blood Meridian as “hyper-real” and writes that “Ironically, the meticulousness of McCarthy’s research and his use of archaic but historically appropriate language defamiliarizes the novel” (24).

Shane Schimpf’s A Reader’s Guide to Blood Meridian (345) is a much more comprehensive treatment than the definitions (researched independently online) provided in this article. A Reader’s Guide is a very useful resource for plumbing the depths of the novel’s lexicon and allusions. My own independent online research simply supports and confirms the accuracy and breadth of Schimpf’s extensive and important work.

Readership typology includes the following, drawn from the discourse of reader–response criticism: the “real” reader (the actual person with book in hand — Gibson, Iser); the “autonomous” reader (there is the book and here I am I; Michaels); the “mock” reader (a reading persona or role assumed by the “real reader”; Gibson); the “implied” reader (“a textual
structure anticipating the presence of a recipient without necessarily defining him”; Iser) who approaches the “virtual” or “assumed” reader (whom the author imagined as a reader of what he/she has written; Prince); the “informed” or “at-home” reader (who knows the language in which the text is written and “has literary competence”; Fish); the “gap” reader (who fills in the blanks and vacancies of indeterminacy by “[supplying] the missing links”; Cohen, Iser); the “trace” reader (who tracks down “the multiplicity of traces” that help fill in the “gaps” in a reader’s understanding; Doyle); the “hypothetical” reader (“the one upon whom all possible actualizations of the text may be projected”; Iser); the “ideal” reader” (who “would understand perfectly the least of the author’s words, the most subtle of his intentions”; Prince); and the “super” or “multiple” reader (Riffatere), etc. For more on readership typology, see Jane Tompkins (Reader-Response Criticism) and Wolfgang Iser (The Act of Reading and The Implied Reader) and bibliographies in these works.

15 Recall that in his “Circular Letter on Translation” (1530) Martin Luther used “translate” and “Germanize” as synonyms. This particular way of describing what translation is by means of how it works is most apropos: the target or receiving language becomes the agent and verb of its own function, both protagonist and purpose of the act of translation.

16 One wonders why the full translations contained in Shane Schimpf’s Reader’s Guide were not used for the online glossary. Woodward informs us of the novel that “McCarthy learned Spanish to research it,” complementing his new literary language with extended trips through Mexico, which explain his sure-handed embedding of Mexican culture in the novel, his first to take place outside of East Tennessee. In 1967, he had also lived with his second wife, DeLisle, “for many months on the island of Ibiza in the Mediterranean, where he wrote Outer Dark.” Spanish was also the official language of this Balearic island.

18 Ortega reminds us that “To write well is to make continual incursions into grammar, into established usage, and into accepted linguistic norms. It is an act of permanent rebellion against the social environs, a subversion. To write well is to employ a certain radical courage.”

19 In my own reading of Blood Meridian, I typically encountered 1–5 unknown words per page, × 335 pages = at least 1,000 such problematic words. In order to informally gauge the difficulty of the language used, I asked six other readers with varying degrees of literacy — three undergraduate students (two general readers of literature and one major in literature), a college graduate (general reader and an expert at word games and crossword puzzles), and two professors of English (professional readers) — to take a vocabulary “quiz” in which they were asked to indicate from a list of 348 Blood Meridian words, including the 61 in this sampling, the ones for which they could answer with confidence the simple question of “What does this word mean?” Little to no context was provided for the words. (In my own reading and reflections, I found that while context often enabled me to better grasp the still fuzzy meaning of a word, it generally did not mean that I could define the word any more precisely: I either knew what it meant or I did not, with or without context. This was a surprising realization.) The three undergraduates, outstanding students at prestigious American universities, averaged a 4% definition rate; the general reader, 20%; and my two colleagues, both professors of English, averaged 27% between them. This would seem to confirm the level of difficulty of McCarthy’s lexicon. An interesting aspect of the vocabulary of Blood Meridian is that somebody who grew up on a ranch, riding horses and working with cattle, or who had done a lot of camping, served in the military, or frequented saloons and casinos, might recognize as many words as a university professor whose more sanitized world is primarily books and the classroom.

20 In a 6/28/07 e-mail exchange about McCarthy’s language in Blood Meridian with Dr. Cy Knoblauch, Professor of English at UNC Charlotte, he observed that “there are in fact
comparatively few words that we can define ‘with any real precision’ — ‘understanding meaning’ and ‘defining’ are two different enterprises.” My response was that “It just shows that Cormac McCarthy is on another plane when dealing with language, because he does know how to define the exact words he uses in his writing, such that his ‘understanding of meaning’ is much more sharply defined.” McCarthy knows the precise meanings (definitions) of the words he uses; therefore we must become better, more complete readers in our quest for “understanding meaning” in Blood Meridian.

21 See Schimpf, 329–330, for greater detail. I had already looked up the information presented on these native American tribes before accessing A Reader’s Guide to Blood Meridian. This is the case throughout this article, unless indicated otherwise through attribution.

22 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ The _High_ Priestess (6/28/07). In Blood Meridian: “The woman [the blindfolded fortune teller] sat like that blind interlocutrix between Boaz and Jachin inscribed upon the one card in the juggler’s deck that they would not see come to light, true pillars and true card, false prophetess for all.”

23 Dan Moos has written in “Lacking the Article Itself: Representation and History in Cormac McCarthy’s Blood Meridian,” “Unveiling the violence of Manifest Destiny, McCarthy presents us a kind of memory or a history we believed long masked” (24).

24 Schimpf writes in his Preface, “Blood Meridian is a hard read, and this is no accident” (iii).

25 McCarthy’s Spanish in Blood Meridian demonstrates conventional correctness, as he generally uses accent marks where required for proper orthography. Yet he also does to his Spanish similar things to what he does to his English when writing. For example, he will omit the inverted question mark that is required by Spanish convention: Qué dice el muchacho? vs. ¿Qué dice el muchacho? Whether writing in English or in Spanish, he is consistent with his recent statement in an interview with Oprah Winfrey that “If you write properly, you shouldn’t have to punctuate…[use] just what’s needed” (6/5/07, www.oprah.com).

26 The page numbers used for the online “A Translation of the Spanish in Blood Meridian” are the same as for the edition of Blood Meridian cited in this work.

27 Incomplete or missing translations occur on pp. 42, 55, 74, 81, 100, 101, 151, 186, 197, 202, 229, 230, 241, 271, and 305.

28 About his book, Schimpf writes in the Preface that “The book you are reading is not the one I set out to write. My original goal was to publish an annotated edition of Cormac McCarthy’s Blood Meridian.” McCarthy’s literary agent, Amanda Urban, informed Schimpf in a two-line letter that “Cormac McCarthy wishes his novels to be read the way he’s written them. I do not believe he would be able to help you with your well-intentioned questions” (i), which led to A Reader’s Guide to Blood Meridian.

29 In his Acknowledgements, Schimpf writes: “I owe a special thanks to John Sepich. Simply put, his book Notes on Blood Meridian is awe inspiring. To think how he tracked down all of McCarthy’s references in a time before the Internet is mind boggling. Needless to say, my book is greatly indebted to his. In fact, part of my motivation for writing this reader’s guide is to share some of Sepich’s scholarship” (v).

30 In my own reading of the novel, quite by accident I followed Schimpf’s recommendation. I first read Blood Meridian as McCarthy intended it to be read, simply on its own. After being at times overwhelmed by this initial exhilarating reading, I began my own research, which eventually included studying Schimpf’s Reader’s Guide.

31 The translations of the Spanish into English would benefit by being consistently rendered as literary translations rather than as literal translations, or perhaps have both types of translation together.

32 For more, see J.C. Catford, “Translation Shifts,” in The Translation Studies Reader.

33 Close reading of many other contemporary novelists (e.g., Jeffrey Eugenides, Khaled Hosseini, Jhumpa Lahiri, Yann Martel, etc.) reveals that intra- and interlingual self-
translation are an integral element of their fiction writing, which suggests that translation is often part and parcel of the process and product of fiction writing itself, that to write is to be engaged continuously in forms of translation. Perhaps translation as integral to writing — as part of how writing works — is axiomatic, especially for dialectal or ethnic writers, and represents an interesting area of inquiry into the nature of fiction writing and writing in general. McCarthy’s own dialectal novels could also be classified as ethnic within the American English tradition, as Appalachian East Tennessee and the southwest U.S.-Mexico border deal with the drama and trauma of individuals and minority groups within the larger society, characters who share a distinctive culture and language in each of his novels.


In order to experience the difficulties involved, the reader is encouraged to review the translation(s) of *Blood Meridian* into a familiar target language, or to translate the passages selected from *Blood Meridian* for discussion in this article.

In *Meridiano de sangre*, the Spanish words that appear in *Blood Meridian* are italicized in the text of the novel but not italicized in the chapter headings or titles. What was Spanish in the SLT is thus visually marked for the Spanish-language reader of the translation. Murillo indicates this with a translator’s footnote on p. 22 of *Meridiano de sangre*: “Las palabras que aparecen en cursiva figuran en castellano en la edición original. (N. Del T.).”

“Tennessee’s Name Dates Back To 1567 Spanish Explorer Captain Juan …” (www.tngenweb.org/campbell/histbogan/tennessee.html).

Murillo acknowledges the difficulty, as on p. 99 of *Meridiano de sangre*, he provides a translator’s note explaining that Granny Rat is “Abuelita rata, un apodo” (Granny Rat, a nickname).

Schimpf refers to the novel as “a long, surreal poem” (iv).

In his essay “The Task of the Translator,” Benjamin writes that “The task of the translator consists in finding that intended effect [Intention] upon the language into which he is translating which produces in it the echo of the original” (19–20).

7/13/07 e-mail to Michael Doyle, part of an e-interview.

**Works Cited**


http://www.wikipedia.org/