The Phenomenon of Self-Translation in Puerto Rican and Puerto Rican U.S. Diaspora literature written by women: The cases of Esmeralda Santiago’s *América’s Dream* (1996) and Rosario Ferré’s *The House on the Lagoon* (1995), from a postcolonial perspective

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to understand self-translation as a postcolonial, social, political, cultural and linguistic phenomenon and it focuses on how it communicates a hybrid transcultural identity that not only challenges the monolingual literary canons and concepts of national homogeneous identities, but also subverts to patriarchal society. Thus, I understand self-translation as a mean of empowerment and contestation.

The cases under study are Puerto Rican writers Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago, and their novels *The House on the Lagoon* and *América’s Dream*, written in English and translated into Spanish by the authors themselves. I believe that Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago are representative of a group of writers, artists and intellectuals who through their work originated from the island and from the U.S. Diaspora, have aimed to give voice to a Puerto Rican postcolonial hybrid identity that has been silenced until recently. Therefore, they disrupt the official national cultural and linguistic discourse about the Puerto Rican identity that has been weaved by the Spanish language in opposition to U.S. colonialist attempts of linguistic and cultural assimilation.

This dissertation is located in the intersection between the fields of comparative literature, translation, cultural, gender and postcolonial studies. The question that guides this research is: Is self-translation in the case of Puerto Rico, a result of cultural hybridity in Puerto Rico’s postcolonial context?

Therefore, this is a multidisciplinary research project that integrates elements from the humanities and the social sciences. Methodologically, it integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches. Hence, hybridity is embedded in this research not only because it discusses English and Spanish writing, but because it includes textual analysis, content analysis and statistical analysis.

The main finding is the deep connection between socio-political context, language, culture, identity, power and translation that supports the idea that self-translation is a postcolonial act, which in the case of Puerto Rico is strongly related to hybridity as an everyday practice of identity affirmation.
DECLARATION

I, Aurora Sambolín, declare that no portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

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Dedication

I want to dedicate this dissertation to all the wonderful people that supported me during this journey, including my family who was always there for me unconditionally, and all my good friends who as me crossed the Atlantic Ocean in the search of becoming better persons and better professionals. Last but not least, I dedicate this work to my “Coqui”, my son or daughter that I could not meet but who made me the happiest woman in the world even if it was for a short time.
Acknowledgment

I would like to acknowledge my supervisor Professor Parvathi Kumaraswami, who was a patient and wise supervisor who offered me her unconditional support when I needed it the most and who I consider a great example to follow not only as an academic but as a wonderful human being and as someone who as me believes that a better world is possible if we join forces. I would also like to acknowledge my Co-Supervisor Professor Siobhan Brownlie and my Advisor Professor Hillary Owen, who guided me with their knowledge and feedback.

I would like to thank the members of the Collective Political Learning for all the shared experiences, all the feedback they provided and all the interesting discussions that we had. A special thanks to all the good friends I made through this journey who supported me during the difficult times and with whom I have shared uncountable happy moments that will be with me forever.

I would also like to thank my family for their unconditional support despite the distance. They were always there when I needed them and they have always encouraged me to push forward even in the most difficult times. Finally, I want to thank my partner in life Hugo for his love and support, for his invaluable feedback, and for being a constant source of inspiration.
Chapter 1: Introduction

This dissertation aims to explain the phenomenon of self-translation in the case of two Puerto Rican writers, Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago, who have written their novels *The House on the Lagoon* and *América’s Dream* in English, and have self-translated them into Spanish from Puerto Rico and from the United States respectively. It focuses on how these authors communicate a hybrid identity that challenge the monolingual literary canons and concepts of national homogeneous identities of both Puerto Rico and the United States, through English writing and self-translation. My analysis is located within the fields of comparative literature, translation, cultural, gender and postcolonial studies.

I will argue through this dissertation that in the case of writers Esmeralda Santiago and Rosario Ferré, their writing strategies, including their acts of self-translation, are deeply related to their national identity. This argument is based on the belief that Puerto Rico, as the cultural and geographical place from where they write, could be understood as a postcolonial\(^1\) nation that has developed a hybrid cultural identity after more than five hundred years of colonialism, first under Spain and from 1898 until today under the United States.

Through their literature, writers Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago have documented the transculturation, adaptation and migration experiences of Puerto Ricans in the United States. They have also reinvented a Puerto Rican language that clearly represents a break with the Puerto Rican literary canon, describes their social reality, reflects the hybrid cultural and linguistic reality of Puerto Ricans, both in the U.S. Diaspora and in Puerto Rico, and constructs through language a very unique hybrid identity.

In my thesis, I relate Santiago and Ferré’s novels to the colonial state of Puerto Rico, and to U.S. colonial discourse. Additionally I explore how this discourse has affected Puerto Rican identity and how both authors use their English writing texts and their self-translation practice to deconstruct all sorts of discourses coming from different

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1 The temporal use of the term “postcolonial” will not be used in this dissertation. Its use will be widely discussed in Chapter 2.
power spheres, including patriarchal, class-based, colonialistic and nationalistic power spheres.

I have chosen Ferré and Santiago as study cases because I believe that they are representative of a group of writers, artists and intellectuals who through their work originated from the island and from the U.S. Diaspora, have aimed to give voice to a marginalized Puerto Rican postcolonial hybrid identity. As I will show throughout this dissertation, their narratives disrupt the official national cultural and linguistic discourse about the Puerto Rican identity that has been weaved by the Spanish language in opposition to U.S. colonialist attempts of linguistic and cultural assimilation. Additionally, the fact that they are woman writers allows an exploration of female agency through self-translation, an agency that would be consonant with the underscoring of the position of the woman in patriarchal society that both put forward through their narratives.

The aim of this research is to explore the role of self-translation in Puerto Rico’s context to determine if it is in fact a postcolonial writing tool for the expression of a national hybrid identity that has been marginalized as it counters literary canons and concepts of homogeneous national identities both in Puerto Rican and in the United States. Therefore, the question that guides this research is: Is self-translation in the case of Puerto Rico, a result of cultural hybridity in Puerto Rico’s postcolonial context?

To answer this query, the following research questions are posed:

- What are the motivations and aims behind the self-translation of both Esmeralda Santiago’s and Rosario Ferré’s literary pieces?
- What writing techniques do Esmeralda Santiago and Rosario Ferré use in their English and Spanish novels to express hybridity? How do they compare to each other?
- What are the specific textual characteristics that make Esmeralda Santiago’s literature postcolonial? Are there postcolonial textual characteristics in Rosario Ferré as well? How do these textual characteristics compare?
- How is the hybridity of Puerto Rican Diaspora culture reflected textually and paratextually in Esmeralda Santiago’s analyzed literary pieces and in the analyzed paratexts about her and her literature?
- What are the hybrid elements of the Puerto Rican culture present in Rosario Ferré’s?
- Is self-translation a postcolonial tool for the affirmation of cultural hybridity for both Ferré and Santiago?

In terms of the structure and development of this thesis, it starts by providing the historical and socio-political background information behind the colonial status of the island. To establish the past and present colonial status of the island is fundamental not only because of its ambiguous political situation, but because without this understanding, it would not be possible to discuss the island’s culture, identity and literature as postcolonial. After establishing the island’s colonial condition, Chapter 2 proceeds to discuss how this condition has affected the Puerto Rican identity. This discussion examines the conceptualizations that intellectuals and artists have developed to analyze, define and express the Puerto Rican identity and its hybrid condition in relation to its colonial situation and the consequences that this situation has had. Additionally, it discusses the relationship between the island’s history and its literature, emphasizing how this literature has developed around the issue of the Puerto Rican identity. This literary overview also highlights literature written by women and literature written in English to provide the foundations for the analysis of writers Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago. The last part of chapter 2 deals with the main theoretical issues in gender studies and feminist literary criticism and it is fundamental for this dissertation as I am discussing women literature and I argue that the authors’ condition as women is related to their acts of self-translation.

In Chapter 3, I provide an overview of postcolonial studies complementing it with theories from the fields of translation and linguistics to discuss self-translation English writing and code-switching as postcolonial practices. Furthermore, I relate this framework to the case of Puerto Rico as a postcolonial nation and to its literary production and position Ferré and Santiago’s acts of self-translation and writing strategies as the authors’ postcolonial attempts to recover their voices and to revert the marginalization of which they have been victims. This chapter gives special attention to postcolonial concepts such as “hybridity” and “linguistic appropriation”, concepts that will be widely applied through this dissertation.
Chapter 4 is dedicated to a discussion of the objectives behind this research and of the methodology that it will follow in order to answer the proposed research questions. It will provide details about the data that I will analyze (primary sources, secondary sources and reader response survey), the methods of analysis (quantitative and qualitative analysis), and the analysis techniques (textual analysis, paratextual analysis, statistical analysis and content analysis). This methodology design draws form both the humanities and the social sciences.

Chapter 5 locates the literary pieces analyzed in this research within the authors’ literary production looking for patterns in terms of writing topics, linguistic tendencies and writing strategies and styles. Additionally, it looks at the authors’ paratexts, namely interviews, biographical information, and academic literary criticism, to explore how the authors’ personal contexts have framed their literary production and their writing choices, mainly their choice to self-translate themselves. This chapter is the first of three that analyze the authors comparatively.

Chapter 6, which is also organized by author, explores how *The House on the Lagoon* and *América’s Dream* deconstruct the colonial and patriarchal discourses of the canon through the novel’s plots, its characters, presentational narrative devices and descriptions of the hybrid elements in Puerto Rican culture and society both in the island and in the U.S. Diaspora. More importantly, this chapter exposes how the aforementioned narrative elements subvert to homogenizing conceptualizations of the Puerto Rican identity by communicating a hybrid Puerto Rican culture and identity.

Subsequently, in Chapter 7, I look at the linguistic writing strategies and techniques that the authors implement through their novels and I analyze them closely and separately considering the effects each of them has on the reader, the authors’ apparent aims behind them, and their subversive effects in relation to patriarchal and colonial discourses. The writing strategies that I focus on are English writing, linguistic hybridity and self-transaltion.

After presenting the two central empirical chapters, I present the results of a reader response survey that I designed to complement the analysis. With this survey, I wanted to find out how the authors’ writing strategies were received by the target audience in terms of the hybrid culture and identity they aim to communicate. In my analysis of the survey results, I use both qualitative and quantitative methods and I look at the linguistic
characteristics of their answers to see how they relate to their self-defined identities, to their geographical location and to their relationship to the English and Spanish languages.

Finally, in the conclusion, I summarize the findings and arguments. I show how self-translation and hybridity are in tension because of the postcolonial context. Thus, self-translation is a postcolonial tool that gives voice to both writers as postcolonial subjects.

In terms of the originality of this research project, it should be noted that it is the first study to provide an extensive comparison of Puerto Rican writers Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago, and one of the first studies to analyze the practice of self-translation from a postcolonial perspective in the Puerto Rican context. Additionally the project’s multidisciplinary approach, which combines theories from the fields of self-translation, postcolonial theory, gender studies, feminist literary criticism, linguistics and comparative literature, makes it unique. Moreover, the fact that it includes a reader response survey adds further to its originality.

From the two Puerto Rican writers studied in this dissertation, Ferré is by far the writer that has received more attention from researchers due to her background as an academic, her statements and theorizations about female writing and self-translation and the position she occupies in relation to the canon. From the research that has been conducted about her literature, it could be said that the works of Marie Hélène Loignon, *Rosario Ferré y la nueva lectura femenina de la identidad puertorriqueña* (2010), and Simona Cocco, *The House on the Lagoon / La casa de la laguna, di Rosario Ferré: Trascrittura e autotraduzione* (2005), are those that are more similar to the present study. However, there are significant differences in terms of the approach.

Like this dissertation, Loignon’s study discusses Ferré’s novel *The House on the Lagoon*, locating her literature within *la literatura femenina* and Ferré’s theories about women writing within feminist literary criticism, underscores how her narrative subverts to patriarchal society and how it has been deeply influenced by the island colonial history. However, the subjects of self-translation and linguistic hybridity are not included in the objectives of the research, thus it does not explores how Ferré subverts the patriarchal and colonial discourse in a holistic way.
Before comparing my research with Cocco’s book, I should explain that I was unable to access it despite of an extensive national and international search. However, I had accessed to Cocco’s paper “Lost in (Self-)Translation? Riflessioni sull’autotraduzione” (2013), which, according to researcher Bo Byrkjeland, sums up the results of her study of the textual differences between *The House on the Lagoon* and *La casa de la laguna*. As in this dissertation, Coco relates Ferré’s change of political ideology with her change of writing language and presents her self-translation act as her need to communicate a hybrid Puerto Rican identity. She also analyzes the author statements about her act of self-translation and positions her within an international group of writers that self-translate making use of the categorizations proposed by translation researchers such as Michaël Oustinoff’s, Helena Tanqueiro, Gema Soledad Castillo García and María Alice Antunes. In contrast with the approach of this research, Cocco’s research, does not take into consideration the possibility that Ferré could be exercising female agency through her self-translation act. Moreover, she only analyzes Ferré’s self-translation without acknowledging other writing strategies implemented by Ferré. Thus Cocco’s research is more focused on looking at the variations between *The House on the Lagoon* and its self-translation *La casa de la laguna*, in order to prove her hypothesis that Ferré’s self-translation as an “autraduzion(i) (ri)creatrici” (Cocco 2013).

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2 The search was conducted through Marquette’s University Raynor Memorial Libraries. The library requested an interlibrary loan but up to the moment of the publication of this dissertation never received an answer.
Chapter 2: Literary and socio-political context of Puerto Rico since 1898

Entre las literaturas de los países latinoamericanos la puertorriqueña parecería destacarse por diversas razones. En primer lugar, porque la sustenta una contradicción aparente: el hecho de que se haya creado una literatura nacional en un país que aún no se ha constituido en nación independiente.

(Juan G. Gelpí: Literatura y paternalismo en Puerto Rico, 1994)

The startpoint of the timeline covered in this thesis is 1898 because it is then that the colonial relationship between Puerto Rico and the U.S. originated. This colonial relationship, and the linguistic assimilation attempts that followed, created in turn a generalised cultural resistance movement with strong Hispanophilic values that marginalised the Diaspora literature written in English and the literature that exhibited a hybrid Puerto Rican identity.

This chapter will begin with a review of the specific conditions that allow us to affirm that the island is in fact a U.S. colony because of the ambiguity of Puerto Rico’s political status, and the fact that its colonial status is not evident worldwide. After establishing the island’s colonial status, it will proceed to expose the necessary literary and socio-political background that will make it possible for the reader to locate Rosario Ferré’s and Esmeralda Santiago’s literary pieces within a literary movement which focus has been the exploration of the Puerto Rican identity. Additionally, it will locate them within a wider group of artists, intellectuals and academics that have created different concepts to make sense out of the island’s political status.

2.1 Puerto Rico: Colonial Status

Because most once-colonized nations have achieved their independence, it is possible for the general public to believe that the era of empires is gone and that we now live in a decolonized world. However, the United Nations has recognized five countries who still have colonies or Non-Self-Governing Territories. These countries are Spain
(Western Sahara), the United Kingdom (Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha, Bermuda, the Falkland Islands, Anguila, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands, Gibraltar and Pitcairn Islands), the United States (United States Virgin Islands, American Samoa and Guam), France (New Caledonia) and New Zealand (Tokelau).

Puerto Rico is not in the current list of Non-Self-Governing Territories but it was part of the 72 territories included in the original U.N. list of 1946 when the United Nations was created. In 1953, the United States ceased to provide the United Nations with the stipulated information regarding non-self-governing territories, after the creation of the Estado Libre Asociado of Puerto Rico (officially translated as Commonwealth or Free Associated State). This cessation, and the subsequent removal of Puerto Rico from the list of Non-Self-Governing-Territories, took place before the approval of the ‘Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples’ (Resolution 1514) by the United Nations in 1960. This resolution stated that colonialism was a menace to world peace and a crime against humanity, and likewise Principles VI and VII of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1541 (1960). Under these principles, “Free Association” was defined by the United Nations as the status of as a territory that “... has reached a full measure of self-government” by “free association with an independent state”. Under this definition, countries that are freely associated have “freedom to modify” its status “through the expression of their will by democratic means and through constitutional processes” and “Non-Governing-Territories” as “... territories whose people have not yet attained a full measure of self-government” (1960s United Nations Charter, Chapter XI, Article 73).

Puerto Rico is not nowadays a colony in the way it was a colony of Spain, nevertheless as Puerto Rican theorist Ramón Grosfoguel argues, it is a “modern colony” that “... has access to metropolitan citizenship and welfare transfers” (Grosfoguel, 2003: 2). The status of Commonwealth was supposed to eliminate the colonial characteristics of the island. However, Puerto Rican political groups and parties still debate annually at a United Nations Forum whether or not the case of Puerto Rico meets the internationally

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3 See “Non-Self-Governing Territories” included in references.
4 U.N. Resolution 748.
5 This debate takes place at a meeting called by the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.
recognized conditions of Commonwealth established by the United Nations. Through this forum, these organizations argue that Puerto Rico’s Commonwealth status is a colonial status. This argument is based on the fact that Puerto Rico’s constitution was created and approved by the U.S. Congress allowing federal law to overrule it. These political groups and organizations also demand that the United Nations reinstalled the island on its list of Non-Self-Governing Territories, and denounces U.S. practices such as the attempt to impose the English language on the island and the use of Puerto Rican ground to test genetically modified plants and for other experiments.

As Wilma Reverón Collazo pointed out during a U.N. decolonization seminar in Quito, “the de-listing . . . leaves the territory in an international limbo”\textsuperscript{6}, which is a handicap in relation to the island’s legal fight against colonialism. In addition to this annual effort to present the colonial case of Puerto Rico internationally through the United Nations forum, there is also extensive literature by Puerto Rican politicians, academics, constitutionalists and political organizations that unmask the colony hidden behind the Commonwealth in all areas of Puerto Rican public life.

Regarding Puerto Rico’s governability and judicial system, Puerto Rico’s constitution is subjugated to the constitution of the United States in many ways including its provision for the use of the death penalty\textsuperscript{7} and the use of English in all the proceedings of the U.S. District Court in Puerto Rico, which restricts jury participation to only those who speak the language.\textsuperscript{8} Land administration on the island also serves as proof of Puerto Rico’s colonial status, as is dramatically shown by the U.S. Navy occupation and

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\textsuperscript{7} The death penalty was abolished by the Puerto Rican legislature in 1929 and Article 2, Section 7, of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico states that “The death penalty shall not exist” but it is still applied for certain federal crimes even though Puerto Rican judges have ruled against its application only for it to be overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court on the basis that Puerto Rico is subject to federal law.

\textsuperscript{8} “Only 5 percent of island-based Puerto Ricans speak English at home, and 80 percent report that they speak English less than “very well” (Collazo, Ryan and Bauman, 2010:11).
environmental contamination of Vieques, by military bases on Puerto Rican land (Fort Buchanan), and by U.S. control of Puerto Rican borders through the U.S. Coast Guard. The United States stopped their bombing practices in Vieques in 2002 after a massive local and international struggle, but large amounts of land are still contaminated, as the decontamination process is not complete. Puerto Rico’s foreign trade is also controlled by U.S. policies as it imports 80 to 85 percent of the food it consumes from the United States, or using U.S. ships (A. Martínez, 2012), and the U.S. Coastwise Shipping Laws forbid Puerto Rico from using cheaper maritime goods transportation. Within the education system, the 2002 law No Child Left Behind was imposed by the George W. Bush administration in all states and in Puerto Rico. The problem presented by the implantation of this program is that Puerto Rican students are evaluated based on the same standards as students in the United States and the law does not take into account the specific circumstances of the Puerto Rican students that are rooted in Puerto Rico’s colonial status. One of the most shocking facts backing up the argument that Puerto Rico is a colony of the United States is that Puerto Ricans do not have the constitutional right to vote in the U.S. presidential elections and do not have full representation in Congress despite their U.S. citizenship. These are only a few facts that classify Puerto Rico as a colony from a long list of facts that illustrate Puerto Rico’s colonial condition.

2.1.1 The Origins of the Colonial Relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico

The material consequences of Puerto Rico’s colonial condition presented in the previous section were constructed through a theoretical framework created by the United States through law, and the 1900s Foraker Act, is one of the most important. This federal law, established a Puerto Rican civilian government with a governor and an executive council elected by the U.S. president; a House of Representatives with 35 members elected by Puerto Ricans; a Resident Commissioner in Congress (non-voting); a judicial system with a Supreme Court and a U.S. District Court. Additionally, it established free commerce between the island and the United States, and the invalidation of the 500 acres law, which limited the amount of land that any individual could own. This

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9 An island municipality of Puerto Rico located on the East coast and used as a military training ground.
10 Instead, they have a Resident Coordinator who is a non-voting member of the U.S. House of Representatives.
11 It is important to note that under the Act the U.S. government imposed a temporary tariff on goods exported to the United States thus treating the island as a foreign territory.
stipulation paved the way for U.S. sugar cane industries which, after the Foraker Act, transformed the Puerto Rican agricultural economy into a sugar monoculture. This new law together with the new tariffs forced a great number of Puerto Rican sugar plantation owners to go into bankruptcy or to sell their plantations to bigger companies. The Foraker Act legislated that “Puerto Rico belongs to the United States, but it is not the United States, nor a part of the United States.”12 This statement shows that from the outset the United States did not want to incorporate Puerto Rico as a state but wanted to keep the island as a disguised colony. This was achieved in the public eye when they had it removed from the United Nations list of colonies after the approval of the Commonwealth Constitution in 1952.

From the beginning of the colonial relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States, the colonizer, as is common in all colonial relationships, has constructed a discourse that portrays Puerto Ricans as immature beings who are unable to govern themselves. As Nathaniel Córdova states:

Congressional discourse on Puerto Rican self-determination is a memorial narrative that, although on its face an attempt at decolonization, constitutes Puerto Ricans as incomplete colonial subjects (42).13

Statements by official representatives of the U.S. government constantly ‘otherised’ Puerto Ricans as such as being pathetically submissive. For example, Senator John Spooler commented, “There is something pathetic about the island. Under the tyranny of Spain I believe they never rebelled.” (qtd. in R. Fernández, 1996: 13). A cartoon from 1899, portraying Hawaii, the Philippines, Puerto Rico and Cuba as black children sitting in a classroom listening to Uncle Sam lecture them about self-government, showed another paternalistic image comparing Puerto Rico with a child (Dalrymple 1899).

Even though Puerto Ricans are the only migrant minority in the United States who have U.S. citizenship by default, which would make it easier for them to assimilate, they also live in a space surrounded by U.S. presence, U.S. industries and multinational food

12 Congressional Record, 56th Congress, 1st session, April 30, 1900, p.4855.
13 In the sense that it “reflects Congress’s power to mediate a particular public memory of Puerto Rican and US colonial history, and celebrate the moment when Puerto Ricans finally arrive at the gates of political maturity.” (Córdova 2008: 43)
chains, and live with the imposition of English as a second language. Puerto Ricans have resisted assimilation and have expressed their unique hybrid identity through a wide variety of means including dance, music, art, literature and academia.

2.2 Conceptualizing Puerto Rican Postcolonial Hybrid Identities: Cultural Resistance to Colonial Assimilation

In academia, there has been a significant development of concepts that define the Puerto Rican identity as a hybrid postcolonial identity. Some of these concepts originate from the ambiguous political status of the island as not being a state of the United States nor an independent nation, but a sort of neo-colony that has colonial characteristics as well as some characteristics of self-governance. An example of how this hybrid and contradictory status translates into the Puerto Rican political parties arena is presented by Rafael Bernabe, literature professor at the Universidad de Puerto Rico, when he argues that in Puerto Rico the autonomist movement has promoted a dual discourse of “subordinación colonial y afirmación cultural” (n.pag.). He supports his argument by presenting several contradictory examples such as the “... aceptación a finales de la década del cuarenta y principios de la del cincuenta de la Ley de Relaciones Federales (que perpetúa el poder del Congreso sobre Puerto Rico) y la eliminación de la política de imposición del inglés ...” and “... la entrega progresiva, durante décadas, de la economía insular al capital extranjero combinada con la fundación del Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña y otras formas de foment de una identidad propia ...” (n.pag.).

2.2.1 “Radical Statehood”: Linguistic Resistance to Assimilation

On the other side of the spectrum, and within the statehood movement, it is possible to find hybrid postcolonial concepts such as “radical statehood”. As their proponents state, “radical statehood”, supports a relationship with the United States that does not require Puerto Ricans to “Americanize” themselves “by assimilating culturally”, that brings “radical democracy”, and protects “the material, cultural and social links

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14 He was also candidate for governor of the Working People’s Party of Puerto Rico in the 2012 elections. The Working People’s Party of Puerto Rico is a new political party founded in 2010, which calls Puerto Ricans to unite with the goal of creating a government that favours the Puerto Rican working class and that makes most of Puerto Rican society regardless of which political status they prefer for the island.
15 Juan Duchesne, Chloé Georas, Ramón Grosfoguel, Agustín Lao, Frances Negrón-Muntaner, Pedro Ángel Rivera and Aurea María Sotomayor.
16 The proponents of “radical statehood” define “radical democracy” as “a set of human rights for real people and communities, rather than for corporations, the government, nation-states, or political parties” (Negrón-Muntanér 1997b: 30-31).
between those Puerto Ricans who live in the United States and those who live in Puerto Rico” (Negrón-Muntanér 1997b: 30-31). This concept is a new twist on the concept of “estadidad jíbara”, a concept coined by former Puerto Rican governor Luis A. Ferré in a public speech he gave in 1968. In that speech he argued that the “estadidad jibara . . . conservará todo lo Bueno de nuestra cultura y nuestras tradiciones así como nuestra lengua española” (Ferré 305). The fact that Ferré had to include the preservation of Spanish in his speech shows that in Puerto Rico the Spanish language is the main identity representation and not even statehood defenders dare to part with it. This linguistic resistance is the reason why Rosario Ferré’s English writing was not initially accepted and Esmeralda Santiago’s English novels were not included in Puerto Rican literature anthologies at first.

2.2.2 “The Commuter Nation”: Puerto Rican Identity as a Fluid Identity

Although there are many concepts created around the issue of Puerto Rican identities, the more relevant are those which illustrate the tied relationship between migration and national identities and which build around the metaphor of la “guagua aérea”, (air bus), created by Luis Rafael Sánchez in his canonical essay “La guagua aérea” (1994). “La guagua aérea” attests to Puerto Ricans’ resistance to assimilation by showing how they destabilize American culture and space through the constant circular migration that transforms the U.S. and the P.R. borders into a “contact zone” (Pratt 575).18

The “commuter nation” is a concept coined by Carlos Antonio Torre in The Commuter Nation (1994), a book consisting of a collection of essays that Torre edited together with Puerto Rican social researchers Hugo Rodríguez-Vecchini and William Burgos, and it originates in Sánchez’ metaphor of the “guagua aérea.” To “commute” is to travel every day between the place of residence and the work place when the residence is located outside a city’s urban centre, but in this case, it refers to the circular migration that takes place between Puerto Rico and the U.S. mainland. Puerto Ricans first commuted from the rural areas of Puerto Rico to the urban areas during the period of industrialization of the 1950s with the implementation of Operation Bootstrap; and about

17“Jíbaro” is used in Puerto Rico to refer to the typical country people of Spanish descent as “guajiro” is used in Cuba. The image of the “jíbaro” has been adopted by the Popular Democratic Party of Puerto Rico, the party that supports the status quo, as a symbol of Puerto Rican identity.

18 Concept coined by Mary Louise Pratt.
the same time, they started to migrate to the United States, encouraged by both the Puerto Rican and U.S. governments.

The implication of applying the word “commute” to talk about migration is that the two places of transit are close enough. In the Puerto Rican case, the distance between the place of departure and the destiny is irrelevant. What matters is the number of commuters, how often they travel, and the Puerto Ricans’ unrestricted access to the United States due to their American citizenship, in contrast to other Latin American migrant groups. In his essay, which is also the introduction of the book, Torre presents the theoretical framework of the book and the “commuter nation” concept, allowing other essayists who participated in the book to state their own positions regarding the hybrid identity that has resulted from the phenomenon of the “commuter nation.”

For example, Juan Manuel García Passalacqua, writer, university professor, lawyer and political analyst, seems to look at Puerto Rican identity as a rigid identity when he argues that “Goods, money, hopes and dreams, may traverse the Ocean both ways, all the time . . .” but “. . . Puerto Ricans will always be Puerto Ricans, first and foremost” (qtd. in Torre, Rodríguez-Veccini and Burgos 1994: 110). Passalacqua describes Puerto Rican nature in relation to the coming and going between the island and the United States as a “transient nature”, an “airy and fragile quality” that he sees as a “drawback against the formation of a national consciousness in Puerto Rico” (Torre, Rodríguez-Veccini and Burgos 111).

In the foreword to the same book, Hugo Rodríguez-Veccini seems to have a more inclusive take on hybrid diasporic Puerto Rican culture when he recognizes the contribution of Puerto Rican literature written in English: “Puerto Rican literature is also richer because it includes works written in English” (Torre, Rodríguez-Veccini and Burgos 1994: 89). Rodríguez-Veccini seems to invite us to listen to the Puerto Rican migrant voice when he says:

[T]he conspicuous and loud play migrant tape recorder, known as ‘ghetto blaster’ (‘la bocona’ or ‘la cocola’ among upper-class Puerto Ricans), is perhaps” inviting us to listen to their music. (95-6)

Of the two cases analyzed in this dissertation, América’s Dream is the one that offers a representation of the migrant Puerto Rican community and its identity as Chapter
2.2.3 “Nation on the Move”: Puerto Rican Migration Challenging Geographical Borders

Another Puerto Rican researcher who has contributed greatly to the study of migration and Puerto Rican identity is Jorge Duany. In his essay Nation, Migration, Identity: The Case of Puerto Ricans (2003), Duany talks about Puerto Rico’s circular migration and the aftermath of this migration in terms of cultural identity. Through this discussion, he uses his concept of the “nation on the move” which is similar to Torre’s “porous borders” and Sanche’s “airbus”, and is defined by Duany as “a country whose porous borders are incessantly crisscrossed by migrants coming to and going away from the Island.” (425). Duany argues that this constant migratory movement between the U.S. mainland and the island has created Puerto Rican “detransnationalized” and “transnationalized” identities that have in turn strengthened “the sense of national identity” and “long distance nationalism” (428). As proof of the materiality of this cultural communication between the U.S. mainland and the island, Duany mentions as examples how Puerto Ricans living in the United States have taken with them their Puerto Rican traditions. Some of these traditions are the celebration of the Three Kings Day; the celebration of parades in honour of their Puerto Rican cultural heritage and the modelling of casitas representing the idyllic pre-industrialized Puerto Rican life. By the same token, however, he also talks about how Puerto Rican diasporic identities have influenced island-based Puerto Rican identities, especially within music, with the influence from salsa and rap (429-30).

Writer and researcher Juan Flores presents a similar but more critical perspective in his book The Diaspora Strikes Back (2007). Flores argues that in terms of the research undertaken about Puerto Rican circular migration to the United States and its effects on Puerto Rican culture and identity, Torre’s interpretation of the “guagua aérea” as a “commute” is misleading. For Flores, there is no real two-way exchange but a one-way trip where “the rich liminal space between home culture and Diaspora thus becomes nothing but a zone of cultural authentication” (Flores 152) and most researchers ignore the hybridity that comes from the “other” end of the commute. Academic Marisel Moreno

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19 Note that contrary to other discourses about Puerto Rican identity, Duany recognizes the existence of more than one identity.
adds to this argument by stating that Puerto Rican U.S. migrants who return to the island after a long time, are stereotyped when they return to the island and that this stereotyping has come as a result of “glossing over the history of half the Puerto Rican population” (Moreno 2012: 3). Later on in Chapter 5, where I will deploy the authors’ bibliographical information, I will discuss the experience of Esmeralda Santiago of feeling discriminated when she returned to the island. Moreover, Juan Flores suggests that the hegemonic practice of looking at the cultural influence that takes off from the Diaspora and lands in the island “from above”, reinforces the “prevailing structure of cultural imposition and domination” (Flores 2007: 153).

This brief exploration of the concepts that Puerto Rican academics have developed, does not discuss exhaustively the effects of the constant migratory flow between the island and mainland United States on Puerto Rican identities. However, it clearly shows that Puerto Rican academic researchers have been progressively moving from homogeneous notions of Puerto Rican national identities, to more inclusive and transnational ones.

2.2.4 “El Puerto Rican Embassy”: A Project of Spatial Appropriation

Other more resistant perspectives on hybridity in Puerto Rican identity have come from the visual arts, especially from New York City’s Nuyorican cultural movement. This movement originated in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and was funded by “. . . individuals of Puerto Rican parents born and raised in New York or Puerto Ricans who came to New York and embraced its hybrid condition.”\(^{20}\) Inspired by this movement, Adál Maldonado\(^ {21}\) and Nuyorican poet Pedro Pietri, one of the founders of the Nuyorican Poets’ Café,\(^ {22}\) created El Puerto Rican Embassy in 1994. Eduardo Figueroa, director, playwright and founder of the New Rican Village in Loisaida, established the concept of El Puerto Rican Embassy in 1979, when he developed “El Spirit Republic of Puerto Rico.”

Through the Puerto Rican Passport,\(^ {23}\) Adál and Pietri conceptualized the “out of focus identity”. They intentionally took out of focus passport photos that represent an

\(^{20}\) (El Puerto Rican Embasy webpage) http://www.elpuertoricanembassy.org/lagallery.html [accessed 26/10/2012]

\(^{21}\) A Puerto Rican visual artist who moved to New York City in 1965 at the age of seventeen.

\(^{22}\) A non-profit organization funded in the early 1970s as an embassy for the Nuyorican movement.

\(^{23}\) The Puerto Rican Passport was part of their series Out of Focus Nuyoricans.
elusive way of being that is always changing and always on the move, a schizophrenic identity “caused by trauma — emotional and psychological trauma — by a sort of mental colonization, first by Spain, and then by the United States” (qtd. in Estrin n.pag.).

On the subject of the benefits of having an “out-of-focus identity” Adál says . . . this condition can be useful while you plot your subversive act of injecting yourself into their psyche or consciousness — by the time they recognize your presence it is too late. (qtd. in En Foco n.pag.)

Another example of Adál’s subversive statement is his reflection, underlined by extensive code-switching, about the “out-of-focus identity” years after he and Pietri created the concept:

Maybe nosotros no somos los que estamos fuera de foco maybe is the signs that we are receiving. Las direcciones de los centers of power; that's what's out of focus. (Blanco n.pag.)

With their project of El Puerto Rican Embassy, Adál and Pietri subversively resist cultural assimilation, not by trying to preserve a “pure” Puerto Rican identity, although they do affirm their distinct culture, but by embracing and constantly reproducing their hybrid identities.

2.3 Puerto Rico’s Literature: a Contestation of its History

To be able to understand literature written in English during the last decades of the twentieth century by Puerto Ricans, and more specifically the cases of Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago, who not only write in English but also self-translate their literary works into Spanish, it is necessary to look back at Puerto Rican history. It is also necessary to focus such a historical review on the sociopolitical relationship that has been developing between Puerto Rico and the United States since the latter took control of the former. In this way, it is possible to link this sociopolitical relationship to the formation of a Puerto Rican Hispanophilic literary canon and to relate the latter to the insular and diasporic Puerto Rican literary movement that emerged in the 1970s to contest and challenge this canon that was excluding marginalized sectors of Puerto Rican society. It

24 The project of El Puerto Rican Embassy, included the Manifesto, the Spanglish National Anthem, the Puerto Rican Passport Agency, El Spirit Republic of Puerto Rico’s “passport”, and their concept of an “out of focus identity”
is very important to understand how this P.R.-U.S. relationship originated as well as its consequences on Puerto Rican cultural identity, not only because it would explain why Puerto Ricans write in English despite coming from a Caribbean Spanish-speaking island, but also because the subject matters embraced by these writers in their fictional works are directly linked to these facts. Additionally, it would explain why some of the Puerto Rican authors that write in English chose writing strategies that move away from standard homogeneous English. Throughout this overview, I will highlight the events and the characters that have influenced Puerto Rican cultural and linguistic identity formation and the development of the Puerto Rican literary movements of the twentieth century, especially the 1970s generation that gave birth to Esmeralda Santiago and Rosario Ferré as Puerto Rican women writers who have challenged mainstream Puerto Rican literature. This account will highlight the literary contribution of women writers so the reader can locate the chosen case studies among them.

2.3.1 Spanish Colonial Literature

There have been significant archaeological findings that have helped historians put together the puzzle that is Puerto Rico’s history before the arrival of the Spaniards in 1493. However, the literature written by the Spanish colonizers and missionaries has been the main source of information about the indigenous people that inhabited Puerto Rico, or Borikén, as the Taínos used to call it, before colonization took place. This literature recorded in writing for the first time some of the vocabulary used by the Taínos, relatives of the Arawaks, who inhabited the West Indies before and during colonization by the Spanish. The Taínos became extinct in Puerto Rico due to the exploitation they suffered under Spanish colonization, exposure to new diseases for which they had no natural defence, the casualties they suffered during their fight for freedom from the Spanish, and mass migration to the Windward Islands in search of a life free of Spanish oppression.

Although the first history of Puerto Rico was initially written by Spaniard Fray Íñigo Abbad y Lasierra (Abbad y Lasierra 1788), a new edition was published in 1866, which is considered by many to be the first history book about Puerto Rico by a Puerto Rican. The extensive editorial work done by journalist José Julián Acosta for this edition, explains the recognition it got. In this socio-political and literary account, I will only include the most important developments of Puerto Rico’s nineteenth century under Spain’s colonial rule because strictly speaking Puerto Rican literature came into being at
that time with the beginning of romanticism.

In Puerto Rican society, contrary to the case of other Latin American societies such as Mexico, the arts and sciences were poorly developed before the nineteenth century. Some of the condition that contributed to this underdevelopment and hindered the influence of the Spanish Golden Age before the nineteenth century were conditions created by poverty, censorship, the absence of an institution that promoted the love of literature, the late arrival of printing and the fact that the infrastructure of the island’s government was built to serve military purposes. At the end of the nineteenth century, there were three main political currents: the separatists were the most influential; they wanted political and financial independence from Spain and were looking to implement reforms that had a positive effect in all sectors of Puerto Rican society. The separatist movement had among its members important political figures including Ramón Emeterio Betances, Eugenio María de Hostos, Segundo Ruiz Belvis, Francisco Gonzalo Marín and Lola Rodríguez de Tió. The remaining two movements were the “unconditional Spaniards”, which was the most conservative movement composed by Spaniards residing on the island, merchants, government officials, clerics and military men who wanted Puerto Rico to remain an overseas Spanish province at all costs, and the reformists, which had among its members Román Baldorioty de Castro, José Julián Acosta and Julián Blanco Sosa. The latter was divided into two factions, the reformist assimilists, who wanted Puerto Rico to assimilate to Spain as an overseas province, and the reformist autonomists, who wanted administrative autonomy from Spain.

During the Spanish colonial period the literature written by women is almost non-existing due to their role in colonial society, however, there are a few exceptions such as María Bibiana Gautier Benitez y Lola Rodríguez de Tió which cases will be discussed in the next section.

2.3.2 Literature and National Identity Building

It is important to track the different conceptualizations of the Puerto Rican national identity because over time they have feed up each other and have created a dynamic dialogue in which Ferré and Santiago have participated through their literature.

The first attempt to build a national identity took place during the first half of the

25 Pejorative name for the conservative annexationists
nineteenth century with the arrival of printing in 1806 and the development of journalism and was led by the “hacendados” class. The “hacendados”, who together with the Spanish government officials, ruled the agricultural economy of the island and were the only ones allowed to write because strict laws prohibited the rest of Puerto Rican natives to express themselves in written form. Before 1806 the few literary works that were produced on the island had to be printed in Spain and in La Española. It was in this period that María Bibiana Gautier Benítez, considered to be the first female poet of the island, published her first poem, La Ninfa de Puerto Rico (1832) in La Gaceta, the first Puerto Rican newspaper. Her father was a lieutenant in the Spanish army and had a passion for literature. They had a library with all the books that were important at the time. Her example shows that even under a Spanish empire that promoted a very conservative role for women in society, Puerto Rican women were involved in the production of culture, particularly in literature, from an early stage and fought to be recognized. In 1843, 1844 and 1846, the first literary anthologies, Aguinaldo Puertorriqueño (Guasp et al. 1843), Álbum Puertorriqueño (Alonso 1844) and Cancionero de Borinquen (Vasallo 1846) respectively, emerged. These anthologies were mostly written by young Puerto Ricans studying in Spain and by young Puerto Ricans studying on the island. One of these young writers was Manuel A. Alonso, who is one of the first and most important literary figures of the Antillean Romanticism and of Criollism. In 1849 Alonso published El Gíbaro, “el libro criollista que será piedra angular de nuestra historia literaria” (González, 103), according to José Luis González, one of the most renowned Puerto Rican writers of the twentieth century. In El Gíbaro, Alonso exposes Puerto Rican customs, differentiating them from those of the colonizers, and thus gave Puerto Rican society a concrete portrait of a young Puerto Rican culture. El Gíbaro marks the entry of Puerto Rican literature into the Romantic literature genre and more specifically into the criollo-costumbrista tradition. One of the resources Alonso employed to highlight and differentiate Puerto

26 Land owners.
27 These laws were enforced with prison or banishment.
28 80% of Puerto Ricans were illiterate during the beginning of the nineteenth century and storytelling through song compositions called “coplas” and “décimas”, were the main instruments that native islanders had to record important events and tell stories.
29 After the arrival of printing, every city had at least one or two newspapers. After the change of colonial status in 1898, these newspapers acquired a more commercial role which still permeates today.
30 When this book arrived into Puerto Rican customs at the airport, it was intercepted by government officials claiming that one of the poems included in the book had a subversive character. This is an example of the repression that the island was experiencing when the romanticism movement arrived.
31 “Jíbaro” is the term used in Puerto Rico to refer to the countrymen that made a living from agriculture. It is equivalent to the term “guajiro” in Cuba.
Rican culture from the colonizer culture is the transcription of the oral speech of the uneducated country style Puerto Rican (e.g.: “¡Ja Miguey! ¡cuánto me acueldo! De aquey queso esmoronao…”) (Álbum puertorriqueño 161). This literature was heavily influenced by Romantic literature and portrayed the injustices experienced by Puerto Ricans under Spanish colonial rule. Literary works produced in this period helped fuel the desire to overthrow the Spanish government on the island. For that reason, a number of Puerto Rican writers had to go into exile due to harassment, or were incarcerated by the Spanish colonial government that feared that Puerto Ricans would follow the example of the Hispano-American republics that were in the past part of their empire. One example of this persecution is the case of Daniel Rivera, who published the poem “Agueybaná el Bravo” (1854) in El Ponceño, a newspaper published in Ponce, and was persecuted until he decided to go into exile. The publishing house where the newspaper was produced was charged a fee of 1,000 dollars and eventually closed down by a jury. In the Romantic literary period, the poet José Gautier Benítez stands out with his patriotic and love poems.

Other important writers of the time were Alejandro Tapia y Rivera (historic dramas, legends and biographies), Eugenio María de Hostos, whose greatest novel, La peregrinación de Bayoán (1863), promoted a message of freedom and the unity of the Spanish Antilles, and Lola Rodríguez de Tió, a poet “noted for having cut her hair and dressed in manly costume to be able to attend political revolutionary meetings”, according to the academic María M. Solá Fernández (2). Rodríguez de Tió became a supporter of Cuban and Puerto Rican independence and Antillean unity from an early stage and wrote La Borinqueña, the revolutionary national anthem that was sung by revolutionaries during the Grito de Lares uprising in September 23, 1868. El Grito de Lares was the first call for the independence of Puerto Rico under Spanish rule, and was organized by Ramón Emeterio Betances and Segundo Ruiz Belvis. These freedom fighters, together with various revolutionary cells, had met before the uprising with Cuban revolutionaries in New York, out of frustration over Spain’s false reform promises for political and economic autonomy and over the conditions of misery and repression on the island. The insurgents were part of the most advanced sectors of Puerto Rican society at the time, which was composed of intellectual landowners that were part of the small

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32 Agueybaná was the most important cacique in the island before Juan Ponce de León arrived. He was also the first caciques to revolt against the Spaniards and their enslaving imperialism.

33 Hostos joined the Cuban Revolutionary Committee in the United States, advocated independence from Spain and later from the United States, and travelled widely promoting the idea of an Antillean Confederation (Confederación Antillana). He also contributed greatly to the methodology of education.
bourgeoisie. El Grito de Lares contributed to the abolition of slavery on the island in 1869 and to the implementation of important political and economic reforms.

During the last decades of the nineteenth century Puerto Rican literature was influenced by European Naturalism, and Manuel Zeno Gandía (1855-1930) wrote *La Charca* (1894), widely considered to be the most important novel in Puerto Rican literary history. In *La Charca*, Gandía, who was deeply influenced by French naturalist writer Émile Zola, captured through raw images the social misery and moral corruption experienced by most of Puerto Rican society living under Spain’s colonial rule, with the exception of the wealthy coffee hacendados. Gandía’s long stays in Europe provided him with a different perspective as he had the opportunity to distance himself from life on the island and to compare it with conditions in European cities. He also published *El Negocio* (1922) and *Redentores* (1925), novels in which he criticized U.S. trade corruption and the political conspiracies under U.S. colonialism as Esmeralda Santiago will do more than 70 years later in her novel *América’s Dream* in which she denounces the U.S. military presence in the Puerto Rican island of Vieques. Among other literary figures that stand out in this naturalist period, are Salvador Brau, and Manuel Fernández Juncos. Both of them were renowned journalists and both were exposed to the autonomist political movement that demanded more power from the Spanish Crown. Manuel Fernández Juncos also contributed greatly by founding the magazine *El Buscapié*, a forum for socio-economic proposals and for criticism.

It is evident that the participation of women in literature in the nineteenth century was not as strong as that of men, but in spite of the restrictions and marginalization of women in that century, they participated actively in education and literary fields. For example, Ana Roque de Duprey, educator, suffragist and founder of The University of Puerto Rico in 1903, wrote *Sara la obrera* (1895) and *Luz y sombra* (1903), and Carmela Eulate Sanjurjo, painter, pianist, translator, polyglot and suffragist, wrote *La Muñeca* (1895) and other novels, which focused on the situation of women in Puerto Rican society. It is worth noting that the main literary contribution by women was in the poetry genre.

34 This novel has a strong critique against the attempts of the United States to impose English and to culturally assimilate Puerto Ricans.

35 This anti-colonial representation will be discussed further in Chapter 6.
2.3.3 The Arrival of the Americanos: Linguistic Assimilation and the Rise of Hispanophilia

This section is of the utmost importance as it further explains how the relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States originated and how this relationship shaped the character of the Puerto Rican literature.

In November 25th 1897, after much struggle by the autonomist Puerto Rican sector, Spain signed the Autonomous Letter for Cuba and Puerto Rico. This act was driven by Spain’s concern of the United States’ growing interest in the Cuban conflict (the Big War) and fear that the Cuban rebellion would have an influence on the more liberal sectors of Puerto Rican society. The Autonomous Letter granted men older than 25 the right to participate in the elections of autonomous governments, to be closely supervised by the colonial Spanish empire. The autonomous Cuban government was short-lived as only 11 days after the new government took power on January 1st, a small riot took place in Havana. The United States sent the Maine battleship as part of a larger military operation and on February 15th, it sank mysteriously in Havana harbour changing the situation drastically. Spain and the United States went into war on April 1898 and after Spain’s defeat became obvious, a peace treaty was signed in Paris on December 10th, which invalidated the bilateral pact between Spain and Puerto Rico under the Autonomous Letter. The Treaty of Paris granted the U.S. control over Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines in exchange for $20 million to be paid by the United States to Spain. After the war, Cuba remained under U.S. military control until it attained its independence on May 12th 1902. For Puerto Rico a new era under a new colonial government started when U.S. troops landed in Guánica on July 25th after bombarding the city of San Juan. U.S. troops found little resistance and the fact that a significant number of civilians joined U.S. forces to help them in the takeover of several towns is indicative that most Puerto Ricans saw U.S. intervention as positive for the future of the island (although a large number of Puerto Ricans defended Spain’s Autonomous Letter).

During the first years under U.S. rule, there was a feeling of freedom from the Spanish yoke that led certain sectors of society to openly express and promote their points of view against oppressive institutions like the Catholic Church, which forced itself upon Puerto Rican society, suppressing freethinkers and Free Masons. Certain groups of poor country people called partidas expressed one side of this feeling of freedom by looting...
haciendas and stores in response to the end of an era during which they were abused by the landowners, foremen and merchants. Some of these attacks, which were more common from August 1898 to February 1899, included violent acts such as murder and rape. During this period, new papers that would have been censured under Spanish rule emerged, including papers such as El Porvenir Social. New labour organizations were created such as the Federación Regional de los Trabajadores (FRT), which in 1898, a year after its creation, split over the decision as to whether or not to create alliances with bourgeois parties. The efforts of the FRT, together with a series of workers’ strikes, mainly amongst cigar makers and typographers, pushed U.S. military government to decree the eight-hour day. With this explosion of labor actions came repression by the United States including harassment and incarceration, resulting in leaders such as Santiago Iglesias Pantín escaping to New York, where they met with leaders of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and became affiliated to them by 1901. As to the new governmental conditions under the new U.S. colonial status, Puerto Ricans were given very limited participation as the island was governed first by U.S. military governors and later by U.S. civil officials. It is important to note the contribution of Luisa Capetillo who is perhaps the best known Puerto Rican female syndicalist and suffragist, famous for challenging social norms by being the first Puerto Rican woman to wear trousers in public. She is less known though, for her literary contribution, which includes four books, among them a collection of literary essays, Ensayos Literarios (1907).

One of the main industries of the island under Spanish rule was the sugar industry, which experienced two booms, one in the sixteenth century and another in the early nineteenth century, and descended into crisis after the abolition of slavery in 1873, due to the inability of the industry to make the transition into wage labor. Interested parties on the island were hoping that with the arrival of U.S. rule they could enter the tariff-protected U.S. sugar market so that the sugar industry could boom again. Since the late 1860s, the coffee industry on the island had been enjoying an expansion period. This boom in the coffee industry led to the emergence of an haciendado class that was reducing the number of independent farmers in the western interior part of the island.

During the first decades of the twentieth century, a series of important historical events relating to the new U.S. colonial regime took place. The first of these events was

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36From this split emerged the Federación Libre de Trabajadores (FLT), which favoured the political independence of the labour movement.
the U.S. Congress approval of the Foraker Act in April of 1900. The Act established Puerto Rican citizenship, but this concession would not last long because in 1917 the Jones Act would impose the U.S. citizenship invalidating Puerto Rican citizenship but denying Puerto Ricans the right to vote for the U.S. president, making legal the drafting of Puerto Ricans by the U.S. army. Under this new law, all schooling was conducted in English, and Spanish was taught as a foreign language even though both Spanish and English were official languages of the island. With the arrival of the United States, many political leaders, especially those from the Partido Republicano and the Partido Federal, were hoping that the United States would incorporate Puerto Rico as a state in the same way as it did with the conquered American territories. Instead, the United States implemented a government full of contradictions that left the island in political limbo and it is still in force even though there have been important reforms. The anti-colonialists condemned these contradictions and the Supreme Court of the United States had to open a forum in 1901, the so-called Insular Cases, in which it determined that the conditions of Puerto Rico as a non-incorporated U.S. territory covered by U.S. federal legislation were constitutional. Other important changes that occurred in the first decades of this new century were the change from a coffee based agricultural economy to a sugar based economy that benefited the interests of the U.S. sugar industry, the currency change to U.S. dollars from Spaniards pesos, and the monopolization of the Puerto Rican economy by U.S. market.37

The new U.S. imperial regime tried to impose the English language during the first decades of the twentieth century as an attempt to assimilate Puerto Ricans into U.S. culture and lifestyle. Notwithstanding, Puerto Rico remained a Spanish speaking island and Puerto Rican society started using its new acquired freedom of speech to defend Spanish as an expression of culture and identity. This linguistic defense represents an important shift, because Puerto Ricans had not been able to distinguish themselves from Spaniards through language whereas now they would be characterised by the Spanish language. The violent way in which the United States tried to assimilate Puerto Ricans through language and culture, translated into the emergence in the 1930s of an Hispanophilic literary movement that gave birth to important literary pieces such as SantaClo’ llega a la Cuchilla (1947). In this short story, by Abelardo Díaz Alfaro, Santa Claus appears during a school Christmas performance, and everybody runs off horrified

37 Puerto Ricans can no longer export their products to other countries other than the United States.
as they think he is the devil.

The emergence of this literary movement could be compared to the emergence of linguistically hybrid literature in the 70s as a response to the Hispanophilic literature that ignored English Diaspora literature written by Puerto Ricans and denied the reality of the linguistic and cultural influence in the Puerto Rican culture.

As I have exposed in this section, in the first decades of the U.S. colonial regime, the U.S. attempts to linguistically and culturally assimilate the P.R. population, started to give origin to a literature that would contest this violent practice and would create a literature with a strong base on Hispanophilic values.

2.3.4 The Emergence of “El Jíbaro”: Marginalization of Non-Hispanophilic Identities

In this context, Puerto Rican intellectuals turn back to the past and idealize it highlighting a Hispanic identity against the attempts at assimilation by the United States backed by the belief that Hispanic culture was responsible for Puerto Ricans’ illiteracy, laziness, conformism and submissiveness. This is why the short-lived 38 literary movement of Modernism focused on the defence of Puerto Rican identity linked to a Hispanic American culture with shared roots. Another characteristic of this literary movement in the Puerto Rican context is the welcoming of new metropolitan and modern influences. During this period, some of the most important literary figures were Luis Lloréns Torres, José de Diego and Nemesio Canales, who is the most representative poet of Modernism on the island. De Diego and Canales define through their literature a national identity, which is mainly Hispanic in terms of race, religion, language, culture and customs. This national identity ignored the oppression suffered under the Spanish colonial regime, and the African heritage present in Puerto Rican culture. Writer Luis Pales Matos highlighted this racial and cultural element through his literary work, which initially started under the Modernism movement but he made his most important contributions in the 1920s and ‘30s during the Avant-Garde movement. In the newly industrialized island this literature, together with working class literature, was read aloud by designated readers in tobacco factories and contributed to the intellectual development

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38 Modernism covered the first two decades of the twentieth century until the Avant-Garde movement arrived in the 1920s.
of the workers. Although this practice was initiated in Puerto Rico before the United States’ arrival, it became more common in the first years of the twentieth century. During this time, there was a growth in workers literature and unions because of the influence of American workers’ unions such as the American Federation of Labour, which affiliated in 1899 with the Federación Libre de Trabajadores founded by Santiago Iglesias Pantín, who was one of Puerto Rico’s most important labor organizers.

During the 1920s, the Pan-Africanism movement was taking place in the United States, driven by Marcus Garvey in defense of black peoples’ rights. This movement had an influence in Puerto Rico, especially in the literary works of Luis Pales Matos, who together with poet José de Diego Padró, founded the Diepalismo movement in 1921. Diepalismo, a name invented from the surnames of Diego and Pales, mixed Afro-Caribbean vocabulary with Puerto Rican verse. Diepalismo is considered part of the Avant-Garde movement of the 1920s because it brings a different cultural perspective that breaks with traditional literary canon, which as a norm ignored the African heritage present in Puerto Rican culture and racial composition in favor of Hispanic heritage. Pales’ most recognized literary work is his poetry book called Tun tún de pasa y grifería (1937); his work had a strong influence on contemporary Nuyorican poets such as Tato Laviera, although it was very controversial and criticized at the time. While Pales Matos was exposing openly his views regarding the African component in Puerto Rico, others such as Muñoz Marín were arguing that even though Spaniards had mixed with blacks islanders, Puerto Rico was essentially jíbaro, white from Spanish descent, and that both Africanization and Americanization were a threat to Puerto Rico’s Hispanic heritage. This way of thinking was heavily influenced by the ideas of Spanish journalist Luis Araquistán in contrast to the ideas of José Vasconcelos in defense of mestizaje. It is evident that the literature that originated in this decade has a strong influence in contemporary Puerto Rican literature and The House on the Lagoon is a good example of it as it underscores the Afro-American community of the island and its history.

Other avant-garde movements that emerged in this period were Euformismo, the Noísmo and Atalayismo. This generation of writers was pivotal, as they were to transform Puerto Rican literature in the 1930s. Not only did they grow up during the first decades of U.S. domination, which brought huge economic, political and social changes, but they

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39It started in a Cuban tobacco factory in 1856 and from there it spread through Latin America, the Caribbean and New York.
witnessed a large number of important international events such as the U.S. financial
depression, the Philippines’ struggle for independence, the progressive idea of the right
of every nation to self-determination, Gandhi’s anti-imperialist ideas, the Sandinista,
Russian and Mexican revolutions, and the Latin American student activism movement.
During this period, the University of Puerto Rico was making its transition from a
teachers’ college to a higher education institution and received visits from important
literary figures such as the Mexican author José Vasconcelos and the Spanish Hispanist
Federico de Onís. The founding of the Department of Hispanic Studies in 1927 and its
magazine the following year as part of the transformation of the University of Puerto
Rico, provided important encouragement for this generation. It is important to note that
at that point most of the courses at the University of Puerto Rico were taught in English.
The founding of the Nationalist Party in 1928 also served as a motor for the nationalist
feelings that would instill in the Puerto Rican literary and intellectual production
throughout most of the twentieth century.

2.3.5 La Generación del treinta and the Canon: The Birth of La gran familia
puertorriqueña

This generation of young authors that matured under such particular
circumstances, became what we now call the Generación del treinta, a generation that
was eager to define its Puerto Rican identity through literature, especially through the
genres of poetry and essay. Some of the most influential writers of this period include
Francisco Manrique Cabrera, Enrique Laguerre and Antonio S. Pedreira. There seems to
be a consensus that the latter is the most influential and important figure of this period
and that his most important work is his essay Insularismo (1934). Pedreira was an
educator,40 a writer and a journalist who contributed consistently to the most important
newspapers of the time and he co-founded in 1929 the Índice magazine, a forum for
debate on Puerto Rican culture and identity. He was also one of the first directors of the
Department of Hispanic Studies. Insularismo is considered one of the most fundamental
texts in the debate about Puerto Rican identity and it continues to be controversial and
criticized. In this essay, Pedreira recognized the existence of a Puerto Rican soul, not fully
developed but fragmented by the events that took place in 1898 when the U.S.
government took over the island. This realization contrasted with the viewpoint of other

40He was a professor at the University of Puerto Rico, at Columbia University and at the Brooklyn Institute
of Arts and Sciences.
writers such as Matienzo Cintrón, Zeno Gandía and Mariano Abril, who during the first half of the twentieth century either questioned or denied the existence of a Puerto Rican soul and identity in their essays and novels. It can be said that the Generación del treinta is for Puerto Rico what the “Generación del 98” was for Spain, a period of disorientation and crisis. This generation represented a cultural and linguistic resistance against the assimilation efforts of the U.S. colonial government within the first decades of its regime, and was responsible for the creation of important institutions such as the Instituto de Literatura Puertorriqueña and the Biblioteca de Autores Puertorriqueños. Puerto Rican scholar Juan G. Gelpí summed up the importance of this generation of writers thus:

Si bien no pueden dirigir el país, los treintistas, mediante su literatura y su crítica, compensaron la pérdida de la hegemonía que se produce a partir de la invasión del 98. El canon literario que crearon e impusieron en una sociedad colonial ha hecho las veces de una constitución nacional; ha compensado la existencia de un Estado nacional independiente. (Gelpí 26)

Over the years, after realizing that the island was missing a national identity or had a partially developed identity, writers such as José Luis González, who started his literary career during the 1940s, have highlighted the responsibility that Puerto Rican writers and other participants in the cultural arena had in the strengthening and formation of a Puerto Rican national conscience. With this in mind, José Luis González said in 1976:

Yo diría, en consecuencia, que la tarea principal de los productores de cultura en el Puerto Rico de hoy consiste en enriquecer la conciencia nacional puertorriqueña. Cuando digo conciencia nacional quiero decir . . . conciencia nacional de masas. (González 127)

The national identity created by this generation of writers through their work during the 1930s, was very particular in terms of the cultural elements that it embraced and those it excluded. It described a homogeneous culture with a strong patriarchal base that excluded all cultural aspects that were not consonant with the idea of “la gran familia puertorriqueña”, and with values that belong to the wealthy class leaving out cultural elements related to women, the working class, the black community and homosexuality.

Even though the situation of women was not a common literary topic at the time, in this decade their participation in the literary field became significantly wider both in
terms of the amount of women writers as well as in the amount of women involved in literary criticism. Some of these women were poets, writers and educators: Concha Meléndez was a writer and essayist, Margot Arce de Vázquez an educator and essayist, literary critic Marfa Teresa Babín, the educator, journalist and writer Nilita Vientós Gastón, and poets Clara Lair and Julia de Burgos. Novelists and playwrights included Manuel Mendez Ballester, Luis Palés Matos, Tomás Blanco and Enrique A. Laguerre was the author of La llamarada (1935), one of the most important novels of Puerto Rican literature, which contrasts the prosperity of an idealized rural coffee industry with the misery of the coastal sugar cane industry. Most of these writers were also involved in politics and social movements. Perhaps one of the best examples is poet, journalist and political activist for the independence of Puerto Rico, Juan Antonio Corretjer who was a collaborator in the Cuban movement to overthrow the dictator Batista; elected Secretary General of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party and arrested several times because of his political beliefs. During the 1940s Corretjer became one of the most important figures of the “Neocriollismo” literary movement.

During the 1930s, the intensification of U.S. colonial repression lead to the Ponce massacre, in which the police killed 21 unarmed nationalists (Cadetes de la República) as they tried to lead a nationalist march. In the island, more than 10,000 Puerto Ricans attended the funeral of the assassinated nationalists, while in New York’s East Harlem, around 3,000 gathered to listen to speeches by the lawyer of the Nationalist Party leader Albizu Campos, Gilberto Concepción de Gracia and Congressman Vito Marcantonio. Even though the mass migration of Puerto Ricans to the United States took place in the 1940s, especially to New York, by this time Puerto Ricans had already established a Puerto Rican community east of black Harlem and referred to as El Barrio, where they had shops selling Puerto Rican products, restaurants, churches and other social and political organizations. Some of these events are highlighted in Ferré’s novel The House on the Lagoon.

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41 Arce de Vázquez was one of Rosario Ferré’s professors at the University of Puerto Rico and had a great influence on her intellectual development.
2.3.6 **“Del campo a la ciudad”**: Industrialization and the Longing for an Idealized Agricultural Patriarchal Society

The 1940s and the 1950s brought important changes to Puerto Rico such as the creation of the Operation Bootstrap program ("Manos a la Obra") by the Partido Popular Democrático (PPD), created in the 1930s and led by Luis Muñoz Marín, president of the Senate of Puerto Rico who in 1949 became the first democratically elected governor of Puerto Rico. Operation Bootstrap was responsible for turning Puerto Rico’s agrarian economy into an industrialized society in the context of the postwar boom through the granting of cheap labour, tax exemptions and other incentives to U.S. companies looking to invest their capital. This project created a new industrial working class, and a new bourgeois class with a new set of values that favoured U.S. modernity over the criollo traditional values and nationalist patriotism. President Roosevelt’s New Deal had a great impact on the Puerto Rican agricultural economy. A large number of Puerto Ricans joined U.S. armed forces in World War II, and a new constitution for Puerto Rico was approved in 1952, thereby creating the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. An important consequence of these changes was the massive migration of people not only from the rural areas of the island to the urban areas, but from the island to the United States. The Puerto Rican and the U.S. government promoted this migration.

In the literary arena this period of the 1940s and 1950s was a time of anguish and it reflected a sense of loss regarding the violent changes brought about by industrialization. The government of Puerto Rico’s attempts to turn a monoculture economy into an industrialized one contributed to a yearning for the past, for the agricultural life, and this yearning is expressed through literature. Intellectuals and writers

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42 Title of a Puerto Rican children’s book published in the 1960s and used in Puerto Rican elementary schools. The book was illustrated by American artists and has been criticized because of the conservative family portrayed that presented and because of its approach pointed towards cultural assimilation.

43 One of their initial goals was to reach economic progress and then reach independence from the United States.

44 After the constitution was approved, the United Nations eliminates Puerto Rico from their colonies list even though the constitution clearly established that the relationship between the island and the United States was off-limits and that Federal legislation would continue to operate in the island.

45 This migration wave has been called the Great Migration because it mobilized hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans, most of which were poor people that had been displaced by the change from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy, could not find a job in the urban areas and were looking for better living conditions. By the 1940s there were 70,000 Puerto Rican migrants living in the United States, mostly in New York.

46 In 1947 the Puerto Rican government created the División de Migración within the Department of Labor to facilitate the migration of Puerto Rican workers to the United States as a strategy to alleviate the unemployment situation that the island was going through.
related the industrialization movement to the loss of a Hispanic culture given that the economy was becoming more industrialized. These feelings of loss turned into anti-American feeling, most intellectuals and writers believing that Puerto Rican society was selling off its values and traditions and that Puerto Rican identity was being changed from its roots. They continued to cling on to the patriotism and nationalism that had been present in the 1930s, but they alienated themselves from the interests of the vast majority of Puerto Ricans by succumbing to an existentialist pessimism. There was a feeling of yearning for the past, for an idealized patriarchal agricultural society linked to Hispanic roots that were being replaced with U.S. customs and values. Plots set in rural areas were still present in Puerto Rican literature at that time. However, there was a shift towards including urban settings that revealed social disintegration, the misery in which a significant number of the new urban proletariat class were living, the corruption of moral values that came as a consequence of such a rapid industrialization process, and the racism and deplorable living conditions of Puerto Rican immigrants in the United States.

The generation of literary figures that lived during these decades counted on institutions, organizations and publications such as the *Asomante* magazine, founded in 1945 by Nilita Vientós Gastón, which served as a forum for Puerto Rican writers. Additionally, literary magazines such as *Asomante*, gave them exposure in Europe, North American and the rest of Latin America. The foundation of the *Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña*, founded in 1955, was also important because it was meant to support Puerto Rican culture and to protect it against what was considered by intellectuals and writers to be an assimilationist movement trying to change Puerto Rican society by changing the economy and the Puerto Rican way of life. Through their novels and essays, authors such as José Luis González, Abelardo Díaz Alfaro and René Marquéz denounced the effects of the social transformation that the island was undergoing and suggested that this transformation was affecting the core of Puerto Rican society, the “*gran familia puertorriqueña*”, which was an idealization of a patriarchal past. It is important to note that behind the literary forums that originated in the first half of the twentieth century, lay an important number of academic women who aided other women writers to find their place in Puerto Rican literature.

In the narrative genre, the short story stood out and its main exponents were José Luis González, Abelardo Díaz Alfaro and René Márquez. Alfaro, considered to be the most important Puerto Rican story teller of the twentieth century, contributed with his
masterpiece *Terrazo*, a collection of short stories that portrayed the life of the peasant and his environment, and René Márquez, contributed greatly as a narrator, essayist, playwright, screenwriter, anthologist and literary critic. The latter denounced and protested against the social consequences of Puerto Rico’s violent industrialization with short stories such as “Otro día nuestro” (1955) and “En una ciudad llamada San Juan” (1960), his novel *La vispera del hombre* (1959) and his play *La carreta* (1940). In *La carreta*, Márquez narrates the story of a Puerto Rican family that moves to the capital city of San Juan and then to New York, and after harsh experiences and the loss of their cultural values, returned to the island when Luis, the head of the family, is killed by a machine in the boiler factory where he worked.

Although the novel was not developed as a genre during this period, there were important contributions from writers José Luis González with “*Paisa; un relato de emigración*” (1950), Cesar Andreu Iglesias, who being an atypical writer with a background as a communist leader and union organizer, wrote about the nationalist movement in his novel *Los derrotados*, Emilio Díaz Valcarcel, who captured through his literary works his experiences in the Korean War in which he participated as a consequence of the U.S. drafting policy, René Márquez and Pedro Juan Soto, who stands out for his commitment to topics related to Puerto Rican migration to the United States and the disappointments suffered by Puerto Ricans in “the promised land.”. The case of writer Pedro Juan Soto is of special interest as even though he wrote mainly in Spanish while he lived in New York, he defended Puerto Rican literature in English against those who attacked it stating it was not a Puerto Rican manifestation. Another author who wrote in Spanish from the U.S. Diaspora is Bernardo Vega, whose book *Memorias de Bernardo Vega* (1940) contains the most detailed portrait of the life of U.S. Puerto Rican migrant workers, especially in the tobacco industry, an industry that Vega experienced himself.

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47 Several short stories of this collection were translated into English, French, Russian, German, Polish, Czech and Italian.

48 Compulsory enrollment in the U.S. army was highly criticized as being a blood tax imposed on Puerto Ricans.

49 *Memorias de Bernardo Vega* was written in 1940 but was edited and published in 1977 by César Andreu Iglesias. An English translation by renowned scholar Juan Flores was published in 1984.
2.3.7 The 1960s and the 1970s: Puerto Rican Literature Contesting the Canon

This section is of the outmost importance as it is in this period of Puerto Rican literature when Santiago and Ferré start to write. Thus, it contains important paratextual information about their literature.

Puerto Rican literature in English written in the United States really started to flourish in the 1960s, with a few exceptions including the cases of Arturo Alfonso Schoumburg, who started to write in English about the Afro-Americans’ contributions to U.S. society in the first decades of the twentieth century, and Jesús Colón, socialist activist and community organizer who during the 40s and 50s wrote a series of short stories in English about his experiences as a black Puerto Rican migrant. Colón’s literary work gave way to a new generation of Puerto Rican writers who would write in both English and Spanish from the United States and who would be called the Nuyorican Movement.

The context in which the generation of writers of the 1960s and 1970s lived was full of contradictions. On the one hand, there was an upper class, which was accommodated thanks to the political changes, monopoly and U.S. investment in the island. On the other hand, there was a working class that was being displaced to the urban areas of the island and to the United States, leaving the rural areas in a state of desolation because of high rate of unemployment. They were very conscious of the difficult social situation that the island was experiencing and they were ready to offer new analyses and proposals that would break with past generations. Their literature was still going to be political but in a different way, a more subtle way that would incorporate innovative techniques and more alternative approaches. This new literary movement was also characterized by the wider participation of women especially in the genres of the short story and the novel. Important influences were the disappointments over Operation Bootstrap, increased poverty in the slums, the rise of Latin American revolutionary movements, a student movement that promoted a break with the status quo and a spirit of compromise with their country, the Mexican Tlatelolco massacre, and the U.S.’s civil rights movements, such as the protest movement against the Vietnam War. The Latin American writers of the Boom were also very influential for this generation. Some of the

These short stories were published in 1961 as A Puerto Rican in New York and Other Sketches.
written press forums used by this generation to express their ideas included publications such as *Guajana,* a revolutionary poetry magazine founded in 1962, *Mester,* which had an international socialist perspective and was founded in 1967, and *Palestra,* also founded in 1967. There were also other poets who were not associated with these groups. Among them were female poets including Ángela María Dávila, Magaly Quiñones, Olga Nolla and Rosario Ferré, whose poetry was focused on denouncing the way in which women were treated in Puerto Rico, and who demanded equal treatment for them.

It is worth highlighting the role that the magazine *Zona de Carga y Descarga* played, launched by writers Rosario Ferré and Olga Nolla in 1972, in the development and dissemination of the literary works of this generation of writers. *Zona de Carga y Descarga* encouraged the creation of new writing styles and new approaches that would break with the pamphletism and dogmatism of the past and became one of the main forums of the new literary movement of the 1970s.

The short story genre would offer the same social criticism offered by poetry and was greatly influenced by the Latin American Boom, introducing innovative literary techniques. Some of the most recognized story tellers were Luis Rafael Sánchez, whose short story collection *En cuerpo de camisa* is considered to be one of the first literary works that breaks with the canon, with a colloquial language that would characterize the writing style of most Puerto Rican literature henceforward, Manuel Ramos Otero, who would explore sexuality from a more open and explicit perspective, Tomás López Ramírez, Carmelo Rodríguez Torres, Rosario Ferré, who with her short story collection *Papeles de Pandora* opens the door to a new feminist literary discourse, Carmen Lugo Filippi and Ana Lydia Vega.

Within the novel also aligned with the Latin American Boom, important authors include Edgardo Rodríguez Julia, Roberto Cruz Barreto, Luis Rafael Sánchez with his *Guaracha del Macho Camacho,* Egberto Figueroa, Tomás López Ramírez, Manuel Ramos Otero, Mayra Montero, Ana Lydia Vega and Iris M. Zavala.

As in the 1950s, the essay would play a leading role in the 1960s and 1970s both within the political and social criticism arena as well as within the literary criticism forum.

51 Edwin Reyes Berríos and Antonio Cabán Vale were some of the members of this group of poets.
52 Two of its most important exponents were Jorge María Ruscallada Barcedoniz and Ivan Silén.
53 Irvin Sepúlveda Pacheco, Angel Luis Torres and Juan Torres Alonso were the leaders of the group behind the magazine.
Exponents of the social criticism essay are Manuel Maldonado Denis, Juan Ángel Silén and Edgardo Rodríguez Julia, while Iris M. Zavala, Arcadio Díaz Quiñonez, José Ramón de la Torre, María Magdalena Zolá and Rosario Ferré dominated the literary criticism of the time. These voices provided a critical view of the literature that preceded them, a literature which presented a homogenized Puerto Rican identity, highly influenced by European hispanophilia.

Puerto Rican literature written in the United States started to emerge during the first decades of the twentieth century. However, it was not until the 1960s that the beginnings of a literary movement emerged, and it was then when writers really started to write in English, as most of them migrated to the United States with their families when they were very young. Whilst English became the language in which they were educated, for most of them, it also became their first language. It is important to note that even if they adopted English in order to adapt to their new living circumstances, most Puerto Rican migrants moved to Puerto Rican neighbourhoods, spoke Spanish or a mixture of Spanish and English at home and preserved a significant amount of cultural and social Puerto Rican traditions mixed with and influenced by U.S. culture. This resilience is underscored by Santiago in América’s Dream, as I will show in Chapter 6.

The main literary figures in the novel genre within the group of Puerto Rican authors writing in English from the United States are Piri Thomas, Nicholasa Mohr, Edward Rivera, Edwin Torres, Abraham Rodríguez, Judith Ortiz Cofer, Esmeralda Santiago and Alba Ambert. Thomas’ novel, Down These Mean Streets (1967), about a young black Puerto Rican man living in Harlem, New York City, was very successful and portrayed not only the marginalization suffered by the main character because of his Puerto Rican descent, but because of his race. Torres’ novel Carlito’s Way was made into a movie. Through their literature, these writers have documented the transculturation, adaptation and migration experiences of Puerto Ricans in the United States. As their counterpart writers in Puerto Rico, they have reinvented a Puerto Rican language that clearly represents a break with Puerto Rican literary canon, describes their social reality, reflects the hybrid cultural and linguistic reality of Puerto Ricans in the United States and constructs through language a unique hybrid identity.

In the genre of poetry, it is important to highlight the centrality that the Nuyorican poetry movement occupied within the literature of Puerto Ricans in the United States.
This group of poets represented like no other literary genre the way in which Puerto Ricans communicated with each other in the Puerto Rican Barrio and in the Lower East Side of New York, and integrated their oral poetry with elements of performance and theatre. They described and denounced social inequalities and the marginalization of Puerto Ricans in the United States in contrast to the American dream. Some of the most important figures of this group of poets were Pedro Pietri, Miguel Algarín, Miguel Piñero, Lucky Cienfuegos, Sandra María Esteves, Bimbo Rivas, Victor Hernández and Jesús Papoleto Meléndez. Their headquarters was the Nuyorican Poets Café, founded by Miguel Algarín in 1975 on the 6th Street of the Lower East Side. The Nuyorican Poets Café is still operating, although it was closed for a while and reopened in the 1980s, and now presents performance poetry, which is not exclusively Puerto Rican. Rosario Morales and her daughter Aurora Levins Morales have also contributed to diasporic Puerto Rican poetry and prose written in English.

The generation of writers that started writing during the 1960s and 1970s, both in mainland Puerto Rico and in the Puerto Rican Diaspora, broke with the homogeneous concept of the conservative Puerto Rican family portrayed by most writers in the first half of the twentieth century. Moreover, it included literary characters representing the marginalized sectors of Puerto Rican society, such as homosexuals, women, immigrants, blacks and prostitutes. The language used in the literary works would resemble more the colloquial language rather than the language used by previous generations of writers who adopted as their mission the rescue of Spanish as a national language threatened by the violent influence of English as the language of the U.S. colonizer.

It is in this context that Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago start to write. Rosario Ferré started writing in English in the late 1990s after starting her career with Spanish as her literary language in the 1970s. Her decision to write in English caused great controversy and was the target of many attacks that labelled her as assimilated and un-Puerto Rican while others considered the switch as part of the break with the canon portrayed by the literary movement to which she belonged.

For many people it is logical that Puerto Ricans that migrate to the United States change their writing language to English. Nonetheless, in the context of the colonial situation of Puerto Rico and its particular relationship with the United States, writing in English from the U.S. Diaspora has led to great controversy and has been considered by
some to be un-Puerto Rican. That is why until relatively recently these works were not included in Puerto Rican literature anthologies. In the case of Rosario Ferré, who writes in English from the island, her challenge to the Hispanophilic canon has been criticized by “both sides – language purists on the Island and those who condemn her for trying to pass as a ‘Latina’ author on the U.S. mainland” (Moreno, La gran familia puertorriqueña in the Works of Rosario Ferré and Judith Ortiz Cofer. 84).

As Marisel C. Moreno states, there is a “gap between women’s literatures produced on the island and in the Diaspora” (Moreno 2012: 6) as there is a “tendency to examine these literary bodies independently of one another” (Moreno 2012: 4), thus emphasizing the difference between some of their characteristics rather than the ones they share. Some of the existing studies and anthologies that bring together literary works from Puerto Rican women writers in the U.S. Diaspora from the late twentieth century onwards present them alongside other U.S. Diaspora women writers from other countries of Latin America. This is the case of Ellen McCracken’s New Latina Narrative: The Feminine Space of Postmodern Ethnicity (1999), Juanita Heredia’s Transnational Latina Narratives in the Twenty-First Century (2009) and Phillipa Kafka’s Saddling La Gringa: Gatekeeping in Literature by Contemporary Latina Writers (2000). Some other studies also include Puerto Rican male writers in the U.S. Diaspora, as is the case of Lisa Sánchez González’s Boricua Literature: A Literary History of the Puerto Rican Diaspora (2001) and Writing Off the Hyphen by José L. Torres-Padilla and Carmen Haydée Rivera (2008). However, there is only one published study that focuses on contemporary literature written by Puerto Rican women in the U.S. Diaspora (Kissing the Mango Tree: Puerto Rican Women Rewriting American Literature 2002) and only one study that focuses on contemporary literature written by Puerto Rican women who write from both the island and the U.S. Diaspora (Family Matters: Puerto Rican Women Authors on the Island and the Mainland). In this book Marisel Moreno argues that in order to gain a holistic view of Puerto Rican women writers, they should be studied comparatively but not separately as there is a “need to acknowledge those familial links that unite the Puerto Rican communities on the island and in the diaspora” (Moreno, Family Matters: Puerto Rican Women Authors on the Island and the Mainland : 14). A similar view was expressed by Nicholasa Mohr when she stated during an interview that “The Puerto Rican Diaspora

54 There is also one anthology called Breaking Ground: Anthology of Puerto Rican Women Writers in New York 1980-2012, but it is only focused on the New York Diaspora.
keeps our literature in a subcategory” (Kevane & Heredia 95), implying that Puerto Rican literature written in the Diaspora should be categorized and studied as Puerto Rican literature, without subcategorizing it.

In common with Moreno, I believe that both literary bodies of work should be studied holistically and that is the reason why my study analyzes Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago as part of the same group of Puerto Rican women writers although it also analyzes them comparatively. I believe that at least in the Puerto Rican context, self-translation, as English writing, code-switching and the transcription of oral speech, is a writing strategy used by Santiago and by Ferré to portray their hybrid identities by presenting themselves to readers as bilingual and bicultural beings. Additionally, I believe that they want to keep complete control over their literary work as woman writers whose texts highlight the marginalization of women and provide a voice for the voiceless. Thus, before examining gender issues in Santiago and Ferré’s literary pieces and their acts of self-translation as female agency, it is necessary to provide an overview of the most important theories in gender studies and feminist literary criticism.

2.4 Gender Studies and Feminist Literary Criticism in Latin America

Issues raised by both feminism and gender studies have clearly influenced the literary cases analyzed in this dissertation, even though these influences have materialized differently in both cases. In the case of Esmeralda Santiago’s América’s Dream, these influences are evident in the novel’s plots and its characters, while in the case of Rosario Ferré’s The House on the Lagoon, they are also evident in the novel’s structure as I show in Chapter 6, and in the author’s statements about her literary production and its influences. According to literary critic Naomi Lindstrom, Ferré’s writing “shows a . . . comfortable familiarity with contemporary feminism” and she “refers easily to Beauvoir and Woolf in ‘La cocina de la escritura’ (‘The Writer’s Kitchen’), an account of her beginnings as a writer” which touches on “how women approach the task of writing” (Lindstrom ch. 5)55.

Additionally, one of the main claims that I make throughout this dissertation is that there is a relationship between the author’s self-translation acts and their desire to gain authority as women writers. The fact that one of the central issues of feminist literary

55 When citing an electronic book I will provide the chapter or section number as recommended by the MLA.
criticism and gender studies is how women can destabilize and subvert patriarchal discourses through language, makes this research relevant to these fields of study as well.

Thus, in this section I briefly explore the relationship between the main theoretical issues in both gender studies and feminist literary criticism and how they have influenced Spanish Latin American literature and Latin American feminist literary criticism in the late twentieth century, before displaying the critical analysis of the texts. To begin this exploration it is necessary to identify some of the major issues within both gender studies and feminist literary criticism. To accomplish this objective I will provide an overview based on Toril Moi’s book *Sexual/Textual Politics*. Moi’s seminal study lays out the central issues in the Anglo-American and in the French traditions in feminist literary criticism.

In *Sexual/Textual Politics*, Moi underscores perspectives in feminist literary criticism that move away from authored centred readings and encourage the agency of the reader and a textual analysis that takes into account the social and political context. The structure of the book displays both the feminist theories of specific authors and their published works and feminist topics and debates that are central to literary feminist criticism. For reasons of space, I will only focus on specific feminist theorists that I consider most useful to the analyses I implement through my dissertation.

**Anglo-American Literary Feminism**

For Moi, the fact that Anglo-American feminists have not completely parted with patriarchal writing aesthetics that promote a realist approach to literary writing limits their political agency. For this reason, she argues in favour of other aesthetics that are more deconstructive such as the aesthetics of the modernist literary movement (68).

In the first section of Part I, Moi focuses on Kate Millet’s *Sexual Politics* (1969) and in Mary Ellman’s *Thinking About Women* (1968) as “. . . the basis of the explosive development of Anglo-American feminist criticism” (22). Moi criticizes Millet’s lack of “. . . attention to the formal structures of the literary text . . .” (30) and in the other hand praises Ellmann’s analysis of “. . . how women writers have known how to exploit, for their own subversive purposes, the stereotypes of them and their writing created by men” (35). I believe this statement is particularly valid in the case of the plots inscribed in Santiago and Ferré’s novels. Their novel plots have as protagonist female characters who
manage to subvert patriarchal society from stereotyped social roles. This agency through writing and through irony, in the particular case of Ferré, is similar to the agency identified by Ellman in Jane Austin’s literary works that Moi reviews in her book. Ferré, as Moi, negates essentialist visions of women writing when she says that she does not “think there is a feminine style that differs from a masculine style of writing . . . [w]hat does exist is a different vision” (‘Women and Writing: Juxtapositions’, 4). I believe it is this “different vision” the one Moi underscores when she reviews Ellen Moers’ Literary Women (1976), Elaine Showalter’s A Literature of Their Own (1977), and Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar’s The Madwoman in the Attic (1979). For these feminist critics, who for Moi “. . . represent the coming of age of Anglo-American feminist criticism” it is “. . . society, not biology, that shapes women’s different literary perception of the world” (Moi, 51-2). The Madwoman in the Attic presents a contradiction with this perspective though as in it Gilbert and Gubar argue that for them female creativity is “. . . a natural essential, inborn quality in all women” thus “. . . in a given patriarchal society all women . . . will adopt certain strategies to counter patriarchal oppression” (64). According to Moi, the problem with this perspective is that it assumes that women cannot “. . . become solid defenders of the patriarchal status quo” (Moi 2002: 65). Ferré seems to agree with Moi’s perspective when she discusses Isabel Allende’s literary works and underscores how she thinks that even though her literature is dominated by women narrators, her “vision is not different from a masculine view . . . in ideological terms” (‘Women and Writing: Juxtapositions,’ 4). Moi also criticizes their “. . . emphasis on integrity and totality as an ideal for women’s writing . . . ” (Moi 2002: 65), which fails to part from patriarchal aesthetics that see the Phallus “. . . as a whole, unitary and simple form, as opposed to the terrifying chaos of the female genitals” (Moi 2002: 66).

While Moi applauds the fact that these critics “. . . accept the political necessity of viewing woman as a distinctive group . . . , which allow the subversion of oppressive patriarchal categorization (Moi 2002: 52), she criticizes Moers for hiding the feminist political approach of her book and Showalter for not exploring “. . . the relationship between literature and reality and between feminist politics and literary evaluation . . . ” (Moi 2002: 55).

To summarize the book’s main analysis of Anglo-American feminism literary criticism, Moi invites us to “. . . confront the fact that the main problem in Anglo-American feminist criticism lies in the radical contradiction it presents between feminist
politics and patriarchal aesthetics” (Moi 2002: 68). This invitation detaches from her believe that “[t]he central paradox of Anglo-American feminist criticism is thus that despite is often strong, explicit engagement, it is in the end not quite political enough . . . in the sense that its radical analysis of sexual politics still remains entangled with depoliticizing theoretical paradigms” (Moi 2002: 86).

French Feminist Literary Criticism

Even though Moi criticizes French feminist literary critics for alienating their non-French readership with its “. . . ‘heavy’ intellectual profile . . .” which draws from philosophy, psychoanalysis and linguistics, she praises them for their discussions about “. . . the nature of women’s oppression, the construction of sexual difference and the specificity of women’s expressions to language and writing” (Moi 2002: 94). In this review I will only focus though in Moi’s discussion of Julia Kristeva’s contribution to the analysis of the relationship between women, language and writing, which she presents as “. . . the most challenging point of departure for [her] own feminist enquiry” (Moi 2002: 150).

Kristeva suggests that linguistics should shift its focus from “. . . language as a monolithic, homogeneous structure . . .” and focus instead on the “speaking subject” taking into account the theories of Marx, Freud and Nietzsche (Moi 2002: 151).

As an alternative to essentializing Anglo-American feminist linguistics, Moi presents Kristeva’s approach: “. . . the study of specific linguistic strategies in specific situations” (Moi 2002: 153). The problem with this approach as per Moi is that it would require linguistics to focus on discourse, which at the same time would entail a move away from the study of sentences, something that this field of study refuses to do. Thus, she proposes the study of “the whole text” including “. . . its ideological, political and psychoanalytical articulations, its relations with society, with the psyche and – not least – with other texts”, the latest being what Kristeva refers to as “intertextuality” (Moi 2002: 155).

Regarding sexism in language, Moi underscores Kristeva’s notion of language as productive to argue that sexism does not lies in the structure of any language or is a result of “. . . a male plot against women . . .” (Moi 2002: 156). She seems to agree with
Kristeva’s statement which considers language as “an arena of the class struggle”, where meanings are not fixed and thus can be appropriated by feminism (qtd. in Moi 2002: 157).

Moi ends her analysis of Kristeva’s work by presenting what she seems to believe is her main contribution:

[A] feminist vision of a society in which the sexual signifier would be free to move: where the fact of being born male or female no longer would determine the subject’s position in relation to power and where, therefore, the very nature of power itself would be transformed (Moi 2002: 171).

Moi’s book has been harshly criticized by feminist critics because of her “…notorious dismissal . . . of American black or lesbian feminist criticism” (Fuss 1991: 175-176). Critics such as Robyn Warhol-Down and Diane Price Herndl argue in their book An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism (1997), that Moi’s statement that “lesbian and/or black feminist criticism have presented exactly the same methodological and theoretical problems as the rest of Anglo-American feminist criticism” (Moi 2002: 85), is not justified. Their argument is based on “Moi’s assumption that without offering readings of work by women of color she can nonetheless expect us to believe her that none of it would alter her definition of feminist theory” (Warhol & Price 1997: 408). These perspectives have contributed to the development of statements by critics such as Binod Mishra who in her book Critical Responses to Feminism said that “. . . Western feminist theorists blindly assume that their methodologies and theoretical systems can adequately account for the experiences of ‘all women’” (Mishra 2006: 192).

This is the same claim that author Naomi Lindstrom makes in her book The Social Conscience of Latin American Writing (1998) about how U.S. feminism “. . . often separates gender issues from other social problems” (ch. 5)56. Even though the feminism that developed in Latin America had a great influence from the feminist movements from “. . . Western Europe and the United States . . .” , it did not developed exclusively from those sources but also from Latin American’s women “. . . experience and observation . . .” as the works of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz can attest (Lindstrom 1998: ch. 5). Additionally, as Lindstrom argues, Spanish America is more radicalized compared to Europe and the U.S. in terms of their use of Marxist because those “. . . from the more

56 As The Social Conscience of Latin American Writing has been accessed as an e-book, I will only provide the chapter number where the quoted text is located as per MLA norms for e-books.
prosperous areas are less likely to view their societies urgently in need of drastic change” (Lindstrom 1998: ch. 5). This critical view of feminism is the one that activist Domitila Barrios de Chungara portrays when she suggested through “The Woman Problem”, a speech she gave at the 1975s International Conference on Women, that working class women should organize themselves “. . . within the context of labor and revolutionary movements” (Freedman 2007: 346). Domitila believed that wealthy women wanted a different kind of liberation because they had different needs than working class women. This radicalization, which originates from the colonial and postcolonial character of the Latin American context, and the influence from U.S. and Western Europe feminism, has had an influence in the way in which literary critics have debated gender issues and women writers have presented them in literature.

One of the most influential foreign influences in Latin American women’s writing studies has been the French feminist “. . . idea that writing could be efficacious in undoing the mindset of the patriarchal system” (Lindstrom 1998: ch. 5). From the English written feminist criticism they have drew the practice of studying women writing historically in relation to their literature, how they have influenced each other and how they position themselves and relate to the canon (Lindstrom 1998: ch. 5). Sometimes the feminist concepts that came from abroad “. . . were adapted to be useful in literary studies and to apply to different types of societies” (Lindstrom 1998: ch. 5), however, sometimes they were applied uncritically and did not take into account the contextual differences. Like scholar Debra Castillo, Lindstorm seems to believe that Latin American feminists should incorporate debates and concepts from the First World, but without ignoring those that develop in their regions (Lindstrom 1998: ch. 5).

The literary works examined in this dissertation can clearly be considered feminist fiction not only because they “. . . focus . . . attention upon women’s experience or women’s difficulties in society . . . ” (Lindstrom 1998: ch. 5), but because they belong to the Latin American women’s writing that flourished from the 1970s onward which was greatly influenced by the feminist concepts that I have discussed in this section.

As scholar Sara Castro-Klarén has stated, feminism “is not a methodology for literary criticism . . . that is what it lacks” (qtd. in Lindstrom: ch. 5). I believe that is one of the most important contributions of my study: not only the underscoring of the relationship between self-translation and gender agency, but how this relationship is also
nuanced by a postcolonial perspective. For this reason, the next section of this research project is devoted to relating the authors’ novels to postcolonial theoretical debates. This exploration will allow me to better analyze the authors writing strategies in relation to their context as authors that come from a postcolonial context and to evaluate its aims and effects and ultimately, to prove that in their specific cases their acts of self-translation are indeed postcolonial acts.
Chapter 3: Postcolonialism and the Case of Puerto Rico: Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The cases of Puerto Rican writers Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago are very complex for several reasons: their writing techniques, their acts of self-translation, and the geographical and migratory contexts they embrace can be analyzed using different academic fields and a variety of theoretical frameworks. As I stated in the title of this thesis, I have chosen to apply postcolonialism as my main analytical lens as I believe it is a rich field that provides the theoretical tools necessary to explore the aims behind both Ferré’s and Santiago’s acts of self-translation. I will complement this main framework with theories from the fields of translation and linguistics to discuss self-translation and code-switching as postcolonial practices.

To be able to analyze Ferré’s and Santiago’s self-translation acts it is necessary to explore the case of Puerto Rico within a postcolonial framework, given that Puerto Rico is the geographical and cultural place from which they write. Before doing this though, I will first provide an overview of postcolonial studies. This overview will emphasize on the concepts of “transculturation”, coined in 1940 by anthropologist Fernando Ortiz and further developed by other theorists such as Mary Louise Pratt, Édouard Glissant and Phyllis Peres, on the notions of “hybridity” and “Third Space” as developed by Homi Bhabha, Édouard Glissant’s “opaque literature” and the notion of “language appropriation” as proposed by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin.

3.1 Approaches to Postcolonialism

When attempting to define postcolonialism, to say that it is the period of time following colonialism is far too simplistic. Although it may appear that “postcolonialism”, “post colonialism” and “post-colonialism” are synonymous, orthography plays a determining role in this context. The orthographical differences among these terms have been used to make important distinctions between the aforementioned more generic historical use of the term and other more ambitious uses that refer to more ideologically-charged and abstract concepts relating to a wider period of time ranging from the beginning of colonization to the period after the colonies achieved their independence.
The difference between these terms is not clear cut as they have been used in several ways by a large variety of theorists throughout the years; therefore I will focus on the difference between those that are more relevant and more frequently used: “postcolonialism” and “post-colonialism.” The oldest and most frequently used is the latter term, as used by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin in their books *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial literatures in English* (1989) and *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* (1995). The former is considered the most important book written on the subject. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin use “post-colonial” in the title of their book *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* (1998) and in the definitions of “post-colonial body” and “post-colonial reading” as key concepts of the field. However, they recognize the use of “postcolonialism” when it comes to defining the concept, which they initially define as a term that “. . . deals with the effects of colonization on cultures and societies” (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 1998:186). Later on in their summarized definition of the term, they explain that after World War II historians used the term in a literal way to talk about the period after the colonies had achieved their independence. However, during the late 1970s literary critics began to use it in a broader way to include the “cultural effects of colonization” (186). These literary critics wanted to politicize literary studies, specifically the study of what came to be called Commonwealth Literature and New Literatures in English, and postcolonial discourse theory provided them with the tools to articulate their concerns.

Contrary to the anti-colonialist standpoint, postcolonialist discourse does not have a black and white view of cultural identity. Postcolonial theorists are operating in a globalized context where identities are no longer local. These identities are seen through a lens that scrutinizes not only how the colonizer has influenced the colonized identity and culture with its self-imposed superiority, but how the colonized have reflected on this influence and appropriated the colonizer’s culture to empower themselves and challenge the colonizer-colonized dichotomy as a conscious or unconscious act of resistance and self-determination/self-representation. It seems that the hyphen has been used to stress the chronological meaning of the prefix “post” and that is why the unhyphenated version “postcolonialism” has been adopted increasingly as the fields grow to include other more

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57 They also use it when defining “post-colonial state” but while they do not show their preference, they do acknowledge that version of the term, as they specify in the definition, “has often been used by historians, economists and political theorists as a synonym for ‘post-independence state’” (Ashcroft et al 1998: 193). Thus the use of the hyphen is not optional.
interdisciplinary angles and to stress the intrinsic relationship between pre-colonial times, colonial times and post-colonial times. Acknowledging the terminological differences stressed above, in this chapter I will use the unhyphenated version of the term most of the time, except to refer to its more chronological/historical meaning, when quoting and when referring to the difference between the two versions. Most importantly, I have decided to use the unhyphenated version because “postcolonialism” can be applied to the Puerto Rican case regardless of whether or not the island is seen as a commonwealth or as still possessing colonial features. That is not the case however with “post-colonialism”, which could only be used to refer to Puerto Rico if the island is seen as a country that has reached a non-colonial status.

The aim of postcolonial studies is to find a way of unveiling the damage created by European colonization towards non-European colonized people, their identity and their cultures, by identifying the discourses of power used by the dominant colonial powers in order to build a dehumanized representation of the colonized that justifies their actions of exploitation and domination. Postcolonial studies deconstruct this damage to establish the ways in which the people marginalized by this colonizer can recover their voices and escape marginality through self-constructed postcolonial identities. Although there are many issues that have been debated by postcolonial theorists, one of the main debates is whether or not it is possible for the colonized to become decolonized. This debate takes into consideration the fact that colonized people have been educated by a colonial educational system and that they have undergone a sort of brainwashing that has led them to see themselves as inferior beings.

With this aim in mind, important theorists recognized world-wide such as Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Homi K. Bhabha have engaged in the analysis of the colonial situation and in the debate of the future of colonized nations, leading to the field of postcolonial theory. Some of these theorists have been heavily influenced by the philosophical ideas of twentieth century poststructuralist thinkers such as Jacques Lacan, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida and Julia Kristeva. However, within this spectrum of theorists, Fanon and Said are the theorists whose work embraces Marxist materialism, using a historical and social approach, as against other theorists whose approaches are more focused on the analysis of the textual structures of colonial texts.
Fanon’s contribution to postcolonial theory is very broad but one of his major contributions was his analysis of how the degradation and destruction of the image, culture and history of the colonized people, manufactured by the colonizer to sustain his superiority and dominant status, created an inferiority complex on the colonized that led to alienation from her/his own culture and identity (Fanon, 1967). In order to rebuild their self-identity, Fanon suggested that it was necessary for the colonized people to fight back, resorting to violence,\(^58\) in the pursuit of their independence, to recover their culture and history and to rebuild society by eliminating the spaces that had been built on racism and colonial power (Fanon 1967). Fanon was heavily influenced by Lacan’s Mirror-Stage concept, which highlighted the influence exerted by outside role models on self-identity formation. He further developed this concept by suggesting that the colonizer’s representation of the colonized identity as an “other”, an inferior being, led the colonized to adopt his “superior” culture, customs and beliefs in order to improve their self-esteem (Lacan 1977). To rebuild the colonized society after decolonization, Fanon’s approach suggested the reconstruction of all colonial institutions as they have been contaminated by the colonizer and would otherwise reproduce the oppressor’s ideologies with all its prejudices.

This analysis of how the colonizer has affected the self-esteem of the colonized by positioning himself as a superior paternal figure is also present in Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978), one of the most influential books in the field of postcolonial studies. In his study, Edward Said analyzes how Western hegemonic powers have built an oppositional representation of the Oriental subaltern as an inferior culture that needs to adopt Western ways in order to improve. In his analysis of the role of colonization, Said uses Michel Foucault’s theory of ‘discourse formation’, which deconstructs the process of subject construction to explain how the colonizer justifies his superiority through discourse, a discourse that dictates who can speak and where it is appropriate to speak.

After *Orientalism*, Said published several books about colonialism. It is in his book *Culture and Imperialism* however, that he seems to go further by not only describing the relationship between the hegemonic metropolis and the subaltern overseas territories, specifically the relationship between the literary work of migrant colonized intellectuals,

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\(^{58}\) Fanon defended the use of violence by the colonized against the colonizer in their struggle for freedom arguing that subjects that have been dehumanized through representation should not abide by the mainstream rules of human behaviour established by the colonized.
but by highlighting the agency that the subaltern can mobilise by using literature as a postcolonial tool. The same narrative strategy used by the colonizer to create an image of the colonized as inferior beings in need of guidance and incapable of self-governance is the same strategy that the colonized use to “assert their own identity and the existence of their own history” (Said 1994: xiii). This is what Said calls “culture of resistance”, when writers “appropriate through their fiction such great topoi of colonial culture as the quest and the voyage into the unknown, claiming them for their own, post-colonial purposes” (Said 1994: 34).

Other important figures within this debate are the cultural theorists Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak. Bhabha recognizes Said’s statement about the colonizer having all the power by means of a discourse that has handicapped the colonized, and agrees with him that the colonized is able to appropriate the colonizer’s discourse by disrupting it and using it to resist and protest. Spivak, like Bhabha, also shifts the debate to focus on the colonized instead of the colonizer’s discourse, but contrary to Bhabha, she seems to state that “the subaltern cannot speak” (Spivak 1988 [1985]: 308). However, academics such as John Beverly, have underscored the fact that there has been a misunderstanding of Spivak’s statement. As Beverly clarified in his book Subalternity and Representation: Arguments in Cultural Theory (1999), “[w]hen Gayatri Spivak makes the claim that the subaltern cannot speak, she means that the subaltern cannot speak in a way that would carry any sort of authority or meaning for us without altering the relations of power/knowledge that constitute it as subaltern in the first place” (Beverly 1999: 29). With her statement, Spivak did not mean that the subalterns do not have the ability to speak back, but that the Western does not takes them seriously. In her statement, Spivak adopts the term “subaltern”, originally used by Gramsci to refer to marginalized sectors of Italian society, and uses it to talk about Third World marginalized sectors. Later on, she uses the term more specifically to refer to Indian society and to colonized women who have been silenced not only by the colonial master but also by the patriarchal society which acts as a “self-consolidating Other” (Spivak 1988) and as a collaborator of the colonized by internalizing its othering and by reproducing it. Spivak applies this same theory to the colonized in general and implies that the master has tricked the colonized into internalizing his/her own oppression.

Another major contribution of Spivak, who, according to Colin McCabe “is often called a feminist Marxist deconstructivist” (Spivak, In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural
Politics xii), to postcolonial studies, is her criticism of the lack of attention given to the relationship between gender and empire. Not only does she draw upon the role of the colonized woman in the colonial scheme, arguing that she is caught between the oppression of the colonizer and the oppression of the colonized man, but she also draws upon how hegemonic feminism wants to give a voice to all women but fails to deconstruct the empire’s scheme, thus not acknowledging the different layers of oppression suffered by women who are not heterosexual, white and middle class. Spivak’s feminist perspectives on the colonized women are especially relevant in Ferré and Santiago’s literary texts because in them they support Spivak’s statement that “If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow . . .” (Spivak 1988: 28). In uncovering the multiple layers of oppression suffered by Puerto Rican women living on the island and in the U.S. Diaspora, these writers deconstruct the position of colonized women through their discourse and through their acts of self-translation.

In reaction to Spivak’s statement that the subaltern cannot speak, Bhabha (1994) and other theorists such as Jan Mohamed (1983) and George Lamming (2002), defend the agency of the colonized subject, arguing that they are not a completely passive victim. It is Bhabha’s belief, for example, that by deconstructing the colonizer’s discourse by showing the way in which it creates stereotypes for the colonized and “otherizes” it, it is possible to liberate the colonized and to transform the features that have been categorized as “other” features into features of difference. This process of empowerment by the colonized through literature is further explained by Ashcroft et al when they introduce and define appropriation: “the process by which the language is taken and made to ‘bear the burden’ of one’s own cultural experience” (Ashcroft et al, The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature: 38). Referring to the same domination discourse used by the colonizer and abrogation, they say: “a refusal of the categories of the imperial culture, its aesthetics, its illusory standard of normative or ‘correct’ usage and its assumption of a traditional and fixed meaning ‘inscribed’ in the words.” (Ashcroft et al, The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature 38). Ashcroft et al’s concept of appropriation is an extremely relevant and appropriate concept to discuss the English writing and code-switching practices of Ferré and Santiago and for

that reason I will make use of it throughout my dissertation. Another term with similar conceptual implications is the term “hybridity”, defined by Bhabha as “the strategic reversal of the process of domination through disavowal” as it “displays the necessary deformation and displacement of all sites of discrimination and domination” (Bhabha 159).

Another critical debate in postcolonial studies is whether or not theorists such as Bhabha and Spivak are able to really understand the colonized subject, or if they are “too deeply implicated in European intellectual traditions, which older, more radical exponents of post-colonial theory, such as Frantz Fanon and Albert Memmi, had sought to dismantle and set aside” (Ashcroft et al, The Post-Colonial Studies Reader. 9). This is the same concern expressed by the Latin American Subaltern Studies Group in their *Founding Statement* published in 1993:

We must be careful, in the process of conceptualizing subalternity, not to ensnare ourselves in the problem, dominant in previous articulations of ‘national’ liberation (for example in some form of Puerto Rican nationalism or in Latin American Literary Arielism), of the national elite itself as subaltern, that is, as transcriber, translator, interpreter, editor: to avoid, in other words, the construction of postcolonial intelligentsias as “sharecroppers” in metropolitan cultural hegemony. (Latin American Subaltern Studies Group 119-120).

All these academic debates about colonialism, its effects on both the former hegemonic powers and their ex-colonies are very relevant to Puerto Rico and its literary production, even though the case of Puerto Rico as a postcolonial nation is one that is not much discussed in the mainstream global postcolonial debate. Perhaps the reason behind the absence of Puerto Rico as a feature of the postcolonial debate is that as some critics point out, postcolonial studies are too centred on hegemonic European nations and its ex-colonies and it fails to recognize the postcolonial in other sites such as Latin America and the Caribbean, with the exception of Anglophone and Francophone ex-colonies. Another reason why Puerto Rico is not discussed as postcolonial within mainstream postcolonial studies could be that it is not recognized as a proper colony internationally. The reason why it is not recognized as a colony is that it “does not fit the conventional image of colonial societies such as the ones that British and French anthropologists studied before World War II” (Duany 2010: 34). Within this dissertation, I will continue building on the
argument that Puerto Rico is a “postcolonial colony” and I will present proof that Santiago and Ferré’s novels are postcolonial through a textual and contextual analysis.

3.2 Postcolonial Writing Strategies

Even though concepts about Puerto Rican hybridity have been developed from Puerto Rican academia on the island and in the Diaspora and can also be found in artistic projects such as El Puerto Rican Embassy project, it is in the language found in literature where the more efficient and extreme postcolonial contestation can be found. As Ashcroft et al state in their reader, “Language is a fundamental site for struggle for postcolonial discourse because the colonial process only begins in language (Ashcroft et al, The Post-Colonial Studies Reader. 261).

Puerto Rican writers of the 1960s and 1970s recognized this potential of language to destabilize hegemonic discourses and to create a way of writing that challenged Puerto Rican linguistic nationalistic discourse by incorporating everyday colloquial language and acknowledging English influence. They also challenged the homogeneous concept of the conservative Puerto Rican family portrayed by most writers in the first half of the twentieth century by including marginalized sectors of the Puerto Rican population such as homosexuals, women, black, prostitutes and immigrants.

It is in this context that Puerto Rican writers Esmeralda Santiago and Rosario Ferré started to write in English and to translate their work into Spanish from the U.S. Diaspora and from the island respectively. Both their English and Spanish writings/rewritings make use of code-switching to reflect that in-betweenness that is so characteristic of postcolonial literature. As Ashcroft states in his book Caliban’s Voice (4), “This appropriation of language, this capacity to make it do a different cultural work from that of the colonizers, is metonymic of post-colonial cultures themselves.” When they write in English they disrupt the U.S. colonial language by including instances of Spanish and when they write/self-translate in/into Spanish they disrupt Spain’s colonial language so valued by the Puerto Rican nationalist movement as the only tool for linguistic resistance.

60 This expression of Puerto Rico as a “postcolonial colony” was coined by Juan Flores and María Milagros López (1994. "Dossier Puerto Rico: Introduction." Social Text 38:93-9), and has also been used by Jorge Duany (2002: 4, 122 and 2010: 35), Jaime Pagan Jiménez and Reniel Rodríguez Ramos (2008). I will use the concept as per Duany's definition of “a people with a strong national identity but little desire for a nation-state.”
As Eva Santos argues in her paper ‘Abrogation and Appropriation in Rosario Ferré’s "Amalia”’, “Puerto Rican writers show their personal independence through their manipulation of both languages. Having grown up with these two strong cultural and linguistic influences has led many Puerto Rican writers in the last 50 years to pursue abrogating the centre, meaning to write in a language that defies traditional ‘standard Spanish’ and at the same time tries, unsuccessfully, to resist English intrusions.” (118), avoiding Anglicisms as they see Spanish as an identity marker.

Perhaps Ferré’s published novels written in English and self-translated into Spanish are a conscious effort to counteract the limitations of Puerto Rican literature written in Spanish, which are a consequence of the colonial dynamics of the creation and distribution of knowledge. It is in this way that the post-colonial writer infiltrates the centre literary space with their national literature. Many post-colonial writers write in English because of the symbolic capital value of English as a language in the literary capital, as is explained by Casanova in her book The World Republic of Letters (2004). This is the case of writers from all around the world who decided to write in French because of the status of French as a literary language. Some examples of this practice are Romain Gary, Agota Kristof, Milán Kundera and Jorge Semprún (Miletic 2008). In the case of Santiago, and also in Ferré if we consider her to be an internal exiled, she could be using literature to control her own representation and to express her claims as a colonialized subaltern. In any case, both writers use language as a tool for the appropriation of power by code-switching. It is possible that as women both authors also use self-translation to gain additional authority and agency by assuming both roles, as authors and translators, producers and reproducers.

The “inner translation” that is at play when post-colonial writers write in English is the common ground between Translation Studies and Post-Colonial Studies (Ashcroft 2009). Both Ferré and Santiago have incurred in this “inner translation” and they have talked about the process in the prologue of their books or in interviews. In Ferré’s case, she said that when she writes in English “there was always a map or a base draft that was conceived in Spanish” (Rinks et al 63). In the introduction to her English self-translated novel Cuando era puertorriqueña (1994), Santiago states that even though the novel was originally written in English, the experiences she narrated were lived in Spanish and that while she was writing she caught herself speaking the words in Spanish out loud while her fingers where writing them in English (Santiago 1994: xv). She also stated that
There are similarities within the processes of post-colonial writing in English and the English translation of literature written in the writer’s native language. In post-colonial English writing, the transcultural writer performs this kind of “inner translation” but the practice of writing in English by Latin American writers should be studied separately because in the process of writing in English, the post-colonial writer creates a third language and a third identity that destabilises both the source and the target language (Narayan 1979). In this process, the post-colonial writer has to think of the new target audience and choose which words to leave in the vernacular, which ones to translate and emphasize.

The writing technique that creates a hybrid language is what Édouard Glissant calls “opaque” literature as it defies transparency as a way of erasing difference in favour of hegemonic writing techniques and attempts to re-place English as a centre dominant language (Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays). “Opaque” literature forms part of Glissant’s “opaque consciousness” (Poetics of Relation) theoretical framework which “represents a type of knowledge of the Self in relation to the Other that would both embrace one’s cultural differences all the while making space and giving voice for those of others” (Okawa 2010: 21), thus defying hegemonic image constructions of the colonized. By the same token Glissant promotes opaque translation strategies as he believes that "opportune obscurities in translation must be created" (Glissant Poetics of Relation 120) in order to avoid privileging traditional translation strategies that render the translator invisible (see Venuti 1995 about the translator’s invisibility) by taking away his or her agency. Abrogation and appropriation, as defined by The Empire Writes Back (Ashcroft 1989), are linguistic subversive writing practices that can be considered “opaque writing.” The same can be said about “the translation methods employed by Maryse Condé’s husband, the professional translator Richard Philcox and by Rosario Ferré in the self-translations of her own work”(Okawa 2010: 21). In his dissertation entitled ‘Translation and Resistance to Transparent Forms of Knowledge: The Case of Caribbean Literatures’, Okawa states that these translation methods “are opaque in the
sense that they challenge the long held tradition of rendering transparent translations of the ‘original’” (Okawa 2010: 21).

3.3 Self-translation as a Postcolonial Tool

A simple way of defining what literary self-translation is would be to say that it is when “the author of a literary text completed in one language subsequently reproduces it in a second language”, as was defined by Christopher Whyte in his journal article ‘Against Self-Translation,’ published in Translation and Literature (Whyte 2002). However, as Elena Bandín establishes in her paper ‘The Role of Self-Translation in the Decolonization Process of African Countries’ (Bandín 2004), Whyte’s definition “does not take into account the relationship that the writer has with both languages”. The absence of a satisfactory definition has lead her to define self-translation as “the process by which a bilingual author transfers his/her own (literary or non-literary) work from one language to another” (36). Thus, self-translators are bilingual and bicultural writers who inhabit the space overlapped by more than one language and culture feel the necessity to bridge these two languages and cultures through the act of self-translation, targeting two different audiences as a result.

After establishing that the self-translator is a bilingual writer, it can also be safely established that he or she consciously chooses not to write in only one of the languages of which he or she has mastery, but to choose one as the source language and the other as the target language. This leads us to ask ourselves what the reasoning is behind the decision to translate one’s literary work oneself instead of allowing another translator or writer to do so. A brief review of some of the authors who have practiced self-translation throughout history, or at least since the Middle Ages, will lead us to consider the multiple circumstances that can influence a writer over this practice that has been until recently unexplored in scholarly works.

Even though until recently, well known figures in academia have referred to the practice of self-translation as an uncommon and marginal practice (see Santoyo 2005), Julio-César Santoyo, Marcella Munson and Jan Walsh Hokenson61, have proven with their research that self-translation has been a common practice since the 1st century,

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61 It should be noted that Julio Cesar Santoyo has published and presented numerous papers about the history of self-translation and Marcella Munson and Jan Walsh Hokenson have published one of the only books that consider the topic extensively.
through the Middle Ages to today. During the Middle Ages when the Latin or Vernacular diglossia emerged, self-translation was very common and practitioners such as Pedro Alfonso, doctor to King Alfonso I of Aragón, Robert Grosseteste, English Bishop of Lincoln and Ramon Llull, to name just a few. With the consolidation of nation-states, languages and national literatures, the Romantic concept of the mother tongue took root and self-translation was marginalized, stigmatizing self-translators as traitors to their languages and cultures or as linguistically homeless. This stigma has until recently translated into a theoretical conceptual gap in critical translation studies because notions of fidelity, translator’s invisibility, authority, originality and linguistic purity promoted by nineteenth century theorists, such as the German Friedrich Schleiermacher, have kept bilingual self-translators hidden behind national canons. This under-research, has left the field of translation studies with a limited number of tools to approach self-translation and self-translators, even though the amount of publications within the last ten years has grown and it promises to continue growing.

Even with these setbacks in terms of the reception of their work as translators of their own literature, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have seen a handful of successful and recognized literary self-translators. In the twentieth century some of the literary self-translators that have left their mark include Samuel Beckett, Jorge Luis Borges, Vladimir Nabokov, Rabindranath Tagore, Stefan George, Salvatore Di Giacomo, Raymond Federman, Manuel Puig, Vicente Huidobro, Ariel Dorfman, Guillermo Cabrera Infante, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, Rosario Ferré, Esmeralda Santiago, Rolando Hinojosa, Gloria Anzaldúa, Maitreya Devi, Giuseppe Ungaretti and Stanislaw Baranczak. As this list shows, self-translators come from all over the world and the social, cultural and political backgrounds that have perhaps influenced their decisions to be both authors and translators of their own literary works are diverse.

It should be noted that not all self-translators have shared the motivations behind their acts of self-translation. However, some of the principal motivations that have been already explored by researchers from postcolonial, cultural and translation studies include: (1) dissatisfaction with previous translations, (2) the desire of writers from minority languages under diglossic conditions to give others access to literature through

62 For a more comprehensive list of self-translators, see Santoyo 2005.
their self-translations into the dominant colonial language within a colonial context. In this case, the declaration put forward by scholar Edwin Gentzler is particularly valuable:

Rather than using translation as a tool to support and extend a conceptual system based upon Western philosophy and religion, postcolonial translators are seeking to reclaim translation and use it as a strategy of resistance, one that disturbs and displaces the construction of images on non-western cultures rather than reinterpret them using traditional, normalized concepts and language (Gentzler Contemporary Translation Theories 176).

In the case of bilingual writers whose native countries have been subjected to colonial or imperial regimes, the choice of language for writing has political implications and consequences both for the writers who choose the language of the colonizer as well as for the writers who choose to write in the language of their native country. For the latter case, this linguistic decision is often part of their struggle to oppose the colonizer’s linguistic and cultural imposition and for the former it is often a demonstration of their will to assimilate into the colonial power they support. In the case of Puerto Rican writer Rosario Ferré, the fact that as a bilingual writer she has chosen to change her writing language from Spanish to English, has strong political connotations as researcher Marta S. Rivera Monclova has also stated in her PhD thesis Discrimination, Evasion, and Livability in Four New York Puerto Rican Narratives:

I assert that the decision to write primarily in English makes a statement about Puerto Rican identity that pushes against the literary traditions of island-based Puerto Rican literature, but that the decision to write not exclusively in English pushes against the literary trends of American literature. (Rivera 2010:)

This conscious decision could respond to Ferré’s cultural hybridity, as is the case of many other bilingual writers who have experienced life in two countries and have lived in and in between the cultures of these countries. However, further factors such as her migratory and socio-economic background and her political convictions and how these have changed over time should be also taken into consideration because it is possible that Ferré’s writing and self-translating language selection is strongly tied to them.
In the Puerto Rican context, the defence of Spanish against colonial attempts of linguistic assimilation has been a tool for cultural affirmation not only within separatist sectors of society but within all sectors of Puerto Rican society including the statehood movement. A reason for this could be that contrary to other Latin American countries, the indigenous language spoken in Puerto Rico before the Spanish conquest was almost completely erased from Puerto Ricans’ language, making it impossible for Puerto Ricans to hold on to their indigenous language in resistance to colonial attempts at cultural and linguistic homogenization. For this reason, most Puerto Rican consider Spanish their mother tongue and is part of their linguistic national identity even though they acquired it through a process of colonization. Another reason could be that the influence of the U.S. culture surrounds Puerto Rican society, and language is one of the only distinctive characteristics the Puerto Rican people have been able to control and appropriate. As part of this process of linguistic appropriation which challenges linguistic dominance by appropriating the languages of the colonizers, Spanish and English, Puerto Ricans have created a unique linguistic phenomenon that reflects the language spoken by Puerto Ricans today: a mix of Spanish dressed with indigenous, African and English vocabulary. Puerto Ricans freely speak this particular Spanish on a daily basis, but there is great resistance from the Education System, the promoters of Puerto Rican culture such as the Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña and academia in general, to promote the use of a more standard Spanish that does not includes the English influence. The language spoken by Puerto Ricans is itself hybrid as a result of more than 500 years of Spanish colonization and more than a hundred years of U.S. colonialism. Should the hybridity of the U.S. Diaspora Puerto Rican language be considered an authentic attempt to create a distinct national identity out of the subversive process of the appropriation of the language of the colonizer instead of considering it anti-Puerto Rican? Is post-colonial literature written in English a valid narrative tool as it carries a hybrid identity, a hybrid culture that has been built by the Puerto Rican colonial experience?

As I have already stated, the Spanish spoken by most Puerto Ricans is an act of linguistic appropriation, but the most aggressive appropriation of English, which translates into the creation of Spanglish for some of these writers, occurred mainly within the Puerto Rican U.S. Diaspora and Esmeralda Santiago is an example of this.

The fact that she is not included in some Puerto Rican literary anthologies could serve as an indication that she is not considered to be a Puerto Rican writer by the
commissioners of these anthologies due to the fact that she writes in English from the Diaspora, even though her literature is deeply linked to Puerto Rican history and culture. A similar diglossic situation occurred in Spain with Catalan, Basque and Galician but these cases deserve further attention in their own right.

In the case of colonial Africa, contrary to Puerto Rico, European languages were imposed successfully and as a result, writers who write in one of the European languages are left in a kind of limbo, as their literature is not considered either European or African. As Elena Bandín argues in her essay “The Role of Self-Translation in the Decolonization Process of African Countries”, “It can be said that they have been decolonized through the translation of their own writings” and “Then self-translation can be regarded as the way to live with the tensions produced by an internalised experience of colonialism.” (Bandín 39)

There are plenty of theories regarding translation proper but I agree with Hokenson and Munson when they advise us to “try to set preconceptions about equivalence aside, and to study each instance in its historical context.” (Hokenson-Munson 9). They also suggest that we should stay away from analysis that fuse national identity and language together as it does not correspond to our post-colonial linguistic reality where authors-translators are often displaced from their native lands. The fact that monolingualism is not the dominant linguistic situation in most countries and has not been for a long time, should also lead research about bilingual writers and self-translators to seek new approaches. I believe that in order to do justice to self-translation, researchers in the area of translation studies should approach the phenomenon from a different perspective as issues that have always been obstacles in theorizing about translation are magnified when we discuss and analyze self-translation. Translation studies has moved away from archaic views of translation that portrayed the translator as an invisible mediator who should be subordinated to the source text and take care not to leave his or her mark on the text, and translators are nowadays valued as language professionals who are also authors of their translations. Notwithstanding, there are still influential figures in the literary world such as Milan Kundera, who said that “a translation is only beautiful when it is faithful,” (78), and who think that translators should be as faithful as possible so as not to betray or interfere with the literary canon. In the case of translators who are also the authors of the texts they translate, it is recognized that they have the right to exercise their judgement regarding the necessary modifications to be carried out through
the process of expressing what they have narrated in one language into another language. However, at the same time most comparative analyses of the self-translated texts focus their attention on the gaps between the source and target texts and on the semantic deviations from the source, because of the notion that translations should be faithful to the original. Other approaches such as an analysis of the author’s audience design together with reader reception studies would be very valuable in obtaining information about the aims of self-translators regarding the translation deviations they apply and their effect on target audiences.

Although literary self-translation is a practice generally unknown outside the translation or comparative literature fields of studies, its research has experienced a steady blooming since the 1960s. This boom has included contributions in the form of journal issues especially dedicated to the topic, edited volumes which compile academic articles on the subject, published books, articles published in academic journals, postgraduate dissertations and academic papers presented at conferences and talks. Before I go in depth into self-translation and its links to postcolonialism, I will provide a brief overview of some of the most recently published literature on the subject. Due to lack of space, I will only review two collections of academic articles on self-translation, namely Aproximaciones a la traducción (2011) and Self-translation: Brokening Originality in Hybrid Culture (2013), and a very recent case study entitled “El proceso de autotraducción in mente en Amor de Baobá de Suleiman Cassamo: un estudio exploratorio” (2014). From these three resources, I will focus on the second collection of essays, Self-translation: Brokening Originality in Hybrid Culture, as it contains contributions that are more interdisciplinary analysing self-translation through non-traditional perspectives.

Aproximaciones a la traducción is an edited volume on self-translation that gathers academic papers by researchers that have made the subject of self-translation their speciality. Some of them are Olga Castro Vázquez, who has conducted extensive research in the area of feminist translation studies and self-translation in the Iberian Peninsula and Xosé Manuel Dasilva, author and editor of multiple articles and volumes on self-translation who also specializes on self-translation in the Iberian Peninsula.

63 For a detailed list of resources on the subject of self-translation, see the ‘Self-translation Bibliography’ compiled by Eva Gentes, last updated in 2014 (Gentes 2014).
In her paper “Aproximación cultural en las traducciones de una obra (autotraducida): La proyección exterior de *Herba Moura*, de Teresa Moure”, Olga Castro establishes textual differences between Teresa Moure’s Galician feminist novel *Herba Moura* (2005), her Spanish self-translation *Hierba Mora* (2006), and other translations into other European languages. Her analysis goes deeper though, as she also analyzes the relationship between the original text and its translations, the effect that this relationship has had in the status of Galician as a minority language, and the novel’s reception in the targeted cultures. After a thorough analysis, Castro concludes that the fact that Moure takes a translation approach that domesticates the text for the new audience by erasing “las marcas de galleguidad del texto” together with its editorial presentation as a Spanish original, not as a translation, affects the visibility of the original Galician novel and promotes cultural assimilation (Castro 34). Castro also argues that the position that Moure’s novel occupies within the Galician feminist and postcolonialist literature because of how it links gender and nation, gets lost outside of the Galician context (Castro 40).

Xosé Manuel Dasilva presents a similar perspective from the one presented by Castro regarding the domestication of the source text by the self-translator. In his research paper “La autotraducción transparente y la autotraducción opaca”, Dasilva provides extensive definitions for the terms “traducción transparente”64 and “traducción opaca”65, with examples from the Gallician literary system (47-54). Through these examples, he shows the different nuances of opacity and transparency and identifies patterns of the occurrences of both modalities of self-translation, noting that opaque self-translation is more common nowadays in Galician literature. The main question that guides Dasilva’s paper though is to find out what are the reasons why self-translators choose opacity. He suggests that the double writing that self-translators often perform when they take a recreational approach, could influence the level of opacity of the self-translation but only when both languages enjoy a similar status. Dasilva explains how the inequality between the source language and the target language, the source language having a peripheral position in comparison to the central position of the target language, plays an important

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64 Defined by Dasilva as “…aquella en la que no faltan informaciones paratextuales que ponen en conocimiento del lector la circunstancia de que se encuentra ante una obra traducida por el propio autor a partir de un texto original escrito en otra lengua” (Dasilva 2011: 46).

65 Defined by Dasilva as “…la que no proporciona ninúm dato, ni tan siquiera en el pertexto más recógnito, que desvele que se trata de una traducción llevada a cabo por el autor partiendo de un texto anterior, recibéndola por tanto el lector como una auténtica obra original” (Dasilva 2011: 46).
role in the self-translator decision to diminish the cultural differences by creating an opaque translation (62). This operation improves the reception of the literary work and widens its audience but also “agudiza la falta de visibilidad de las culturas periféricas” (62).

One of the most valuable more recent contributions to the self-translation field of study is the book *Self-translation: Brokening Originality in Hybrid Culture* (2013). The importance of this collection of essays is that it looks at self-translation from a different set of lenses which parts from traditional translation theory to give space to new perspectives not only from the translation field itself, but also from other research fields such as postcolonial studies, comparative literature, sociology, philosophy, narratology and linguistics. As the book’s editor, Anthony Cordingley established in its introduction, the volume aims “to illustrate the diversity of research currently being undertaken into the literary phenomenon” (7) and stresses “the hybridity which gives birth to self-translation itself” (9).

The collection of essays is divided in four parts, which organizes the contributions by the perspective that guides their arguments. Even though all the contributions are highly valuable, I will only choose to discuss one chapter per part as to give the reader a glimpse of the diversity of relevant topics that have been included in the collection.

In Chapter 1 of Part 1, Susan Bassnett examines the case of a variety of authors who self-translate in the light of Borges and Lefevere’s theories about the concepts of original writing and translation as rewriting, in order to make us rethink the use of the term “self-translation” in favour of the term “rewriting” (Bassnett 14). She also invites us to analyze the author’s contexts and relationships with their languages and cultures moving away from descriptive and simplistic analyses of the practice that adhere to the traditional “binary notion of original – translation” (Bassnett 15).

In “A sociological glance at self-translation and self-translators”, included in Part II of the book (Interdisciplinary Perspectives), Rainier Grutman provides a sociological perspective at modern self-translators taking into account Pierre Bordieu’s Field Theory and Abram De Swaan’s “global language system” (Grutman 73). The focus of Grutman

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66 Nancy Huston, Amalia Rosselli, Vladimir Novokov, Milán Kundera, Ngugi Wa Thiongo, Rabindranath Tagore and Samuel Beckett.
research is a sample composed by literary self-translators who have won a Novel Prize and its result is the categorization of self-translators in four groups or categories: exogenous bilingual self-translators, endogenous bilingual self-translators, self-translators with a symmetrical bilingualism and self-translators with an asymmetrical bilingualism (70-75).

The first two categories consider whether or not the author’s bilingualism and need to self-translate come from a diglossic context, or if it emerged from migratory experience. The last two categories consider the power relationship between the languages that the self-translators juggle with and distinguishes among those authors whose languages are major languages that enjoy upper class status, and those whose languages have an unequal value in the world language market and thus “are forced to choose between authenticity and universality” (84).

With his contribution, Grutman invites us to recognize the value of the self-translators individual and social contexts when we theorize about the self-translation act, “in order to develop a truly holistic perspective” (80).

Within Part III (Post-colonial perspectives), Susanne Klinger’s contribution, “Translated otherness, self-translated in-betweenness: Hybridity as medium versus hybridity as object in Anglophone African writing”, provides in my opinion the most interdisciplinary approach as it draws on narratology, linguistics, translation and post-colonial studies to explore the linguistic hybridity in post-colonial Anglophone African literature. Even though Klinger draws on the existent parallelisms between self-translation and hybridity, most of the discussion focuses on the different kinds of hybridity present in Chinua Achebe’s novel No Longer at Ease (1994) and in the different functions that they can play. Through selected extracts of Achebe’s novel, Klinger illustrates the difference between the hybridity present in the level of story (reflected through the “story-language”) and the one that exists in the level of discourse (reflected through the “discourse-language”) (115-116). Subsequently she draws on Meir Sternberg’s “translational mimesis”, “the practice of representing one language withing another” (115), and in the writing strategies that writers can use to materialize this practice. After a brief description of these strategies, Klinger stops to highlight the absence of terminology that can be used to differentiate between two kind of discourse-level hybridity, the one that “represents a different language on the story-level”, and the
one that “reflects ‘english’ on the story level” (116). It is at this point when she introduces the terms “symbolic hybridity”, which represents hybridization as medium, and “iconic hybridity”, which represents it as object (116). Klinger’s research represents a valuable contribution because her coinage of the terms “symbolic hybridity” and “iconic hybridity” can be used to discuss how post-colonial writers represent in-betweenness, otherization and cultural and linguistic hybridity. Additionally, her underscoring of the importance that differentiating between the different kinds of languages (discourse language vs story language) that exist within a narrative has important implications for its translation and for the search of translation strategies.

The last part of this book, entitled “Cosmopolitan Identities/Texts”, includes a research paper by Elin-Maria Evangelista, which discusses the self-translation process that takes place when an author writes in his/her second language and how this process affects the writers’s “language, identity and voice” (178). This research paper reviews mainly the perspective that Mary Besemer puts forward about self-translation in her book *Translating One’s Self: Language and Selfhood in Cross-Cultural Autobiography* (2002), which includes statements mostly from authors who were forced to write in their second language due to their condition as immigrants. In the first part of the paper, Evangelista focuses on statements that attest to the “loss of self, place and subsequently a betrayal of the first language” (178). Some of the perspectives included are Eva Hoffman’s “loss of self” (qtd. Evangelista 2013: 178), Alice Kaplan’s “sense of performance” (179), Andrea Witcomb’s “feeling of being territorially lost” (qtd. in Evangelista 2013: 180) and Irene Ulman’s “sense of suspension and self-conscious use of language” (180).

In the second part of her paper however, she reviews other books that offer perspectives not included by Besemer, which underscore the positive side of being a bilingual writer writing in the second language. Some of them are Ariel Dorfman’s “richness . . . of being double” (42), Alice Kaplan’s sense of “privilege of living in translation” (140), and Ania Walwicz’s second language musicality (Riemer 179).

Evangelista finishes her contribution by sharing her own experience as a bilingual writer to give more validity to the argument that through second language writing writers can also experience gain. Her experience summarizes, in a way, the perspectives discussed in the second part of her article.
Writing, as I am, a novel set within a Swedish cultural context with Swedish-speaking characters expressing themselves in English, it is this distance to language (and place) that I too find so appealing. It is as if the distance creates a new space, where the translation process enables a new kind of writing . . . Listen! There is music to be found; unexpected rhythms, sounds, strange encounters and experiments, a new language is waiting to be heard, a struggle is taking place to find something I do not yet have the name for (184).

Last but not least, I will discuss “El proceso de autotraducción in mente en Amor de Baobá de Suleiman Cassamo: un estudio exploratorio” (2014), which contains the initial exploratory work, as stated by its author Maritxell Soria Orti, for an ongoing dissertation guided by self-translation specialist Helena Tanqueiro. Even though this paper discusses a specific kind of self-translation (“traducción in mente”) and a specific case, the case of Mozambican writer Suleiman Cassamo, it includes a very good introduction to self-translation, by citing important publications written by recognized authorities in the field such as Julio César Santoyo, Helena Tanqueiro, Rainer Grutman and the self-translation research group AUTOTRAD. It also juxtaposes the definitions given by these authors to the act of self-translation, describes the process that postcolonial authors go through when they write in the language of the colonizer, which is different from the language of the culture communicated through the characters and events of the narrated fictitious story, and explains how this process fits within those definitions. This description represents a relevant contribution as the translation “in mente” process has implications for postcolonial writers who write in the language of the colonizer and translate themselves into their native language.

Even though there has been a significant increase in the number of publications that have highlighted the relevance of its research, as I have demonstrated in the previous section, there is no doubt that within the translation field of study self-translation is still an under-researched area that needs further attention.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter, which has provided an overview of the main debates within postcolonial studies, locates the literary works of Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago within postcolonial literature by discussing what it does to colonial discourse, and how it does it. More specifically, it situates the authors’ self-translation acts within the strategies
used by other writers that are considered postcolonial writers. Postcolonial theory is at
the core of this dissertation because it provides the tools to describe and analyze how the
literature of the authors studied deconstrucuts and deestabilizes the colonial power
discourse through language appropriation, linguistic hybridization and self-translation.
Through all of these strategies, Santiago and Ferré self-construct their hybrid postcolonial
identities in an attempt to recover their voices and to revert the marginalization of which
they have been victims. Through Chapters 2 and 3, I have underscored how Puerto Ricans
have conceptualized their hybrid identities as a way of resisting the colonial attempts to
assimilate them, and I have related the authors strategies to postcolonial studies. Thus, in
the next chapters, I will discuss the design of this research project and then I will proceed
to discuss the authors’ specific contexts and to analyze their literature closely.
Chapter 4: Research Design and Methodology

4.1 Research Questions and Objectives

This dissertation is located in the intersection between the fields of comparative literature, translation, cultural, gender and postcolonial studies. Its aim is to understand the phenomenon of self-translation in the context of Puerto Rican literature written by Puerto Rican women from the island and from the U.S. Diaspora, taking into consideration the colonial relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States, and its linguistic and cultural consequences. Therefore, the question that guides this research is: Is self-translation a result of Puerto Rico’s postcolonial cultural hybridity in the case of Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago’s analyzed literary pieces?

Therefore, this is a multidisciplinary research project that integrates elements from the humanities and the social sciences. Methodologically, it integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches. Hence, hybridity is embedded in this research not only because it discusses English and Spanish writing, but also because it includes textual analysis, paratextual analysis, content analysis and statistical analysis.

Although research about U.S. Latin American literature written in English by women has experienced significant growth in the past decades, a research gap still exists for the case of latina women writers who write in English, and then self-translate their literary works into Spanish. Esmeralda Santiago’s and Rosario Ferré’s self-translation cases deserve special attention because both of them are Puerto Rican and their writings are heavily influenced by Puerto Rico’s colonial relationship with the United States, and by the need to search for a Puerto Rican voice/identity that this particular relationship has created. Another characteristic of Santiago’s and Ferré’s literature is the hybridity present in the characters of their narratives, as well as in their use of writing techniques such as code-switching. This hybridity is a result of their migratory experiences, but it is also a result of Puerto Rico’s political ambiguity.

To answer this query I have raised the following research questions:

- What are the motivations and aims behind the self-translation of both Esmeralda Santiago’s and Rosario Ferré’s literary pieces?
What writing techniques do Esmeralda Santiago and Rosario Ferré use in their English and Spanish novels to express hybridity? How do they compare to each other?

What are the specific textual characteristics that make Esmeralda Santiago’s literature postcolonial? Are there postcolonial textual characteristics in Rosario Ferré as well? How do these textual characteristics compare?

How is the hybridity of Puerto Rican Diaspora culture reflected textually and paratextually in Esmeralda Santiago’s analyzed literary pieces and in the analyzed paratexts about her and her literature?

What are the hybrid elements of the Puerto Rican culture present in Rosario Ferré’s analyzed literary pieces?

Is self-translation a postcolonial tool for the affirmation of cultural hybridity for both Ferré and Santiago?

This research used the following data collection techniques:

*Primary sources:*

- Literary texts:
  - *The House on the Lagoon* (Ferré 1995)
  - *La casa de la laguna* (Ferré 1996)
  - *América’s Dream* (Santiago 1996)
  - *El sueño de América* (Santiago 1996)

- Paratexts:
  - Readers response survey with 80 participant readers

*Secondary sources:*

- Paratexts written by Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago:
  - “Cuando las mujeres quieren a los hombres” (Ferré 1974)
  - “On Destiny, Language, and Translation; or, Ophelia Adrift in the C. & O. Canal” (Ferré 1991)
  - “On Bilingual Trespassing” (Ferré 1996)
  - “The Blessings of Being Ambidextrous” (Ferré 1997)
“Puerto Rico, U.S.A.” (Ferré 1998)
“Familia e historia nacional” (Ferré 2000)
A la sombra de tu nombre (Ferré 2001)
Duelo del lenguaje/Language Duel (Ferré 2002)
Memoria (Ferré 2012)
When I was Puerto Rican (Santiago 1993)
Cuando era puertorriqueña (Santiago 1994)
Almost a Woman (1998)
The Turkish Lover (Santiago 2004)
“Esmeralda Santiago: Finding Her Voice” (Bianco y Santiago 2008)
"Biography" Esmeralda Santiago (2012)

Paratexts written by literary critics and academics about these two authors and their literary work.

This data was analyzed through four techniques: textual analysis, paratextual analysis, statistical analysis and content analysis.

4.2 Textual Analysis


In my textual analysis, I have taken into consideration the following elements:

- Narrative subversion (Cultural hybrid identity, patriarchal gender subversion, critiques about the colonial relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States)
- Inclusion of Spanish in English written texts
- Inclusion of English in the Spanish self-translated texts

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67 Section 4.3 provides a discussion of “paratexts”, based on the categorization system of Gérard Genette, which will be useful throughout my analysis of the novels.
• Spanish inclusion strategies and literary resources used such as translation and explicitation. Do they domesticate or foreignise the texts? (Venuti 1995)
• Textual differences between the source texts and their self-translations. Do they have a domesticating of foreignising purpose?
• Phonetic transcription of oral speech

4.3 Paratextual analysis

As literature does not occur in a void, it is necessary to look at all the contextual elements that surround the literary text and to analyze how these elements relate and interact with the text, influencing the meaning that the reader extracts from it. In this research, which explores how the acts of self-translation of Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago relate to hybrid transcultural identities, I analyze in detail the plots and characters of their novels *The House on the Lagoon* and *América’s Dream*.

Additionally, and in the following chapters, I analyze the novels’ narrative devices, the features that frame the narratives (e.g. chapter division and typography), the authors’ biographical information, the historical background that surrounds them and their texts, and secondary sources consisting of interviews and texts written by literary critics and academics about them and their literary work. All of these elements are located in the “zone between the text and [the] off-text, a zone not only of transition but also of transaction . . . ”, which literary critic Gérard Genette calls “the paratext” (2).

As Gérard Genette states in his book *Paratexts: thresholds of interpretation*, “it is appropriate to define objects before one studies their evolution” (13). For this reason, I will briefly pause to define some of the concepts I will implement throughout my analysis, before displaying the textual and paratextual analysis of Esmeralda Santiago’s and Rosario Ferré’s texts and its paratexts.

According to Genette, the paratext, “. . . is empirically made up of a heterogeneous group of practices and discourses of all kinds . . . ” (2), reason why he finds necessary to make some important distinctions about them which he classifies according to their relation to the text.

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68 Namely dissertations, academic articles, newspaper articles, book chapters and books.
The first distinction that he makes relates to the material location of these “practices” or “discourses”, henceforth called the paratextual elements, in relation to the text. In this way, the first two categories of Genette’s classification system emerge. Thus the “peritext” are “. . . elements as the title or the preface and sometimes elements inserted into the interstices of the text, such as chapter titles or certain notes” (5), and the “epitext” are “. . . messages that, . . . are located outside the book, . . . (interviews, conversations) or under cover of private communications (letters, diaries, and others)” (5). Both of these kinds of paratexts are analyzed in this research project but it is not the case of the next level of classification defined by the paratext’s temporal status from which the category of “posthumous paratexts” does not applies, as both Ferré and Santiago are alive. Most of the paratexts analyzed in this research project are either “prior” (before publication), “original” (simultaneous publication), “later” (after publication), “delayed” (with a republication), or “anthumous” (within the author’s lifetime) (5-6).

Regarding the nature of “substance” of the paratexts, I have analyzed both “textual paratexts” which “share the linguistic status of the text”, and “factual paratexts”, which “consist [] not of an explicit message . . . but of a fact whose existence alone, if known to the public, provides some commentary on the text and influences how the text is received” (7). Genette’s categorization also considers the paratext’s “situation of communication”. This category includes the “authorial paratext”, the “publisher’s paratext”, the “allographic paratext (produced by a third party), the “public paratext” (addressed to the general public of to the text’s readers), the “private paratexts” (addressed to individuals who “are not supposed to go around talking about them), and the “intimate paratext” (“messages the author addresses to himself”) (9). Regarding the addressee of the message, Genette also distinguishes between the “official paratext”, “. . . openly accepted by the author or publisher or both . . . ”, and the “. . . unofficial paratext” which “. . . the author can always more or less disclaim with denials . . . ” (10). To cover the nature of the message, or the “illocutionary force” as he calls it, Genette establishes that it can communicate “information”, intention, “an interpretation”, a “decision”, a “commitment” or “advice”. Additionally, messages can be “performative”, in the sense that they “. . . perform what they describe . . . ” (11).

Considering the paratexts mentioned above, I have compared the contexts of the authors paying special attention to factual paratexts (migratory background, family background), and their statements about their relationship with Puerto Rico contained in
epitexts. I have also taken a close look into the cultural and linguistic hybrid elements in the authorial epitexts that provide information about their contexts as writers and about their English writing, their hybrid identities and their self-translation acts (biographies and interviews).

4.4 Reader response survey

One of the objectives of this research is to find out what are the cultural and linguistic hybrid elements in Rosario Ferré’s and Esmeralda Santiago’s contexts as writers and in what way these hybrid elements are present in their literary texts. Additionally, this research delves into the strategies they use to portray these hybrid elements and whether or not their readership recognizes them, both the hybrid elements and the writing strategies. To find the answers to these questions I have carried out a textual analysis of Santiago’s and Ferré’s texts to identify the hybrid elements present in them and the writing strategies they implement to communicate hybridity, and I have also carried out a reader response survey that I will present on this section.

In my analysis of the four selected texts, I have not only found hybrid elements in their plots and topics, but I have also found hybridity in the writing strategies and in the way the writers implement them (See Chapters 6 and 7 for more details).

To explore the reader’s perception of hybrid elements in the literary works of Santiago and Ferré and the reader’s identification of the strategies that the authors use to portray these hybrid elements, I recruited 80 adult Puerto Ricans (18 or older), 40 living in Puerto Rico and 40 living in the U.S. Diaspora. I asked the participants to read several literary extracts taken from Santiago and Ferré’s English novels and self-translations and to answer a 15-question questionnaire after reading these extracts (see Appendix I to see the selected literary text and the questionnaire). I have to point out that the participants for the survey were mostly recruited online through reading clubs and internet groups that bring together Puerto Ricans living in P.R. and in the U.S. Diaspora. I was unable to recruit the survey’s participants on a face-to-face basis due to my living circumstances and difficulties financing travel expenses. Therefore, the recruiting process was not aleatory and the sample is not representative. Regarding the data collection, it was carried out through a webpage that I created in Google Sites. For the data analysis, I applied

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69 The questionnaire was created using Adobe®FormsCentral.
qualitative and quantitative methods and I used the data analysis computer software SPSS and NVivo. These softwares were very useful in the organizing of the data but, moreover, they helped me to observe how the different variables behaved in relation to my survey questions, allowing me to use these observations to support my hypotheses and to categorize and compare my survey data. For some of my survey questions, I used both SPSS and NVivo as I wanted to benefit from both quantitative and qualitative analysis.

By means of a personal information sheet (See Appendix II) and in addition to the general information usually requested, I asked the participants to provide information about their nationality, their language skills, their English and Spanish reading habits, and their experience with texts that are linguistically hybrid\textsuperscript{70}. Regarding the questions about place of residence, the questions I asked the United States based participants versus the Puerto Rico based participants were different. I only asked the Puerto Rico based participants if they had lived in the United States for more than one year. To the United States based participants, however, I also asked them how long have they lived in the United States, if they have lived outside of the United States for more than a year, and for how many generations have their family have been living in the United States.

Regarding the age of the survey participants, even though in Puerto Rico there was a wider distribution, both in Puerto Rico and in the U.S., most of the readers were middle aged and the age fluctuated between 35 and 44 years old (See Appendix II). Both in P.R. and in the U.S. there were a majority of women (See Appendix III). In terms of education, the sample’s population is quite educated as in both cases most of the participants have master degrees at least (See Appendix IV).

The extracts from the two sets of novels that the readers were asked to read, were selected because of the high amount of instances in which the authors included Spanish in their source English texts and because they showed variety in terms of the literary resources used for the inclusion of Spanish. After selecting the source texts extracts,\textsuperscript{71} I

\textsuperscript{70} By linguistically hybrid, I mean written mostly in English but including words, phrases, sentence fragments or whole paragraphs in Spanish or vice versa (texts written in Spanish but including instances of English).

proceeded to select the Spanish self-translated extracts that corresponded to the selected extracts in English. In terms of size, the selected English extracts had around four hundred words for both authors, and the self-translated extracts had around four hundred and thirty-eight words. In the case of Ferré, it was necessary to select the text presented to the participants from three different parts of the novel because the included Spanish was more spread out throughout the novel.

After the participants read the provided extracts from Ferré’s and Santiago’s novels, they were asked to complete a questionnaire including the following topics:

- Writer’s migratory background (Which of the two writers lives in the United States permanently?)
- Relationship between the character’s nationality and migratory background, and the use of the phonetic transcription of oral speech included in the extract in the case of Santiago’s extracts.
- Difficulty understanding the phonetic transcription of oral speech
- Recognition of source language and target language of the provided extracts
- Textual characteristics behind the selection of source and target language of the provided texts
- Aim of hybrid language use (Spanish inclusion in English texts and English inclusion in Spanish texts)
- Presence of U.S. cultural elements

Some of the questions included in the reader response survey, were formulated as open questions allowing the participants to write their answers freely. The answers to these questions were analyzed using qualitative analysis methods and this analysis was developed with the support of the software NVivo. There were also other questions which were formulated as closed questions and they required the respondents’ choosing from pre-established answers. The answers provided for this questions by the contestants were analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis methods and this analysis was developed with the support of the software SPSS.
To summarize, the act of self-translation was analyzed through a textual analysis, a paratextual analysis and a reader response survey, to explore its relationship with hybridity as a postcolonial trait. In the following sections of this dissertation, I will deploy the empirical chapters. Chapter 5 will contain the paratextual analysis of Ferré’s and Santiago’s biographies and literary work. Chapter 6 and 7 will contain the analysis of the narrative and linguistic subversions that both authors implement through *The House on the Lagoon* and *América’s Dream* and their self-translation, and Chapter 8 will contain the results of the reader response survey that I have executed to complement my analysis.
Chapter 5: Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago: Biography and Literary Works

The practice of exploring how fiction writers’ life experiences influence their narratives (biographical criticism) is no longer considered a reliable approach. However, there are important feminist approaches to literature, which argue that life experiences and political ideology are worth researching and are related to authors’ literary output. We can refer to perspectives such as that presented by Nancy K. Miller in her essay ‘Getting Transpersonal: The Cost of an Academic Life’ (2009) to support this approach.

In the case of authors Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago, their acts of self-translation are closely related to their personal contexts. For this reason, it is important to take a close look at how the events of their lives have framed their literary work as well as the writing strategies they employ, the topics they address, their decision to publish in a language different from their native or writing language, and the position of their literature within literary criticism and the publishing market in relation to the canon.

This chapter thus forms the first of three, which explore comparatively the political and socio-cultural intentions and effects of the two texts, and their self-translations, using a range of sources including memoirs, interviews, essays and other academic writing.

5.1 Rosario Ferré: Biographical information

Although Rosario Ferré’s life experiences and political ideology do not directly determine her literary practices, they have had a deep influence on them. This is why it is important to take a close look at her life to better understand her literary and linguistic choices in terms of her writing language and her translation practice.

Rosario Ferré was born in 1938 in Ponce, Puerto Rico and is the daughter of Luis A. Ferré Aguayo, governor of Puerto Rico from 1969 until 1973 and a wealthy businessman, and of Lorenza Ramírez de Arellano. As Ferré was born into a wealthy family, she lived a privileged existence, which included access to private chauffeurs, a

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72 Given that Rosario Ferré is, in addition to being a writer, also an academic, she has theorized about writing, feminist writing, translation and Puerto Rican identity among other topics. For this reason, a larger part of this chapter will be dedicated to Rosario Ferré than to Santiago, whose life experiences and creative agenda have been communicated through memoirs and interviews alone.
personal nanny, and frequent family trips to the United States, and Europe, which opened her mind and impelled her to know more (Ferré, Memoria: 93). Her father’s personal library included books that were on the forbidden list of the Catholic Church (87). Most of these books, however, were American and European classics (87-8) as her parents thought that “Europa era la fuente de toda cultura y civilización” (93).

Ferré started to learn English with U.S. marianista priests in elementary school and later on at the Colegio del Sagrado Corazón private Catholic School (14). At the age of thirteen she was sent to Danna Hall, a protestant boarding school in Massachusetts, because her parents had heard the rumour that the Latin American nuns were not teaching her good English. Additionally, her parental grandfather was afraid that the nuns at the Sagrado Corazón private school would influence her to become a nun, as did her aunt Sister Isolina Ferré (107). On her experience at the Catholic School Ferré said, “[l]a educación que las monjas impartían consistía en que las mujeres se ocultaban y no tenían que aparecer en público jamás. Estaban circunscritas a la anonimia” (qtd. in García Pinto 72). 73

At the age of fourteen, Ferré started to write articles for El Día, a small Ponce newspaper owned by her father, which would later become El Nuevo Día, one of the most important Puerto Rican newspapers, now based in San Juan and owned by her brother Antonio Luis Ferré. She also wrote poetry during her childhood (García 77). After her graduation from high school, Ferré completed her undergraduate studies at Manhattanville College in Purchase, New York, from where she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English and French in 1960 (Memoria 108). That same year, when she was ninetheenth years old, she returned to the island, married businessman Benigno Trigo (Hintz 2004), and moved to San Juan where she had 3 children (111), and became an “ama de casa tradicional” (112), conforming to her family’s expectations. About this, she said:

They wouldn't let me even consider a career as a journalist. Women weren't supposed to work at that time, so I got married and had three children. After ten years I got a divorce and then went to the University of

73 This patriarchal upbringing where women are trapped in the domestic sphere is represented in Ferré’s literary work by short stories such as The Youngest Doll, a story in which a gendered task such as doll making is subverted to give agency to the female protagonist.
Puerto Rico to do my master's degree in Spanish and Latin American literature (Perry 85).

In 1968 Ferré started her studies at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras campus, where she studied Hispanic and Latin American literature. Regarding her motivation to study, she has argued that she enrolled on a couple of courses to take her mind away from the “problemas personales” she was experiencing within her marriage (García Pinto 76). When she decided to work towards a literary career by undertaking a Master’s degree in Hispanic and Latin American Literature, her husband became upset as he considered her studies to be an entertainment (77). After she founded the literary magazine Zona de Carga y Descarga with her cousin Olga Nolla, Ferré divorced in 1972 given that the bold nature of the magazine was “para él algo insostable” (Ferré Memoria 120).

At the University of Puerto Rico, Ferré had the opportunity to be taught by Puerto Rican writers who included Margot Arce de Vázquez, Enrique Laguerre Vélez and Peruvian-Spanish writer Mario Vargas Llosa and Uruguayan writer Ángel Rama Facal, who urged Ferré and her cousin Olga Nolla to publish Zona, the magazine that started her literary career (114). Both Nolla and Rama had great influence on Ferré’s development as a writer. In 1970, while she was studying for her MA, her mother Lorenza Ramírez de Arellano died and Ferré felt the necessity to write her first novel, realizing that she did not want the same destiny as her mother who had spent all her life being a wife whose voice had been silenced (Ferré Flight of the Swan 66-7). She inherited a significant amount of money from her mother, which gave her the freedom to do what she really enjoyed doing, which was writing (Ferré Memoria 77).

Ferré had a difficult relationship with her mother, who never recovered from her brother’s tragic death in an aircraft accident, and when Ferré was 7 years old, she hired a black woman named Gilda Ventura to take care of her. Gilda encouraged her writing as she used to share stories and fairy tales with her (Reichardt 102), and introduced her to Latin American culture (Ferré Memoria 74-81), given that in Ferré’s house “sólo se hablaba y se leía literatura e historia norteamericana y europea, y era como si Latinoamérica no existiese” (63). Other literary influences were her mother Lorenza, who

74 Hereafter referred to as Zona.
75 In 1972, her father had to step down after he lost the election against Rafael Hernández Colón.
took it upon herself to introduce Ferré to Spanish literature, her great aunt María Bartoli, who was a poet (38), and her maternal aunts Olga Ramírez de Arellano de Nolla and Haydée Rodríguez de Arellano de Rodríguez Olleros, who were also poets (13).

From 1970 to 1972, following the death of her mother, Ferré acted as Puerto Rico’s first lady as her father had been elected Governor of the island. Luis A. Ferré was founder of the PNP (Partido Nuevo Progresista), the party that advocated that Puerto Rico join the United States as the 51st state. Even though Rosario helped him throughout his electoral campaign, she stated much later on that when she helped him “... no fue por una convicción estadista, sino porque quería ayudarlo para que ganara las elecciones” (32). By this time, she had dissociated herself from Ponce’s and San Juan’s bourgeoisie, and had surrounded herself by artists and writers who where a great influence on her (García Pinto 78). She had the opportunity to read texts from Puerto Rican authors who were in favour of independence for the island, such as José de Diego, Gautier Benítez and Llorens Torres (Ferré Memoria : 115). Even though Ferré stated that when her father won the elections she thought that the victory of the PNP was going to be good for the island (32), she also said that “El issue del estatus político de la Isla estaba solo superficialmente presente en mi conciencia por aquel entonces” (32). As the following quotation shows, Ferré seems to have rethought her position about the island status when she entered the literary world and started to publish Zona: “Cuando salió Zona pasó otra cosa que fue muy importante para mí: cobré conciencia de nuestra situación política, y decidí que la independencia era la única solución posible para nuestro pueblo” (115).

The magazine was published from 1972 until 1976 and according to Ferré, they decided to stop publishing it because it was very expensive and because she and the other women were overworked with the mechanical nature of the publishing process whilst the men only wrote and had their work published (García Pinto 1988: 83).

In 1975, Ferré met her second husband, the Mexican writer Jorge Aguilar Mora, and in 1976 they moved to Mexico where she published her first collection of short stories, Papeles de Pandora (78), which included all the pieces she had published in Zona. Even though she was being very productive in Mexico in terms of her writing – while she was there she published Sitio a Eros (1980), a collection of feminist essays, and wrote El árbol y su sombre (1989), a collection of essays about literature – she had to move back

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76They did not sell any space within the magazine for advertisements (García Pinto 1988: 83)
to the island for health reasons among other difficulties (Ferré Memoria 124-25). Her stay in Mexico also gave her the opportunity to meet Elena Poniatowska and other recognized writers and it was also there that she realized the meaning of being a writer and that she was now a writer herself (122).

In 1980 Ferré relocated to Maryland (132) because the University of Maryland hired her husband as a professor and in 1981, after completing her Master’s thesis, she started PhD studies at the same university, finishing in 1985. In 1983, she separated from her husband and moved to Washington DC where she met her third husband, Puerto Rican architect Agustín Costa in 1989. Whilst she lived in the United States, she taught literature at Berkeley, Johns Hopkins, Harvard and Rutgers University and at the University of Puerto Rico (Ferré 2012). In 1991, Ferré returned to Puerto Rico and married Costa, and they have been living on the island since then. In 1997, she received an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Humane Letters from Brown University and in 2007, she was named as honorary member of the Academia Puertorriqueña de la Lengua Española.

5.1.1 Literary Work, Language and Ideology

Rosario Ferré is one of Puerto Rico’s most important and prolific writers as she has enjoyed great international exposure and recognition and has worked within various literary genres including poetry, the short story (for children and adults), literary criticism, biography, press commentary, and the novel. In this section of the

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77 They were divorced while Ferré was living in Washington DC (Ferré 2012: 237).
83 During the 1970s and 1980s she wrote columns for El Mundo (Hintz 1995: 15) and she also wrote frequently in the San Juan Star during the 1990s (Hintz. Rosario Ferré: Bibliografía. http://www.ensayistas.org/filosofos/puertorico/ferre/biblio-de.htm.) [accessed 26/10/2012]
chapter, I will relate Ferré’s life experiences to her texts, her political ideology and her language choice. I will only include Ferré’s first edition publications, included in the footnotes, omitting publications in anthologies, and I will highlight those books that include either relevant statements that will help me to draw conclusions about her act of self-translation and writing language choice, or those which are either self-translations themselves or have represented a change in writing language choice. I will include a more detailed analysis about Ferré’s act of self-translation in Chapter 6.

5.1.2 Early Literary Career

As Rosario Ferré and her critics have stated, it was with Zona de Carga y Descarga that Ferré’s controversial literary career started in 1972. In Zona she published her first controversial short story in 1974, “Cuando las mujeres quieren a los hombres” (When women love men), which she would later publish in 1976 in a collection of short stories named Papeles de Pandora. The story was a sort of homage to Isabel Luberza, Ponce’s most famous prostitute, and was published in conjunction with Manuel Ramos Otero’s story “La última plena que bailó Luberza” about the same woman but from a homosexual perspective. Ferré’s story included explicit sexual language and contained as the two main characters an upper class widow and a prostitute who both move into the same house left as an inheritance by the man they shared. This story was so controversial that Ferré was accused of being “a traitor to her class and her gender” and some readers decided to burn their copies “because they thought it had to do with witchcraft” (Perry 83).

Zona played a very important role in the dissemination of the literary works of a group of writers who were pioneers in transgressing insular homogenized Puerto Rican identity, including the displaced Puerto Rican Diaspora. These writers, called “La generación del 70”, started to articulate a hybrid identity in contraposition to the hispanophile identity that was considered to be the only linguistic Puerto Rican identity. In common with Ferré, Zona wanted to portray “una nueva identidad posmoderna”, “una visión de Puerto Rico, ya no ‘logocéntrica’ y homogeneizada que rebasaba los postulados del nacionalismo sin excluirllo” (Ferré Memoria 143). Some of the most important members of this literary group were Manuel Ramos Otero, Edgardo Rodríguez Julia, Luis

Rafael Sánchez and Ana Lydia Vega Santana. This literary current was subversive in the sense that it was going against the Puerto Rican literary canon that reinforced the notion of a Spanish European Puerto Rican identity as a defensive response to the menace represented by the socio-political and cultural influence of the United States. Regarding Zona’s public ideological position, Ferré has stated that Zona“… era una revista de corte más bien anarquista” (García Pinto 79) that was interested in social reform but from a critical perspective without ties with any political party (García Pinto 80). The last three issues had to be published in New York because the Ramayo Brothers, who had published the previous issues, said they were not willing to keep publishing after the public response to issue number eight. That issue included Manuel Ramos Otero’s short story “El esclavo y el señor”, which was about homosexual sado-masochism, and was burned and banned as being “cosa del diablo” (Ferré Memoria 116).

Zona de carga y descarga was also controversial because in its second issue it aligned itself to the cause of independence for the island. Ferré has stated that at about the same time in which Zona started to be published, she reflected on Puerto Rico’s political situation and decided that “… la independencia era la única solución possible…” (Ferré Memoria 115). When the press found out about Ferré’s political independence tendencies, they ignited a controversy around her position as the daughter of Governor Luis A. Ferré who was campaigning for re-election. A Puerto Rican magazine called Avance published an article entitled “Rosarito Ferré… O el otro mundo”, suggesting that even though Rosario Ferré had not explicitly and publicly talked about her pro-independence ideology, it was “… un ‘secreto’ convertido en ‘vox populis’…” (“Rosarito Ferré …O el otro mundo”: 5). In a later edition, Avance published a letter sent by Ferré, in which she confirmed the rumors saying that to escape “el limbo existencial” in which they were living, Puerto Ricans had to embrace “una nación nueva e independiente” (“Rosarito Ferré confirma a Avance”: 5). In the same letter, Ferré clarified that in the 1968 electoral campaign she had also expressed herself publicly in favour of independence for the island. Notwithstanding, she clarified in a later interview, that she did not believe in joining any mass movements (Borrás 1972: 2). She also expressed an individualistic perspective towards politics when she said “El escritor es un ser marginado que no debe identificarse con grupos políticos, yo ciertamente no pienso identificarme con grupo ninguno” (Borrás 1972: 4). From that year on, Ferré was considered to be “…una intelectual proclive a la independencia de la isla” (Espinosa 1998: 18). Rosario
Ferré’s early career statements about the political status of the island in relation to the United States are relevant because they would have a direct relationship with her decision to write in English and to self-translate her literature.

Ferré’s contributions to Zona as a writer were crucial to the launch of her literary career, as she has stated: “Those first two years gave me about half the material for the first book, Papeles de Pandora, which came out in 1976”\textsuperscript{86} (Perry 85).

_Papeles de Pandora_ was Ferré’s first collection of short stories and poems and it included all her contributions to Zona in the same order they were published (Ferré Memoria 121). It was “focused on the multiple roles of women in Puerto Rican society” (Hintz 1995: 14). Several of the short stories included in this collection were published separately later on.\textsuperscript{87} In her essay “La cocina de la escritura”, Ferré recounts how during a banquet celebrating the centenary of Juan Ramón Jiménez, she was approached by a literary critic who asked her if it was true that she wrote pornographic short stories (Ferré 1980b: 132). Looking back, Ferré reflects about her use of language by saying “[s]i en mis cuentos ‘Cuando las mujeres quieren a los hombres’ o ‘De tu lado al paraíso’ el lenguaje obsceno ha servido para que una sola persona se conmueva ante la explotación sexual de la mujer, no me importa que me consideren una escritora pornográfica” (Ferré 2001b: 134). As Hintz concludes in her book _Rosario Ferré, a Search for Identity_, _Papeles de Pandora_: “represents the rebellion of the generation of the 70s in that Ferré includes a fervent attempt at proselytizing readers to take up the standard of the social reform movement”, which included social reforms about “gender, racial, and economic equality among all Puerto Ricans” (Ferré Flight of the Swan 148).

5.1.3 Self-translation, English Writing and Hybrid Identity

In the context of Puerto Rican literature, for Puerto Rican authors who have had the experience of living in the United States throughout long periods of time as did Ferré, who lived there ten years, “... historizarse en otros códigos lingüísticos deviene un acto natural y para algunos, algo necesario en el proceso de redefinirse” (Marcano 2009: 217).

\textsuperscript{86} Ferré, Rosario. _Papeles de Pandora_. Mexico: Joaquín Mortúz, 1976.

Even though Ferré’s act of self-translation cannot be circumscribed to a single motive, her awareness of being trapped by a patriarchal society in a submissive role, the new world that opened to her when she entered academia, and her experience of having lived in the United States for more than ten years, combined to engender in Ferré a need to redefine herself on her own terms. Perhaps her English writing and her practice of self-translation are part of that redefinition in terms of identity. The ten years that Ferré lived in the United States included the years she spent there while she was in high school and studying for her undergraduate degree. During part of Ferré’s childhood she was sent by her parents to live in the United States so she could learn English from English native speakers, as it is common practice among privileged families from colonial and/or postcolonial countries to send their students to the colonial metropolis. Even though Ferré had started to learn English as a second language in Puerto Rico before she migrated for the first time to the United States, I believe that it was not until she moved to Dana Hall in Massachusetts, where all classes were taught in English, that her hybrid identity started to develop. In her book A la sombra de tu nombre, she has said that because in Dana Hall she did not have to go through the ritual of confession imposed by the Catholic school system, this led her to relate English to “la rebelión y la independencia personal” (Ferré A la sombra de tu nombre 176). She had also said that her life while she was studying at Manhattanville College, became schizophrenic as in New York she would enjoy the freedom of being by herself and when she returned to Ponce she would resume going to church with her parents on Sundays and to having to be chaperoned everywhere she went (Ferré Memoria 108, 109).

Even though Ferré’s sense of hybrid identity is partially a consequence of her U.S. migration experience, she has also referred to this hybridity as a consequence of the emergence of the “culturas universales” (153) created by the globalized world, as the following statement reflects:

“No nos sentimos seguros de quiénes somos ni de cómo somos, habitamos una frontera movediza que incluye innumerables lenguas e identidades” (Ferré 2012: 153).

88 “... el vivir lejos de Puerto Rico me permitió ver cómo la izquierda se confundía con la derecha y la derecha con la izquierda sin sentir pánico por ello y sin perder el sentido de dirección” (Ferré 2000: 160).
During Ferré’s early literary career, she published her work mostly in Spanish, with the exception of the English self-translations of some of her short-stories and poems published in literary magazines and anthologies until 1991, when she published The Youngest Doll, her first book published in English. The Youngest Doll is Ferré’s English translation of Papeles de Pandora. Papeles de Pandora included approximately twenty short stories, however, the English version differs from the Spanish as it includes fewer stories and it includes an essay called “On Destiny, Language and Translation: Or Ophelia Adrift in the C. & O. Canal” (Castillo 238). This essay was a very pertinent addition as in it Ferré assumes a linguistically and culturally fluid hybrid identity represented by the dream image of herself floating in the “water of words”, with “the shore of Washington” on one side, and “the shore of San Juan” on the other (Ferré 1991: 154-55). According to Ferré, her dream was trying to tell her that as a writer she had to “. . . learn to live by letting go, by renouncing the reaching of this or that shore, but to let oneself become the meeting place of both . . . ” to serve as a mediator between cultures (Ferré 1991: 155). The writer’s role as mediator and its similarities with the role of literary translators as communicators that “struggle to bring together different cultures”, enables her to introduce the topic of translation. The conceptualization of herself as a Puerto Rican bilingual writer, “coming and going from south to north, from Spanish to English”, in a “constant recreation of divergent worlds, which often tends to appear greener on the other side”, serves as a testament of Ferré’s qualifications for self-translation. Moreover, it also establishes her need to express her hybrid bilingual identity as a motive. She also presents as motives for self-translation her desire, led by her superego, to “not only better but surpass herself, or at least surpass the writer she has been in the past” (Ferré 1991: 162). She also has a need to reach out to those Puerto Ricans who, “. . . struggle to integrate with and become indistinguishable from the mainstream” and to their children, who have lost their native language and are unable to “read the literature and history of their island” in an attempt to “adapt in order to survive” (Ferré 1991: 162-63). She identifies with these

89 A list of Ferré’s early short stories and poetry in English self-translation can be found in Hintz 1995 (227-229).
91 This essay appeared for the first time in El coloquio de las perras (1990b) but Ferré reprinted it in The Youngest Doll as an explanation to her English translation (Castillo 2005: 238).
Puerto Ricans because she has felt the anguish of being afraid of losing her “sense of self”, her identity.

It should be noted that as for Ferré, self-translation is an opportunity to improve the text. Thus she implements multiple substitutions, cancellations, additions and rewriting in her self-translations. She justifies these differences between her source and target texts by presenting self-translation as an opportunity to improve the source text (Ferré 1991: 162), and by discussing the differences between Latin American and North American literary traditions with examples from her experience of self- translating her novel *Maldito Amor* into English as *Sweet Diamond Dust* (Ferré 1991: 156-61). She also justifies her translation strategies by reinforcing the metaphor of translation as betrayal in the adage “La traduction est comme la femme, plus qu’elle est belle, elle n’est pas fidèle; plus qu’elle est fidèle, elle n’est pas belle” (Ferré 1991: 162).  

After publishing her English self-translation, *The Youngest Doll*, Ferré published a second self-translation into English, *Sweet Diamond Dust* (1989) and then proceeded to self-translate three of her novels into Spanish. These novels are *The House on the Lagoon* (1995), published in 1996 as *La casa de la laguna*, *Eccentric Neighborhoods* (1998), published as *Vecindarios excéntricos* the same year, and *Flight of the Swan* (2001) published in 2002 as *El vuelo del cisne*. *The House on the Lagoon*, her first English novel, was criticized in Puerto Rico when it was published. The fact that Ferré decided to switch to English as her writing language did not sit well with a significant part of her Puerto Rican audience as they considered that by writing in English Ferré was linguistically betraying her cultural roots. On the other hand, *The House on the Lagoon* was very well received in the United States, it was nominated for the National Book Award and more than 80,000 copies were sold. After the success of *The House on the Lagoon* and after publishing the Spanish self-translation, Ferré announced, in a letter published in the *New York Times*, that she no longer believed in independence for the island and that she was going to vote in favour of statehood in the referendum that was

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92 Most of the translated short stories included in *The Youngest Doll*, were translated by Ferré in collaboration with translators Diana Vélez, Nancy Beutel, Claire B. Ashman, Cindy Ventura and Nancy Taylor, except for “The Dust Garden”, “The Fox Fur Coat”, “Amalia”, “Marina and the Lion”, “The Seed Necklace”, “The Other Side of Paradise”  
93 *The House on the Lagoon* was first published in English but Ferré had written a Spanish manuscript that served as a base of this novel but that was never published. For information about the unpublished manuscript see Irizarry 2001.  
going to take place on the island on December 1998. In her letter she openly supports the statehood choice for the 1998 Referendum and defends her position by arguing that “Puerto Ricans have already joined the first world” (Ferré 1998: para. 6) and that “independence would be sure to hurt Puerto Rico’s economy” because it “has practically no natural resources” (Ferré 1998: para. 7). She also justifies her vote in favour of independence in two previous referenda by saying that “it was the only honorable solution because losing our language and culture would have been a form of spiritual suicide” (Ferré 1998: para. 10). To explain her change of political ideology, she states that “conditions have changed” and joining the United States would not endanger Puerto Rico’s language and culture because “bilingualism and multiculturalism are vital aspects of American society”. Additionally, she states that Puerto Ricans “no longer need fear that ‘el otro’ (the other), will swallow us up” because they “have become the other“ (Ferré 1998: para. 10-13).

The response was immediate from Puerto Rican critics as well as from Puerto Rican fellow writers such as Ana Lydia Vega95 and Liliana Cotto96 who felt betrayed. Ana Lydia Vega accused her of extending her hybrid “condición personal” to all Puerto Ricans, of describing her “self” as Hispanic, not Puerto Rican. Liliana Cotto categorically denied the existence of a Puerto Rican hybrid identity by referring to sociological and social sciences studies in which the data shows that most Puerto Ricans identify themselves as Puerto Ricans (Ferré 1998: para. 5-6). After Vega and Cotto’s response letters, José E. Cruz, a political professor at CUNY, joined the debate by reminding them of the struggle that took place in Puerto Rico to defend a plural conceptualization of Puerto Rican identity that included the Taino-indigenous, Hispanic and African elements against claims that defended a Hispanophilic identity.97

In defence of her Puerto Rican identity against the criticism that labelled her as a traitor to her culture for switching to English as a writing language, Ferré has stated: “But I am no less Puerto Rican because I can write in English. Why limit myself to one language when I can write in both? Why use one hand when I have two?” (Ferré 1997c: 9).

In response to the critics that accused her of writing in English for monetary reasons, Ferré had no problem admitting that she started to write in English so she could market her literary work more broadly, thus reaching a wider audience. About her English writing she has said: “El inglés ha permitido que mis novelas circulen fuera de los limitados círculos de la isla. Eso no lo entendieron los intelectuales locales, que forman una capilla intransigente. Yo sigo redactando en español, pero me parece absurdo encasillarse” (Espinosa 1998: para. 8).

It is important to highlight that because in Puerto Rico Spanish is a symbol of Puerto Rican identity, Puerto Rican writers who write in English have been historically ignored by the canon until recently, and have been highly criticized and regarded as traitors to their Puerto Rican identities. This judgement, which establishes language as the main component of national identity, “stems from the intellectuals’ resistance to the imposition of English as the Island’s official language” (Duany 2002: 29).

When Ferré writes in English, she uses code-switching including Spanish words and phrases in texts that are written mostly in English,98 and thereby projects a Puerto Rican hybrid identity. Compared to writers like Esmeralda Santiago, who also writes in English, self-translates herself into Spanish and includes instances of Spanish in her English texts, Ferré seems to favour a monolingual reader by using italics and cushioning strategies to help readers recognize the Spanish words and to help them work out their meaning. She also includes fewer instances of Spanish and provides the reader with supplementary information to help him/her understand Puerto Rico’s socio-historical background that is embedded in her narratives.

On the subject of bilingualism that goes hand in hand with her hybrid identity and its effect on her writing process, Ferré has said that “[t]o be a bilingual writer doesn’t mean just to be bilingual. A bilingual writer is really two different writers, has two very different voices, writes in two different styles, and, most importantly, looks at the world through two different sets of glasses” (qtd. in Kellman 2003: 138).

Ferré’s self-translations or recreations of her narratives have been criticized as too liberal, and for including too many additions and other substantial changes, especially when writing or self-translating into English. These concessions are considered by many

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98 Examples of this linguistic literary resource will be presented in Chapter 6.
to be aimed at the English reader or the “yanqui” reader as some of Puerto Rico’s nationalists literary critics call the colonizer “other.” Even though it is not my place to make any judgments regarding Ferré’s domesticating practices, I can understand why critics were suspicious about Ferré’s changes especially taking into account her ideological change of mind regarding the political status of the island.

5.2 Esmeralda Santiago: Bibliographical Information

Esmeralda Santiago was born in 1948 in Villa Palmeras, in Santurce, a district of San Juan Puerto Rico (Santiago 2012), to Pablo Santiago Díaz, poet and carpenter, and Ramona Santiago, a factory worker (Martínez 2007: 218). She is the eldest child of eleven children. When she was four years old she moved with her family to Macún (Santiago 1993: 9), a slum in Toa Baja where they lived in a single room, shack style house made out of zinc with a kitchen shed by it, in which she and her two younger sisters would sleep in hammocks, and they had no electricity. Even though during her childhood Santiago did not have access to many books as Ferré did, she was influenced by her father’s love for books, for general knowledge and for poetry in particular (Barradas 1998: 200).

While she lived in Macún, Santiago experienced the arrival of the services offered by the government of Puerto Rico and sponsored by the United States federal government, as a result of the creation of the Estado Libre Asociado. In “The Amerikan Invasion of Macún”, a chapter of her first memoir, When I was Puerto Rican, Santiago narrates how she witnessed the opening of a community centre by the Estado Libre Asociado, the recently inaugurated Puerto Rican government. Experts from San Juan, together with “Americanos”, would go to the community centre and teach mothers, who constituted most of the audience because fathers “work seven days a week, about “proper” nutrition and hygiene habits so that their children could “grow up as tall and strong as Dick, Jane and Sally, the Americanitos in [their] primers” (Santiago When I was Puerto Rican 64). She highlights how the suggested diet did not include coffee, rice, beans or codfish but included fruit and vegetables that did not grow on the island (Santiago When I was Puerto Rican 39). She also learned from her father that on the island “Americanos” were called

99 Santiago’s website “http://www.esmeraldasantiago.com.”
100 During her childhood she moved back and forth from Macún to Santurce several times with her mother and her siblings because of the frequent fights between her parents caused by her father’s affairs with other women.
101 Santiago, Esmeralda. When I was Puerto Rican. 1993.
“gringos”, an adjective that was meant as an insult for their imperialistic practices, and that in the “Jun-ited-Estates” Puerto Ricans were called “spiks” because of the way they pronounced “speak” when they tried to explain that they did not speak any English (Santiago When I was Puerto Rican 73). After hearing her father talk about the “Americanos”, she decided she did not want to learn English (Santiago When I was Puerto Rican 73).

When Santiago attended elementary school at Macú, she would have daily English classes where the teacher would use songs to teach them English phonetically with the result that students had no idea about the meaning of what they were singing (Santiago 1993: 61-62). They also learned the Puerto Rican anthem and other patriotic songs like “En mi viejo San Juan”, a song that narrates the sadness of author Noel Estrada who had migrated to the United States with the intention of going back to his homeland but was not able to return (Santiago 1993: 61-62). She also remembers how the jíbaro figure was celebrated officially, “poems and stories about the hardships and joys of the Puerto Rican jíbaro were required reading at every grade level in school” (Santiago 1993: 13), while in practice everyone looked down on them and to be a jíbaro was considered to be an insult.

All these experiences characterized the formation of Santiago’s identity and served as a preamble to her migration to the United States in 1961 when she was thirteen years old. In contrast to Ferré, whose migration to the United States to study was considered a sign of status, Santiago’s migration to Brooklyn, New York occurred in the context of the Great Migration when most Puerto Ricans migrated in the hope of escaping poverty. Santiago’s mother Ramona decided to leave her common-law husband to migrate with her eight children, hoping to build a better life in the United States and to find medical help for her son Raymond who had a serious foot injury when he was four years old (Bianco 61, PBS: An Interview with Esmeralda Santiago, Copeland 1998, Santiago 1993: 3). By that time, Luis Muñoz Marín was still governor of Puerto Rico and the promotion of migration was part of Operation Bootstrap, a development project of the recently founded Estado Libre Asociado.

When Santiago arrived in the U.S., she was a Spanish speaking girl but eager to fit into her new environment. Because there were no bilingual schools in New York at

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102 The family would keep growing after their arrival in New York and eventually reached 11 children.
that time, she and her siblings had to learn English by pronouncing the words in the books she brought home from the library, speaking in English to each other, and by imitating their cousins who had migrated when they were babies (Santiago 1993: 12). At the school where she was enrolled, she was supposed to be put back one year as that was the regular procedure for students that were not English speakers, but she made a deal with the school authorities that she would go back to seventh grade if she could not learn English within six months (Santiago 1993: 227). Even though Santiago was placed in a “learning disabled class” (Santiago 1993: 228), she learned English so well that within two years she was admitted to New York’s Performing Arts High School, from where she majored in drama and dance. Santiago’s mother did not speak any English so she had to serve as an interpreter for her whenever her mother had to go to the Welfare office when she was laid off from her job, or had to run other errands in English, as well as to their Spanish speaking neighbours (Santiago 1993: 219).

After her high school graduation she studied part-time in several colleges around New York while working full-time (Domínguez. Web) and started a career as an actress. By the time she was 21 years old, she had already left her mother’s house to live and travel with her boyfriend Ulvi, a Turkish man older than her mother who upon seeing her at a telephone booth presented himself as a movie director and asked her to audition for him (Santiago 1993: 267). Santiago’s relationship with Ulvi, who had domineering and jealous tendencies, was a rocky one as he was verbally and physically abusive. He would always call her “Chiquita” and would say that she needed him to teach her (Santiago 2004: 48) as she was too innocent for the world. On many occasions she gave up opportunities to be with him and help him achieve his goals, including quitting a job as Assistant to the Executive Director of New York’s Museum of Modern Art (Santiago 2004: 146). After having lived in many cities with Ulvi, while he completed three graduate degrees (Santiago 2004: 289), Santiago, who was 26 at the time (Copeland 1998: para. 3), was awarded with a full scholarship to study for a B.A. in film production

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103 The United States public assistance program accessible to Puerto Ricans because of their U.S. citizenship.
104 She worked at the Museum of Modern Art (Santiago 2004: 131).
105 She acted on Broadway and in a movie called “Up the Down Staircase” in 1967 when she was 19 years old (Copeland 1998).
106 Probably Ulvi is a fictional name as Santiago has explained in the acknowledgments of her memoirs that she had used the real names of her family members but she had renamed or used nicknames for the rest of the people in her life according to the circumstances.
107 Santiago named her third memoir, The Turkish Lover, after this relationship.
at Harvard University (Martínez 2007: 219), from where she graduated Magna Cum Laude in 1976 (Ramírez 2008: 306). After graduating from Harvard she decided to finish her on-and-off relationship with Ulvi after he told her “you have many male friends, Chiquita” and asked her if they all were her lovers (Santiago 2004: 325). She also went to Sarah Lawrence College where she earned an M.F.A. in fiction writing (Ramírez 2008: 306). Later on she was awarded honorary doctorates from Trinity University, Pace University and Metropolitan College (Ramírez 2008: 306).

After her graduation from Harvard, Santiago visited Puerto Rico briefly to film a documentary (Santiago 2004: 319) but returned to New York after feeling rejected and as if her “Puerto Rican-ness” was being questioned (PBS). She has said that this first visit to Puerto Rico after she left the island at the age of 13, prompted her to write for herself in the hope of exploring and understanding what had happened (PBS). When she returned to New York, she met Frank Cantor and got married to him a year later and together they founded CANTOMEDIA, a film and media production company with several documentary filmmaking awards (Santiago 2013).

5.2.1 Literary production

Before publishing her first book, the internationally-acclaimed novel When I Was Puerto Rican, Santiago worked as a script writer for educational and documentary films. It was not until 1985 that she started publishing essays and other pieces of writing, first in Hinham’s Massachusetts local newspaper (Kevane 2000: 125) and later on in newspapers such as The New York Times and the Boston Globe. She also published in magazines such as The Christian Science Monitor, House and Garden, Metropolitan Home, Sports Illustrated, Good Housekeeping and Radcliffe Quarterly (Santiago 2013, Ramírez 306, Hernandez 1997: 157). The fact that Santiago’s mother, as well as Ferré’s, had to renounce her life dreams to bear children was also something that was in Santiago’s thoughts and led her to write these essays. “Two or three years later, I was by then married and had a child, and I began to think about my mother and what it must have been like for her. At the same age, she had already had nine children. That’s when I began to write these personal essays that I thought were good enough to be published.” (PBS)
About her first memoir, *When I was Puerto Rican*, she had said that she started to write it out of a few childhood memories she had after book editor Merloyd Lawrence, who upon reading a couple of her first essays published in the *Radcliffe Quaterly*, prompted her to write a book of memoirs (Hernández 1997: 158). Commenting on what led her to write this first book she has said:

> When I returned to Puerto Rico after living in New York for seven years, I was told I was no longer Puerto Rican because my Spanish was rusty, my gaze too direct, my personality too assertive for a Puerto Rican woman, and I refused to eat some of the traditional foods like morcilla and tripe stew. I felt as Puerto Rican as when I left the island, but to those who had never left, I was contaminated by Americanisms, and therefore, had become less than Puerto Rican. Yet, in the United States, my dark looks, my accented speech, my frequent lapses into the confused silence between English and Spanish identified me as foreign, non-American. In writing the book, I wanted to get back to that feeling of Puertoricanness I had before I came here. Its title reflects who I was then, and asks, who am I today? (Santiago 1993: 278).

After her first published book, Santiago published a fiction novel, *América’s Dream/El sueño de América* in 1996. Subsequently she published a second memoir, *Almost a Woman* in 1998. This memoir won three awards from the American Library Association, received several “Best of Year” mentions (Santiago 2013), and was adapted by Santiago as a film for PBS Masterpiece Theatre, which won a George Foster Peabody Award.

After *Almost a Woman*, Santiago co-edited two anthologies with author and Editor Joie Davidow: Las *Christmas: Favorite Latino Authors Share Their Holiday Memories* (1998) and *Las Mamis: Favorite Latino Authors Remember Their Mothers* (2000). In

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108 The Spanish self-translation, *Cuando era puertorriqueña*, was published simultaneously with the English version in 1993. I will discuss Santiago’s self-translations in the next chapter.

109 It was translated and published in six languages and was an Alternate Selection of the Literary Guild (Santiago 2013). The self-translation, *El sueño de América* was also published simultaneously with the English version.

110 The Spanish translation was made by Puerto Rican Professor Nina-Torres Vidal and it was published in 1999, a year after the publication of the English version.

111 Released in Hungary in 2006.

Santiago has also been recognized for her voluntary work on behalf of public libraries, and as a spokesperson, she is involved in the development of programs for adolescents and battered women and their children, and is a board member in organizations that advocate the development of the arts and literature.

### 5.2.2 Migration and Identity

Santiago’s migration story is the history of thousands of Puerto Ricans who migrated to the United States in the 1950s and 1960s looking to improve their quality of life. Many of these migrants left the Puerto Rican countryside for the urban areas of the island before migrating to the United States, which made their adaptation process more difficult as they had lived most of their lives in the country. Before migrating to New York, Santiago had moved to a slum of Santurce in San Juan where she felt out of place and was mocked by other students for being a jíbara.

Santiago’s migration to New York with her mother and siblings made her feel uprooted because she did not want to become an American. Even though her mother had told her that in Puerto Rico to be a jíbara\(^{113}\) was not desirable and represented a sort of insult, she nonetheless wanted to be a jíbara as she had learned from poems and songs that “jíbaros were rewarded by a life of independence and contemplation” (Santiago 1993: 12). When the Americans arrived in Macún and Santiago’s father told her that they wanted Puerto Ricans to be like the Americans, she decided that she did not want to learn English because she did not want to become American (Santiago 1993: 73).

When Santiago arrived in New York, she started to feel the loss of her Puerto Rican identity as she was forced to define herself as *latina* every time she had to fill out a form that asked about her heritage (Santiago 1993: 56). Another event that forced her to rethink her identity in this new environment was her encounter with a girl in her new neighbourhood two days after her arrival from Puerto Rico. The girl asked her if she was “hispana.” She answered that she was Puerto Rican and the girl told her that in the United States to be Puerto Rican and to be Hispanic was the same thing. After this conversation,

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\(^{112}\) In the same year the Spanish version was published. It was translated by translator and Professor Nina Torres Vidal who also translated *Almost a Woman* into Spanish.

\(^{113}\) “Puerto Rican country dweller” (Santiago 1993: 12)
she realized that after only a few days in New York she had already become something else, which was different from Puerto Rican (Santiago 1993: 5). At the same time, she realized that she was now in a “racial middle” (Santiago 1993: 242) as she was “too dark to be white” and “too white to be black” (Santiago 1993: 242). In Puerto Rico, she was aware that to have a lighter skin complexion was seen as something desirable, because straight hair was called “good” hair and curly hair was called “bad” hair. However, she did not feel that she stood out as she was considered to be a “trigueña” and her “features were neither African nor European but a combination of both” (Santiago 1993: 57).

When Santiago announced that she was going to apply to study at the Performing Arts High School she was bullied by other students at the predominantly Italian, Afro-American and latino school she attended. They thought she believed she was better than them, and her mother, despite being proud of her achievement, accused her “of wanting to go to a school for blanquitos” (Santiago 1993: 57), implying that she was “reaching higher” than she ought to and that she was becoming too independent, too “Americanized.” Santiago is trapped by her mother’s contradictory conceptions of a patriarchal national identity. On the one hand she wants Santiago to succeed in her American life and she is proud that she has been able to learn English so quickly (Santiago 2004: 6). On the other hand though, she wants her to keep being a “nena puertorriqueña decente” (Santiago 2004: 6) and warns her about becoming “Americanized” like her cousins Alma and Corazón (Santiago 2004: 10), who arrived in the United States at a younger age and refused to speak Spanish. Santiago wants to fit into her new environment but is expected to behave according to her mother’s rules, which I believe led her to finally leave home at 21 to find and build her own identity.

Throughout her memoirs, Santiago writes about how her sense of identity was challenged and how those challenges helped her in her quest to define her identity as a Puerto Rican in the U.S. Diaspora. One of these challenges occurred when she was working as Assistant to the Executive Director of New York’s Museum of Modern Art. At the time there was a group of artists that were fighting MOMA’s establishment policies from their ethnic backgrounds and one of these activists was a Puerto Rican activist that Santiago identifies as Ralph Ortiz. Ortiz was working on the foundation of El Museo del Barrio, “a community-based museum that he envisioned would be devoted to the work of Puerto Ricans and other Latin American artists” (Santiago 2004: 134). At one point Ralph and other protesters gathered in front of the MOMA after being ejected from a
performance that involved sheep’s blood, and Santiago was obliged to interfere as an administrator. Ralph, with whom Santiago was having an affair, accused her of “acting white” and of “selling out” because she should understand where they were coming from and should stand with him as a Puerto Rican. Even though she was afraid, she confronted them and asked them to understand her position as the only Puerto Rican on the museum staff and that she was also fighting against stereotypes and trying to do her job well so that more people like her would be hired (Santiago 2004: 135).

When Santiago was twenty-six, she started to study at Harvard University and came into contact with Boston’s Puerto Rican community and with student activists from different ethnic backgrounds, who led her to reflect about race and oppression. It was in that context that she realized that in her struggle not to be stereotyped, she “had bought into the negative Anglo view of Puerto Ricans” by thinking she was a “model Puerto Rican” (Santiago 2004: 262, 261). Santiago had to become independent from her mother who had accused her of compromising her identity by having “learned to function outside [their] culture” and also from Ulvi, who use to call her “spoiled American girl”, so that she could start to grasp her identity as a Puerto Rican woman living in the U.S. Diaspora (Santiago 2004: 63).

Santiago defines herself as a woman that “was born and raised in Puerto Rico who lives and writes in the United States.” She has said that that duality is very natural to her as well as her bilingualism and biculturalism (Bianco 2008: 62). She has characterized her identity as a Puerto Rican identity in harmony with her North American life by saying: “Mi puertorriqueñidad incluye mi vida norteamericana, mi espanglés, el sofrito que -sazona mi arroz con gandules, la salsa de tomate y la salsa del Gran Combo. One culture has enriched the other, and both have enriched me.” The title of her first memoir, When I was Puerto Rican, was criticized in the United States and on the island when it first came out as it was interpreted as if Santiago was rejecting her Puerto Rican identity by saying she was no longer Puerto Rican (Torres & Rivera 2008: 81). In the introduction to the Spanish version of the memoir, Santiago explains the past tense in the title by pointing out that such a title represented a time in her life when she defined herself by the Puerto Rican culture of the country as opposed to now, when after having migrated to the United States she defines herself as a “híbrida entre un mundo y otro” (Santiago Cuando era puertorriqueña: xvii).
In his book *Partes de un todo*, Efraín Barradas categorizes *When I was Puerto Rican* as “otra autobiografía más de una autora que podemos llamar ‘neorrican’” (Barradas 1998: 200). Even though Barradas categorizes Santiago as “neorrican”, he concludes his essay “Esmeralda Santiago o cómo dejar de ser puertorriqueña,” by referring to Santiago’s notion of being Puerto Rican as that of being a “jíbara” (Barradas 1998: 200), stating that Santiago “es tan puertorriqueña como muchos otros que también hace tiempo dejamos de ser jíbaros” (Barradas 1998: 202).

Even though English is the language most used by Santiago, she said that when she was writing *When I Was Puerto Rican*, she would type in English while pronouncing the same phrase in Spanish (Santiago 1994: xv). On spoken language, she has said that she finds herself in a “limbo entre español e inglés.” She has also said that her dreams “son una mezcla de español e inglés que todos entienden, que expresa lo que quiero decir, quién soy, lo que siento. En ese mundo oscuro el idioma no importa” (Santiago 1994: xvi). This dream representation of an imagined world where languages merge is similar to Ferré’s dream of floating in the C&O Canal in the “water of words”, with “the shore of Washington” on one side, and “the shore of San Juan” on the other (Ferré 1991: 154, 155). At the end of the introduction to *Cuando era puertorriqueña*, Santiago expresses a rounded mature identity when she defines three stages of her process of identity definition. The first was her childhood stage when she wanted to be a jíbara, the second stage was when she was a teenager and wanted to be North American, and the third and last was her present matured identity, a “jíbara norteamericana” (Santiago *Cuando era puertorriqueña*: xviii).

5.3 Similarities and Differences

Even though Santiago and Ferré write from different geographical locations, in that Santiago writes from the U.S. Diaspora and Ferré writes from the island, both writers are Puerto Rican writers whose literature occupies and transits a hybrid space. In this space Puerto Rican cultural identity and hybridity, in terms of the linguistic code in which they narrate, plays an important role in the construction of a Puerto Rican identity. This hybrid Puerto Rican identity creates a sense of belonging even if their identities have been uprooted and displaced.

Both Santiago and Ferré migrated when they were thirteen but as I have shown in this chapter, they occupy different migratory contexts due to their different background
in terms of class. Ferré comes from a wealthy family whose expectations towards her were that after completing a basic undergraduate education she would become a wife and a mother. In elementary school, she had learnt English from native speakers and it is possible that she had been to the United States on vacation with her family before she was thirteen, which made her adaptation easier than it was for Santiago. In Santiago’s case, because of the disadvantaged financial situation of her family, she had a different gender role as she was not only expected to study so she could get ahead in life, but she was expected to help her mother to take care of her ten siblings, to adapt to a new environment with no knowledge of English while preserving Puerto Rican values. In terms of race, aside from the fact that all Puerto Rican are *mestizos*, Ferré is less mixed than Santiago as is visible in the colour of her skin and most likely this difference was significant in their adaptation process. Even though they both define their identities as hybrid, I believe their different migratory backgrounds play different roles in relation to their self-translation acts and the way they define their hybrid identities. In Ferré’s case as in Santiago’s, at the age of thirteen she did not have much say about whether or not she wanted to migrate to the United States in the first place, but as she came from a wealthy family she was able to move with more freedom between the two countries, languages and cultures. In Ferré’s case, it is safe to say that her act of self-translation is more related to a conscious decision, contrary to Santiago’s case in which translation is a practical, and to a certain extent expected decision.
Chapter 6: Narrative Subversion

Both novels analyzed in this thesis, *The House on the Lagoon* and *América’s Dream*, are characterized by subversion which operates on several levels, including narrative and linguistic levels. Although linguistic subversion, a postcolonial textual feature present in both novels, is the most important component of this study, I believe it is necessary to explore narrative subversion as well, as the two are complementary.

In Chapter 5, I explored the contextual elements that have contributed to the authors’ self defined hybrid identities, their relationship to the English and Spanish languages and to self-translation. In this chapter, I will explore the hybrid elements present in their literary texts and how Ferré and Santiago utilize narrative and writing strategies to subvert, colonial, patriarchal and class structured society. Through these strategies, they give voice to marginalized sectors of Puerto Rican society such as women and black people, sectors that have been silenced by official histories. I will also explore how characters belonging to these sectors subvert homogeneous conceptualizations of national identity, thereby underscoring hybridity. As in Chapter 5, I will divide this chapter in two sections, one for each author, and I will start each section by providing an overview of the novel’s plot followed by a discussion of the main topics, characters, plots and spaces and how they are part of the authors’ postcolonial discourse to criticize the societies they inhabit.

6.1 Counter Narrative in Rosario Ferré’s *The House on the Lagoon*

From the beginning of her literary career Rosario Ferré has been recognized as a writer who delivers a very harsh social criticism of Puerto Rican bourgeoisie through her narrative. On this topic, José Luis González, recognized as one of Puerto Rico’s best writers, said that “nadie en la historia de nuestra literatura… había ofrecido una imagen tan devastadora de la descomposición social y moral de la burguesía puertorriqueña como la que ofrecen los mejores cuentos de esta escritora” (qtd. in Barradas 1978: 97). This social criticism has been a constant throughout Ferré’s literary career and it is a key theme in *The House on the Lagoon.*
6.1.1 The use of presentational narrative devices to display gender power relations

Whilst reading the first 12 pages of the novel, the reader can appreciate, by interpreting a series of features used by Ferré such as italics, boldface, capital letters, printed ornamentation and chapter division, that there are several narratives working simultaneously in the novel. In the first section of text, which functions as a prologue and is entitled Quintín and Isabel’s Pledge, Isabel is narrating the events that led her to write the manuscript that follows, which we soon realize is the very novel we are reading, *The House on the Lagoon*. The manuscript begins with an introduction by Isabel in which she narrates the violent incident that occurred between her boyfriend at the time, Quintín, and a young man who was in love with her. After this incident, Quintín and Isabel decided to exchange family stories to “. . . examine carefully the origins of anger. . . ” (Ferré 1995: 5) within their families so this anger would not interfere with their happiness. This exchange of family stories triggered Isabel’s interest in writing a manuscript to record them but as she herself says at the end of the introduction, “. . . what I finally wrote was something very different” (6).

The novel is interspersed with insertions of text that are not classified as chapters but that act as paratextual text which narrates Quintín’s and Isabel’s thoughts and interactions about and with the manuscript. It is important to notice that Quintín and Isabel’s paratextual insertions are different in terms of narrative point of view, size and number. Isabel’s insertions, which are fewer and shorter than Quintín’s, act as a sort of diary whereby Isabel, not only a character in Ferré’s novel but also the fictitious author and the main narrator of the novel, records her purpose in writing the manuscript and talks about Quintín’s interactions with the manuscript and about his reactions to it. Even though these paratex
tual insertions are entitled QUINTÍN and ISABEL and they have the same format, Isabel’s insertions are first person narratives and are strategically positioned from the middle of the novel forward. However, an omniscient narrator with a He/She perspective narrates Quintín’s insertions, and there are three times more of these than

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114 All subsequent textual citations from the novel refer to this edition and are indicated by the page number in brackets after the citation.

115 The first insertion we find at the beginning of the novel, called **QUINTÍN AND ISABEL’S PLEDGE**, plays the role of an introduction and it was not added to the novel by Isabel until all the action had taken place. This is evident in the last sentence “My original purpose was to interweave the woof of my memories with the warp of Quintín’s recollections, but what I finally wrote was something very different” (Ferré 1995: 6).
Isabel’s insertions in both number and size. The way in which Ferré spreads these narratives around the main narrative, which is Isabel’s manuscript, is quite deliberate and the number of insertions per manuscript part, as well as their position within these parts, creates a pattern, which emulates the dynamic between the characters in relation to Isabel’s manuscript and builds up suspense in the plot.

The use of a frame narrative, a novel within a novel, allows Ferré to place Isabel’s character in a very privileged position as both an extradiegetic narrator who has a voice at the first level narrative through the text insertions interspersed in the novel/manuscript, and as an intradiegetic narrator who is the fictitious author of the manuscript presented to the reader. As a character Quintín does not really has a voice of his own as even though at the extradiegetic narrative level his perspective is represented by text insertions labelled with his name, these insertions are not narrated by him, but by an omniscient narrator that describes his actions and interactions with the manuscript and with Isabel. To subvert patriarchal authorship even more, Ferré gives this omniscient narrator a female voice. The gender of Quintín’s insertions narrator is evident when she makes comments such as “. . . (like most men, he could barely find the socks in his own drawer without her help) . . . ” (146).

The fact that Ferré deprived Quintín of a narrative voice is consistent with the historiographical perspective followed by Isabel in her manuscript. This manuscript is really a counter-narrative of Puerto Rico’s 20th century history from her perspective as a woman. Isabel, like Ferré herself, has never really been on her own because she got married very young, and knows how the women in her family had to fight against a society that treated them as human incubators, sexual objects and maids, and did not respect their opinions and wishes.

Ferré makes Quintín’s lack of voice more evident after Chapter 18, when he starts to write notes in the margins of Isabel’s manuscript, criticizing her writing style and pointing out parts of her manuscript which in his opinion, contained “mistakes” and were altering official history, his story, and the story of his family. Gender and intellectual roles are reversed in the novel as the feminine character, Isabel, empowers herself and rewrites history from her point of view as a woman ignoring society’s taboos and exposing family secrets. It is the masculine character, Quintín, who now has to write in the margins of the

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116 Isabel’s insertions are 3 in number and spread over 7 pages, and Quintín’s total 10 over 34 pages.
main manuscript in a desperate attempt to silence Isabel’s perspectives about the “official” story or about history.

The aforementioned presentational features can be divided into formal presentational ones such as italics, boldface, capital letters and printed ornamentation, \textsuperscript{117} and into structural and organizational features including the division of the narrative into parts, chapters and insertions and their location in relation to each other.

It seems that Ferré designed all these features to help the reader identify the different narrative levels and to emphasize Isabel’s authorship and empowerment against Quintín’s attempts to discredit her from the margins, challenging and subverting the concept of authorship within the male oriented literary world. The paratextual insertions interrupt the subsequent narration with the effect that the reader has the impression that he or she is reading the manuscript while Isabel is writing it and while Quintín is reading it. This narrative technique adds to the suspense of the novel and creates a very clear dichotomy between the two main characters, between genders and between literature and history.

\textbf{6.1.2 Subversion through Characterization}

The novel contains a large number of characters as is shown in the tree included after the dedication page of the novel. Even though the main characters are Isabel Monfort and Quintín Mendizábal, the way in which Ferré builds up each character’s history allows her to use each one to introduce historical events or to criticize different aspects of Puerto Rican society and the behaviour of the United States towards the island.

\textbf{Isabel and Quintín: Literature versus History, Independence versus Statehood}

One of the main features of Ferré’s novel is the use of characterization to introduce topics and to represent sectors of Puerto Rican society which have been marginalized from official nation building and the construction of history by those in power. The characters that best serve Ferré’s purpose to rebuild history from the point of view of the marginalized, are the two protagonists Isabel and Quintín, who introduce literature and

\textsuperscript{117} Ferré uses a small little printed symbol to correlate the parts of the manuscript with its chapters and to distinguish them from Quintín and Isabel’s insertions. This symbol is first seen in the cover of the book accompanying the name of the novel/manuscript, and it accompanies all of Isabel’s manuscript chapter but not Isabel’s and Quintín's paratextual insertions.
history as the main topics of the novel, thereby inviting the reader to reflect upon their roles in society, how these societies are constructed and by whom.

Through these two characters, Quintín as historian and Isabel as novice novelist with a degree in Romance Literature, Ferré not only creates a dichotomy between genders and their roles within society, but creates a dichotomy “. . . entre géneros intelectuales: es decir entre la literatura, representada por Isabel, y la historia, representada por Quintín” (Giusti 1994: 130), and between political ideologies regarding the relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States (statehood versus independence). The literature-history dichotomy allows her to tell stories from different points of view, a sort of “. . . literary version of Rashomon . . .”, to show how “. . . everybody manipulates the truth to a certain extent” (Perry 1993: 90). She has said that she learned this technique from Latin American writers such as José Donoso and that in her opinion “literature is made of many pieces, of a reinterpretation of similar themes, of a recycling of materials” (Perry 1993: 98).

In the first text insertion that narrates Quintín’s first encounter with Isabel’s manuscript, the narrator relates his reaction when he found out that she was writing the manuscript. He does not mind that his wife is writing a book about their families’ histories as he supported her desire to become a writer and “. . . didn’t want Isabel to be just another bourgeois housewife. He wanted her to amount to something, so he could be proud of her” (Ferré 1995: 70), but he is concerned by the fact that she is writing it by herself, without his input. At the beginning of the section Quintín seems to assign an equal value to history and imagination as the two important sources of fiction, and he seems to give her credit for “. . . her authentic efforts at writing fiction” (71). However, later on as the section progresses his preference for history and his criticism of literature are disclosed when he says that writing “. . . is not a serious occupation, like science or history” (72). By comparing science to history, by pointing out that “. . . all writers interpreted reality in their own way . . .” without acknowledging how the same could be said about history writing, Quintín is de-authorizing her-story (Isabel’s female perspective story) in favour of his-story (mainstream male written history) (72). This becomes even clearer when he calls Isabel silly and categorizes as an “. . . inexcusable mistake . . .” the scene where she describes when a newly arrived Buenaventura, Quintín’s father, sees a hot-dog stand and asks the vendor what it is (73). In common with the narrator he recognizes that “. . . no one knew for sure when hot-dogs had arrived on the island” and then goes on to say that “. . . he doubted it was before the Second World War” (73). Although he does not know
when hot-dogs arrived to the island, he is giving his opinion, or what he believes is true, more weight than Isabel’s opinion or version of the truth. What starts as a critique of literature turns into anger and discomfort toward Isabel and the manuscript she is writing, not only because she is writing the manuscript by herself without acknowledging that “. . . she could never have written the chapters without his help” (72-3), but because she is “. . . manipulating history for fiction’s sake” (71). “She had consciously altered the facts of history to serve her story” (74). She has chosen not to write from his perspective but from her perspective as a woman who is the protagonist of the stories that she narrates in her manuscript. It is important to note that as Quintín reads Isabel’s manuscript, a manuscript that she has hidden from him because she does not want him to read it, he does not think that he is invading her privacy, “. . . he feels he is doing the right thing” (74). When he says that Isabel “. . . must hold the record for wives who have shared the same bed with their husbands for years and still have managed to keep secrets from them” (72), he is implying that as a wife Isabel does not have the right to keep secrets from him. Isabel can be a writer as long as she depends on his support and relies on him to provide the “truth”, as long as he acknowledges that she needs him and as long as she does not keep any secrets from him. Quintín’s thoughts about gender roles are also evident in his reaction to Isabel’s portrayal of his parents, Buenaventura and Rebecca. Quintín excuses his father’s “vile temper” (74), which is the reason why he has “. . . a hard time getting along with him as a child” by saying “. . . he was a generous provider and a kind parent” (74). On the other hand, Quintín considers as a vile rumour spread by Petra, the black maid whom Buenaventura had hired, Isabel’s account of how his mother has “ignored” him and has “relegated” him to the cellar, but accepts Isabel’s account of how Rebecca “had given up her artistic career and had devoted herself to him” (74).

In Quintín’s second intervention, he differentiates history from literature again when he says that one of the principles he believed in, described by him as “the historian’s point of view”, is that “there was a true and a false, a right and a wrong”. For him, fiction writers such as Isabel believes that “[n]othing is true, nothing is false, everything is the color of the glass you’re looking through . . .” (106). Again, Quintín is elevating history over literature and its subjectivity by asserting history’s false presumption of objectiveness. Even though he almost burned Isabel’s manuscript upon reading how she described their out-of-wedlock sexual encounters, thinking about what people in San Juan would think if they knew, Quintín had supposedly decided to adopt a “critical attitude”
“as if he were a conscientious literary critic” to be able to “... create a distance between what he was reading and his own personal feelings...” (107). With that perspective in mind he starts by admitting that Isabel’s novel was “riveting” and “had its good points” (ibid) but the falseness of this “objective” attitude disclosed itself when Quintín declares that “... the manuscript was tainted with feminist prejudices” and for him “feminism was the curse of the twentieth century” (108). Through the novel’s omniscient narrator, Ferré lets the reader know that Quintín’s main reasons for resenting Isabel’s novel is because in it she was the one in power, “... imposing her opinions and making the decision; creating or destroying characters (and reputations!) at will”, (108) and because she was emphasizing through the female characters in both families, how they were oppressed by men in the patriarchal societies in which they had to live. He resented her for empowering herself through the novel, for reverting society’s gender roles and for this he labels his wife’s act of writing as a “violent” act directed towards him. Quintín also suggests that Isabel, in common with her Corsican ancestors, has “... the typical personality of the colonized, envious of other’s people’s successes” and was “... prone to inferiority complexes” (109-10). At this point, he starts to think about how he would write it if he were writing the novel and he starts to write his-story on a writing pad (109), which he considered was the “historical truth.” This was Quintín’s first attempt to modify Isabel’s manuscript, letting her know that he had read the chapters, but he changed his mind and threw away the pages he had written, leaving only “... a few commentaries here and there in pencil, in a tiny script which was almost invisible” (146). These pages are important, however, because even though he throws them away, in them Quintín rewrites the “true” story of the Monfort brothers, Isabel’s grandfather Lorenzo Monfort and his brother Orencio, and why Orencio has ordered “... the foreman to chop off Lorenzo Monfort’s head...” (112), leaving Isabel’s grandmother, Abby Antongeorgi, widowed. Quintín learned this story from one of his salesmen at his company Gourmet Imports, who had heard it from Don Alvarado, the owner of a grocery store in Adjuntas. Even though he did not learn the story first hand, he decides that Don Alvarado is a “trustworthy man” (110), and that his story has more value than Isabel’s version of what happened simply because he is a man.

In the next insertion, number 3, Quintín shows once again his intent to discredit Isabel’s story in front of history/his-story. He presents Isabel’s interpretation about Puerto Rican historical/political events such as the 1950 nationalist attack on President Truman,
the 1954 nationalist shootings at the United States House of Representatives, and the 1937 Ponce Massacre. Subsequently, he counteracts Isabel’s interpretation with his own, followed by phrases such as “. . . she made another historical slip. . . .” “. . . the truth was . . .”, “[t]his, of course was inaccurate.,” and “. . . the lens through which the event was seen had been subtly altered . . .”, among others (149-152).

Quintín’s discussion about these historical events is accompanied by the presentation of a political dichotomy consisting of statehood on one hand, supported by him, and on the other independence, supported by Isabel. Through this introduction of Puerto Rico’s political status as a topic, Ferré also introduces the “language problem” (150), consisting of the American governors’ refusal to learn Spanish and of the imposition of English as the language of instruction in public schools. This postcolonial critique of U.S. colonial practices is accompanied throughout by a reflection on English as being the reason why Puerto Rico is part of “the modern world”, while other countries such as Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti are “still in the Middle Ages” (150). The narrator presents this reflection as Quintín’s opinion on the matter, but it relates directly to a controversial statement made by Ferré, in which she equates Puerto Rico’s position as a state of the United States with being part of the modern world.118 I believe that Ferré also uses Quintín’s reflection about Puerto Rico’s political status and about Isabel’s preference for independence, to make a metatextual commentary about her own language choice in writing The House on the Lagoon:

Would she have written her manuscript in English if she didn’t think English was important? If she had written her novel in Spanish and published it in Puerto Rico, why, only a handful of people would read it! But if she published in the United States, thousands would read it (151).

This insertion is one of the most important ones because in it Quintín reflects upon Isabel’s portrayal of his family, especially her portrayal of his father as an abusive husband, and of his mother as a manipulative wife who made use of the “dead fly” strategy. This strategy was “. . . the traditional way for a married woman to behave in those days” consisting of “apparent meekness” and obedience, to “. . . get away with a lot” (148-149). For the first time Quintín thinks about what it is that Isabel is trying to

accomplish by portraying his family in such a way. He concludes that by describing Rebecca’s behaviour against Buenaventura’s authority, Isabel wanted to “describe the tactics of married women in the past” (149). Through Quintín’s statement about Isabel’s purpose in writing the manuscript, Ferré is giving her audience information about her aim in writing the novel from a feminine point of view.

Even though Quintín felt that Isabel was challenging his authority as her husband and as a historian with her “fantastic fabrications”119 (148) and her “historical slips”120 (149), he decided that it was “. . . impossible to respond to all the false statements Isabel had put in her novel” because “. . . he certainly didn’t have time for that” (152). In insertion four, though, Quintín goes further with his intervention into Isabel’s manuscript. Previously, in insertion number two, the reader learned that he had rewritten an episode of Isabel’s story on a writing pad but decides to throw this away leaving only a “tiny script”, which apparently was not noticed by Isabel because it “was almost invisible” (146), as proof that he had read the chapters. This time, his intervention progresses and becomes more aggressive. At first he starts to make small notes in the margins thinking that he could “. . . help Isabel write the perfect novel” (188), and then he proceeds to write “. . . freely on the back of Isabel’s manuscript” when he reaches the end of the margin (189). He obviously does not care if she finds out what he has been up to once she reads his comments. These notes are different from the initial commentaries that Quintín writes in the margins though. Not only because now he writes in the body of the manuscript, but because previously Quintín was acting as an editor giving the appearance of being objective, but now he talks to Isabel directly, adding entire paragraphs and not just notes, knowing full well that she will read his comments. When he starts to discuss “. . . Isabel’s tendency to use her female characters as shadow players of her own personality” (189), and her identification with such “rebellious characters” (189), his enthusiasm grew and he started to take over as if he was the author of the manuscript. In the paragraphs, he adds to her work, Quintín writes his version of Kerinki’s episode, which he differentiates, form the one Isabel presented in her manuscript as being “based on facts.” He declares that by writing his version of what happened he wants to prove that “. . . history can be just as valid from the point of view of art if it is properly told”, and he also wants to show that “all stories have a history” (190).

119 The plural is mine.
120 The plural is mine.
Even though Quintín recognizes that Isabel “. . . was becoming a better writer as the novel progressed. . . ” (187) and that her work produced “aesthetic pleasure” in him, his comments about her work as a writer are plagued with irony. He not only resents that Isabel is writing the chapters without his help as “. . . she rarely asked him questions anymore” (186-7), but also that with her authorship she is empowering herself and is trying to break the mold of society’s imposed female role. It is not that he holds the writing profession in contempt, but he is resentful that even though he would have liked to be a writer as well, as he believed “a good historian is as creative as a good novelist”, he had to adhere to society’s ascribed gender role (187). As a man, “he had to bite the bullet” (187), “like all men who were responsible heads of household” (187).

“He never had the opportunity to sit around doing nothing, fanning himself on the terrace as Isabel did, watching the pelicans dive into the lagoon and waiting for ideas to come to him so he could capture them in beautiful words.”(187)

Influenced by society’s mainstream gender roles, Quintín believes that in order to grow up and be responsible, women have to be obedient to men. This becomes evident when he describes his mother as being “ungovernable” and “used to having her own way” until his father “helped her to grow up and she accepted her responsibilities as a wife and mother” (189). With this comment, Quintín is subscribing to the machismo present in a class-based society. Consistent with his thoughts about his mother and how she should have behaved according to society’s gender roles, Quintín expects Isabel to sacrifice herself and her work by keeping the novel “a secret between them”, as “proof of her devotion” for him (188). What bothers him the most is the fact that Isabel seems to intend to publish the novel. He was not really opposed to her writing it, in fact, “he would be the first to compliment her on it,” but he was worried that with the novel’s publication his “family’s reputation” would be at risk (188).

At this point in the novel the first Isabel-authored insertion takes place. In it, Isabel shares her anger towards Quintín for daring to read and modify her manuscript behind her back. Even though Quintín has openly threatened her at the dinner table by quoting from the Bible, “[w]hoever troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind” (197), she decides that she will not only keep writing, but she will also include the story of their marriage in her novel. From this point forward, the novel becomes more dynamic because its chapters are in direct correspondence with what is happening between Isabel and
Quintín, who becomes an important part of her audience. Isabel now knows that Quintín is reading what she writes, even though they have not spoken about it. Because of this, she includes details of their family histories that contradict Quintín’s version. For example, in Quintín’s second insertion, he discredits her account of the financial situation of the Monfort’s twins Lorenzo and Orenicio, by saying that their coffee farm “… wasn’t the affluent establishment Isabel has romantically made it out to be”, and that “… the brothers didn’t live in a balconied two-storied mansion, but in a low wooden shed they built themselves “(111). In Chapter 19, the first chapter that Isabel writes immediately after she finds out that Quintín is reading her manuscript, she counterattacks by mentioning the wedding sheets her grandmother Abby asked for on the day she died, proof that “… life with Lorenzo must have been very fine indeed” (203). The chapters that follow are even more subversive than the first half of the novel in terms of the narrative focus on unveiling how patriarchal society kept the women of both families oppressed and how some of these women subverted this order. Because of the large number of characters and stories included by Ferré’s novel, I will only include some of those that are present in this second half.

Women and their Reproductive Rights: The cases of Gabriela and Carmita

Through these two characters, Gabriela, Isabel’s maternal grandmother and Carmita, Gabriela’s daughter and Isabel’s mother, Ferré introduces the topic of women’s reproductive rights. After having a baby per year for six years in a row, Gabriela, married to Vincenzo Antonsanti\(^\text{121}\), decided to ban her husband from her bedroom as a method of birth control until she reached her menopause. Notwithstanding her husband’s insistence that she “… honored a husband’s prerogatives”, her love for him and her enjoyment of sex, Gabriela stood by her decision of not having any more children and “… defended her celibacy with brooms, dust mops, and even kitchen knives” (83). Gabriela not only subverts society’s expectations of her as a woman when she empowers herself and claims her rights over her own body, but she also subverts to her religion when she stops attending church even though she was a practicing Catholic. When she realized that the Church promoted a double standard about sex in relation to men and women, condemning women’s enjoyment of sex, while men’s sexual desires where considered part of nature, she stopped praying to the Virgin Mary as she felt she was betraying her gender by

\(^\text{121}\) During their twenties, both Gabriela and Vincenzo Antonsanti, originally from Corsica, migrated to Yauco Puerto Rico where together they built a coffee farm (Ferré 1995: 82).
aligning herself with St. Peter, St. Paul and the Fathers of the Holy Church “. . . who were all unfair to women” (84). When her six daughters grew up, “. . . she made them promise they would have one child every five years.” She told them, “[a]n only child is portable. The mother may carry it with her everywhere. But two babies are a powerful link in the iron chain with which men tie women down and make them their prisoners” (85).

Three years after Isabel was born, her mother Carmita became pregnant again and when Gabriela found out she travelled to San Juan and “forced her to drink some brew to terminate the pregnancy” (85). The abortive drink caused a heavy haemorrhage and left Carmita sterile which in turn caused a deep depression: even when she recovered from it she was never the same (87).

With this story Ferré is positioning herself as an advocate of women’s right to have control over their bodies and reproductive system against whoever and whatever threatens it, be that men, religion or even other women, and as an opponent of forced sterilization. She is also suggesting that women can be as oppressive as men when in power.

Rebecca, Quintín’s mother, was the only child of Madeleine Rosich and Aristides Arrigoitía who were part of San Juan’s bourgeoisie and for that reason, she was spoiled and treated as a “porcelain doll” (28). She married Buenaventura at sixteen, just a month after he had escorted her to the Spanish Casino carnival where she was the elected queen. She did not want children as she wanted to be a dancer and a poet (39, 44). She wrote poetry in secret and organized artistic gatherings with her friends in the bungalow where she lived with Buenaventura. She wanted to learn to dance on her own “. . . by identifying with nature” as the dancer Isadora Duncan has done, and for this reason she spent a lot of time in the garden (46). Her artistic inclinations were discouraged by her parents and treated as “bizarre interests” (46) and later on they were ignored and forbidden by her husband Buenaventura when he became Puerto Rico’s Spanish consul. At that point, they were living in the First House on the Lagoon, built by Milan Pavel, a Polish architect who had lived in Chicago and was the protegé of Frank Lloyd Wright. Pavel had built the

122 In Puerto Rico, the Puerto Rican government together with the International Planned Parenthood Federation implemented a sterilization program funded by the United States government that “had sterilized roughly one third of Puerto Rican women” as part of a population control plan. (http://stanford.edu/group/womenscourage/cgi-bin/blogs/familyplanning/2008/10/23/forced-sterilization-in-puerto-rico/)
house as a “Temple of Art” (51) as he had fallen in love with Rebecca and wanted her to live in a house that would “...enable her to go on living for beautiful things in spite of being married to a boor” (47). Rebecca would often meet with her artistic friends in the “...beautiful golden terrace at the back of the house” that Pavel had built “floating over the lagoon” (48), but after her husband became consul, the house turned into a “Temple of Commerce and Diplomacy.” Buenaventura expected her to act as a social host, giving up her artistic interests, “because it wasn’t seemly for a diplomat’s wife to patronize such bohemian goings-on” (51). When she tried to claim the house as her territory, Buenaventura put her down by using a very famous and sexist Latin American saying, “a man’s home is like a rooster’s coop: women may speak out when chickens get to pee” (51). Another way in which Rebecca resisted Buenaventura’s dictatorship was through the use of irony. This tactic is evident in an episode narrated by Isabel in which Buenaventura had invited the President of the Royal Bank of Canada to have dinner at home with them; Rebecca poured him coffee in a broken cup that had been glued. When the cup broke again in the hands of the bank president and the hot coffee spilled all over his lap, Rebecca “...smiled charmingly and said without losing her composure: ‘Please, excuse my clumsiness, sir. My husband abhors waste and never throws anything away, even broken cups. That’s why he fully deserves to be trusted by the Royal Bank’” (52, 53). At one point Rebecca left Buenaventura and moved to Atlanta to live with her parents and her parental grandfather, as she could no longer tolerate Buenaventura’s ways. A week after Rebecca left him, Buenaventura travelled to Atlanta asking for forgiveness and that same day Rebecca told him she was pregnant. Buenaventura not only apologized to her but also promised her that if she returned with him to the island, she could resume her artistic activities. “From that day on she reigned as undisputed mistress of the house on the lagoon” (56), but she had to become a mother to be able to have her kingdom. Previously she had considered maternity a threat to her freedom to dance and to dedicate her life to the pursuit of her artistic interests, but she used her “weakness” as leverage to obtain the freedom to do what she wanted.

123 When she says “a man’s kingdom is his business and a woman’s is the home”, she is subscribing to patriarchal society’s gender roles but at the same time she is exercising “las prácticas de resistencia frente al poder” (Ludmer 1984: 49), and trying to gain some agency so she can pursue her interests.

124 Buenaventura had given orders to Rebecca and to the house servants not to throw away any broken porcelain “...so he could keep track of how much waste there was at the house” (52).
The truce between Buenaventura and Rebecca lasted seven years and ended when Rebecca and her friends organized a performance of Salomé’s *Dance of the Seven Veils* at the golden terrace house built for her by Pavel. Buenaventura, upon seeing his wife “. . . almost stark naked, except for the golden goblets” on her breast, “. . . took off his cordovan belt” and “. . . flogged her until she fell unconscious to the floor” (65). Rebecca knew that Buenaventura had guests coming to dinner that night and was aware that “it was a risky decision”, but “she was determined to be true to her artistic vocation, as she promised Pavel” (65). Her act of rebellion put an end to the false harmony between Buenaventura and Isabel, and revealed that Buenaventura was the one in power.

Buenaventura blamed Pavel for encouraging her artistic activities and for her having “. . . lost touch with reality” (66). He justified her beating by saying that he had “to give her a lesson to make her come down to earth” (66). To emphasize his demonstration of power, Buenaventura demolished the house that Pavel had designed for Rebecca, including her library (215), and “. . . built a Spanish revival mansion with granite turrets, bare brick floors and a forbidding granite stairway with a banister made of iron spears” (67). All the materials that he used in the construction of the new house were symbols of a new order where art and freedom had no place. He physically and materially impose himself on Rebecca and her interests by beating her and replacing all the artistic features of the house with very harsh and masculine ones. Moreover, he also strengthened gender roles by demanding that Rebecca gave him more children and by imposing a behavioural code which ordered that all habitants of the house must “. . . get up at daybreak, take a cold shower before going to Mass and work for his keep” (68).

Regarding society’s gendered roles, Ferré comments through Rebecca’s character on how women, in spite of being the victims of a patriarchal system that keeps them subjugated and does not allow them to fully develop their talents and capacities, perpetuate that subjugation through their children’s upbringing. This perpetuation of *machismo* is evident when Rebecca agrees with Buenaventura that Isabel’s parents had made a mistake by sending her to study abroad as she “. . . had evidently enjoyed too much freedom” living by herself in the United States (209). For that reason, they had planned to send their two daughters Patria and Libertad to a “finishing school” in Switzerland where each would learn to “. . . bring up her children better” and to be a “polished hostess” for their husbands’ social gatherings (209).
Rosario Ferré is known for having her female characters exercise subversion through traditionally feminine domestic tasks and one example of this is the character of Ermelinda. She was the daughter of a widowed lace-maker from Ponce who gained a political labour conscience and joined the needle-worker’s strike as a leader upon finding out that the negligées that she, her sisters and her mother made at home to sell at the garment factory, were sold for fifty dollars while they were only paid fifty cents by the owner of the factory. In her speeches, she would denounce how the garment industry used sexist slogans to promote its products:

If the lacemakers of Puerto Rico have fingers as slender as flower stems, she said, “it’s not because they’re born frail and sensuous but because they have t.b. And if the children of Puerto Rico, “she would add, “can sew as daintily as elves, it’s not because they’re born delicate by nature, or any shit like that, but because they have tapeworms and are starving (220).

As part of the strike, Ermelinda led a march to San Juan’s Capitol building to put pressure on the Puerto Rican government to improve the working conditions of people in the needlework industry, but she ended up in jail. In prison, she was sexually abused and was set free only after Don Bolívar paid for her bail. Don Bolívar was a married Mayagüez lawyer who once heard her give a speech and had fallen in love with her. When she was freed, Don Bolívar “…drove her to Ponce himself, bought her a house…and moved in with her” (221). After her experience as a labour leader “she swore she would never bother to march for labour rights again” but she found a different way to “win the struggle against powerful men” (222). She set up a workshop in her house and a boutique next to it where she would not only make beautiful gowns. Her gowns “…made women mysteriously seductive, so that their escorts would inevitably become infatuated or fall head over heels in love with them,” and she would also teach her female customers how to use desire and temptation “…to seduce a convenient suitor, one who could support her in style” (223). As she could not change the way in which women were treated in the labour market through her activism, she decided to use the unfair way in which women were perceived by society in her favour in order to empower herself and to teach other women how to do the same.

Another example of how Ferré uses characters to subvert patriarchal society is the character of Isabel’s parental grandmother Abby, whose maiden name was Valentina
Antongeorgi and she then became Valentina Monfort when she married Lorenzo Monfort, “... a coffee planter from Adjuntas” (99). Valentina wanted to become a nurse but when she was sixteen years old, she had to put her studies aside to take care of her brothers once her mother passed away. Valentina’s father remarried, and she married Lorenzo when she still “looked almost like a little girl” (99), but her marriage was not the result of a love story. One day Lorenzo passed by Valentina’s house in old San Juan and saw her on the balcony while she was killing a chicken for cooking purposes. The next day he passed by her house again and saw her playing the piano and “[a] few days later he went to see her father and asked for her hand” (99). In this way Ferré underscores how at the beginning of the twentieth century in Puerto Rican patriarchal society, women were disposed of as property and marriage was celebrated as a business transaction between the father and the future husband. Later on in the novel, Abby subverts this order after she becomes a widow by moving back to San Juan to live as an independent woman instead of going back to her parents’ house, by raising her son Carlos by herself as a single mother, by setting up a very successful culinary business from scratch and by paying for her son’s education, allows him in turn to set up his own business.

6.1.3 The construction of a postcolonial hybrid identity

Through the family histories of the Mendizábal and the Monforts, written in the form of a saga, Ferré narrates crucial twentieth century historical events that have woven together Puerto Rico and the United States, engendering the hybrid that is today’s Puerto Rico. Her novel The House on the Lagoon demystifies and deconstructs the concept of La Gran Familia Puertorriqueña, developed by Puerto Rican hacendados in the nineteenth century. The concept of La Gran Familia Puertorriqueña, served as a way to build a united front against Spain’s colonial power on the island, in order to dominate as a social class, and to build a populist movement that would back their interests and give the impression that they were acting in the interests of all Puerto Ricans (Quintero 1978: 24). This populist concept has also been used by the Puerto Rican “Hispanophilic nationalist independentistas” as a tool against U.S. cultural imperialism and it has ‘othered’ the hybridity present in Puerto Rican culture (Khader 2003: 141).

125 When she started she would make “curd cheeses wrapped in plantain leaves which she sold from house to house” (Ferré 1995: 104).
In the Puerto Rican context, there are two kinds of cultural hybridity\textsuperscript{126} that coexist and are treated differently. On the one hand, there is the cultural hybridity, which is the product of the racial mix between the African, the Spanish and the native Taíno, celebrated and portrayed as the hallmark of Puerto Rican identity, even though, as the work of several academics shows, the three racial elements are not celebrated equally\textsuperscript{127}. On the other hand, there is a cultural hybridity, which is the product of the colonial political relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. This relationship has created a material and a symbolic presence of the United States in Puerto Rico that has had great influence on the island’s culture. Even though Ferré presents both kinds of cultural hybridity in her novel, this chapter will focus on the latter as it is one of the most important postcolonial features of Ferré’s literature, and it is essential to understanding Ferré’s act of self-translation.

From the beginning of the novel, hybridity plays a central role in \textit{The House on the Lagoon}. As has been suggested by scholars, the house that gives the novel its title is a metaphor for the nation. Ferré begins to construct the image of hybridity from the outset by describing the site where Buenaventura builds the chalet that preceded the house as a site “. . . where the mangrove swamp met the private beach of the lagoon” (Ferré 1995: 9). The animals that inhabited this location, not entirely a swamp or a lagoon, are described as both “. . . amphibious and terrestrial” and they lived “. . . half immersed in the mud, half encrusted in the mossy cartilage of the wood” (10). Ferré continues the construction of hybrid spaces through narrative in Chapter 2, in which she describes the colonial part of the city of San Juan, where Buenaventura arrived on the 4\textsuperscript{th} of July in 1917. In this description we see the material presence of U.S. culture in steamships with North American names, “. . . the Mississippi and the Virginia . . .”, the Federal Post Office, the 4\textsuperscript{th} of July Parade, the presence of the American Red Cross, and the shape of the San Juan Capitol building whose dome was “. . . an exact copy of the one Thomas Jefferson built at Monticello” (16-17). These elements are presented side-by-side with Puerto Ricans wearing “straw hats” (Ferré 1995: 18), symbol of the Puerto Rican peasant, the \textit{jibaro}, and taking part in cockfights (Ferré 1995: 20). The presence of U.S. cultural elements on the island already presents hybridity, but Ferré goes even further when she

\textsuperscript{126} In this thesis, I have adopted the definition of hybridity provided by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin: “the creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zones produced by colonization” (Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tiffin 1998: 20).

\textsuperscript{127} See research on racial discrimination in Puerto Rico (Duany 2000, Zenón 1975).
presents a pink Federal Customs House with “. . . guava colored pinnacles on the roof”, and hot dogs alongside “fresh sugar cane juice” (guarapo de caña) (16-17), considered by Puerto Ricans to be a very traditional drink.

Puerto Rican culture is also described as being hybrid through having incorporated different cultural elements from Spain, Africa and the United States. The various ways in which different members of different social classes have incorporated or resisted these cultural elements is shown in several episodes throughout the novel. One of these instances is when the narrator makes reference to the Puerto Rican diet of 1917, the year of Buenaventura’s arrival on the island from Spain. The narrator mentions that even though the island was starting to be influenced more and more by the North Americans, “. . . most well-to-do people favored the paella valenciana, Segovian sobreasada, ensaimadas from Mallorca, and other such tasty dishes over American-style food” (12). This comment about the diet of the Puerto Rican “well-to-do people” (12), shows a class identification by the Puerto Rican aristocracy with the former colonial power as a result of socio-political alliances formed during Spanish colonial times, but it also shows resistance to the new U.S. colonial empire. Another example of resistance to the cultural and political influence to which Puerto Ricans were exposed can be observed in terms of rum consumption. Casks of rum are shown being thrown overboard from a ship as required by the Dry Law imposed by the United States on the island, while at a cockfight, people are shown drinking openly and rum is used by participants in the practice of Cuban santería inherited from Africa (20). These two scenarios, while revealing a hybrid culture influenced by three different cultures, African, Spanish and North American, show the preference for Spanish and African culture over North American.

Through Isabel’s narration, Ferré confronts us with characters who by showing their contradictions display the hybridity of the Puerto Rican nation and its people. Abby, Isabel’s grandmother, is the perfect example of this hybrid identity as she is a fervent supporter of independence for the island, but at the same time she worships the Sears’ catalogue and “. . . cherished her American passport as if it were a jewel” (183).

6.2 Counter narrative in Esmeralda Santiago’s América’s Dream

Esmeralda Santiago’s América’s Dream is a fictional literary piece that narrates a journey through borders, languages, and cultures. This journey is experienced by América, a maid who works at La Casa del Francés, a small hotel in Vieques, which is an
island-municipality located to the east of Puerto Rico. América has a harsh life that includes problems with her alcoholic “embittered mother”, her fourteen-year-old rebel “resentful daughter” Rosalinda, who has run away with her boyfriend, and Correa, the father of her daughter who married another woman and tells her he loves her while he beats her up (Santiago 1996: 285). These problems, especially the numerous beatings she suffers at the hands of Correa, coupled with his decision to separate Rosalinda from her mother without her consent as a way of showing his power over her, lead América to migrate to Westchester, New York. In Westchester, América works as a housekeeper and a babysitter for the Leverettes, a family she met at La Casa del Francés when she babysat their two little children Kyle and Meghan upon a request from Don Irving, the owner of the hotel who favors her because he is the lover of her mother, Ester. Towards the end of the novel, Rosalinda’s anger towards her mother leads her to give information to her father Correa about América’s whereabouts. Correa works as a guard at Sun Bay Beach, taking down the names and personal information of tourists who want access to the hidden beaches under the control of the United States Navy, and the city on the postmark of the letter that Rosalinda receives from América is enough for him to discover the Leverettes’ address and telephone number. Once Correa knows where to find América, he calls her and tries to convince her that he has learned his lesson and that he will never beat her again. Terrified, and knowing that if she agrees to return to the island with Correa her situation will worsen, as deep down he is outraged that “his” woman dared to leave him, América plans an escape. As part of this plan and as a way to gain time, América tries to keep Correa at bay by pretending to agree to go on a vacation with him but Correa suspects foul play, appears at the Leverettes’ house and attacks her. During this attack, Correa stabs América but even though she is hurt she fights back and kills him in self-defense.

América’s Dream is a narrative full of subversions but the two main features here are subversion to patriarchal society and to the colonial power represented by the foregrounding of the presence of the United States in Puerto Rico.

6.2.1 Subversion to Patriarchal Society

There are at least two ways through which Santiago subverts mainstream patriarchal society, by emphasizing through her narrative the aspects of patriarchal
society that oppress women and keep them marginalized, and by having the novel’s characters subvert these social aspects with their actions.

The fact that the main characters of the novel are women, América, her mother Ester, and her daughter Rosalinda, is the first sign of narrative subversion as it places women, a marginalized sector of patriarchal society, at the centre of the story. This focus on female characters is consistent with Santiago’s interest in giving her narrative a female perspective and in focusing on a female audience (Hernández 1997: 160-161).

In América’s Dream Santiago criticizes both Puerto Rican and American patriarchal societies but she does so in different ways. Throughout the entire novel Santiago utilizes the concept of the cycle to underscore how in patriarchal society the gender roles that keep women marginalized and serve to justify violence against them function as a mechanism to preserve a status quo full of gender inequalities, and are reproduced through the nuclear family and social interaction. She also highlights how, as part of this social scheme, women participate in the reproduction and perpetuation of these chauvinistic gender roles that keep the cycle of violence alive. Importantly, however, she also shows through América’s actions how they can contribute to break this cycle.

The cycle concept is introduced first in the novel through the presentation of three generations of women, Ester, América and Rosalinda. These three women have shared the same circumstances of being the daughters of single mothers who have been marginalized not only because they are women, or because they are poor, but because they are poor women living in a colony. They are part of a long chain of “countless generations” (Santiago 1996: 60) of daughters who have suffered the “family curse” (32) of becoming single teenage mothers after running away with their boyfriends. These women are left with no option but to serve the colonial master for generations and are stigmatized by society as “loose women” and bad mothers (57-58). Santiago suggests that this cycle of oppression and marginalization of fatherless “girls bringing up girls” (60) who later become teenage single mothers themselves is timeless, when she recounts the story of Marguerite, América’s ancestor who migrated to Vieques from France. Marguerite was sixteen when she arrived in Vieques as the maid to a French woman.

128 All subsequent textual citations from the novel refer to this edition and are indicated by the page number in brackets after the citation.
recently married to a man who had inherited a sugar cane plantation on the island. When the French woman died from fever, the owner of the *hacienda* made Marguerite his lover but never gave his last name to their daughter Dominique, and upon his death, Marguerite “. . . was retired to a cabin at the edge of the property, within walking distance of the house, where she was housekeeper to the new owners” (77). That French man was the first owner of what later became La Casa del Francés, and “. . .each time, one of Marguerite’s descendants, a woman with a child and no husband, appeared at the back door claiming to be the housekeeper” (*ibid*). “América is the daughter of the great-great-great-granddaughter of the resourceful Marguerite” (*ibid*) and she too is a single mother who works as a housekeeper for a white man who represents colonial power. All América dreamed of was to have a husband who loved her and a “. . .house full of children, girls and boys running in and out of a neat home . . .” (107). She projects her dreams onto her daughter’s life and wishes that Rosalinda can “. . . break from her history, that she would educate herself, marry above her station, like Yamila Valentin, and live in a house where she would employ maids, not be one”129 (77). When she realizes that her relationship with her daughter is falling apart and that Correa is taking advantage of the situation, she feels frustrated and begins to examine her life. She asks herself why she ended up being abused by Correa, with no control over her own life (114) and with no say in the decision-making process of her daughter’s life.

Throughout the novel, Santiago highlights traditional patriarchal ideas about social gender roles by embedding them into the story’s plot. The “situation” with Rosalinda and Correa’s abusive behavior leads América to reflect on gender roles and to realize how they have influenced the situation of women in Puerto Rican society. The first example is how when América first finds out that Rosalinda has run away with Taino, she goes to find Correa instead of going to find Rosalinda herself. The reason behind this behaviour is that “[i]t’s his duty to find them . . .” (9) as the man of the family, even though he has “. . .left the parenting up to América because ‘She’s a girl and you’re a girl, and girls need their mother’” (55). When América attempts to get in the car with Correa so they can go and find Rosalinda together, Correa slaps her saying “[y]ou go home and wait for me” (14). Whis his words and actions he is suggesting that América’s place as a woman is at home and that his use of violence against her is his instrument to show his

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129 Yamila Valentin is the mother of Rosalinda’s boyfriend Taino. Like América, Yamila always wanted to go up in the social scale and achieved it when she married a rich man and moved to the Vieques hills where the “Yanquis” live (17-8).
power over her and to compel her to play the role that patriarchal society has decreed for her. In this way, Santiago displays the strong ties between patriarchal gender roles and gender violence. This link is reinforced by the comments of other male characters. For example, Feto, the cook at La Casa del Francés, says that “. . . a man has to teach women the way he likes things, and if the only way she can learn is ‘a fuerza de puños’ well, then, his fists should be the teacher” (34). Before meeting Correa, América was part of a student group that participated in the protest against the presence of the United States in Vieques, but once she started her relationship with him, she had to stop participating because “‘Women’, he told her, ‘should stay out of politics’” (253). The house where América lives with her mother and her daughter belongs to Ester, but Correa is the “master of the house”, and all the members of the family acknowledge his power (57). He gets the “bone with the most meat” (ibid) and he feels that he has the right to decide what América and Rosalinda can and cannot do as is exemplified by the fact that even though América did not approve Rosalinda’s move from Vieques to Puerto Rico after she returned to the house, Correa took her away nonetheless.

Santiago also comments about how gender roles work in U.S. society. At La Casa del Francés, she notices that the tourists always bring with them books that “. . . seem designated male or female”, the women’s with “lace and flowers” and the men’s “austere” (31). Once she is living in the United States with the Leverettes, she notices how even though Karen has a job outside the house (as does her husband), she is also the one in charge of most of the parenting and is always organizing the children’s schedules which are full of activities (172).

These patriarchal gender roles go hand in hand with stereotypes about the difference among genders. “Boys are easier to bring up than girls,” “. . . they’re not as moody, and they are up front about what’s bothering them. Girls are deceptive that way”, says Nilda during lunch in the kitchen of La Casa del Francés (33). Through América’s reflections, triggered by Rosalinda’s escapade, Santiago highlights the double standard that exists in patriarchal society regarding men and women and the behaviour that is acceptable and expected.

If Rosalinda were a boy, she would be calling him a man. If Rosalinda were a boy and were having sex at fourteen, there would be sly looks and jokes, and pride that his ‘equipment’ works. If Rosalinda were a boy, América would forgive him,
because that’s what men are, sexual creatures with a direct link from brain to balls. It is expected that boys will be men, but girls are never supposed to be women. Girls are supposed to go directly from girlhood to married motherhood with no stops in between, to have more self-control, to not allow passion to rule their actions, to be able to say no and mean it. When a boy has sex, it elevates him in the eyes of other people. When a girl has sex, she falls (113).

After this reflection América reaches the conclusion that the only reason she allows Correa to abuse her and control her life is “. . . because he is a man” (114).

When América reflects about her family history and how the women in her family have worked as maids for many years, she admits that she is satisfied with her job as a maid because “[i]t’s housework, women’s work…” (77). This admission, together with her dream of having her own house and of being a housewife, “. . . when women nowadays want to be scientists and leaders of nations” (107), shows how América has internalized the domestic female role promoted by patriarchal society. This internalization is evident in her behaviour when “[s]he registers mens’ admiring glances when she passes, listens for the mumbled piropos or soft whistles for confirmation that she looks good, that all the trouble she takes in the morning dressing, brushing her hair, and putting on make-up is worth getting up half an hour earlier” (100). It is also evident in the scene that takes place in New York when América accompanies her aunt Paulina to the hairdresser. In this scene, Nereida, who had also run away from Vieques after her husband had tried to kill her by running her over in his car, told América that even her “. . . own mother “won’t accept the fact that Gene”, her husband, “tried to kill” her (237).

By having América reflect about gender roles, and how she has internalized these roles imposed on her by patriarchal society, allows Santiago to point out how by embedding them in the values they pass on to their sons and daughters, women have participated in the perpetuation of their own marginalization. “We’re stupid! All women are stupid! We’ve let ourselves believe that men are better than we are. And we’ve told our sons that, and we’ve told our daughters” (114). With this statement, América shows her understanding of how women participate in the perpetuation of women’s marginalization by modifying their sons’ and daughters’ behaviours so that they can fit the patriarchal society gender roles and maintain the status quo. “A woman should smell good and look good,’ the men she knows have said many times, and she agrees, and has
taught this to her daughter” (100). While she is working in the Leverettes’ house, she surprises herself using “...the soft pleading tone Correa uses when he is trying to pacify her” (175) after slapping Meghan’s hand when she did not let her help her to put her clothes back on after going to the bathroom. After this realization, she is “...ashamed at having to borrow from Correa the one thing she always resented most. His use of the word love as blackmail” (175).

Santiago also highlights how social taboo contributes to the patriarchal status quo and to the institutionalization of machismo. The first taboo highlighted is about female sexuality outside marriage, which should not be discussed openly, especially in the case of an under-age woman who runs away with her over-age, but still young, boyfriend. This is evident when América asks Odilio, a police man, if there is a law that forbids an under-age girl to run away with an older boy, and he says that “...there are laws, but these things are better handled privately” (23), because “when a girl runs away with her boyfriend, it’s a family matter” (59). From the beginning of the novel, both the narrator and América refer to Rosalinda’s escapade with her boyfriend with phrases such as “el problema con Rosalinda” (105, 188).

The second taboo displayed by Santiago is about gender violence, as it is not socially accepted to discuss such abuse in detail. In the novel the topic is referred to by using phrases such as “a situation” (196), “her situation” (ibid) and “your situation” (197), and “the circumstances” (323), to avoid talking openly about the abuse that América suffers from Correa which includes physical abuse\(^\text{130}\), verbal abuse\(^\text{131}\), sexual abuse\(^\text{132}\) and emotional abuse\(^\text{133}\). Similarly, the attack which another woman from Vieques

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\(^{130}\) “He will bruise her and, batter her” (62, 122, 316, 317) whenever she does not behave like he wants her to (14, 68, 73, 97), when she talks back to him (: 20, 73, 85, 86), “if he thinks she is flirting” (72) or even “for just walking on the same side of the street as another man” or “just looking in his direction” (299).

\(^{131}\) Name calling (20, 62,156, 316).

\(^{132}\) The sexual relationship between América and Correa is more of a power relationship than a consensual act (109) and América recognizes that when she does not “want to do it”, “It is rape” (118). The fact that Correa calls “his pleasure” the “taking of América whenever and however he wants her” (109), shows that his sexual enjoyment is triggered by a demonstration of power over América (20, 109, 122).

\(^{133}\) Correa’s abuse is not only physical, he manipulates her using fear to make her behave the way he wants her to, and treats her as his possession (22, 50, 68, 73, 105, 156, 183, ). América does not drink because Correa does not want her (72), she can’t laugh loud because he does not likes it when she does (81). If “she leaves the house looking unkempt”, Correa beats her (8), she has to nod in agreement at him even if she disagrees with him (73), and she can’t wear red because “Red, he said, made her look like a puta” (160). When Correa finds out that Rosalinda has run away, he blames América, not Rosalinda, asking her how she “let a thing like that happen” (13). He also threatens to kill América and her supposed lover when he thinks that she has left Puerto Rico with another man (156).
suffered when her husband ran over her with his car is referred to as an “accident” that happened when “. . . Nereida slipped on an icy patch and fell behind her husband’s car while he was backing out of their driveway” (236). Before “el problema con Rosalinda” (105), Correa had battered América several times to the point where the neighbours, had called the police upon hearing her screams. Every time he battered her América had told the policeman and family friend Odilio “. . . to leave Correa alone, that he didn’t do anything, that the bruises on her face and arms are self-inflicted” as they were the result of her falling off a chair while hanging curtains or falling down the stairs at work (121). When Odilio “. . . has told her she’s within her rights to have Correa arrested”, she has justified Correa’s violent behavior by saying “. . . he’s just had too much to drink” (*ibid*). América does not denounce Correa because she is “. . . scared of what Correa would do to her if she pressed charges against him” (*ibid*).

Another way in which Santiago criticizes patriarchal society is through the use of metaphors. Several times in the novel the narrator mentions how the “. . . tunnel of spiny rose branches leading to her front door” (81) always attacks América when she passes by and how they make her sneeze, suggesting that she is allergic to them (5, 8). The roses are part of “. . . Ester’s unruly garden” (229), and there are other thorny plants that are mentioned such as “. . . the lemon and grapefruit trees” (229), but the narrator repeatedly highlights the thorny rose branches among all the other plants. The first and last time that roses are mentioned, they have a positive connotation related to their fragrance (5, 319), but during most of the narrative, the rose bushes are described as “invading” (5, 81), “thorny” (84), “aggressive” (5, 81) and even “poisonous”.*134*

Even though the rose branches attack “everyone” (81) and “. . . anyone who dares enter”(229), particularly América and the novel’s narrator, Correa “. . . pays no attention to the thorny branches grazing him as he comes up the walk” (84). The roses, despite being the feminine symbol *par excellence*, represent here patriarchal society’s imposition of gender stereotypes and behavioral norms, and as Correa approaches América to show her who is in charge, they “seem designed to help rather than impede his progress toward her” (*ibid*). In one of the last scenes of the novel, when América is at the hospital recovering from Correa’s last beating before she finally kills him in self-defense, she

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134Santiago suggests that the roses are poisonous when she says that the blossoms “sway as if intoxicated by their own perfume” (81).
sniffs her niece Elena’s rose-scented perfume and does not sneeze, as she now seems to have freed herself (319).

In addition to the metaphor of the rose branches, Santiago uses a butterfly metaphor that also subverts the literary canon. Traditionally butterflies are portrayed in literature in a positive light, usually relating to freedom, springtime, and the achievement of human capabilities to the full. In América’s Dream, though, Santiago gives butterflies a negative symbolic meaning. The first time a reference to butterflies appears in the novel is in a scene where América is staring out of her room’s window at the Leverettes’ house. She has recently found out that Correa knows that she is in New York because he saw the postmark on the letter she sent to her daughter Rosalinda and she has stayed in, waiting for his call. She is reflecting on how “[e]ven from Puerto Rico” Correa is “controlling” her and has her “locked” in her room “waiting for him” (279). While she is reflecting on her situation and looking through the window, she realizes that she has not seen any butterflies since she arrived. She remembers that in Puerto Rico, every time she would look through the window she would always see butterflies, and thinks that maybe in New York there are no butterflies because “it’s too cold for them” and they die. While she is thinking about dead butterflies, the phone rings and it is Correa. He says that he has learned his lesson, that he will divorce his wife so that they can get married and be a family and he swears that he will never hit her again. América plays along and says that in a week she will go back to him (281). When Correa hangs up América goes back to her reflections: “There are no butterflies here. They all die” (282). In the second reference to butterflies, located within the same chapter, América has fallen asleep after returning from the long drive during which she thought about running away from everybody and changing her name to Margarita Guerra, when Correa’s call wakes her up. She has been dreaming that “… she was being chased by butterflies through a field of daisies” (288). I put forward that in América’s dream, daisies, margaritas, symbolize freedom given that Margarita was the name she chose for the new identity that would give her the freedom she desperately needed as well as the name of her French ancestor. Correa is the butterfly chasing her, threatening her new-found freedom.

135“There are no butterflies here, it occurs to her. Back home, if I look out a window, I’d always see butterflies. But I haven’t seen a single butterfly since I arrived. Maybe it’s too cold for them. Everything dies here in the winter – birds, butterflies…” (279).
The first reference to butterflies suggests that the butterfly symbolizes the freedom that América will not attain in New York given that Correa already knows she is there. However, after the second reference it is clear that Santiago wants the reader to identify the butterfly with Correa who transforms himself when he wants to be the sweet lover, hiding his true violent self. Both metaphors, the rose branches and the butterfly, are typically used in literature to symbolize freedom and other qualities such as fragility and beauty, which are usually considered feminine qualities, in América’s Dream the roses represent the patriarchal gender roles that favor Correa, and the butterfly represents Correa, transforming himself to hide his violent character.

6.2.2 Subversion of Patriarchal Gender Roles through América’s Actions

Perhaps the most effective way in which a writer can implement social criticism is by having their fictional characters subvert social aspects identified by the writer. In the case of América’s Dream, América’s subversive actions are triggered by the possibility that her daughter Rosalinda will become a single mother, like her mother Ester and herself, and the cycle of oppression and marginalization will go on. If América continues to be submissive, and keeps allowing Correa to abuse her, Rosalinda will follow in her steps as she knows of nothing else. She does not want Rosalinda to “. . . think that’s the way men show their love”, by beating women, or that allowing men to abuse them is “. . . how women show theirs” (157).

From the beginning of the novel, it is evident that even though América was born in Puerto Rico, she does not feel comfortable living in Puerto Rican society as a woman who has been stigmatized for being the daughter of a single mother and for becoming a single mother herself when she was a teenager. América lives with her mother and she has no friends. Compared to other women portrayed by Santiago within the same novel, América is not interested in making drama of her domestic problems and in meddling in other people’s business. This character differentiation could be a critique by Santiago of Puerto Rican society in general, as she has expressed elsewhere that she thinks that “in Puerto Rico there is always a sense that you’re being evaluated, that you’re being judged” (Hernández 1997: 168). However, it could also represent a subversion of Puerto Rican patriarchal society that expects women to live mostly within a domestic sphere and to be interested in domestic issues, as it is not well received for a woman to be involved in the public arena, such as politics. This behavioral difference can be observed in the first scene.
of the novel when Ester appears in the hotel to tell América that her daughter Rosalinda has escaped with her boyfriend Taíno (Santiago 1996: 1-4). América “is not like other women”, “[s]he’s not willing to talk about her life, to commiserate with other women about how tough it is” (4). América is disturbed by the news and all she wants to do is go home and deal with the problem privately while her mother Esther and her co-worker Nilda react dramatically. The former actually seems to enjoy taking part in the drama and is disappointed when Ester insinuates that she wants her to leave by saying that “s]ome people should mind their own business” (5). Santiago underscores this voyeuristic attitude when she describes how the “neighbors come to their porches or stop watering their plants to stare, mocking her” (4). Another instance when América’s refusal to share her private life is revealed is when she ignores her mother’s advice that she should not wear a colorful dress to go out of the house and should dress as befits the dramatic situation in which they are living. América decides that “she’s not about to dress in black so the whole vecindario will know how she feels” as she does not care about what the neighbors think or say about her (ibid). This lack of regard about society contrasts with the way América modifies her behavior around Correa’s desires. Her decision to dress up in the face of society’s behavioural expectations that she should wear something more sober, is not only propelled by América’s feeling of displacement within Puerto Rican society, but responds to a fear of defying Correa’s desires that she look neat at all times. There is a contradiction between how América behaves in public spaces, where she defies society’s norms, and how she behaves in the domestic private space where she is submissive and subjected to Correa’s abuse.

From the beginning of the novel, América expresses her fear of Correa, the father of her daughter Rosalinda, who originally asked her to run away with him when she was a teenager, never married her but instead married another woman with whom he has another family. Notwithstanding these contradictions and her submissive behavior towards Correa’s abuse, América displays a behaviour that subverts patriarchal society’s behavioural norms. In one hand, América expects men to notice her and misses the piropos she used to receive on the island when she goes to live in the United States. In the other hand, in a scene where she is walking down a street in Vieques, a male driver slows down his car “. . . to comment under his breath that he’d like to eat her and ”[i]instead of being intimidated and reacting submissively, América answers back and tells him that “. . . in her current state he’d die of indigestion” (9).
During most of the novel, but especially at the beginning, América’s subversion is in constant contradiction with her submissiveness. This is also the case of Puerto Rico as a country. Even though it remains being a colony, it has a huge influence worldwide in the music industry and in sports, being one of the only countries who managed to beat the United States’ basketball team, the Dream Team. Additionally, it is one of the only countries that has attacked the U.S. Congress, and one of the few countries who has successfully expelled the American military through civil actions (Vieques). In one hand she disobeys Correa’s order that she stays put and lets him be the one to go after Rosalinda when she goes to Taino’s mother’s house as she “can’t just stand by and let him do it all”. In the other hand, she wears a dress and sandals when she knows it would have been better to wear “sneakers and shorts” (17) because Correa does not like her to leave the house “looking unkempt” (8).

During most of the novel Santiago emphasizes through repetition how América feels her life is not really hers. After Correa tells her that he is going to take Rosalinda to Fajardo to live with his aunt Estrella and his cousin Fefa, América reflects on how Correa has control over her every move “. . . even in her house” (62, emphasis mine) and she starts questioning if that kind of life can be called a life. When Correa goes to América’s house to take Rosalinda with him, América experiences a catharsis:

“Leave it?” Anger replaces fear. Fifteen years of reading Correa’s moods, his body language, the tone of his voice, of anticipating how he will behave next, fly out the window on the wings of her fury at having to give in to him one more time. Fifteen years of negotiating with herself just how far she will go to prevent a beating disappear the instant she hears him asking her to leave it alone as if “it” were a trivial thing, as if “it” didn’t include every other moment in those fifteen years in which she has “left it alone.” “No,” she screams, “I won’t leave it alone. I won’t.” And she lunges at him, beats her fists into his chest, scratches his smooth-shaved cheeks with her nails, screams at the top of her lungs, “No! No! No!” (85).

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136 “This life that is not hers” (293). “This life that’s not hers” (295).
137 The bold typeface in “her” is mine.
138 My life is not really mine” (68).
The fact that Correa actually takes Rosalinda away from her and batters her badly after she stands up to him triggers a chain of subversive reflections and actions on América’s part that drives the plot of the novel until the end. When Karen Leverette calls América and offers her a job as a housekeeper and baby-sitter at her house in Westchester, América considers leaving Vieques without letting anyone know as it is her life and “[n]o one has to know” her business (119). When Ester realizes that América is serious about moving to New York, she asks América not to tell her where she is going in case Correa tries to force her to tell him where she is. América responds: “We’ll tell Odilio to keep an eye out. This is your house. If he tries anything, you can have him arrested.” (120). América “wonders where these words are coming from” (120) because in the past fifteen years she has never had the courage to press charges against him (121). Later on, after she has been in New York for two weeks, América feels that she is “in control” for the first time in her life (182) as she has distanced herself emotionally and physically from the “. . . people who until a couple of months ago dominated her thoughts and actions” (231). “I’m going to worry about myself from now on, about what I want and what I need. I can’t count on any of them. On anyone. I’m alone, and it’s my life and I’m not going to let them spoil it anymore”¹³⁹ (231, emphasis in original). América has to disassociate herself from her role as mother and daughter to free herself and to find her own well-being. This sense of being in control is endangered by América’s discovery that Rosalinda has told Correa where she is: “Even from Puerto Rico he's controlling me, keeping me locked in my room waiting for him” (279).

I have one week to figure things out. One week to disappear to God knows where. And once I do, I will not tell anyone. Not Mami. Not Rosalinda. Not even Tia Paulina. None of them. I’ll go someplace where no one knows me. A place with no Puerto Ricans, so that there’s no chance I’ll see anyone I know. I might even change my name. But I’m not going back. Not for him. Not for her. Not for anybody (283).

After she talks to Correa on the phone, she pretends to agree to return to him and asks him to give her one week so she can give the Leverettes notice, and then América drives “. . . away from the city, toward where she’s never been” (286), and when she reaches Connecticut, she creates another identity for herself. She renames herself

¹³⁹ The bold typeface in “her” is mine.
Margarita Guerra, Margarita “... in honor of her great-great-great grandmother”, and “Guerra for war” (287). América drives back to the Leverettes’ house and does not change her name, but this trip is very significant not only because she can imagine a life for herself away from Correa or because of the symbolism behind the name she chooses, but also because she is alone and enjoying the freedom of driving wherever she wants to. In this context, the actual business of driving has a very significant meaning. América “loves to drive” (171) as for her to drive a car means to be in control, something that she has never been able to do, given that the first half of her life has been “...centered around Ester and her demands as a mother”, and “[t]he second half of her life has been shadowed by Correa” (68). While América lives in Westchester, she empowers herself as a result of experiencing life by herself and she makes her own decisions, such as driving where she wants to and picking the movies she wants to see instead of the “... movies about airplanes crashing, cars blowing up, or muscular bare-chested men shooting men in suits” that Correa made her watch (310). These decisions could seem superfluous and perhaps in a different context may not be considered subversive, but they turn into subversive actions in the context of the life of a woman who has been a victim of the gender violence that patriarchal society promotes.

Another way in which América subverts patriarchal social norms is by questioning “her” dream of being a mother and a wife.

I never had dreams of being a schoolteacher like Frida, or a nurse like Adela, or a bank teller or telephone operator. Maybe that’s been the problem. I’ve never had any dreams of my own, so Mami and Correa and even Rosalinda walk all over me. They try to, anyway. They have no respect for me. She shakes her head. I’ve had no respect for myself (266).

Before moving by herself to the United States, América thought that having a house, a husband and children was her dream and all she wanted to achieve in life (107). When her daughter Rosalinda runs away, as América herself did when she was the same age, she realizes that with her submissiveness and the pursuit of a dream that is not really hers but one that she has learned to desire. With her behaviour, she is condemning her daughter to have no dreams of her own and to stay within the cycle of marginalization and violence at the expense of losing her self-respect and of not being able to develop as a woman and a human being (266).
In the first sentence Santiago allows the narrator of the novel to state, referring to América, that “[i]t’s her life, and she’s in the middle of it” (1). América is in the middle but the way the statement is structured leaves América with no power: she occupies the middle ground between her role as a daughter, as a mother and as a ‘wife’/lover. After the empowering experiences she had while living by herself, and after the dramatic ending in which América kills Correa in self-defense, she lives with her daughter “in the Puerto Rican part of the Bronx. She does not live in the quiet neighborhood with the tall green building” in which her aunt Paulina advised her to live and she “doesn’t listen to Ester’s advice” regarding how to raise her daughter Rosalinda. América now makes her own decisions because “It is, after all, her life, and she’s the one in the middle of it” 140 (325).

6.2.3 Subversion to Colonial Power

The novel’s subversion of colonialism, which makes it a postcolonial narrative, takes place on at least two levels. On the one hand, Santiago underscores the colonial relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States by highlighting the presence of the latest on the island and the uneven colonial relationship between the two countries, which translates into second-class citizenship, cultural assimilation and at the same time cultural resistance, both on the island and in the U.S. Diaspora. On the other hand, she “mirrors the wider Puerto Rican experience” by having the main character of her novel migrate to the United States, “seeking escape from an oppressive situation”. In this way she presents the struggle and cultural negotiation that Puerto Rican migrants have experienced, and also locates it within wider Latin American migration by contrasting América’s experience as a migrant in the United States with the experience of other Latin American migrant housekeepers and babysitters (Hernández 1997: 11).

Although Santiago could have chosen to locate the plot of her novel in a more urban location of Puerto Rico with a higher degree of U.S. influence on Puerto Rican culture, she chose to locate it in Vieques. This decision is significant as Vieques has suffered “60 years of subjugation, victimization, and isolation”, has been “. . . left [with] 72 percent of Viequenses below the poverty level, with nearly 50 percent unemployment, as well as high teen pregnancy rates, rampant drug and alcohol abuse, and broken families . . .”, as a result of an extensive U.S. Marine occupation that began in 1941 (Wheeler 2011). By choosing to locate América’s story in Vieques, Santiago wanted to

140 Bold in “after all” and in “the one” mine.
make the colonial power relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico more obvious by displaying one of the most violent consequences of the uneven relationship between the two countries, the occupation by the U.S. Navy of “. . . two-thirds of the island for its maneuvers” (Santiago 1996: 16).

In common with most Puerto Ricans who migrate to the United States at an early age, Santiago describes an idealized Puerto Rico with “. . . a sea of sugar cane, which elegant señores oversaw atop sprightly Paso Fino horses” (ibid). This uncritical idealization of “the great sugar haciendas” that existed when Spain was in control of the island has the effect of highlighting the negative effects of the U.S. occupation. Examples of the presence of the United States on the island of Vieques in the novel include: “Camp García, the naval base” (17), the U.S. Navy “hidden beaches” (64), the “. . . protests against the United States’ presence in Vieques” (253), and against its daily bombings ,“. . . Yankis who rent houses [and jeeps] in the village” and buy “cans of tuna fish and boxes of unsweetened cereal flakes”(11), the tourists that stay at La Casa del Francés (12,17,35), and Don Irving, the owner of La Casa del Francés where América and Ester work.

Amongst these examples of the U.S. presence in Vieques, this section will focus on Don Irving and the tourists at La Casa del Francés. They are the only human agents with whom América interacts and as such, they allow Santiago to narrate the encounters that she has with them and to emphasize América’s remarks about their behavior towards her and how they make her feel. Don Irving and the tourists at La Casa del Francés are also the characters that Santiago develops the most and who better reveal the colonial relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico. Don Irving is one of the native English-speaking characters of the novel; he has migrated from the United States to Puerto Rico and has become the owner of La Casa del Francés, the small hotel in Vieques where América and Ester work. Don Irving reflects the attitude that most U.S. citizens that go to Puerto Rico to visit or to live assume towards language. While América has learned some English by listening to him and to the guests, Don Irving “. . . has never learned Spanish and speaks as if it didn’t matter, as if it were the person he’s talking to who has to make sense of what he is saying” (36). “[I]n the ten years she’s worked for him, she [América] keeps expecting him to speak Spanish when he opens his mouth, but he never does” (35). On top of that, he often speaks with a cigar in his mouth, further complicating comprehension for his Spanish-speaking audience. This attitude towards language is a symptom of a feeling of superiority that mirrors the position of power of the
United States over Puerto Rico. Don Irving does not have to learn Spanish even though he has migrated to a Spanish-speaking country and none of his employees speak English. Because he is the owner of La Casa del Francés and the country of which he is a citizen “owns” Puerto Rico, he feels that it is them, the colonized Puerto Ricans, who have to bow to him and adapt to his language and culture. This position of power and the fact that he has been Ester’s lover for years, are the root of Don Irving’s paternalistic attitude towards América, leading him to call the Leverettes to see if they were willing to hire América as a housekeeper in order to help her to escape from Correa’s abuse. América resents “. . . Don Irving’s interference”(117), and the fact that when he talks to Ester he asks about América and “makes suggestions” about how she should handle her life as if he was her father (67).

The characterization of the tourists that visit La Casa del Francés also permits Santiago to reflect on the colonizer’s superior attitude. While working at La Casa del Francés, América “. . . notices how they look right past and pretend not to see her...as if she were a part of the strange landscape into which they have run away from their everyday lives. Those who do see her, smile guardedly, then slide their gaze away quickly, ashamed, it seems, to have noticed her” (30). When América walks along the road, she feels “. . . their rude stares” and feels that “. . . to them she represents the charm of the tropics” (17). In postcolonial studies this “stare” is what has been termed “the post-colonial gaze” and the absence of it is the representation of the “invisibility” of the colonized, a consequence of a feeling of shame on the part of the colonizer, here represented by the tourists. Through the tourists’ gaze América becomes an object for them to consume, a part of nature. “[S]he thought they saw her as a different species of creature from themselves. She felt like part of the tropical landscape they came to experience, something to be stared at with curiosity and forgotten the moment they returned home” (228). In their gaze, they are consuming the cultural identity they have bought of the other, the imaginary that the U.S. colonial historiography has constructed of Puerto Ricans.

Regarding the Leverettes, even though they behave in a friendly way towards América while they are on vacation in Vieques and they do not seem to objectify her in the manner of the rest of the tourists, there is an episode in which they render her invisible indirectly. Karen comments to her daughter Meghan how beautiful América’s name is and she answers back that “America is where [they] live.” Mrs. Leverrette blushes but
not because her daughter is referring to the United States using the name of the whole continent, as most North Americans do, but because her daughter has not realized that ‘América’ is a proper name in Puerto Rico. With her answer, “[n]o silly, that’s America, our country! She is América. It’s a proper name here” (95), Karen is displacing América as, for them, América is the United States “[a]nd nothing else. NO Canada, no Mexico, no Caribbean” (299). The United States status as the “American” empire displaces the rest of the American countries, most of them old Spanish colonies. During the time América spent with Karen Leverette, and presumably with the other American tourists that stay at La Casa del Francés, she also “[wonders] about Americans’ habits of asking personal questions when they barely know you” (105).

Once América is living with the Leverettes and working for them in the United States, this imperialist attitude materializes and América notices how their treatment towards her changes and she becomes entirely invisible for them as well. After Karen gives América an order disguised as a suggestion, “[s]he runs up the stairs without a backward glance at América” (145). Santiago also suggests América’s invisibility by narrating how when she encounters Charles on the morning of her second day of work, he asks her how she is “as if truly interested” (148). After a brief exchange of pleasantries though, he wishes her a good day and “. . . doesn’t wait for her to wish him the same before he goes out the back door” (149). Even though both Charlie and Karen Leverette have asked América to call them by their first names, claiming not to be formal and suggesting that América should feel like one of them, the evidence presented by Santiago indicates that both of them look down on her.

América’s perception of the Leverettes’ superiority attitude towards her is accompanied by a deeper critique of U.S. society. From the moment that América arrives in the United States, she starts to make observations about how the people there behave, and the first thing she notices is how at the airport “[p]eople bang into her with their bags, tell her to excuse them as if it didn’t matter whether she does or not” (129). Within this observation, there is an underlying critique of an attitude of superiority inherent in the culture of imperial countries. This attitude of superiority leads to “practices of dominance” 141 some of which Santiago emphasises through América’s experiences at La

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141 According to the Dictionary of Human Geography, “Imperialism” is defined as “[a]n unequal human and territorial relationship, usually in the form of an EMPIRE, based on ideas of superiority and practices
Casa del Francés and while she is working with the Leverettes. She notices how “[t]hey U.S. tourists] do things like leave their used condoms on the floor, or bloody sanitary pads, unwrapped, in the trash cans”, but “…throw a fit if there’s hair in the shower drain, or if the toilet is not disinfected” (79). She concludes that the issue is that “[t]hey don’t mind exposing other people to their germs, but they don’t want to be exposed to anybody else’s” (ibid). América also observes the same superior attitude in the Leverettes’ children at breakfast as they act “. . .like a prince and princess” (150) after their mother serves them a second serving of cereal after throwing away the one that América has prepared for them, when Kyle complained that América has “put too much milk” in it (149-150).

Santiago also poses a critique of U.S. society through América’s observations when she arrives to work in the Leverettes’ house. These observations range from the size of their house (135, 140, 142) to how much money Karen Leverette spends on her shoes, clothes and underwear (218), pointing to a wide range of criticisms of U.S. society. For reasons of conciseness, I will focus on Santiago’s criticism of unfettered consumerism, a hyper-productive way of life and an obsession with body image.

When Karen Leverette shows América their house the morning after América’s arrival, one of the first things that América notices is its size. Although the Leverette family consists of only three members, the kitchen is equipped with an “. . . enormous stove with eight burners, two ovens, [and] a grill” (142) and “[t]he dining room is as large as [her] house in Vieques”, with sixteen chairs in all, twelve around the table and four against the dining room walls (140, 141). That dining room, though, is only used for entertainment as the family has its usual meals in the family room. The house also has two living rooms, two fireplaces, and eight rooms located upstairs which include individual playrooms for the children, two computer-equipped offices, two dressing rooms and five complete bathrooms (141, 142). Additionally, América notices that “[e]verything in the Leverette household is done by machine” (152):

There are machines for baking bread, making pasta, steaming rice, pressing and browning sandwiches, chopping vegetables, juicing fruit, slicing potatoes. There are two regular ovens, plus a toaster oven and a microwave, an enormous refrigerator in the kitchen, a smaller one in the sports den, a freezer. There are

of dominance, and involving the extension of authority and control of one STATE or people over another” (Gregory, Johnston, Pratt, Watts & Whatmore 2009: 373).
machines for washing and drying dishes and clothes...[a] pants pressing machine, a sewing machine, a machine that spits out steam for dewrinkling garments...[a]nd there are other machines which uses she can’t identify (152).

Through América’s observations about the size of the Leverettes’ house and about their huge number of possessions, Santiago not only poses a critique of capitalism’s consumerist practices, but also of its class-based social system, which creates an enormous gap between the quality of life of its various members. This is even clear when América realizes in value terms, the clothes that Karen keeps in only one of her three closets “. . . cost as much as a house in Vieques, [or] maybe more”, and that “[i]t doesn’t seem right” that “[o]ne week of [her] work equates to the price of a pair of Karen’s] shoes.” “It would take her two and a half weeks to earn enough” to be able to spend the “[s]even hundred and fifty dollars” that Karen has spent only in underwear” (218).

Karen’s purchasing power, the fact that she is the owner of the house where América lives and that she is her boss, place her in a position of power equal to that of América’s lover Correa (Shaw 2007: 88). In Chapter 15, “Learning Their Ways”, América seems to see her relationship with the Leverettes as one between equals in which “[t]hey have to get used to each other” as “[t]hey’re not used to [her] ways, and [she’s] not used to theirs” (151). However, in Chapter 18, “Homesick”, she realizes that “[i]t is their house”, and “[s]he’s the one who has to watch every step and be on the alert”, “…the one who must always be conscious of how they perceive her because she’s dependent on them.” For one minute she stops herself and reflects on how “they depend on [her] too”, but then she thinks about how she could “be replaced with a phone call” because “…rich people don’t depend on anyone” (207). After América has the opportunity to share her experiences as a housekeeper and babysitter with other Latin American domestic workers, she realizes that even though she is an American citizen, she is part of a wider community with which she has more in common and that she is really treated as a second-class citizen.

But here, she says to herself, they can’t forget us. We’re everywhere, and they resent us for it. It’s incomprehensible. If it weren’t for us, none of these women would be able to work. And their husbands wouldn’t have it so easy, either. If we weren’t here, who would clear the tables at their restaurants? Who would mow their lawns and build the stone fences around their properties? Who would clean
their offices, restock store shelves, disinfect hospital rooms, make their beds, wash their laundry, cook their meals? (228)

In América’s Dream, América has the possibility of performing the American dream, to be free in the land of opportunity, to have a new start in life, free from her abusive lover and from the problems that her mother and her daughter represents, however what she finds is the reality experienced by most Latin American migrant. Thus, the name of the novel subverts the American dream. América’s experience of migrating to the United States, where she has the opportunity to talk with other women that have lived there longer than her, allows her to open up and to see how other women talk freely, with fewer social taboos, about their feelings and their experiences as women. At the end of the novel when América looks at her reflection in the mirror and sees the scar left by Correa’s knife attack, she realizes “who she is now”, and “who she was then”, before migrating to the United States. Perhaps there is a certain idealization of U.S. society regarding gender violence, but it is undeniable that Santiago aims to present a character who has changed and to show that women living in Vieques are no longer submissive. This submissiveness has been related to a “strong cultural tradition of male dominance and female submissiveness” (Handel and Whitchurch 1994: 353).

The experience of living with the Leverettes and of meeting female domestic workers from other Latin American countries, led América to “engage[s] in a process of identification and disidentification with seemingly stable constructions of citizenship and nationality (Puerto Rican and U.S./American), gender (masculinity and femininity), and class (bourgeois and proletarian) to live (survive) in the Puerto Rican/American borderlands” (Shaw 2007: 56-57).

6.2.4 Hybridity and Cultural Subversion: “Learning their ways…”

Despite the power relationship between América and the Leverettes as members of a privileged social class and legitimized U.S. citizens, América, “. . . wields a certain amount of power and forces brief moments of transculturation” (Shaw 2007: 95) by validating her culture in relation to the Leverettes’ culture. After her fifth day working in the Leverettes’ household, América realizes that a cultural exchange is taking place: “She is learning their ways and it’s beginning to change them” (Santiago 1996: 152). At first, the Leverette children did not like América’s food but they do so later on. “They eat her asopao, or rice with beans over it, or spaguetti Puerto Rican-style, garlicky and not as
slimy as Karen’s” (178), and they enjoy her “portican potatoes” (260). On the one hand, this cultural affirmation and validation translates into a subversion of the colonial dynamics of cultural cannibalism and, on the other, into the construction of a hybrid identity. However, this hybrid identity is not built unilaterally as it is the result of a cultural negotiation in which América empowers herself by taking part in the process.

Santiago presents this cultural subversion on a larger scale when she describes how Puerto Ricans who live in the United States maintain their traditions as a mark of identity. In the New York neighbourhood where América’s family lives, there are Puerto Rican traditional establishments such as la bodega, “. . . where Paulina gets her spices, the piles of name, malanga, yautía, batata and fresh bunches of recao” (233). In the Puerto Rican barrio “[m]ost of the talk is in Puerto Rican Spanish, and América closes her eyes and listens to the familiar sounds with gratitude, relaxing in a way she has not able to do around the Leverettes or even the other maids with their varied accents” (234). The fact that Santiago differentiates Puerto Rican Spanish from Spanish from other Latin American countries, could be a subversion of the way in which all Latin Americans are labelled as latinos in the U.S. melting pot and a possible strategy to bring attention to the specificities of the Puerto Rican case as second class citizens. She also emphasizes how latinos are able to subvert colonial power through language when she places América in a restaurant where “[t]he waitress and busboys are all Latinos...[and] [t]hey speak to one another in Spanish, then turn around with an obsequious smile and ask the customers for their orders in English” (266).

Through her narrative, Santiago presents a hybrid Puerto Rican and cultural hybridity in both Puerto Rican insular culture and in U.S. Diaspora Puerto Rican culture. Some critics, such as María Acosta Cruz, argue that Santiago “. . . rejects notions of the hybridity of Puerto Ricans” (Acosta 2006: 177), following the mainstream nationalist independence movement image of Puerto Rican identity as uncontaminated. In opposition to this view, I believe that she does indeed portray a hybrid Puerto Rican identity. I also believe that Carmen Rivera’s argument about how in When I Was Puerto Rican and Almost a Woman, Santiago “. . . never accomplishes the formation of a ‘jibara’ who idealizes her rural hometown on the island nor of the ‘Americana’ harmoniously integrated into the dominant culture”, can also be applied to Amèrica’s Dream (Carmen Rivera 2002: 25).
In América’s Dream Santiago does not present a hybrid Puerto Rican identity, which is as clear as those presented by other authors such as Judith Ortíz Cofer and Piri Thomas. However, the fact that she presents such a strong social critique of both Puerto Rican and U.S. societies positions her in a state of “inbetweenness” that is clearly hybrid and focuses on the negotiation process that leads into a hybrid identity, rather than on the consequences of that negotiation.

6.2.5 Naming the Other: The Use of Demonyms to Highlight Colonial Power Relations

Another characteristic of Santiago’s narrative which constitutes a subversive element is the use of demonyms to refer to U.S.-Americans, such as Yanqui/s\(^{142}\),\(^{143}\), widely used pejoratively by Puerto Rican independentistas, Americano/a/as/itos\(^{144}\), a more neutral nationality adjective which is a Spanish equivalent of “American”, and gringos/as/ito\(^{145}\). After analyzing the instances in which Santiago utilizes these demonyms in her narrative, I have identified four categories based on the different contexts in which she employs them. These contexts are the highlighting of cultural differences between Puerto Ricans and U.S.-Americans, the foregrounding and descriptions of the United States presence in Puerto Rico, the emphasis on class differences between U.S.-Americans and Puerto Ricans on the island and the display of Puerto Ricans’ contempt towards U.S.-Americans.\(^{146}\)

Even though in América’s Dream Santiago uses all three nationality adjectives subversively, “Yanquis” and “Americanos/ana/as/itos” are mostly used to express “otherness”. Moreover, Santiago uses “gringos/ito” in a more subversive way as she exclusively uses it for the “displaying of Puerto Ricans’ contempt towards U.S.-Americans”, and its pejorative use is


\(^{143}\)Note that the demonym “Yanqui” is a naturalization of “Yankee” but it preserves the capital “y” making it a case of linguistic hybridity. This issue will be further discussed in the “linguistic subversion” section of this chapter.

\(^{144}\)Santiago 1996: 12, 13, 94, 118, 147, 228.


\(^{146}\)Amongst these, the spotlight on cultural differences between Puerto Ricans and U.S.-Americans is the category with the highest frequency and referred to by Santiago as “Yanqui/s” (4x) and “Americana/as/itos” (4x). For the category with the second highest frequency, the “foregrounding and descriptions of the U.S. presence in Puerto Rico”, Santiago uses “Yanqui/s” (4x) and “Americano” (1x). For the category of “emphasis on class differences between U.S.-Americans and Puerto Ricans on the island”, Santiago uses “Yanquis” (2x) and “Americanitos” (1x), and for the “display of Puerto Ricans’ contempt towards U.S.-Americans” category, she uses “Yanquis”(1x) and gringos/ito” (2x), the nationality adjectives that are used pejoratively in Puerto Rico.
accentuated by the use of the pronoun “those”, which in Spanish is often used
derogatively as it creates distance between the speaker and the subject that it refers to.\textsuperscript{147}
The use of the Spanish suffix “ito”, which in this case is not used as a diminutive to
indicate size, connotes contempt. In the case of “Yanquis”, used once by Santiago to
express the speaker’s contempt towards U.S.-Americans, it is also accompanied by
“those” to accentuate its effect. Furthermore, from all three nationality adjectives used by
Santiago to refer to U.S.-Americans, “gringos/ito” is the only one which is not capitalized,
thus producing a more pejorative effect. Interestingly, all the utterances in this last
category are expressed by Correa, thus creating a link between Correa and U.S.-
Americans, both of which exercise their power over América.

\textsuperscript{147} “Esos”
7.1 Rosario Ferré: *The House on the Lagoon* and *La casa de la laguna*

7.1.1 English Writing

Rosario Ferré started her literary career in 1972 with Spanish as her writing and publishing language when she published *La muñeca menor*, but in 1979 she published *The Youngest Doll*, her translation of *La muñeca menor*. She would continue with the modality of publishing her work in Spanish followed by an English translation, until 1995 when she published *The House on the Lagoon*, her first novel originally written in English. The fact that Ferré decided to write and publish first in English, her second language, after privileging her mother tongue for more than two decades, and after being an advocate for Puerto Rico’s political independence, not only as a writer, but as an activist, caused great controversy within literary academia. For some critics in the island, this switch to English was a clear sign that Ferré had assimilated and was giving up her linguistic identity in order to sell more books and cross over into the U.S. market. Others, especially Puerto Ricans in the United States who, because of their everyday reality, had partially lost contact with their mother tongue and now conducted their daily lives in English, were grateful because through her novel Ferré gave them access to their Puerto Rican culture and history. When asked about the rationale that led her to switch to the language of the colonizer, Ferré referred to the pragmatic reason of widening her audience when she said:

\[\text{El inglés es el lenguaje de acceso a la industria de las publicaciones. Creía que, de este modo, la distribución sería mucho mayor y sería posible abrir una brecha, una puerta, para que mis libros se conocieran fuera, más y mejor. Aunque en principio fue una idea práctica e utilitaria para abrir mercado, ahora siento que publicar en inglés ayuda a dar a conocer mi obra y mi cultura. (Castillo García 2005: 243).}\]

Ferré has also mentioned that English writing has allowed her to distance herself from her public persona as “... la hija de Luis Ferré ...” (Ferré 2000: 91) and has caused

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149 The linguistic genesis of *The House on the Lagoon* will be discussed later on in this chapter.
that “... [su] obra se lea afuera y por otras razones: por su mérito literario y no por curiosidades sobre la familia” (Ferré 2000: 91).

“Por eso es que yo tuve que salir de Puerto Rico y es por ello que ahora estoy escribiendo en inglés.” “... por eso fue que escribí *The House on the Lagoon* en inglés primero...” (Ferré 2000: 90).

As she mentioned in “On Bilingual Trespassing”, an article she published in *The San Juan Star* on 1996, English also allowed her to write about topics that were too close to her heart for her to write about in her native tongue.

Additionally, Ferré hinted that her English writing also responds to the expression of a bilingual identity when she compared bilingual writing to being ambidextrous.

I wrote the novel in English and [later] in Spanish because I’m ambidextrous. When I was a little girl I wrote with my left hand, but when I turned seven Mother changed me to the right. I couldn’t be left-handed, she told me. Left-handed people are impaired: there were no left-handed desks at school... At seven I became “right-handed” *obligada*; I had to assimilate my left self into my right self. Today I write with both hands, be it with a pen or ... a computer; and also in both languages” (Ferré 1997c: 9).

This is a similar approach to that taken by writer Ariel Dorfman, who referred to himself as having what he called “linguistic ambidexterity” (Dorfman 1998: n.pag.) and identified himself a “bigamist” of language (Dorfman 2003: 29). Both Dorfman and Ferré have used the metaphor of a “linguistic river” (Dorfman 1998: n.pag.) where “the confluence of the two vocabularies connects distant communities” (idem) and where the bilingual author can “renounce[e] the reaching of this or that shore, but let [his/her] self become the meeting place of both” (Ferré 1991: 155) thus serving as a mediator between languages. Other writers that have decided to write in a language that is not their native language include Latin American writers María Amparo Escandón (México), Gustavo Pérez-Firmat (Cuba), Ilan Stavans (México), Sandra Cisneros (United States), José María Arguedas (Perú) and Graciela Limón (United States).\(^\text{150}\)

\(^{150}\) Other non-Latin American writers that write in a second language are Anita Desai (India), Eva Hoffman (Poland), Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill (English) and Toko Tawada (Japan).
Moreover, Ferré has stated that she writes in English to reach a Spanish speaking audience that has migrated to the United States searching for a better life and that due to the discrimination they encounter upon their migration, have been forced to assimilate linguistically (Ferré 1991: 79). By writing in English, Ferré intended to allow them to stay in touch with their culture and their native country.

Through her writing in both Spanish and English, Ferré has assumed a linguistically- and culturally-fluid hybrid identity that she directly relates with the Puerto Rican identity, and through which she is able to reconcile the two halves that make her hybrid identity. This literary bilingualism has been strongly criticized by Puerto Rican nationalist intellectuals that, per Ferré, “forman una capilla intransigente” when it comes to Spanish as Puerto Rico’s national language against U.S. cultural and political influence. Other authors, such as Gloria Anzaldúa, have also been treated as “cultural traitors”, accused of “speaking the oppressor’s language by speaking English” (Anzaldúa 1999: 2948). In the face of critics that consider Ferré’s English writing to be an act of treachery, such as fiction writer Ana Lydia Vega and academic Liliana Cotto, Ferré has argued that “la nacionalidad no depende únicamente del lenguaje” (Ferré 2001b: 174) and that “. . . [she is] no less Puerto Rican because [she] can write in English” (qtd. in Santiago 2001: n.pag.).

“I will continue to write in Spanish and in English, even if swords are crossing over my head”, she has said (Ferré 2001b: 179).

With respect to the differences between her Spanish writing and her English writing, Ferré has expressed that she has two different writing styles in each language and relates bilingual writing with having a dual identity. In this way, she affirms what Mario Cancel Sepúlveda has called “el carácter polisémico de lo puertorriqueño” (Cancel 2012: n.pag.) and what Anzaldúa meant when she stated that “[e]thnic identity is twin to linguistic identity” (Anzaldúa 1999: n.pag.).

To be a bilingual writer doesn’t mean just to be bilingual. A bilingual writer is really two different writers, has two very different voices, writes in two different styles, and, most important, looks at the world through two different sets of glasses” (qtd. in Kellman 2003: 138).

151 “To be Puerto Rican is to be a hybrid.” (Ferré 1998: n.pag.)

152 For a review of the debate involving Ferré, Vega and Cotto, see Espinosa 1998.
When referring to Spanish writing versus English writing, Ferré has noted that each language “imposes a different mind-set” that makes her Spanish sentences “convoluted as a Baroque retablo” and her English sentences “straight and simple” (qtd. in Kellman 2003:138). By recognizing the linguistic qualities of each language, Ferré is showing linguistic knowledge of the language she works with and is also acknowledging the different expectations that each language’s audience has. This audience design, a concept coined by Allan Bell to describe the relationship between a speaker’s language use and the specific characteristics of his audience (Bell 1984), is one of the motors behind Ferré’s translation strategies and is the reason why she has been compared to a “chameleon” that keeps “. . . a double profile . . . feeding two different readerships” (Stavans 1995; 642). By switching to English as her writing language, Ferré is not only subverting the Puerto Rican canon written in Spanish, but she is also making an incursion into U.S. literature and is participating in the identity construction that the “other” performs about Puerto Ricans.

7.1.2 Linguistic Hybridity

By rewriting a story that came into existence in Spanish into a novel in English, Ferré is empowering herself as she crafts an image of the Puerto Rican identity to be read by the “other”, the English speaker. This identity is a hybrid identity because it was originally built in Spanish, embedded into English, the colonizer’s language fabric, and then rewritten/retranslated into Spanish. It is also hybrid because the story line through which it was built is a testimony of the historical events that have linked Puerto Rico to the United States and of the consequences that this relationship has had on the Puerto Rican idiosyncrasy. Furthermore, it is not narrated in standard English but in a hybridized postcolonial English.

Ferré’s hybrid identity is communicated through her literary use of hybrid language. The *House on the Lagoon* is written in English, but it is riddled with Spanish words, phrases and whole sentences that distance it from standard English writing. These Spanish insertions do not really function as a topic in the novel, as is the case in novels by other bilingual Latin American writers such as Sandra Cisneros, Esmeralda Santiago or Julia Álvarez. They function as a literary device to give context to the reader about

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153 The concept of Audience Design will be use more broadly later on to discuss Ferré’s self-translation.
where the novel’s action is taking place, and to add the flavour of the Spanish language to the novel.

“. . . from time to time one could even see a tiger-eyed guaraguao, the nearly extinct local eagle. . .” (Ferré 1995: 10)

Slowly but surely, however, a bit of juicy gossip would slip out, or a risqué joke or expression which could only be rendered in Spanish: “Estabamásjalao que un timbre e guagua” (He was as drunk as a skunk); or “Éramos demasiados y parió la abuela” (There were already too many of us, and then Grandma got pregnant). (94)

“They pronounced it ‘San Gibin’ . . .”¹⁵⁴ (115)

“Father and Mother met at Ponce’s fiestas patronales for the Virgen de Guadalupe.” (140)

“Abby was defiantly Independentista.” (182)

In some instances, such as the ones presented above, Ferré accompanies the inclusion of Spanish, words and phrases with cushioning domesticating practices such as explicitation, translation, addition of contextual information to help the reader decipher the meaning of the foreign word/phrase, use of cognates, and use of Spanish loan words that are widely used in the English language. The use of these resources favours the monolingual reader as they bring the text closer to him/her by providing access to the meaning of the Spanish word/phrase without the need to consult a dictionary.

In other instances however, as can be observed in the examples provided below, Ferré favours the bilingual reader by including Spanish words/phrases without assisting the English monolingual reader to access the author’s hybrid world, thus foreignising the text.

“Usually there wasn’t much to sell —a couple of red snappers; a spiny chapín, good for only one empanadilla . . .” (133)

“The full moon is the godmother of all mayomberas . . .” (134)

¹⁵⁴ This instance of Spanish inclusion is also an example of phonetic transcription of oral speech.
“... papier-mâché masks for Vegigante costumes...” (141)

“... one of the local political caciques...” (184)

“... that’s why you could describe Rebecca with such gusto...” (189)

By hybridising standard English, Ferré is subverting the hegemonic value of English through language appropriation to communicate a hybrid identity. As it is stated in the blurb of LePage & Tabouret-Keller book *Acts of Identity*, “with every speech act all individuals, to a greater or less extend, an ‘act of identity’, revealing through their personal use of language their sense of social and ethnic solidarity or difference.” Ferré’s language choice of writing in English could be considered an act of cultural assimilation. However, the fact that she inserts words, phrases and whole sentences, in Spanish, even though in some instances she uses domesticating strategies such as cushioning, is an “act of identity” intended to express a hybrid bilingual identity and should be considered an act of subversive language appropriation.

In the case of *La casa de la laguna*, Ferré makes use of the same linguistic resource by including instances of English as the following examples show, but in this case these instances of Spanish represent names of institutions and organizations that are part of the narration of the relationship between the United States and Puerto Rico.

“... cuatro mil copias del *First Reader in English*...” (Ferré 1996a: 104)

“... el National Labor Relations Act...” (135)

“... publicado por el American Federation of Labor...” (234)

“... se graduó en la Boston University y empezó a trabajar con su padre en la Gourmet Imports.” (349)

“... a tono con el *american way of life*.” (350)

“... las recetas del *Boston Cooking School Book*...” (350)

“... el Carnegie Library Ladies Club, el Red Cross Ladies Committee...” (350)

7.1.3 Self-translation

For Ferré, “[l]a obra de arte es todo, ... todo está identificado y es inseparable”, as she stated when she was interviewed by Walescka Pino-Ojeda (Ferré 2000: 124). In
this way, Ferré’s self-translation of *The House on the Lagoon* into *La casa de la laguna* is part of the same literary project that, together with her other self-translations mentioned below, “forma[n] parte del conjunto de su obra” (Mendez-Clark 2000: 396).


One of the more common questions surrounding the practice of self-translation is whether or not the self-translated texts can be considered to be original texts or if they should be considered derivative literary work. This is a topic that Ferré has addressed through her reflections about writing and translation and through the plot of *The House on the Lagoon*. As I previously mentioned, *The House on the Lagoon* has been published as an English original, per the paratext in the book’s dust jacket. However, Ferré has stated in several interviews that the novel is a translation and an expansion of a short story that she had written in Spanish, but had never published (Ferré 1997b: 63, Ferré 2000: 95). Ferré’s explanation about the genesis of *The House on the Lagoon* would turns both her English and Spanish texts into translations of a non-existent text according to scholar Guillermo Irizarry (Irizarry 2001). This argument seems to be irrelevant for Ferré, however, as she has noted, “tanto [sus] libros en español como [sus] libros en inglés son originales” because “[u]na idea puede nacer en una lengua, y al pasar a otra se adensa, se estira, se enriquece o se clarifica.”(Ferré 2001b:177).

In her essay “On Destiny, Language, and Translation; or, Ophelia Adrift in the C. & O. Canal”, Ferré relates her coming to terms with her hybrid identity, her need of writing in both Spanish and English, and her practice of self-translation. Additionally, she asks herself “¿Es posible traducir un texto literario cuando nos enfrentamos a las enormes

\(^{155}\) A novella or short novel accompanied by 3 short stories.
diferencias culturales en las cuales todo lenguaje se encuentra incrustado?” (Ferré 2001b: 156). After discussing several language philosophy theories, she sides with George Steiner and concludes that “real translation is impossible and that what passes for translation is a convention of approximate analogies” (Steiner 1998: 77). This statement about the impossibility of translation is consistent with Ferré’s view of her Spanish and English novels as original versions.

Ferré’s self-translations, or recreations, of her narratives have been criticized as being too liberal, and for including too many additions and other substantial changes, especially when writing or self-translating into English. These concessions are considered by many to be aimed at the English reader or the “yanqui” reader as some of Puerto Rico’s nationalists literary critics refer to the colonizer “other.” Even though it is not my place to make any judgments with regard to Ferré’s domesticating practices, I can understand why critics were suspicious about Ferré’s changes, especially taking into account her ideological change of mind regarding the political status of the island.

Even though the aim of this dissertation is not to evaluate the equivalence, or lack of it, in Ferré’s self-translation, I found that it was necessary to look into the textual differences that exist between the texts in my search for Ferré’s aims behind her self-translation practice. When I started comparing the “original” English source text against the Spanish target text, I quickly realized that the English version included text that was omitted in the Spanish version of the novel. One example of this translation strategy is when Ferré includes additional verses to the “Quiéreme mucho” song in the English version,156 and that the Spanish version had additional text that was not part of the “original” English version as when she adds a detail description of the Moorish olives that Buenaventura imported from Seville.157 While the addition of the description of the olives in the Spanish version is consonant with the baroque style that the author admits

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156 English version: “He went on sitting on the ground, singing, ‘Love me always, / sweet love of my life. / You know I’ll always adore you. / Only the memory of your kisses / will ease my suffering,’ until he fell unconscious on the sidewalk.” (Ferré 1995: 4)

Spanish version: “Permaneció sentado en la acera, cantando Quiéreme mucho hasta que se desplomó inconsciente sobre el piso de ladrillos salpicado de sangre.” (Ferré 1996a: 16)

157 English version: “There he stored his wines; the ruby-red hams he began to import form Valdeverdeja, his hometown; . . . and the exquisite Moorish olives from Seville.” (Ferré 1995: 12)

Spanish version: “Allí almacenaba sus vinos; los jamones que empezó a importar de Valdeverdeja, su pueblo natal; . . . y las exquisitas aceitunas aliñadas de Sevilla – rellenas de pimiento morrón, cebollín o almendra –, cuyos ojillos verdes con pupilas rojas y blancas tanto lo alegraban cuando las veía alineadas en sus tarros sobre los estantes.” (Ferré 1996: 24)
to have when she writes in Spanish, the inclusion of text in the English version that was omitted in the Spanish version, responds to a conscious attempt by Ferré to domesticate the text (Venuti 1995). In this manner, she making it easier for the English reader to access the text and the Puerto Rican culture and identity in it. Although on the one hand, Ferré seems to domesticate the text to accommodate the English speaker through the implementation of additions and omissions, on the other hand, she leaves a significant number of cultural references in Spanish, both with and without English translation, so the reader never loses perspective of where the events of the plot take place. This strategy also serves the purpose to give Puerto Ricans in the Diaspora the opportunity to savour their mother tongue and to identify themselves with the text on another level. This is consonant with the approach of other writers like Esmeralda Santiago, who choose to give the reader a taste of the Spanish language.

Through the additions and omissions that she implements in her self-translation practice, Ferré domesticates the source text to her English speaking audience. It seems that by her being in the “contact zone”, between two shores, the currents entice her towards the dominant culture because as Mary Louise Pratt states, “highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination” exists between the two shores (1992: 4). As scholar Joyce Tolliver argues in the abstract of her paper “Rosalía between Two Shores: Gender, Rewriting and Translation”, translation “is always implicated in relationships of cultural dominance and subordination” (2012: 33), thus, Ferré’s domesticating translation practices should not be considered outside of that premise. Ferré’s paternalism towards dominant culture when using translatory domesticating techniques to make the understanding of source text easier for the U.S. audience should be understood in the context of the colonial power relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States. In addition, I agree with Martin and Vidal that “a domesticating dimension is inherent in the nature of translation or, to put it in other words, that only a relative, gradable foreignising

158 “Escribir en inglés me ha ayudado, porque, en español, yo soy muy barroca. Me regodeo mucho en las descripciones”. (Castillo García 2005: 243)
159 Inclusion of Spanish in English text without translation or explicitation: “She brought two jibaritas from the mountains of Cayey . . .” (Ferré 1995: 92). Inclusion of Spanish in English text with explicitation: “. . . and lay my head on an alcapurria when they lower me down to my grave.” (Ferré 1995: 213). Inclusion of Spanish in English text with translation: “Ojos que no ven, corazón que no siente” – Eyes that do not see, heart that does not feel – goes the old Spanish saying.” (Ferré 1995: 248)
of the text is possible if we are to avoid the complete foreignising strategy of repeating the original text with its original foreign wording.” (Martín and Vidal 2004: 69)

Through arguing that “in translating one’s own work it is only by betraying that one can better the original” (Ferré 1991: 162), Ferré justifies the textual differences existent between her English and Spanish texts, which allows her to refer to them as original pieces of literature.¹⁶⁰ As researcher Bo Byrkjeland has argued in her dissertation, “[w]hat seems to be at stake in these works is, among other things, an attempt to dislocate the hierarchical binary of original/copy.” This becomes clear in Ferré’s statement where she explains why she published her novel *The House on the Lagoon* in English first and then her self-translation *La casa de la laguna*: “Si la publico en español y después en inglés y se publica en Estados Unidos como una traducción, no es lo mismo” (2014: 21).

Additional proof of Ferré’s aim to unsettle the authorial status of her texts is the role that the binary notions of “original” and “copy” play in the plot of her novel *The House on the Lagoon*. Within the plot of the novel there seems to be a metaphor about translation through Pavel’s character, a Polish architect hired by Buenaventura to build the first house on the lagoon. Pavel’s plagiarism of architect Frank Lloyd Wright’s designs while designing a church in Jacksonville, is classified by Isabel as an “exact copy” of Wright’s work while Pavel refers to “his” design as a “faithful re-creation”, “not a mere copy” (Ferré 1995: 41). Later on at the end of the sixth chapter, Isabel refers to Pavel’s design of Buenaventura’s house as “something truly original.” Even though he had used one of Wright’s designs as a model, he had added “many new elements which would make the house more in keeping with life in the tropics” (48, 49). I believe that Pavel’s faithful “stone by stone” (41) re-creation of Wright’s work is an allegory for “word-for-word” translation while the modified design that Pavel created for Buenaventura taking into account the environment where the house was going to be built, would be a metaphor for “sense for sense” translation. Following the logic of this set of metaphors, for Pavel to be able to build a house as beautiful as the one that he wanted to build for Buenaventura’s wife, whom he had fallen in love with, he had to modify Wright’s design instead of making a “stone by stone” copy as he had done before. For this house to be

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such a beautiful house, it had to be created with the target context in mind. These metaphors could represent Ferré’s defense of the additions and omissions in her self-translation. As Boyd Carrière suggests in her dissertation, “Pavel is usurping Wright’s authority and claiming it for his own when he surpasses his former master’s designs” (Boyd Carrière 2007: 191). By self-translating, Ferré is doing something similar. In her self-translation there is an appropriation of authorship rights. Translation, an activity that has been considered as a passive, invisible and secondary activity, is being transformed into an active, visible and primary activity, and the result is an almost new version in its own right. With her self-translation act, Ferré is subverting that traditional relationship between author and translator, original literary text and translated text.

Ferré’s challenging of textual authority through the subversion of the concepts of “author”/“translator”, doubles her authorial role and is consistent with her feminist project, which she has articulated broadly, and with her challenging of patriarchal society, which I have analyzed extensively within the narrative subversion section of this chapter. As researcher María Caballero has suggested, “[p]ara Ferré, existe una íntima conexión entre mujer y escritura” (Caballero 1999: 89), argument that is embedded within the novel plot through Isabel’s writing act and through the novel’s narrative structure, which I have previously described. As Gema Castillo has stated, in her “deseo por convertirse en la autora de su propia vida, Ferré lucha contra la autoridad patriarcal que han ejercido sobre ella y sobre la mujer en general” (Castillo 2006: 18). Self-translation is one of the main resources she makes use of to subvert the dominant patriarchal society. Ferré “[e]scribe para edificarse] palabra a palabra . . .” because “[e]s ella quien [le] ha hecho posible una identidad propia” (Ferré 1980b: 137-38), an identity as a woman writer with her own critical voice, in a society in which she felt valued mostly for being the daughter of Luis A. Ferré.

I maintain that through her act of self-translation, both from Spanish into English and from English into Spanish, and through her public expressions about translation, writing, and the Puerto Rican identity, Ferré wants to make a statement about how both English and Spanish are embedded in her identity thus validating her cultural and linguistic hybrid identity. In this way, self-translation functions as a postcolonial tool for the affirmation of cultural hybridity as it allows Ferré to express her hybrid identity and the hybrid context from which she writes, subverting homogeneous concepts of national identity, as well as the literary canons of both Puerto Rico and the United States. Ferré
also challenges normative patriarchal translation practices, through which translators make themselves invisible, when she takes a recreational translation approach, and subverts canonical notions of literary patriarchal authority by claiming that both her English and Spanish literature are original versions, thus doubling her credit not only as an author, but as a female author.

7.2 Esmeralda Santiago: América’s Dream and El sueño de América

Puerto Rican literature written in English and Spanish from the Diaspora is still not completely accepted by the Puerto Rican literary canon and this has been recognized by scholars such as Juan Flores who argues that it “is a literature of straddling, a literature operative within and between two national literatures and marginal in both” (1993: 152).

This in-betweenness of Puerto Rican literature is experienced by América in the course of the novel when she finds herself in a situation where she has to coexist with a language and a culture that are foreign to her and she enters a process of personal and cultural redefinition. By exposing the differences between a Puerto Rican family living in Puerto Rico and a Puerto Rican family living in the New York U.S. Diaspora, Santiago recreates América’s Puerto Rican identity and contrasts it with the hybrid identity of the Puerto Rican characters that América meets while living in New York. América’s Dream subject matter is identifiable for the bilingual reader that has been marked by migration one way or another, thus the subject matter choice is a literary resource used by Santiago to her main target audience. Upon analysing the linguistic resources that Santiago makes uses of in her narrative, the main target that she aims to address becomes more distinguishable and identifiable.

7.2.1 Inclusion of Spanish Words

Even though the action of América’s Dream (1996) takes place in Puerto Rico and in New York, the novel is written in English however from the novel’s title, the reader can appreciate a linguistic subversion. The fact that the English reader has to read repeatedly a hispaniced version of the “name” of his country, America, with an evident ortographic mark, could be a constant irritation and is a constant reminder of the presence of the Latin American immigrants and that America is not just the United States, but a whole diverse continent. Additionally, the novel includes a significant number of Spanish words and utterances strategically used through the novel as cultural
references within the dialogues and also within the prose narrative, to underscore that the character’s native language is Spanish and what’s being narrated takes place in Puerto Rico.

1. “An orange Isuzu passes her, driven by an Americano with skin pale as clam meat.” (Santiago 1996a: 12) [Emphasis mine]

2. A público passes in the opposite direction, and the driver waves at her. It is an air-conditioned van for twelve passengers, full of tourists gawking at the lush vegetation and doubtless at the brightly dressed women walking along the road. (16) [Emphasis mine]

3. “¡Rosalinda se escapó!” At first she doesn’t quite understand what Ester means by Rosalinda has escaped.” (2) [Emphasis mine]

4. Both of them taking her for a pendeja, sneaking behind her back for who knows how long, while she slaves her life away scrubbing toilets and mopping floors. (9) [Emphasis mine]

5. “She picks them up with a paper towel, rolls the whole thing into a ball. ‘¡No les da vergüenza!’ she mumbles as she dumps the mess into the trash can.” (79) [Emphasis mine]

6. “His father took him to New York. We all thought it was better this way. ‘Así son las cosas,’ she sighs.” (39) [Emphasis mine]

7. “It’s all uphill from Esperanza to Destino.” (16) [Emphasis mine]

Some of the words left in Spanish are English cognates (example 1), in which case the meaning of the Spanish word is accessible to the English monolingual reader. In other cases, Santiago either, makes use of explicitation (see example 2), provides a translation (see example 3), or provides sufficient context for the reader to figure out the meaning of the Spanish word such as in example 4, where the reader can infer by analysing the sentence context, that “pendeja” is an insult. Even though these Spanish words are left unmarked without italics or any other marker, which would indicate that the reader is facing a Spanish word, thus favouring the bilingual reader, they are accompanied by cushioning linguistic resources, which soften the foregnising effect of the inclusion of Spanish words and in that way domesticate the text for the English monolingual speaker.
In other instances of Spanish inclusion though, Santiago simply leaves the Spanish words standing by themselves without surrounding context, translation or paraphrasing in which case the meaning is lost for the English monolingual reader. This is the case in examples 5, 6 and 7. In the last example, the lack of access of meaning represents even a greater disadvantage for the English monolingual reader as even though “Destino” and “destiny” are cognates, the reader would have to consult a dictionary to find out that “Esperanza” means “hope” and then be able to understand the metaphor.

Santiago’s use of this linguistic literary resource increases in Chapter 17 and 20, in which América visits her New York family who lives in the Bronx. In these chapters specifically, the Spanish words included aim to underscore the preservation of Puerto Rican cultural elements which stand for resistance to cultural assimilation of Diaspora Puerto Ricans. Thus words such as “bodega”, “botánica”, “salsa”, “sofrito”, “recao”, “orégano”, “achiote”, “malanga”, “yautía”, “batata”, “viandas”, “ñame”, “bolero”, “merengue”, and “conga”, words that are tied to essential aspects of the Puerto Rican culture such as religion, cuisine and music, are left in Spanish and only a few of them are accompanied by enough context for the reader to have access to their meaning.

In this way Santiago can exemplify the way in which Niuyoricans talk code-switching between English and Spanish even though most of the time América’s family talks to her in Spanish as she has limited command of English.

1. “And to know that she’s sleeping with fulano de tal from who knows where.” (195)
2. “‘My sister,’ Carmen says, ‘thinks life is a telenovela.’” (198) [Emphasis mine]
3. “‘He looked just like a woman, with tetas and everything,’ one of the customers tells her hairdresser.” (234) [Emphasis mine]
4. “‘The hijo de la gran puta ran me over with his car,’ Nereida says with immeasurable anger.” (236) [Emphasis mine]

Throughout this chapter, to clarify in which language the characters are speaking, Santiago adds comments about language use in the dialogue and within the prose.

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161 Santiago 1996a: 180-98.
1. “. . . it’s so nice to be speaking Spanish!” (185)

2. ‘Dario likes you,’ she says in Spanish, looking at América, who shifts uncomfortably. ‘Don’t look so scared! He’s a nice guy,’ she adds in English . . . (192)

3. “América has been looking from one to the other, trying to follow the conversation, which has been in English.” (192)

4. “Most of the talk is in Puerto Rican Spanish, and América closes her eyes and listens to the familiar sounds with gratitude . . . ” (234)

In América’s Dream it is evident how both Puerto Ricans in the island and Puerto Ricans living in the Diaspora code switch. However, there are noticeable differences between these instances of code-switching. In most parts of the novel, Santiago includes Spanish words that would represent the English loan words that have been normalised by Puerto Rican Spanish, but in Chapter 17, the kind of code-switching implemented by Santiago includes a larger amount of Spanish word, long phrases and even whole sentences.

By writing in English and by including Spanish words and phrases in an otherwise English text, Santiago is unsettling the status of English as a colonial language, challenging the U.S. English literary canon. Additionally, she is giving voice to the Puerto Ricans who are expected to learn the colonizer’s language even in their own country, and to the Puerto Rican migrants who struggle with language and are forced to assimilate linguistically.

7.2.2 Phonetic Transcription of Oral Speech

As most literary narratives, América’s Dream uses dialogue to represent oral speech, but when the character whose oral speech is being represented speaks in a language that is not his/her native language and that he/she is not fluent in, Santiago uses phonetic transcription to mark the English utterances, letting the reader know that the English represented is non-Standard English. The reader quickly learns that non-marked English stands for a character speaking his/her native language and marked English stands for a character speaking in his/her non-native language. Santiago masters this technique very efficiently through the novel especially when she wants us to witness how América struggles with both English speech production and English speech reception as she
interacts with native English speakers both in Puerto Rico at the small hotel where she works as a maid, and in New York at the Leveretts’ house where she works as a live-in nanny/housekeeper. At the beginning of the novel, during the parts of the novel that take place in Puerto Rico, phonetic transcription is used to portray Don Irving’s oral speech when he speaks to his employees, who struggle to understand him, not only because of their limited or lack of English comprehension, but because he often speaks with a cigar in his mouth and makes no efforts to make it easier for them to understand him, and also to show América’s limited command of spoken English.

1. “Izevrydinalride?” (30)

2. “‘Any word from your daughter?’ It all sounds like one long word she’s never heard: eniwoifromerdora.” (35)

3. “Whasgoneonere?” (2)

Upon reading Don Irving say “Izevrydinalride?”,” the reader experiments the same struggle that América goes through when Don Irving talks to her. In this way, a subversion of places occurs and the English reader accustomed to experience the ease that comes with being a speaker of a colonial language such as English, switches places with the colonized. By condensing “Is everything all right” in one phonetic unit, Santiago it’s implying that Don Irving’s words are unintelligible to América as she is not able to understand what each word means. “Itskarnlevr” (Santiago 1996: 115), it’s another example of Santiago’s use of phonetic transcription of oral speech to display América’s English comprehension deficiencies. Santiago also uses the same phonetic transcription technique on a few instances to represent América’s struggle with English pronunciation when she talks to Don Irving and when she moves to New York to work for the Leverett family.

1. “Ay don no!” (2)

2. “Ees my dohter,” says América, avoiding Don Irving’s eyes. ‘She in trubel.’ (3) [Emphasis mine]

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163 Is everything all right? [My interpretation].
164 It’s Karen Leverett. [My interpretation]
165 I don’t know [My interpretation]
166 Is my daughter. [My interpretation]
167 She is in trouble. [My interpretation]
3. “Sí, I come. One minute plis.” (138) [Emphasis mine]


Another technique that Santiago uses to portray América’s limited knowledge of English consists of the use of limited vocabulary and omission of prepositions and other grammatical units.¹⁶⁹

In the Spanish self-translated novel, *El sueño de América*, Santiago uses the same oral speech transcription technique, but she utilizes Spanish phonetics in the phonetic transcription to fit Spanish native speaker audiences.¹⁷⁰ This difference regarding the use of this linguistic resource in each language, can be observed in one of the examples previously provided in the analysis of the English version where Don Irving is asking América if everything is all right and she understands “Izervydinalride?” (Santiago 1996a: 30). In the Spanish version, América’s understanding of Don Irving question is portrayed as “Isevridinalrayd?” (Santiago 1996b: 33), where Santiago exchanges the “z” for an “s” and the “ay” for the “i” and vice versa in two instances in order to cater for the Spanish speakers. In terms of vocabulary, Santiago leaves some words in English when the native English speaking characters are talking or when she wants to represent the incorporation of English in Puerto Rican Spanish as a result of more than a hundred years of U.S. colonialism. This influence is evident in the fashion in which most Puerto Ricans speak on a daily basis including English words whose use has been normalised, within Spanish sentences. As in the Spanish novel, Santiago does not mark these words with italics or any other marker to underscore the linguistic switch, thus favouring the bilingual reader.

1. “Eso es menos de lo que ella paga por un *brassier.*” Use of “brassier” instead of the Spanish “sujetador” (Santiago 1996b: 272). [Emphasis mine]

2. “…] sus paredes empapeladas con carteles de artistas de *rockanrol* y cantantes de salsa.” (6) [Emphasis mine]

3. “Yo les prepare unos *sangüiches.*” (7) [Emphasis mine]

¹⁶⁸ Play date.
¹⁶⁹ “I think about” (Santiago 1996a: 117), instead of “I will think about it.”
4. “. . . pone cada cual con sus productos afines: espray de pelo con gel y mousse . . .” (55) [Emphasis mine]

In this way, Santiago not only uses the phonetic transcription of oral speech to demonstrate the character’s struggle with English, but to underscore the linguistic appropriation that Puerto Ricans implement when they transform Standard English to fit their culture and the sounds of their native language.

The use of phonetic transcription of oral speech is really a resource that represents linguistic appropriation and cultural resistance to assimilation in a way that can be compared to the use of Spanglish, which stands against Standard English, in defiance, underscoring difference in front of the other.

Another characteristic of the vocabulary used by Santiago in the Spanish self-translation, is the use of “universal” Spanish vocabulary that most Spanish speakers use regardless of the country where they come from, except in a few instances when Santiago finds necessary to use Puerto Rican culture specific vocabulary to give the novel a local flavour. In a similar way to the English version, grammatically correct Spanish stands for standard Spanish or standard English, depending on the context and of the nationality of the character who speaks, and broken Spanish corresponds to broken English.

When reading either the English version or the self-translated Spanish version of Santiago’s novel, there is no doubt that the reader can experience some difficulties to understand the characters speech or to understand the characters comprehension of another character speaking the foreign language, regardless of what his/her native language is. These difficulties are living proof of Esmeralda’s success on giving the reader a taste of what it feels like to live in a space where individuals are expected to speak and understand the language of the colonizer even in their own country and where the colonizer is not expected to go out of his/her way to speak or understand their language. By creatively using linguistic resources as phonetic transcription, Santiago successfully overcomes the challenges of representing speech production in a bilingual

171 “mecedora”, “pinchadiscos” and “peldaños” instead of “sillón”, “tocadiscos” and “escalones”, which are most used in Puerto Rican Spanish (Santiago 1996b).
172 “asopao” (Santiago 1996b: 188)
context. In terms of language use, it is evident that Santiago designed the novel taking into account the bilingual reader and that she has foreignised the English novel and its Spanish self-translation for monolingual readers of English and Spanish in order to allow the reader to experiment the linguistic alienation felt by the colonized thus “privilege[ing] the space of in-betweenness where languages mutually influence each other” (Martín and Vidal 2004: 85). In this way, Santiago subverts the power relationship, which makes the phonetic transcription of oral speech a postcolonial writing strategy.

In contrast to Ferré, Santiago writes in English because even though she has expressed that she feels as Puerto Rican as Puerto Ricans who live in Puerto Rico, the fact that she had lived most of her life in the United States has made English her first language. Even though Santiago’s English writing could be considered a sign of linguistic assimilation, her non-Standard use of English through which she communicates an identity that can be clearly differentiated from a U.S. American identity, “is not a sign of cultural accommodation” (Flores 1993: 151).

7.2.3 Self-translation

By self-translating Santiago is creating a bilingual literary work that can contain her hybrid identity, her in-betweenness. Self-translation also allows Santiago to successfully preserve in the Spanish novel the difference underscored in her English novel through the use of linguistic resources such as code-switching and the phonetic transcription of oral speech. By translating her narrative herself, she makes sure that the linguistic subversion she implements in her English narrative is not normalised or homogenised in translation, as it is often the case. As Martín and Vidal has argued in their paper “Asymmetries in/of Translation: Translating Translated Hispanicism(s).”, “writing in and, moreover, translating into an ‘invented,’ non-codified idiom, as in Santiago’s case, is an affirmation of this identity.” Thus with her act of self-translation, Santiago is also subverting the literary canons of both Puerto Rico and the United States. (2004: 87)
Chapter 8: Hybirdity in The House on the Lagoon and in América’s Dream: A reader response survey

This chapter is dedicated to the analysis of the reader response survey that I implemented to explore how the readers received the cultural and linguistic hybridity present in Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago’s novels and the writing strategies that they have used to portray this hybridity. Both authors have constructed highly complex narratives in terms of the different writing strategies they used to express cultural and linguistic hybridity, namely code-switching, inclusion of Spanish in originally English written novels and vice versa. Thus, I believe it is important to explore how this audience design has translated in terms of the readers’ understanding of the author’s aims behind these strategies.

For reasons of space this chapter will not include an analysis of all the answers collected through the reader response survey; however, it will include the analysis of the results that are more relevant to the objectives of this research project. Hence, this chapter includes the analysis of the answers provided by the survey respondent to the following questions included in the personal information sheet (Appendix I) and in the survey questionnaire (Appendix II).

Questions from the personal information sheet:

Nationality:

Do you consider yourself bilingual (English/Spanish) Yes / No

Question from the questionnaire:

(3) The writers of the texts that you just read have different migratory backgrounds. Both of them were born in Puerto Rico and migrated to the United States during their childhood however, one of them established herself in the U.S. permanently while the other, even though she has lived in the U.S. for long period of times, does not lives in the U.S. permanently. Which of the two writers lives in the U.S. permanently? Writer #1 / Writer #2

(4a) What characteristics of the text made you identify this writer as the
one that lives in the U.S. permanently?

4b) Judging by the linguistic characteristics of the oral speech transcripts present in the extracts of writer #1 novel (the way in which she presents the dialogue among the characters), what is the nationality of the characters and what is their migratory situation?

(5a) Did you have any difficulty understanding the oral speech transcripts (the characters quoted speech) in any of the extracts? Yes / No

(5b) If your answer was “Yes”, please identify the extracts that contain the transcripts fuss that made your understanding difficult and explain the characteristics that made them difficult to understand.

(6a) Out of the eight extracts that you just read, four of them are translations of the other four extracts. In the case of writer #1, in what language do you think she wrote her novel originally in? (English / Spanish) Which textual characteristics made you select that language as the original writing language?

(6b) In the case of writer #2, in what language do you think that her novel was originally written in? (English / Spanish) Which textual characteristics made you select that language as the original writing language?

(7a) In extracts A1, B1, C1 and D1, the writers include Spanish in texts that have been written mostly in English. In your opinion, what is the purpose of the writers when they use this writing technique?

(7b) In extracts A2, B2, C2 and D2, the writers include English in texts that have been written mostly in Spanish. In your opinion, what is the purpose of the writers when they use this writing technique?

8.1 National identity and bilingualism

By means of a personal information sheet (Appendix I) I asked the participants to define their nationality and then I proceeded to codify the answers they gave me. After this procedure, I have observed that of the general sample 66% defined themselves as
"puertorriqueños" (Puerto Ricans) in terms of nationality, 24% as "estadounidenses", 8% as "puertorriqueños" with U.S. citizenship and 3% as U.S. citizens (See Appendix V). After dividing the sample by place of residence, I found that most of the participants that defined their nationality as "puertorriqueña" live in the United States. This can confirm that Puerto Ricans “. . .have a clear sense of their collective selves” (Duany 2003: 430), and that even though they live in the U.S. Diaspora they display a postcolonial identity despite the fact that P.R. is considered by many to be a colony of the United States. On the other hand, I have observed that in Puerto Rico the distribution between those who define their nationality as "puertorriqueña" and as "estadounidense" is quite even, consisting of 23% versus 21% respectively. This could be a reflection of the historical divisions that exists between those who wish that the island becomes a state of the United States and those who wish that the island remains a commonwealth or gains its independence.

In the personal information sheet, I also asked participants if they considered themselves bilingual. From the participants that live in Puerto Rico 85% said they were bilingual and 95% of the U.S. residents answered affirmatively as well. Regarding the relationship between bilingualism and nationality, most readers that defined themselves as bilinguals defined their nationality as "puertorriqueña" (See Appendix VII). This could mean that there is a normalization of the phenomenon of having two languages since Puerto Ricans have had two official languages, EN and SPA since 1993, but this seems to not have an effect on their national identity (See Appendix 7). Thus, linguistic hybridity seems to be engraved within the Puerto Rican identity. When I compared the variables of bilingualism and nationality by place of residence, I observed that in Puerto Rico 40% of those who defined themselves as bilingual defined their nationality as "estadounidense" which could mean that they see the acquisition of English as an instrument for climbing the social ladder which they relate to belonging to the U.S. nation. In the United States, however, of all the participants that said they were bilingual 85% defined their nationality as "puertorriqueña" which could indicate the presence of a very strong cultural nationalism that leads the participants not to see linguistic assimilation as cultural assimilation.

\[174\] I am using “estadounidense” in the absence of an English gentilic to talk about the United States inhabitants. It is also the word used by a large number of respondents.
On the one hand, the foregrounding of the different manifestations of U.S. presence on the island and its consequences in Puerto Rican culture, the affirmation of Puerto Rican culture through the inclusion of Puerto Rican cultural items, and the emphasis on U.S. cultural practices of dominance, identifies and denounces the power relationship between the colonizer and the colonized cultures. On the other, these practices build a hybrid Puerto Rican identity with a certain degree of cultural assimilation, but also subverts total cultural assimilation through cultural affirmation and resistance.

8.2 Migration and linguistic Writing Strategies

With these questions (survey questions 3 and 4a), I wanted to explore if the readers could determine the writers’ migratory status by looking at the writer’s text characteristics. I expected the readers to identify Santiago as the writer that lives permanently in the U.S. This expectation was based on Santiago’s use of phonetic transcription of oral speech (PTOS) to show the Puerto Ricans’ struggle to understand English speech and to communicate with English native speakers, and on the presence of Don Irving, a character from the U.S., interacting with Puerto Rican characters. As I expected, most readers, 62.8% (49/80), chose Santiago as the writer that lives permanently in the United States, but the reasons why they chose her were varied (See Appendix VIII). The three reasons that prevailed were related to the use of phonetic transcription of oral speech, to the use of code-switching (Spanglish) and to the translation’s quality vs. the English version’s quality.

8.2.1 Code-switching

Regarding code-switching or “La integración de ambos idiomas.” (p49-U.S.175), English and Spanish, as a reason to select Santiago, it seems the respondents related the use of this language resource with Santiago’s personal linguistic experience as a Puerto Rican migrant who might have to resort to both languages to be able to express herself and that might be the reason why they selected her.

“...el hecho que incorpore palabras o frases en inglés y español...” (p34-P.R.)

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175 P49-U.S. = participant # 49, lives in U.S. Throughout this chapter I will use the same method to identify readers thus preserving their anonymity. I will also present my translation of the respondents’ Spanish answers.
8.2.2 Translation Quality

Participants also made observations about the differences in terms of quality between Santiago’s English version and the Spanish self-translation.

“La traducción al español no fluye tanto como la #2. El diálogo en el texto en inglés, al igual que las descripciones, fluye más.” (p21-P.R).

In this case, the respondent compared Santiago and Ferré’s Spanish translations and thought that Ferré’s command of Spanish was better than Santiago’s, thus selecting Santiago as the writer that lives in the U.S. permanently. Another respondent commented more specifically about the quality of Santiago’s translation and identified the use of Spanglish as a trigger for his selection.

“Cuando traduce al español, usa los verbos y las frases traducidas literalmente, al igual que la sintaxis. Demasiado spanglish.” (p29-P.R.)

8.2.3 Phonetic transcription of oral speech:

In the case of the phonetic transcription of oral speech, most readers had high levels of understanding regarding the aim and the effect created by this resource. In this answer, it is clear that the reader recognized that there is an intention in Santiago’s text to portray English from a Spanish speaker point of view. It can be inferred that the reader chose Santiago because he or she relates this intention with being a Puerto Rican in the U.S. who struggles with language or with being around other Puerto Ricans in that situation.

“La forma en que ve el inglés desde el punto de vista del español.” (p18-P.R.)

Other participants answered more specifically in terms of the vocabulary they used to talk about Santiago’s phonetic transcription, and even talked about what they thought was the aim of using such a writing resource. In terms of the place of residence of these participants who highlighted phonetic transcription as a reason why they selected Santiago, I found no direct relation with this variable as 3 of them live in P.R. and 4 of them live in the U.S., which is not an unremarkable difference.
“El uso del lenguaje "fonético" para describir el discurso en inglés (se le describe el inglés al lector como un conjunto de sonidos, en la forma que lo entiende el narrador).” (p50-U.S.)

“. . . el que emplee palabras escritas según su pronunciación . . .” (p34-P.R.)

“La traducción fonética del inglés en los textos. Denota para mí la lucha del emigrante por expresarse en un idioma que no es el suyo.” (p49-U.S.)

The fact that these readers identified linguistic features of the texts as reasons for selecting Santiago as the writer who lives in the U.S. permanently talks about the effectiveness of the phonetic transcription of oral speech and the inclusion of Spanish in an English text and vice versa, as writing strategies to communicate the linguistic struggle of Puerto Rican migrants.

8.3 Linguistic Characteristics of Oral Speech and Nationality

Another question relevant to discuss the Puerto Rican identity was questionnaire question (4b), in which I asked them to identify the nationality of three characters in Santiago’s novel, one of whom was Don Irving, a U.S.-American character. Even though the question asked the participants to relate the character’s national identity to “the linguistic characteristics of the oral speech transcripts present in the extracts” of América’s Dream, the participants were free to use any nationality adjective they wanted, since I considered that their choice could provide valuable information for this research.

In the case of Don Irving, most respondents identified him as U.S. American (See Appendix VI). As in Santiago’s novel América’s Dream, respondents used different nationality adjectives to refer to U.S.-American nationality. The demonym “estadounidense” was the most frequently used within all respondents, followed by “americano/american”, “norteamericano” and “gringo.” From these demonyms, only “gringo” is clearly used by Puerto Ricans, especially nationalist and pro-independence Puerto Ricans, to refer to U.S.-Americans pejoratively. Interestingly, four out of the five

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176(4b) Judging by the linguistic characteristics of the oral speech transcripts present in the extracts of writer #1 novel (the way in which she presents the dialogue among the characters), what is the nationality of the characters and what is their migratory situation?
17744 respondents out of 80.
178“Estadounidense” (used 16 times), “americano/american” (used 12 times), “norteamericano” (used 6 times), and “gringo” (used 5 times).
respondents who identify Don Irving as “gringo”, were part of the U.S.-based population. The fact that most Puerto Rican respondents who used the nationality adjective “gringo” live in the United States could be an indication that some Puerto Ricans who migrate to the United States not only maintain their Puerto Rican identity from the Diaspora, but also adopt a much stronger identity that shows postcolonial traits. It could also be a sign of otherization as a response to second-class citizenship treatment. Another interesting finding is that two other U.S. Diaspora respondents used the terms “Niuyorican” and “U.S. citizen.” In the first case, it is possible that the “Don”, which is equivalent to “Mr” and is used in most Latin American countries as a sign of respect, confused the respondents or that they thought that the use of phonetic transcription of oral speech was a sign of non-standard English, such as that observed within the diasporic Puerto Rican community.

In both América’s and Ester’s cases, most respondents identified them as Puerto Ricans and also used other terms such as “boricua”, a term used by the nationalists and that comes from “Borinquén”, the pre-Columbian name of the island, and “puertorra”, another gentilic used by nationalists that is a derivation of Puerto Rico. Also in both cases, there is one respondent who categorized both characters as “[n]orteamericana de origen puertorriqueña” and “. . . [e]stadounidenses de ascendencia puertorriqueña” respectively (p40-P.R./p64- U.S.). This categorization reflects the attitude of a significant amount of Puerto Ricans who do not recognize the Puerto Rican identity of second-generation migrants due to strong cultural nationalistic feelings.

8.4 Phonetic Transcription of Oral Speech

More specifically, when I asked respondents if they had difficulties understanding the phonetic transcription of oral speech (5a), 75% answered they did not experience any difficulties and 25% said they did (See Appendix IX). When I divided my sample according to the place of residence, I noticed that most respondents that answered positively live in the island, which is understandable as it is possible that those respondents who live in the United States have more access to literature that uses phonetic transcription as a writing resource to portray migrants’ language struggle. Additionally those respondents living in the United States have more exposure to native English pronunciation and to oral and written code-switching.

In their answers to question (5b), most respondents identified extract A1 (7 vs. 3
which identified extract A2) as the extract that presented most difficulty in terms of the understanding of the phonetic transcription of oral speech. Out of these 7 respondents, 6 live in Puerto Rico and 1 lives in the United States, which is logical because the phonetic transcriptions included in this English extract were designed for native English speakers. Even so, the respondent that lives in the United States said that she had to “. . . leerlo varias veces para entender lo que decía.” (p57-U.S.)

The answers also reflected a difference in the level of understanding of the linguistic writing resource. For example, one respondent said that in the case of Don Irving’s phonetically transcribed speech, “. . . se intenta demostrar el modo de hablar de don Irving.” (p7-P.R.). In this case, the respondent did not understand that in the case of Santiago’s display of Don Irving’s speech, her aim is to display América’s struggle with English and thought instead that her aim was to display Don Irving’s particular way of speaking. A similar case was that of another respondent who said that for her it was difficult to understand “. . . la transcripción fonética de lo que habla don Irving en inglés de la calle . . .” (p25-P.R.)

Another factor that had an influence in the respondent’s difficulty to understand Santiago’s phonetic transcription was the punctuation that she chose to use. One respondent said that at first she had difficulties understanding Don Irving’s speech “. . . ya que sus palabras las hablaba corridas y mal dichas.” (p24-P.R.). Another respondent commented that “. . . si hubiese separado las palabras, aun si las hubiese escrito fonéticamente, se hubiese entendido mejor, aunque me doy cuenta que al unirlo todo posiblemente estaba tratando de imitar el sonido . . .” (p21-P.R.). Here again we can see that there was an understanding of Santiago’s aim even if the respondent did not realize that rather than the sound or pronunciation, what she wanted to emphasize was América’s struggle to comprehend English speech. Only one respondent seemed to have noticed the differences of the phonetic transcription instances in both versions when she said that “. . . los discursos están escritos de forma diferente, apelando por supuesto al lector específico en el idioma. Ej. “Whasgononere?” vs Whasgononir?” (p43- U.S.).

After analysing the answers of those respondents that admitted the difficulties they had with the phonetic transcriptions, I can state that even though most respondents recognized that there was an aim behind such an unusual writing technique, none of them proved to have fully understood the intent to show América’s struggle to understand
8.5 Self-Translation Reception

To explore the effect that Ferré’s English writing and self-translation practices had in the reader’s perception of the texts, I asked my survey participants to determine, after reading the provided novel’s extracts, in what language they thought that Ferré’s had originally written her novel (6a), and which textual characteristics made them select that language as the original writing language (6b). From the general sample, 56% of respondents correctly identified Ferré’s English extracts as the source texts (See Appendix X). The English extracts’ textual characteristics that emerged within the participants answers were textual and narrative fluidity, detailed narrative, lexical choice, addition of translation of Puerto Rican words and proverbs, writing quality (syntax and grammar), underscoring of Puerto Rican traditions, and textual differences between the Spanish and the English versions. From these, the textual and narrative fluidity was the most mentioned textual characteristic.

“Tienen más detalles las versiones del texto en inglés.” (p5-P.R.)

... creo que tiene que ver más con el escogido de las palabras y frases en español: chapín, empañadilla, “está más jalao que un timbre de guagua” y los nombres de las deidades africanas; que me parecen buscan resaltar la jerga puertorriqueña (y a través de ella nuestra cultura) no para el puertorriqueño, si no para el angloparlante. (p7-P.R.)

La Escritora #2 despunta con frases o palabras el lenguaje español (especialmente la jerga puertorriqueña) en sus textos. Quiere que el lector conozca el idioma, el cual transmite la historia y costumbres de quienes lo utilizan. Para eso, debe haber sido escrito primero en inglés, resaltando entre los textos la lengua española, con su estilo boricua. (p24-P.R.)

“La forma en que está traducido al español, domina la sintaxis anglosajona.” (p19-P.R.)

“Las versiones en español me parecen literalmente traducciones de algo ya escrito.” (p43-U.S.)

\(^{179}(6b)\) In the case of writer #2, in what language do you think that her novel was originally written in? English/Spanish. Which textual characteristics made you select that language as the original writing language?
“Los pasajes en inglés tienen más fluidez. Sin embargo, la versión española se ve más rígida y no fluye con naturalidad dando a entender que tal vez parece una traducción.” (p58-U.S.)

“El inglés para ser más "limpio", o sea, usado correctamente.” (p72-U.S.)

“[T]he translations were either poor or just didn’t feel right.” (p73-U.S.)

The participants answers expressing recognition of Ferré’s aim to appeal to an English-speaking reader and of a narrative structure designed for a reader who is unfamiliar with the Puerto Rican history and culture, showed how Ferré’s strategy of writing in English first instead of writing first in Spanish and then translating into English as she did initially, was successful. They also corroborated that “[t]he House on the Lagoon seems intentionally designed for a conventional public in the mainland United States, illiterate in matters of the island” (Stavans 1995; 642).

When asked what the source language of Santiago’s novel was, 62% of respondents correctly identified English as the source language vs. 38% for Spanish and in Ferré’s case 53.2% for English vs. 46.8% for Spanish (See Appendix XI). Some of the more frequent reasons provided by the participants to justify their answers were related to detailed narrative, the native English speaker writing quality (better syntax and paragraph organization), vocabulary use (use of colloquial sayings, better choice of words and use of English idioms), narrative fluency, fluid use of phonetic transcription of oral speech and the translation quality.

“‘Darle sentido’ y ‘pelicula en avance rápido’, por ejemplo, parecen traducciones de frases comunes en el idioma inglés.” (p31-P.R.)

“Resalta detalles que se pierden con la traducción.” (p44-U.S.)

“La mezcla de los idiomás y la traducción fonética del inglés.” (p49-U.S.)

“El vocabulario que usó en español, se escucha más como una traducción de cada palabra y menos natural que al leer la versión en inglés.” (p57-U.S.)

“The Spanish version doesn’t flow as well as the language naturally flows.” (p74-U.S.)

Regarding the respondent’s reasons to choose English as the source language for Ferré’s texts the most common were the following:
Narrative:

- More details
- Better rhythm

Writing Skills:

- Text is better organized

Fluency:

- Narrative flows better

Phonetic transcription of oral speech:

- They read better in English

Translation:

- Omission of details included in the English version
- In some cases, the Spanish translation does not work as well in Spanish ("Then everyone would jump in speaking Spanish like mad" vs. "subían el volumen y empezaban a hablar español como desesperados.")

8.6 Code-Switching Reception

As I wanted the respondents to think about what they thought the author’s aims were with this writing resource, based on their experiences as readers, I asked the participants for their opinion about the purpose of this writing technique, the inclusion of Spanish in texts that have been written mostly in English, . The answers were varied and covered a wide variety of aspects regarding both Santiago’s and Ferré’s texts but there were some recurring concepts, such as linguistic and national identity, hybrid identity, resistance to assimilation, cultural differences, preservation of culture, and foreignisation (See Appendix X).

I found that respondents were most assertive in their responses to this particular question and I found very clear and well expressed reflections. One respondent answered that she thought the purpose of including Spanish in English texts was to “Para mostrar hibridez y la experiencia lingüística de quienes viven entre dos idiomas (o tres con el
Another respondent commenting on the representation of Spanish in Santiago and Ferré’s texts said that the strategy was “[u]na afirmación de su identidad, que el lector sepa que el personaje es puertorriqueño o latino y que, con bastante probabilidad, la autora también lo es.” (p7-P.R.)

... destacar la cultura latina y sobre todo puertorriqueña, en Norteamérica, como una que a pesar de los ajustes que ha tenido que realizar para adaptarse a la cultura norteamericana, ha podido preservar algo de la esencia de su idioma y su idiosincrasia social y cultural. (p10-P.R.)

“Esa técnica . . . , es una referencia cultural - resalta la diferencia cultural.” (p21-P.R.)

“Establecer la idiosincrasia y tratar de imitar el acento de los personajes, exponer las dificultades con el idioma extranjero y en ocasiones simplemente no hay traducción.” (p28-P.R.)

“Afirmar el idioma materno de los personajes o dar fuerza a un ambiente donde coquetean ambos idiomas constantemente, crear esa sensación de que hay una mezcla.” (p31-P.R.)

“Para mostrar hibridez y la experiencia lingüística de quienes viven entre dos idiomas (o tres con el Spanglish).” (p51-U.S.)

“. . . una manera de establecer identidad cultural . . .” (p56-U.S.)

“[L]a hibridez cultural.” (p62-U.S.)

“Probablemente porque tiene de mente un público que es bilingüe . . .” (p65-U.S.)

As can be observed in the provided examples, respondents were most assertive in their responses to this particular question. Their reflections, which were very clear and well expressed, showed that they could recognize the expression of a hybrid identity that wants to underscore its difference from a U.S. identity, as an aim behind the authors’ inclusion of Spanish words/phrases in their English texts.
8.7 Code-Switching Use in Readers Response Survey

Interestingly, as I was analysing my survey data, I observed that like Ferré, the survey participants made use of “Spanglish” or code-switching in their answers. From the total population, 15 respondents included English in some way in their Spanish answers (Appendix XIII). The degree of English inclusion in their Spanish answers varied and it ranged from the inclusion of English words, English phrases, English sentences in otherwise Spanish paragraphs, and the use of Spanish phrases that I recognized as English literal translations. From these 15 respondents, 7 of whom lived in Puerto Rico and 8 of them in the United States, 9 included English words/phrases and 6 included English sentences.

Examples of inclusion of English words/phrases in Spanish answers:

“Pienso que lo mismo de la anterior…pero translated . . .” (p27-P.R.) [Emphasis mine]

“Las conversaciones y en el segundo may be la nostalgia.” (p13-P.R.) [Emphasis mine]

“[…] La primera linea de la transcripción #C1 NO HACE SENTIDO ya que, o faltan palabras o no se editó propiamente . . .” (p22-P.R.) [Emphasis original]

Examples of inclusion of English whole sentences in Spanish answers:

“The use of phonetically transcribed expressions.” (p2-P.R.) [Emphasis mine]

Certain words and phrases she uses in the English version. Like juicy gossip. Like juicy gossip. [L]a escritora # 1 de la manera en que escribe en ingles esta bien pero no suena como un nativoamericano. (p41-U.S.) [Emphasis mine]

“Give depth to the character, keep it historically accurate, make them more relatable.” (p68- U.S.) [Emphasis mine]

Such is the case in the third and last example in which the underscored phrase is a Spanish phrase but I have treated it as an English utterance because it has a very clear English structure (from “It does not make sense”).
From the respondents who included English words/phrases, 5 lived in Puerto Rico and 4 lived in the United States, and from the respondents who included English whole sentences, 2 lived in Puerto Rico and 4 lived in United States.

In the case of the respondents who answered in English, only one of them included Spanish in their English answers. Interestingly, the respondent lives in Puerto Rico.

Summarizing, 19% of my sample’s population included English in their Spanish answers. From that percentage, 47% lived in Puerto Rico and 53% lived in the United States. From the percentage who included English in their Spanish answers, 60% used English words/phrases and 40% used whole English sentences. In terms of the place of residence where these participants lived, from the percentage that used English words/phrases, 56% lived in Puerto Rico and 44% lived in the United States. From the percentage that used whole English sentences, 33% lived in Puerto Rico and 67% lived in the United States.

After analysing these instances of English in Spanish answers, it could be said that due to the influence of English in Puerto Rico, the use of English words has been normalised as part of the Puerto Rican culture. On the other hand, I have observed that the use of whole English sentences in the Spanish respondents’ answers was more generalised among the Puerto Ricans who live in the United States. This could indicate that Spanglish/code-switching is more used by Puerto Ricans in the U.S. Diaspora, who have lost contact with their language and feel more at ease code-switching between both languages.

When comparing the respondent’s hybrid language use with their self defined nationality, I found that from the percentage of respondents that used English in Spanish answers, 73% defined themselves as Puerto Ricans. In the extreme case of respondents who used whole English sentences in their Spanish answers, 83% defined themselves as Puerto Ricans. This phenomenon could indicate that Puerto Rican national identity does not depend exclusively on Spanish language use and relies more on the conservation and practice of Puerto Rican traditions.

8.8 Conclusion

After conducting this survey and after adding my findings to the textual analysis of both Santiago and Ferré’s texts, I have a clearer picture of where the hybrid elements
in these authors’ cases are. Contextually these elements are present in the writers’ contexts and in the Puerto Rican historical context that influences their narratives and textually they are present socio-culturally, intra-contextually and linguistically.
Chapter 9: Conclusion

This dissertation has sought to provide an explanation for the phenomenon of literary self-translation. It has examined the deep connections between, socio-political context, language, culture, identity, power and translation, focusing on the role of literary self-translation in a postcolonial context. Self-translation has been performed by fiction writers from around the world and with various aims in mind, but in the case of Puerto Rico, as in the case of other countries with similar political backgrounds, this phenomenon is tightly related to its colonial condition and it is propelled by the existence of a national literature despite of the fact that it has emerged from a country that has never achieved its independence.

In this research, self-translation is defined not only as the action implemented by authors when they translate their own literature, but also as a way of complementing the source text to create a bilingual text that stands on the contact zone, in-between cultures and in-between languages. I have argued that self-translation is used by Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago to express a hybrid postcolonial Puerto Rican identity which they also express through: a) incorporating the legacy in the plot of their novels of their U.S. migratory experiences and of the conflictive situation regarding their relationship with the island, in terms of the use of English as part of the colonial legacy. I have incorporated this legacy into my research despite the fact that the exploration of how fiction writers’ life experiences influence their narratives is no longer considered a reliable approach.; b) English writing as source language within a national literature that has built a fundamental link between the Spanish language and the Puerto Rican national identity; c) the use of hybrid language such as code-switching and the phonetic transcription of oral speech to reflect linguistic hybridity and colonized struggle with the colonizer’s language, in both their source texts and their self-translations; d) the inclusion of Puerto Rican cultural elements and U.S. cultural elements within the same narrative.

Findings:

What are the motivations and aims behind the self-translation of both Esmeralda Santiago’s and Rosario Ferré’s literary pieces?

In Chapter 5 I have exposed the aims that both authors have stated regarding their acts of self-translation, however, I argue that self-translation in the case of both authors is related to their need to express and affirm a national identity which is considered by many theorists to be inherent to their condition as members of a postcolonial nation, as I
have broadly demonstrated in Chapters 3 and 7, by providing examples of other writers, artists and intellectuals who have put forward conceptualizations about a hybrid Puerto Rican national identity. These conceptualization projects are in conflict with the cultural and linguistic Hispanophilic Puerto Rican national identity that has been historically officialised mainly by Puerto Rican cultural and political institutions and organizations such as the Departamento de Educación del Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico and the Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña.

Taking into consideration the authors’ national postcolonial contexts and the narrative and linguistic subversions that they implement, I believe that Rosario Ferré and Esmeralda Santiago’s aim, consciously or unconsciously, to disrupt homogenizing identity building efforts coming from both Puerto Rico and the United States. This disruption is implemented through the plots of their narratives, which portray hybrid characters, through their use of hybrid language, including words, phrases and sentences in Spanish in their English novels and through the way in which they conserve this hybridity on different levels in their Spanish self-translations. Therefore, self-translation should be considered a political act.

Last but not least, I believe that in the cases of both authors, there is a female agency as with their self-translations they are doubling their authorship. This agency is consistent with the critique of patriarchal society that they put forward in their narratives by including topics such as women reproductive rights and gender violence. Therefore in these cases self-translation is not only a political act because of the expression of postcolonial hybridity, but also because it is a tool for the subversion of patriarchal society.

What writing techniques do Esmeralda Santiago and Rosario Ferré use in their English and Spanish novels to express hybridity? How do they compare to each other?

In the case of Rosario Ferré, hybridity is mostly expressed through the inclusion of elements of the Puerto Rican, the Spanish and the African culture such as food items, music and traditions, side by side to the names of U.S. institutions that highlight the presence of the United States in the island and therefore, the colonial relationship that exist between the two countries. Linguistically, hybridity is presented by Ferré through the inclusion of English words and phrases in a text that has been written mainly in English. This Spanish inclusion is sometimes accompanied by cushioning domesticating
practices such as explicitation, translation, addition of contextual information to help the reader decipher the meaning of the foreign word/phrase, use of cognates, and use of Spanish loan words that are widely used in the English language, thus they favour the monolingual reader. However, in some occasions, the Spanish words stand by themselves in a more aggressive approach and the monolingual reader has to consult a dictionary to gain access to the Spanish utterances.

Hybridity is also underscored through the allegory of the house which is described as located in a place which is not entirely a swamp or a lagoon and it’s inhabited by animals which are both “amphibious and terrestrial” (Ferré 1995: 10). Additionally Isabel, the main character of The House on the Lagoon, writes her narrative in English which underscores language use in Puerto Rico and makes reference to Ferré’s own act of English writing, and Abby, Isabel’s grandmother, is described as a hybrid character that even though she is a supporter of independence for the island, worships the Sears catalogue and is grateful for being a U.S. citizen because the U.S. passport allows her to travel to the United States freely.

In the case of Esmeralda Santiago, hybridity is present in her novel América’s Dream in the inclusion of two different contexts where the narrated events takes place, the island of Vieques which is part of Puerto Rico, and the United States, where América migrates to work as a housekeeper in the Leverett’s house. América’s migration thus gives Santiago the opportunity to present the reader with two families, América’s family in Puerto Rico and her family in New York who present an identity influenced by U.S. culture but rooted in Puerto Rican culture through the preservation of Puerto Rican traditions and customs. Linguistically and as in Ferré’s novel, América’s Dream also exhibits instances of Spanish inclusion accompanied by cushioning domesticating practices such as explicitation, translation, addition of contextual information to help the reader decipher the meaning of the foreign word/phrase, use of cognates, and use of Spanish loan words that are widely used in the English language although Santiago also foreignizes the text for the English monolingual reader by not including in some instances, any of the previously mentioned strategies to give him access to the meaning of such Spanish text.

Santiago’s novel presents the most aggressive appropriation of English with her use of the phonetic transcription of oral speech to represent non-standard English
production and América’s struggle to understand the English language (English speech reception). Santiago also uses this transgressive writing strategy when she includes English words in the Spanish self-translation, which reflect the way in which Puerto Ricans appropriate the English language by modifying it to fit Spanish phonetics. Another technique that Santiago uses to portray América’s limited knowledge of English consists of the use of limited vocabulary and omission of prepositions and other grammatical units.

Even though both Santiago and Ferré make use of varied strategies to portray linguistic and cultural hybridity, I believe that Santiago’s use of phonetic transcription of oral speech is the most aggressive. This belief is supported by the reader response survey I implemented.

**What are the specific textual characteristics that make Esmeralda Santiago’s literature postcolonial? Are there postcolonial textual characteristics in Rosario Ferré as well? How do these textual characteristics compare?**

As I have demonstrated through Chapters 6 and 7, *The House on the Lagoon* and *América’s Dream* should be considered examples of postcolonial literature because through them Ferré and Santiago not only give voice to marginalized sectors of the Puerto Rican society and underscore the ambiguous relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States by posing a critique of U.S. colonial practices in the island, but they also communicate a hybrid identity that challenge the monolingual literary canons and concepts of national homogeneous identities of both Puerto Rico and the United States, through English writing, linguistic appropriation, self-translation, and the creation of a transcultural bilingual text which spans two cultures and two languages.

In terms of how these novels’ textual characteristics compare to each other, it could be said that the most aggressive postcolonial narrative characteristics are presented by Ferré novel, while the strongest postcolonial characteristics in Santiago’s novel lay in her use of linguistic subversive writing strategies.

**How is the hybridity of Puerto Rican Diaspora culture reflected textually and paratextually in Esmeralda Santiago’s analyzed literary pieces and in the analyzed paratexts about her and her literature?**

The Puerto Rican Diaspora has a broad presence in the plot of Santiago’s novel *América’s Dream* as the novel narrates the story of a Puerto Rican woman who migrates
to the United States escaping from an abusive lover, from her alcoholic mother who as América became a single mother at a short age and from her rebel daughter. As I expose in Chapter 6 where I explore narrative hybridity, in América’s Dream Santiago reflects the hybridity of Puerto Rican culture in the daily life of América’s New York family by underscoring the presence of Puerto Rican cultural elements and the preservation of Puerto Rican traditions despite the fact that this family leaves in the colonizer’s country which puts pressure on them to assimilate to U.S. culture.

Regarding the paratextual reflection of the Puerto Rican Diaspora culture hybridity in América’s Dream, in this dissertation it was not explored in a traditional way but through the analysis of Santiago’s expressions about her identity as a U.S. migrant, and through the linguistic characteristics of the answers provided by the contestants of the reader response survey I implemented. Interestingly, the answers of the survey contestants show a linguistic hybridity that corresponds to the use of hybrid language presented by both authors in their narratives. Through both narrative and linguistic resources, as I have shown, hybridity is present in the Puerto Rican Diaspora culture displayed by Santiago in América’s Dream.

**What are the hybrid elements of the Puerto Rican culture present in Rosario Ferré’s?**

As I have previously exposed in Chapter 6, Ferré portrays a large amount of Puerto Rican cultural elements in her novel The House on the Lagoon, both to give context to the reader about where the novel’s action is taking place, and to add the flavour of the Spanish language to the novel. However, she portrays a hybrid Puerto Rican culture when she presents these Puerto Rican cultural elements side by side to U.S. cultural elements, showing how they have been integrated by the Puerto Rican culture. This integration of the U.S. culture in Puerto Rican culture is evident in characters such as Isabel and Abby as I have previously mentioned.

**Is self-translation a postcolonial tool for the affirmation of cultural hybridity for both Ferré and Santiago?**

In the case of Ferré, as I have previously stated, self-translation is a crucial part of her agenda of creating a bilingual transcultural literary product that communicates a Puerto Rican identity, which has been deeply influenced by its colonial condition culturally and linguistically. Even though hybridity is already embedded in The House on the Lagoon as I have previously shown in Chapters 6 and 7, Ferré makes use of self-
translation as another literary device to communicate her linguistic and cultural hybridity because for her, “‘[l]a obra de arte es todo, . . . todo está identificado y es inseparable” (Ferré 2000: 124). As part of the search for a Puerto Rican identity that characterizes the literary generation that she belongs to, Ferré needs to communicate in the two languages that she considers being part of her linguistic identity. Additionally, she feels the need to reach the continental Puerto Rican audience and also the U.S. Diaspora audience that cannot access her literature in Spanish as they had lost their native language in order to adapt to their new situation as migrants. The fact that Ferré has self-translated her literature for more than twenty years as I have established in section 7.1, also serves as evidence of her intent to use self-translation to communicate a hybrid Puerto Rican identity. As researcher José Santaemilia has stated, Ferré “. . . ha conseguido con sus traducciones una continuidad literaria de gran calidad artística” (Santaemilia 2003: 382).

In Santiago’s case, in contrast with Ferré’s, I cannot categorically affirm that she consciously uses self-translation as a postcolonial tool to communicate a Puerto Rican hybrid identity, because self-translation is not part of her literary production having translated only one of her novels herself. However, I can affirm that Santiago’s self-translation of her novel América’s Dream does indeed communicates a hybrid identity as in El sueño de América, maintains the same linguistic subversion present in its source text. As Martín and Vidal have stated, “writing in and, moreover, translating into an ‘invented,’ non-codified idiom, as in Santiago’s case, is an affirmation of this identity” (Martín and Vidal 2004: 87).

Through English writing, linguistic appropriation, linguistic hybridity and self-translation, Ferré and Santiago rescue the Puerto Rican hybridity from attempts to eradicate it, and affirm it as a valid identity. This hybrid identity is not submissive as it destabilizes the authority and canonical status of the colonial English language and it resists and counters homogenizing conceptualizations of the Puerto Rican identity, which takes refuge in the use of Spanish as an exclusive marker of the Puerto Rican identity, thus proposing other strategies of resistance to assimilation through subversion.

Thus, the main finding of this dissertation is the deep connection between socio-political context, language, culture, identity, power and translation that supports the idea that self-translation is a postcolonial act, which in the case of Puerto Rico is strongly related to hybridity as an everyday practice of identity affirmation. Puerto Ricans are in-between
cultures and in-between languages, which should be understood as a subversive act of agency in favour of independence.
APPENDIX I

School of Languages, Linguistics and Cultures

Reader-Response Survey
Aurora Sambolín’s PhD Research Project
The Phenomenon of Self-Translation in Puerto Rican Literature

Personal Information Sheet
(USE BLOCK LETTERS)
Last names First name

Alias (we will use this fictitious name to keep your answers anonymous)

Gender: Male / Female

Place of birth:

If you were born in Puerto Rico, how old were you when you first arrived to the U.S.?

Nationality:

Age:

Date of Birth:

Address:

E-mail:

Telephone number:
This information will only be used to verify your residence in the U.S. and to contact you if necessary about the focus group that may take place in the second part of the study.

Education:

Current Occupation:

Native tongue: Second tongue(s):

Do you consider yourself bilingual (English/Spanish) Yes / No

How long have you lived in the U.S.? Have you lived outside of the U.S. for more than a year? Yes / No

For how many generations have your family been living in the U.S.?

Do you usually read literature in English or in Spanish? English / Spanish

Have you read texts written mostly in English but including words, phrases, sentence fragments or whole paragraphs in Spanish or vice versa (texts written in Spanish but including instances of English)? Yes / No

If you answered “Yes”, please specify which texts.

I declare that I participate in this survey voluntarily and that I can change my mind at any time. I authorize the publication of the survey results in Aurora Sambolín’s PhD dissertation. I understand that the conclusions drawn from the survey will be available to me and that my true identity will not be revealed in that dissertation.

Signature: Date:
APPENDIX II

School of Languages, Linguistics and Cultures

Reader-Response Survey
Aurora Sambolín’s PhD Research Project
The Phenomenon of Self-Translation in Puerto Rican Literature

Instructions:
Below you will find some extracts that are part of two fiction novels written by two Puerto Rican writers. Please read them carefully and answer the questionnaire on page 4 based on your opinions and experiences and without the use of any human, printed or electronic resources. To answer some of the questions, you will be able to choose from a drop list and for other questions you will be able to answer freely with an unlimited amount of words. To refer to the extracts you should use the letter and number that identifies them (Ex: Extract C2) Thank you for participating!

Writer #1:

Extract A1 (English version)

Sleepy guests lean out of their windows or step onto porches, concerned expressions clouding their vacation faces. Don Irving, the owner of the hotel, runs heavily from the back of the building, reaching Ester at the same time as América.

“Whasgononere?” he bellows in English. “What’s all the screaming about?
“Ay don no!” América kneels next to Ester. “Mami, please! What’s the matter?”
¡Ay mi’ja!” Ester is hyperventilating and can’t get the words out. América’s breathing quickens, and a whirling pressure builds around her head.

“Please, Mami, what is it? What’s happened?”
Ester shakes her head, sprinkling the air with tears. She presses both hands against her chest, as if to control its rising and falling. She gulps air and, in a halting voice that rises to a final wail, gives América the news. “¡Rosalinda se escapó!” At first she doesn’t quite understand what Ester means by Rosalinda has escaped. Her fourteen-year-old daughter is not a prisoner. But the words echo in her head, and the meaning becomes clear. América covers her face, squeezes her fingers deep into her flesh, and sobs “Ay, no, Mami, don’t say such a thing!”

Ester, who has gained some composure now that the problem is no longer hers, wraps her arms around América and rubs her shoulders, her tears mingling with those of her daughter. “She went with that boy, Taino.”

América stares at Ester, Tries to make sense of what she’s heard. But the words and images are distorted, go by too quickly, like a movie in fast-forward. And at the end there’s a pause, a soft-focus portrait of her daughter, Rosalinda, and pimpled Taino with his innocent brown eyes. She shakes her head, trying to erase the picture.

“What the hells’ going on here?” Don Irving stands over them, blowing great gusts of cigar-scented breath. Behind him, Nilda, the laundress, Feto, the cook, and Tomás the
gardener, run up from different directions. They surround América and Ester, and the men
help them stand.

“Ees my dohter,” says América, avoiding Don Irving’s eyes. “She in trubel.”

“Rosalinda ran away with her boyfriend,” Nilda interprets, and América cringes
with shame.

“Oh, fahcryseiks!” Don Irving spits into the oregano patch.

“Geddadehere, c’mon.” He steers the sobbing América and Ester out of earshot of his
guests, to the back of the building, where he leaves Feto and Tomás to escort them to the
path behind the stables.

Extract A2 (Spanish version)

En las ventanas y balcones aparecen turistas soñolientos, sus caras vacacionales nubladas
por la ansiedad. Don Irving, el propietario del hotel, corre pesadamente desde el fondo
del edificio, llegando a donde está Ester a la misma vez que América.

− ¿Wasgononir? − fulmina en inglés. − ¿Por qué tantos gritos?
− ¡Ay don no! − América se arrodilla al lado de Ester. − Mami, por favor, ¿qué te
pasó, qué fue?
− Ay, mi’ja! − Ester está hiperventilando y no consigue hablar. La respiración de
América se acelera y siente como un remolino dentro de la cabeza.
− Por favor, Mami, ¿qué pasa? Dime lo que ha sucedido.

Ester sacude la cabeza, rociando el aire con lágrimas. Se aprieta ambas manos
contra el pecho, como para controlar su sube y baja. Traga aire y, en una voz titubeante
que sube hasta convertirse en un grito, le da la noticia a América. − ¡Rosalinda se fugó!

Al principio, no comprende lo que Ester quiere decir con Rosalinda se fugó. Su
hija de 14 años no está presa. Pero las palabras se repiten en su cabeza y el significado
llega a ser claro. América cubre su rostro, estruja sus dedos contra su piel y solloza. − ¡Ay,
no, Mami, no! ¡No digas eso!

Ester, quien ha ganado alguna compostura ahora que el problema ya no es suyo,
envuelve sus brazos alrededor de América y frota sus hombros, sus lágrimas mezclándose
con las de su hija.

− Se fue con ese muchacho, Taíno.

América se le queda mirando a Ester, tratando de darle sentido a lo que ha dicho.

Pero las palabras y las imágenes se deforman, pasan demasiado ligero, como una película
en avance rápido. Y al fin hay una pausa, una imagen fuera de foco de su hija Rosalinda
y un granujiento Taíno con sus inocentes ojos marrones. América sacude la cabeza,
tratando de borrar la imagen.

− ¿Qué diablos pasa? − Don Irving se para frente a ellas, resoplando ráfagas de
aliento pestoso a cigarro. Detrás de él, Nilda, la lavandera, Feto, el cocinero, y Tomás,
el jardinero, convergen hacia ellas desde distintas direcciones. Los tres rodean a América
y a Ester y los hombres las ayudan a pararse.

− Is may doter− dice América en inglés, evadiendo los ojos de Don Irving. − Shí in
tróbol.

− Rosalinda se fue con su novio− Nilda interpreta en mejor inglés y América se
encoge de vergüenza.

− Oh, fohcrayseiks! − Don Irving escupe entre las matas de orégano. − Geddadejr,
comon− Conduce a América y a Ester, quienes siguen llorando, fuera del alcance del oído
de sus huéspedes, más allá del edificio, donde deja que Feto y Tomás las escolten al
camino detrás de los establos.
Extract B1 (English version)

Madeleine never learned to speak Spanish. She spoke English at home with her father and with her husband and sign language with everyone else. Even thirty-seven years later, when she finally returned to Boston, she still couldn’t speak a word of Spanish, though she understood most of it. When Arístides’s friends invited them to their house, she suffered. For the first ten minutes, everybody in the room tried to be polite and spoke mincingly in English so as not to exclude Madeleine from the conversation. Slowly but surely, however, a bit of juicy gossip would slip out, or a risqué joke or expression which could only be rendered in Spanish: “Estaba más jalao que un timbre e guagua” (He was as drunk as a skunk); or “Eramos demasiados y parió la abuela” (There were already too many of us, and then Grandma got pregnant). Then everyone would jump in, speaking Spanish like mad.

Extract B2 (Spanish version)

Madeleine nunca aprendió a hablar español. En su casa hablaba inglés con su padre y con su marido, y, cuando salía, se comunicaba por señas con el resto del mundo. Treinta y un años más tarde, cuando por fin regresó a Boston, todavía no podía hablar una sola palabra de español, aunque lo entendía perfectamente. Cuando los amigos de Arístides los invitaban a sus casas, Madeleine sufría lo indecible. Durante los primeros diez minutos, todo el mundo hacía un esfuerzo, y hablaba cortésmente en inglés para no excluirla de la conversación. Poco a poco, sin embargo, un sabroso chisme se escapaba por aquí, o un chiste jugoso saltaba por allá, que sólo podía contarse en español: «Éramos demasiados y parió la abuela», o «Estaba más jalao que un timbre e guagua». Y antes de que nadie pudiera evitarlo, había una explosión general, los presentes subían el volumen y empezaban a hablar español como desesperados.

Extract C1 (English version)

He went down to the Paseo de la Princesa to watch the sun set over the boats of the old finished who still ventured out into the bay every day at five in the morning and came in at eight with their catch. Usually there wasn’t much to sell—a couple of red snappers; a spiny chapín, good for only one empanadilla a black moray eel, still staring ferociously with its beady eyes. The endless traffic of huge ocean liners coming into the bay had done away with most of the fish, and the beach was dotted with plastic bottles, disposable diapers, and all sorts of trash. But Arrigoitia didn’t look down at the polluted beach at his feet; he gazed toward the horizon, where the sea melted into the sky and you could set out in any direction you pleased.

Extract C2 (Spanish version)
Otras veces caminaba hasta el Paseo de la Princesa, y desde allí contemplaba la puesta de sol. Algunos pescadores anclaban cerca sus botes; zarpaban a las cinco de la mañana y regresaban a las ocho con su carga de pesca. Por lo general no era mucho lo que traían: un par de chillos; algún chapín espinoso, suficiente para una empanadilla; una morena negra y gruesa con los feroces ojillos negros calvados en medio de la frente. El tráfico constante de los cruceros turísticos que entraban a la bahía había acabado con la pesca, y la playa estaba cubierta de botellas plásticas, pañales desechables y todo tipo de basura. Pero Arrigoitia no miraba los desperdicios a sus pies. Sus ojos se perdían en el horizonte, en donde el mar y el cielo se fundían en un mismo azul y se podía zarpar en la dirección que uno quisiera.

Extract D1 (English version)

During one of his strolls down Luna Street, Arrigoitia saw a pink house with a curious sign over its door. The house was at the less reputable end of the street, near San Cristobal fort. It was a dilapidated neighborhood occupied by lottery vendors, prostitutes, the owners of the small cafetines and bares of Old San Juan. Arrigoitia stopped to read the sign: “Visit Tosca the Soothsayer and find solace.” Below, there was a hand with the palm divided into five sections: “emotion,” “self-respect,” “energy,” “inner strength,” and “the spirit.” Over each finger was a picture of an African saint: Eleguá, Changó, Obatalá, Ogún, and Yemayá. The Anima Sola stood at the center of the palm, a naked soul surrounded by a circle of flames.

Extract D2 (Spanish version)

Durante uno de sus paseos por San Juan, Arrigoitia vio una casa pintada de Amarillo, con un letrero sobre la puerta que le llamó la atención: «Visite a Tosca, la adivinadora, y encuentre el remedio para la soledad». En la parte inferior del letrero se veía una mano dividida en cinco partes: emoción, respeto propio, energía, fortaleza interior y espíritu. Cada dedo sostenía un santo sobre la punta. En la palma de la mano, el Ánima Sola, desnuda de la cintura para arriba, oraba con las manos juntas y rodeada de llamas. La casa se encontraba cerca del fuerte de San Cristóbal, en el extremo de mala fama de la calle Luna; un vecindario dilapidado en donde vivían los vendedores de lotería, los alcahuetes y las prostitutas.

Questionnaire

Answer the following questions based on your opinions and your personal experience. Do not use other human, printed or electronic resources. Thank you!

Please insert the alias that you have chosen to participate in this study:

Please select which extracts you enjoyed the most (you can choose more than one)

☐ A1  ☑ A2  ☑ B1  ☑ B2  ☑ C1  ☑ C2  ☑ D1  ☑ D2

(1b) Which characteristics made you enjoy it more than the others?

(2a) With what character did you identify yourself the most? Don
(2b) Why did you identified yourself more with this character? (If you did not identify yourself with any of the characters please explain why.)

(3) The writers of the texts that you just read have different migratory backgrounds. Both of them were born in Puerto Rico and migrated to the United States during their childhood however, one of them established herself in the U.S. permanently while the other, even though she has lived in the U.S. for long period of times, does not lives in the U.S. permanently. Which of the two writers lives in the U.S. permanently? Writer #1 / Writer #2

(4a) What characteristics of the text made you identify this writer as the one that lives in the U.S. permanently?

(4b) Judging by the linguistic characteristics of the oral speech transcripts present in the extracts of writer #1 novel (the way in which she presents the dialogue among the characters), what is the nationality of the characters and what is their migratory situation?

Don Irving: Ester: América:

(5a) Did you have any difficulty understanding the oral speech transcripts (the characters quoted speech) in any of the extracts? Yes / No

(5b) If your answer was “Yes”, please identify the extracts that contain the transcripts that made your understanding difficult and explain the characteristics that made them difficult to understand.

(6a) Out of the eight extracts that you just read four of them are translations of the other four extracts. In the case of writer #1, in what language do you think she wrote her novel originally in? (English / Spanish) Which textual characteristics made you select that language as the original writing language?

(6b) In the case of writer #2, in what language do you think that her novel was originally written in? (English / Spanish) Which textual characteristics made you select that language as the original writing language?

(7a) In extracts A1, B1, C1 and D1, the writers include Spanish in texts that have been written mostly in English. In your opinion, what is the purpose of the writers when they use this writing technique?

(7b) In extracts A2, B2, C2 and D2, the writers include English in texts that have been written mostly in Spanish. In your opinion, what is the purpose of the writers when they use this writing technique?

(8a) The novels to which these extracts belong have been considered by many as linguistically and culturally hybrid. What Puerto Rican cultural elements can you identify in them?

(8b) What U.S. cultural elements can you identify in these extracts?
APPENDIX III

Gender

Place of residence

APPENDIX IV

Education

Place of residence
APPENDIX V

Bar Chart

U.S. citizen
- PR: 1%
- USA: 1%

Puerto Rican with U.S. citizenship
- PR: 3%
- USA: 5%

USA
- PR: 3%
- USA: 21%

P.R.
- PR: 23%
- USA: 44%

Place of residence
- PR
- USA

APPENDIX VI

Don Irving's nationality

- American: 59%
- Puerto Rican immigrant: 17%
- Cuban: 2%
- Latino immigrant: 2%
- Puerto Rican: 2%
- Unsure/Don't know: 10%
- Empty: 8%

Legend:
- American
- Puerto Rican immigrant
- Cuban
- Latino immigrant
- Puerto Rican
- Unsure/Don't know
- Empty
APPENDIX VII
Do you consider yourself bilingual?

Nationality
- P.R.
- U.S.
- P.R. w U.S. citizenship
- U.S. citizen

APPENDIX VIII

Which writer lives permanently in the USA?

- Escritora #1: 71%
- Escritora #2: 25%
- Non valid answers/empty field: 4%
APPENDIX IX

Did you have difficulty understanding the transcription of oral speech in any of the extracts?

- Yes: 33%
- No: 67%

APPENDIX X

Original language of Sangiago's novel

- Spanish: 27%
- English: 73%
### APPENDIX XI

**Original language of Ferré’s novel**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### APPENDIX XII

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of inclusion of Spanish in English texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture, nationality and Hispanic roots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(bilingual, Anglo, Hispanic, Puerto Rican roots, Hispanic roots, Puerto Rican roots)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification with characters and situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic and place context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To broaden the audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreignization of the text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix XIII

Use of hybrid language by respondents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic hybridity in respondent’s answers</th>
<th>Use of English in Spanish answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of English in Spanish answers</td>
<td>English words and phrases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English structures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“EEUU, nacida y crecida born and raised] en PR”</td>
<td>“Porque [because] i used to live in old san juan for ten years…” “… i used to stare out a the sea …. no se.. pienso que el personaje de arrigoitía esta solo y dando tumbos . . . I don’t know…i think that Arrigoitía’s character is alone and staggering along] ”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Cubano, viviendo living] en Estado Unidos por largo tiempo for a long time].”</td>
<td>“Pienso que lo mismo de la anterior. . .I think is the same as in last question] pero translated . . .”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Probablemente porque tiene de mente has in mind] un publico que es bilingue y de esa manera atrae al lector.”</td>
<td>“Por otro lado me parece que el interés de los diferentes textos es enmarcar la cultura puertorriqueña y no necesariamente la estadounidense [In the other hand it seems to me that the interest of the different texts is to frame Puerto Rican culture and not necessarily the U.S. culture] then again i could be (and probably are) dead wrong…”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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