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Archipelagic Translation: Mobility amid Every Language in the World

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When most English speakers hear the verb *to translate*, we think of the task of “convert[ing] from one language to another.” Unsurprisingly, this is the *Oxford English Dictionary*’s first definition for the term, and the *OED* further expounds on this initial definition: “To convert or render (a word, a work, an author, a language, etc.) into another language; to express or convey the meaning of (a word or text) using equivalent words in a different language.” This all feels like common sense. But scroll down in the *OED*’s discussion, and another definition, less prominent than the first, presents itself: “to convey or move (a person or thing) from one place to another; to transfer or transport (a person or thing); to exile or deport (a person or people).”¹

Within a special forum dedicated to theorizing mobility, juxtaposing these two definitions of the English verb *to translate* is a reminder that the notion of translation has traditionally hinged on mobility, on movement or the idea of movement from one place to another. That which is moving, or that which is being moved, may be a person, thing, sentence, or poem. And the sites from which and to which it is being moved may be material places or language traditions. Translation’s imbrication with mobility comes as no surprise to German speakers, who speak a language in which the standard translational equivalent for the verb *to translate* is *übersetzen*, which might be paraphrased in English as an act of taking something and moving or setting it into a new place.² Translation is movement, and when we talk about translation from one language to another, we are also talking about movement.

Although the overtly and self-consciously kinetic definition of translation is to a large degree overlooked in everyday speech, language translation as movement from one place to another is a founding structural metaphor among translators and scholars who have thought about translation. We see this in many places. For instance, in the introduction to their Oxford University Press anthology, *Translation—Theory and Practice: A Historical Reader* (2006), editors Daniel Weissbort and Astradur Eysteinnsson

offer a definition in which translation is a project of “building linguistic bridges across the channels that divide language spheres and cultural regions.”³ Elsewhere, Ken Liu, in his “Translator’s Postscript” to Liu Cixin’s Hugo Award-winning science fiction novel *The Three-Body Problem* (2006, English translation 2014), writes, “[t]he act of translation involves breaking down one piece of work in one language and ferrying the pieces across a gulf to reconstitute them into a new work in another language. When the gulf separating the two is as wide as the Pacific Ocean that separates China from America, the task can be daunting.”⁴ Still elsewhere, we see John Alba Cutler’s discussion, at the beginning of his book *Ends of Assimilation: The Formation of Chicano Literature* (2015), of Lorna Dee Cervantes’s dual-language poem “The Refugee Ship” or “Barco de Refugiados.” In this poem, as Cutler observes, the Chicana “poet regrets that she cannot communicate with her own grandmother in Spanish,” finding herself confined to a “refugee ship [that] never docks in either language,” English or Spanish.⁵

All of these figurations tie the prominent linguistic definition of translation closely to the less prominent kinetic definition, and in so doing each is also highly consistent with what translation studies scholar Christina Schäffner has commented on as the “standard metaphors” that cast “translation ... as bridge building, ferrying or carrying across.”⁶ Thus, even as the conventional relation between translation and movement is reaffirmed, the rehearsal of these figurations is also a reminder that the notion of mobility that has undergirded the notion of translation has itself been undergirded by the notion of water—channels, gulfs, oceans, and seas over which the ferries and ships and rafts and bridges of translation navigate in variously favorable, daunting, and undockable conditions. Hence, the project of translation—and this is pivotal within a special forum that is not simply about mobility but about mobility’s relation to archipelagic thought—carries a certain cargo, that of mobility across the waters, from one place to another. Indeed, I would suggest, the act of translation, as conceived of via some of its most foundational and structuring metaphors, depends on and locates itself within an archipelagic grammar, a grammar that corresponds to an archipelagic mode of thought that has—from ancient times to the present—taken relationalities among islands, oceans, seas, island chains, coasts, bays, etc. as objects, subjects, and templates for thinking, acting, and being in the world.⁷ Indeed, the grammar of overwater transit that resides within the fundamentals of translational thinking comes to resemble some of the archipelagic relationalities discussed in the introduction to the 2017 edited volume *Archipelagic American Studies*, as archipelagoes’ “connections proliferate among nodes and across a sea of islands,” with these connections emerging as “filamentous networks, simultaneously evocative of airline routes, communications cables, kinship ties, Internet connections, social networks, and waka/canoe voyages.”⁸ In thinking through translation’s relevance to and place within such archipelagic networks, it is necessary to take seriously the convergence between translation’s self-conscious preoccupation with meaning-conveyance and the archipelago’s relation to meaning-making, as intimated by Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel and Michelle Stephens in *Contemporary Archipelagic Thinking*: “the archipelago

calls for a meaning-making and rearticulation that responds to human experiences traversing space and time.”⁹ In other words, the archipelago, whose discontinuous conjunction of oceans and shorelines has already been a structuring metaphor for thinking about the kinetics of translation, is a thought template and material geography that specifically calls for the cross-cultural meaning-making to which the theory and practice of translation is dedicated.

Such convergences between the materiality of archipelagic space and questions of translation’s metaphors of movement and water have received relatively little sustained attention.¹⁰ And yet these convergences make it absolutely clear that scholars interested in the nexus of mobility and archipelagic thinking need to give attention to the topic and practice of translation. And reciprocally, to the degree that translators and translation studies scholars have only very infrequently thought of their implicitly archipelagic metaphors in self-consciously archipelagic ways, we also see that classic and recent innovations in archipelagic thinking stand to shed new light on the question, mechanics, ends, and means of translation. In taking up the potential for a three-way reinflection of the categories of mobility, archipelagic thought, and translation, this article builds on previous and yet more delimited and suggestive discussions of translation and archipelagic thought,¹¹ now finding inspiration and thought templates in the theorizing undertaken by several island-oriented thinkers, among them Alice Te Punga Somerville, Édouard Glissant, and Craig Santos Perez. In drawing on these thinkers, I develop, layer by layer, an image and conceptualization of archipelagic translation that (via Te Punga Somerville’s work in Pacific Islands pedagogy) emerges as decolonizing, decontinentalizing, and eschewing of teleological ferryings over water as nonspace. This image of archipelagic translation instead embraces interisland waters as places of being and meaning. Subsequently, via Glissant’s emphasis in *Introduction to a Poetics of Diversity* on translation as a crucial form of archipelagic thinking, I emphasize a translation less of betweenness (from one language to another) and more of amidness (a translation in the presence of every language of the world). Finally, and by recourse to Perez’s *from unincorporated territory* poetry series, I elaborate on a view of archipelagic translation as a renaming of the world in which translational equivalents break down and translation happens amid the push and pull of materiality and metaphoricity. Thus, Perez’s work offers both a conceptual template for and an example of archipelagic translation. As I navigate through the work of these three thinkers, the article’s three major preoccupations—mobility, archipelagic thinking, and translation—exist in a constant, reinflecting, and even reconstituting dynamic in relation to one another. In the conclusion, I turn toward the potential for the mobilities of archipelagic translation to speak to and reroute recent work in Transnational American Studies that takes up questions of language, multilingualism, and translation. But more, the conclusion looks toward archipelagic American Studies’s sense of *amidness* as a key to restructuring, on a planetary scale, scholarly approaches to mobility, archipelagic spaces, and translation.

Reemplotting Translational Bridges and Ferries

For decades, discussions among translators and translation studies scholars have indicated that the model of translating that sees translation as an easy bridging or ferrying across is absolutely fundamental and yet fundamentally insufficient.¹² In his important 1991 book *The Translator's Turn*, Douglas Robinson observes that “[t]he definitive image for translation in the mainstream logical theory of the West is the bridge, the structure that will enable the monolingual reader to cross over from the [source language] to the [translation language] reliably, safely, confidently, and above all duplicably.”¹³ And yet, resonant with the previously quoted images offered by Liu and Cutler, Robinson casts doubt on the possibility of a reliable and safe bridge or ferry. Rather, Robinson sees the translator as someone who may not be able to “build a bridge or borrow a boat” and hence will “have to swim across”: “and the swimmer across rapids ... may find himself in serious trouble, may never make it, may drown en route, and even if he does make it to the other side, the current will have ‘turned’ him away from his original destination, so that instead of landing on the opposite bank he finds himself on an island. So fared Columbus, for instance, who thought he was sailing to India and discovered America.”¹⁴ Advanced within a chapter titled “The Tropics of Translation,” Robinson’s image of the translator *at sea* and arriving not at the “opposite” shore but on a presumably unforecasted island suggests that bridge- and ferry-models of translation, as they seek greater complexity by taking into account the water journeys that undergird their assumptions, would do well to look toward the archipelagic thought of the Māori scholar Alice Te Punga Somerville, particularly as she has discussed the topic of anthologization (which includes various modes of translation) in dialogue with watery journeys.

Te Punga Somerville’s 2010 article “Our Sea of Anthologies: Collection, Display, and the Deep Blue Sea” does not focus directly on translation, and yet its discussions of anthologies and sea journeys speak to and unsettle the bridge or ferry model of translation on multiple levels. The article focuses on Te Punga Somerville’s rationale for using four Pacific Islands anthologies in her 2008 course on Pacific literature at the Victoria University of Wellington in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In teaching the country’s first-ever undergraduate course on Pacific literature, she assigned four anthologies: *Whetu Moana* (2003), *Niu Voices* (2006), *Varua Tupu* (2006), and *‘Ōiwi 3* (2005).¹⁵ As students needed to navigate the “multiplicity implicit in a region with 1,200 Indigenous languages that covers a third of the earth’s surface,” these four anthologies became “waka [or canoes]: taking on things and travelers, dropping them off in new places, accruing value and meaning from the diversity of their cargoes.”¹⁶ And in placing her students and others throughout the Pacific into communication, the crisscrossing voyages of these anthologies took translation as a given. For instance, *Varua Tupu: New Writing from French Polynesia* is a waka with a cargo of various French-language writings translated into English.¹⁷ *Niu Voices* is a vessel carrying texts written by Pacific authors, many of whom have adapted Indigenous oral traditions—both in terms of

content and form—into their English-language writings.¹⁸ Likewise, the editors of *‘Ōiwi 3* speak of their decision “to translate material[s] from the past ... into English in order to make them more accessible to those who can’t read Hawaiian.”¹⁹ The introduction to *Whetu Moana*, meanwhile, speaks of its publication-language, English, as one the Pacific’s “major languages of communication” and yet nods toward intralingual translation by readers as it acknowledges that this language “has become many Englishes in Polynesia, with each Polynesian country indigenising it for its own use.”²⁰ In fashioning these anthologies as waka, Te Punga Somerville leans for her central conceit (as showcased in the article’s title, “Our Sea of Anthologies”) on the Pacific intellectual Epeli Hau‘ofa’s famous essay “Our Sea of Islands,” in which Hau‘ofa refers to Pacific Islanders as “‘ocean peoples’ because our ancestors, who had lived in the Pacific for over 2000 years, viewed their world as a ‘sea of islands,’ rather than ‘islands in the sea.’”²¹ This is a decolonizing and decontinentalizing view of the Pacific, consistent with that expressed by the editors of *Whetu Moana* on Pacific “[l]iterature and the arts [as] part of the decolonisation process.”²²

Consider Te Punga Somerville’s image of decolonial waka in juxtaposition with Robinson’s image. Robinson’s troubling of the bridge/ferry metaphor compellingly acknowledges the water-space that undergirds it, and his points are well taken that translation can be disorienting, prone to accident, prone to creating castaways, and prone to unexpected and unintended discovery. In many ways, Robinson’s narrative disrupts tropes of translation, asking us to consider what it means to be *in the water*, what it means to admit that getting to the “opposite” shore may not be the telos of translational practices. Such a disruption virtually points toward or corroborates Te Punga Somerville’s implicit narrative of translation—delivered via translation-dependent anthologies—as a necessary next step. And yet Te Punga Somerville sees much more than Robinson does on the topic of watery voyaging. Te Punga Somerville offers a vision of any individual translation as not simply a journey but part of multiple crisscrossing journeys in which the concern is not with the telos of arrival (nor is it with the thwarting of arrival) but is rather with *remaining on the water*. Te Punga Somerville’s alternative constitutes an archipelagic difference. The straight line (or even Robinson’s thwarted straight line) from point A to B fades in the face of the errantry of ongoing circulation on the water. The notion of the water as a nonspace to be crossed or even as a disorienting antagonist to crossing fades in the face of water (rather than land) as a place of being. The notion of meaning as a deliverable cargo fades in comparison to the imagination of meanings as *diverse cargoes* accruing on the waka through engagement with various, unforecasted, and endlessly repeating departures/arrivals. Here, the departure/arrival dynamic is not simply a departure from one shore and a corresponding arrival on the opposite shore; rather, the dynamic is characterized by departures from land and arrivals on the water, departures from the water and arrivals on land, and departures from one water and arrivals in other waters, possibly on the other side of the land that formerly seemed like the conventional translational journey’s telos.

Whereas Robinson's image takes the easy telos of A-to-B arrival and usefully frays it by imagining the translator as suspended and perhaps even unintentionally stranded *between* two places, Te Punga Somerville's image opens onto a much larger context: the translator as *amid* many landed places and continuing to exist in a *place* even while on the water. Te Punga Somerville's image moves us from conventional translation-thinking between two languages, and toward an archipelagic translation that moves *amid* multiple languages even as it, in a self-consciously nested way, moves *between* two languages. Further, and it must be acknowledged: Whereas Robinson's colonial image has the translator as a potential Columbus (befuddled, running aground on an island and thereby inadvertently *discovering* an unknown continent of meaning that feels scripted to disregard and even seek to decimate Indigenous knowledge), Te Punga Somerville's image centers Indigenous knowledges, or imagines a matrix of Indigenous knowledges in which different islands and waters are acting not on terms of colonization and domination but on terms of mutual exchange among peers and co-participants. Te Punga Somerville's image of the translational waka supplants the colonial with the decolonial, the unidirectional with the polydirectional, and telos with ongoingness.

Translating amid Every Language in the World

Having spent time on the translational waka evoked by Te Punga Somerville's article, the notion of archipelagic translation accrues still greater meaning by recourse to the Martinican philosopher Édouard Glissant's *Introduction to a Poetics of Diversity* (1996; English translation 2020). In the second lecture that appears in this book, Glissant speaks directly of archipelagic thinking in relation to translation as movement between two languages and translation as movement amid all of the languages in the world. Here, Glissant discusses "what [he] consider[s] to be one of the most important arts of the future: the art of translation." He suggests that "the translator can establish a relation between two languages—two systems of uniqueness—only in the presence of all the others, their powerful presence in his imagination, even if he does not know any of them."²³ Translation, he says, "produces the unforeseeable," an attribute he aligns with archipelagic thought (27). In contradistinction to "systemic thought" or "continental thought," he says, "archipelagic thought" is "more intuitive, more fragile, threatened, but in tune with the chaos-world and its unpredictability"; archipelagic thought is "non-systemic, inductive thought that explores the unexpected in the world-totality" (26). And translation is not just aligned with archipelagic thought but among the foremost genres of archipelagic thought: "[A] vertiginous art of salutary wanderings, translation is progressively writing itself into the multiplicity of our world. Translation is therefore one of the most important kinds of this new archipelagic thinking. It is an art of the flight ['fugue'] from one language to another, in which neither the first nor the second [language] is effaced. But also an art of fugue in that every translation now forms part of the network of all possible translations

from and into all languages” (27). Commenting further on what it means to speak and translate, Glissant says that this “multilingualism does not presuppose ... the knowledge of several languages, but the presence of the world’s languages in the practice of one’s own” (24).

Translating in the presence of every language in the world. It could only be *littotes* to describe Glissant’s articulation by using the word *daunting* (this was Ken Liu’s chosen term when comparing the translation of *The Three-Body Problem* to a Transpacific voyage). Rather than *daunting*, this pan-language mode of archipelagic translation seems *sublime*: awe-inspiring, terror-striking, vertiginous, impossible. Nonetheless, Glissant continues, adding layer upon layer regarding archipelagic translation as translating in the presence of every language in the world. “Translation is a flight, in other words a beautiful relinquishing” (27), he says: “I will say that this relinquishing ... is the thinking of the light touch, the archipelagic thinking whereby we recompose the world’s landscapes, a thought which, against all the kinds of systematic thought, teaches us the uncertain, the threatened, but also the poetic intuition in which we can now move ahead. Translation, the art of the light touch and the approach, is a practice of the trace.... [T]he art of translation works to accumulate the expanse of all the beings and all the existences in the world. Creating traces in languages means creating traces in the unforeseeable of what is now our common condition” (28). What a sublime task for the translator! To map this view of the translator and translation back onto Te Punga Somerville’s model of the waka: to translate archipelagically is to move between two islands (or languages) while simultaneously recalling that in this very movement of *betweenness*, the translator is situated *amid* all islands. At the same time, the translator—through a feat of poetic imagination—calls on all past and future journeys between and among other locales to leave *traces* on the present journey or the present translation, emplotting the translational present within what Ottmar Ette has described as “a mobile network in which ... the movements in and of the past cannot be separated from the movements in and of the future.”²⁴ These are traces of past and future attempts, false starts, drowned flotillas, approaches, successes, intended and unintended bilingual puns, *misexecuted* and well-executed navigational techniques, unforecasted arrivals, lost and found cargos, etc.

To elaborate on the *amidness* we perceive in Te Punga Somerville and Glissant, I would recall the English verb *to translate*’s cognate status with the French *traduire* and the Spanish *trasladar*. Each of these three verbs means to move something from place to place, and both the French and Spanish versions of the verb have at times meant to *translate* from one language to another, although the French and Spanish terms are largely divorced vis-à-vis translation from language to language at this point. Rather, the standard French term for speaking of language-to-language translation has become *traduire*, and the standard Spanish verb has become *traducir*, both assuming the same alternative etymological root, based on a Latin term which as early as the fourth century had acquired the denotation “to lead astray, to corrupt, to blame, to censure.”²⁵ We see this sinister Latin root also in Italian, paving the way for the famous

Italian adage on the translator as traitor: “Traduttore, traditore.”²⁶ But in the context of the Americas, recalling that the English verb *to translate* has a Spanish cognate, *trasladar*, does much to help us rethink the difference between what we might think of as continentally oriented mobility and archipelagically oriented mobility. The Spanish *trasladar* would mean to move from one *lado* (side) to another *lado*, a formulation that recalls the US-Mexico border, especially to the degree that the *este lado/otro lado* divide has been an important heuristic for such Latino and Latinx scholars as José Limón and Gloria Anzaldúa.²⁷ This *este lado/otro lado* distinction is one that comports with Lorna Dee Cervantes’s “refugee ship” stuck between two *lados*, or comports with the editors of *Translation—Theory and Practice* and their metaphor of translation as a bridge between two sides, stretching over a channel, especially in light of Anzaldúa’s metaphor of herself or her back as a *puente tendido* or a stretched-out bridge between places divided by borders.²⁸

The image of the bridge between two *lados*—centered perhaps on the crossing of the Rio Grande between the Mexican and US sides of the border—is a crucial and valuable image within its arena of US-Mexican border/borderlands studies. But its preoccupation with two *lados* and its reliance on betweenness do not align it with the ideal of archipelagic translation that we have been following via Te Punga Somerville and Glissant. Rather, to better apprehend the significance of the place-oriented root *lat* in the English *translate* and the place-oriented root *lad* in the Spanish *trasladar* and *lado*, I want to turn toward an alternative image of the *lado*, which I developed in *Borderwaters* while discussing the twentieth-century Greater Mexican artist Miguel Covarrubias and his visual representations of the US-Indonesian borderwaters. In focusing on the variegated, bordering, and overlapping islands of Indonesia, the United States, and the Pacific, the fourth chapter of *Borderwaters* offers the following:

Amid this vast set of islands and waters, the *este lado/otro lado* distinction collapses with the proliferation of archipelagic spaces, where islands’ relationality is not a land-to-land binary of *lados* simply linked by waters but is rather a multifarious and multi-directional land-water relationality, a system of archipe-*lados*, a coinage I hazard because of the useful way in which *-pelago* (“sea”) melds with *-lado* (“side”), reframing the sea itself as a *lado*—a place to be from, a place of existence—rather than simply a medium by which one may transit from one land-based *lado* to another. Within the archipe-*lado* (or, Hispangized, *archipiélado*), the binary *between* is replaced by the multicircuited and poly-relational *among* or *amid*.²⁹

If Simona Bertacco and Nicoletta Vallorani, in their 2021 book *The Relocation of Culture: Translations, Migrations, Borders* have discussed translation “as a border notion, [or as] a notion that defines itself on the border of experiences, cultures, and disciplines,”

then I would see archipelagic translation as a notion set amid the watery borders and borderwaters of planetary culture.³⁰ These watery borders and borderwaters range from the circulating waters and moving islands of oceans like the Pacific and Atlantic, to the islands deposited, shaped, and relocated by the unruly waters of the Mississippi and Rio Grande.³¹

Materialities and Metaphoricities of Being Amid

In thinking through what an archipelagic translation of amidness might look and feel like, the CHamoru writer Craig Santos Perez's poem "aerial roots" is useful, especially to the degree that it is simultaneously a poem, a sustained reflection on translation, and an embodiment of what I have been discussing as archipelagic translation. Set on the lands and waters of Guåhan/Guam, the poem "aerial roots" appears over the course of two books, *from unincorporated territory [hacha]* (2008) and *from unincorporated territory [saina]* (2010), which are the first and second volumes in Perez's multi-book *from unincorporated territory* series.³² Dispersed throughout these first two books, "aerial roots" appears as a series of sections or excerpts (each designated as either "from aerial roots" or "ginen aerial roots," with the CHamoru term *ginen* being the standard translational equivalent of the English *from*). The first book, *[hacha]*, contains five sections of the poem, while the second book, *[saina]*, contains ten sections. These sections/excerpts from "aerial roots" are not contiguous but are interspersed amid sections/excerpts from several other long poems that also unfold over the course of the five books in the series. Among other things, this intermittent poem follows the trajectory of resuscitating CHamoru navigation in the wake of a Spanish colonialism that had decimated it. Perez elaborates the backdrop of this resuscitation in his 2014 book, *from unincorporated territory [guma']*: "In 1992, a group named Traditions About Seafaring Islands, or TASI, was founded in Guåhan [we] have to revive and perpetuate navigational practices, from canoe building to the reading of winds, waves, stars, and currents with [our] entire breath. In 2007, members of TASI built a sakman, a large outrigger canoe. ... They named the sakman 'Saina.'"³³ As Hsuan L. Hsu has described it, "aerial roots" is a poem focused on the building and launching of the sakman (this traditional CHamoru outrigger canoe) in juxtaposition with Perez's memories of canoe paddling while a student at Chief Gadao Academy on his home island of Guåhan/Guam. Hsu remarks that "[t]he sakman's sea voyage entails not only an inventive recovering of Chamorro and Oceanian culture, but also the emergence of a language adequate to the 'aerial roots' of Guam's inhabitants and diaspora."³⁴ Using body-oriented terms in the CHamoru language (including "tilipas" or "intestines," "attadock" or "eye," and "lassas" or "skin"), the poem "disperses the fragmented Chamorro body across oceanic space," contributing to a formal deployment "of fragmentary, dispersed, and unpredictably recombinant aerial roots [that] open up further connections to locations outside Oceania."³⁵ At the broad level of form, I would add, the poem's fragmentary quality mimics an archipelago in which

water and land are equally privileged: as we make our way from fragment to fragment (as if island to island), there is no blank space (as if waters were ever empty spaces)—there are only other poems. Hence, the other poems become the meaning-laden water amid which the different sections/islands of “aerial roots” are set, but in turn “aerial roots” becomes the water of figuration amid the sections/islands of the other poems.

More to the point on the images of archipelagic translation that have been accruing within this article, “aerial roots” is a poem that treats the sakman and translation/language as concomitant with one another. This concomitancy helps us elaborate on questions surrounding the image of translation as cargo (as seen in the traditional ferry model and Te Punga Somerville’s archipelagic complex of waka routes), as well as on the image of archipelagic translation as recomposing the world’s land- and waterscapes (as we have seen in Glissant’s discussion). These stakes for mobility, archipelagic thinking, and translation coalesce in the final two sections of the poem, offering what I see as some keys to reading the poem’s prior sections.

The poem’s final section uses language that converges with Glissant’s model of archipelagic thinking and translation recomposing the world: “the renaming of the world / has never stopped *as once passed down saina / from arriving home*” (129). Perez’s phrasing offers a bivalent image of the world as in a constant state of translation or renaming: as on one hand *the renaming of the world has never stopped* (that is, it has always been continuous), and on the other hand *the renaming of the world has never stopped saina from arriving home* (that is, even in the presence of constant translational flux, *Saina* [a name embodying CHamoru cosmology, identity, and navigational technology] continues unimpeded toward its home, its roots). But what have been the natures of these constant renamings, these perpetual states of translation? We see two such natures in the poem’s penultimate section, as Perez remembers a canoeing excursion during his freshman year of high school: “*is remembered the counting—the repeating—the paddle digging the ocean—to pull to fly—“hacha hugua tulu fatfat lima” in rhythm—so close to the deep water—so close to the passing matson cargo ship arriving—its wake disappearing our own*” (117). One model of translation, of renaming the world, is that embodied by the Matson cargo ship, made specifically to deliver—and intent only on delivering—cargo from point A to point B, with a telos that leaves a concomitant wake that *disappears* all other composings and recomposings, namings and renamings of the world. This model resembles the teleological cargo model that Robinson and Te Punga Somerville have problematized, and it resembles what Perez alludes to, on the same page (117), as the colonial supplanting or renaming of the CHamoru island-name *Luta* with the Spanish name *Rota*. Meanwhile, we see a second model of translation—of archipelagic translation—in Perez’s canoe. His canoe is not oriented toward teleology but is instead dedicated to Indigenous, archipelagic epistemology (the counting) and ontology (the repeating into being), a recomposing and renaming of the world in the face of the colonial, telos-based recomposing and renaming. This is a renaming, a wake-leaving, of what Glissant called (in this article’s previous section) “the light touch, the archipelagic thinking whereby we recompose

the world's landscapes." This is a wake-leaving in which, as Glissant says, "[t]ranslation, the art of the light touch and the approach, is a practice of the trace." In the face of the heavy touch, the oblivious wake of oblivion left by the Matson cargo ship, the canoe's wake is contingently disappeared, but the canoe's wake, which is an archipelagic approach to translation, endures in traces—in fact, the very poem "aerial roots" constitutes one such canoe trace/wake, and more than that, it constitutes a translational complex of competing cargo ship and canoe wakes. This complex becomes particularly visible in what Hsu has described as the poem's work in scattering the CHamoru body throughout the ocean, as it uses CHamoru terms for various body parts and body-associated forms.

In all sections of the poem, as it appears dispersed throughout the first two books of the series, Perez uses bolded body-associated terms as what might be thought of as stanza headings. These headings take two main forms. One form offers the CHamoru term, followed by a typographical colon, followed by the English equivalent, followed by a typographical colon, followed by the stanza. The other form offers the CHamoru term, followed by a typographical colon, followed by the stanza.³⁶ These two forms are on display, for instance, in the first two stanzas of [saina]'s first excerpt from "aerial roots." The first stanza opens with "[hila' : tongue :]" and then continues to the stanza in unbolded script; the second stanza opens with "[pachot :]" and does not state the English translational equivalent (which would be *mouth*) before proceeding to the stanza in unbolded script. In taking this approach to the naming of parts, Perez leans on the typographical colon's grammatical use as a preface to definition, reflecting the typographical colon as a preface to the appearance of a translational equivalent, building toward the previously quoted phrase from his poem's final section: "the renaming of the world has never stopped." Hence, I would observe, across the poem's various stanzas and sections, we repeatedly see a translation-oriented replaying of the sakman and cargo ship's converging translational wakes. In model one of the stanza headings, the Indigenous term (leaving a wake like a canoe) appears but is disappeared by the translational equivalent in the colonial language (leaving a wake that appears to disappear all other wakes). But the disappearance is countered by the stanza, which, via the grammatical function of the typographical colon, is offered as the translational equivalent of both the Indigenous and colonial terms, an Indigenous remaking of the world, in the wake of the colonial wake, so that the construction of each stanza becomes analogous to the neo-Indigenous sakman created by TASI, a vital participant in the constant recomposing and renaming and ongoing translation of the world. This reading of the poem in terms of *language* and *translation* is not a critical superimposition at all, as is apparent from the fact that the poem's first section as it appears in [saina] begins with "[hila' : tongue :]", moves to "[pachot :]" or *mouth*, and then follows these initial stanza with two concluding stanzas that begin with "[lengguahi :]" or *language* and "[bos : voice :]" Hence, we move through the CHamoru equivalents for *tongue*, *mouth*, *language*, and *voice*. This oral orientation nods to the poem's existence—in its variously fragmented versions and

portions—as a respeaking, a recomposition, a retranslation, or better, a set of multi-directional and ongoing respeakings, recompositions, and retranslations, traveling as wakes and ripples through the water, dispersing, riquocheting, and refracting within and against multitudinous shorelines, currents, and waters. Against a Columbus-structured (and hence colonial) notion of translation as a passage from one continent to another, this is a translational mode that, to borrow from Ette’s troubling of translation’s bridge metaphor, “belong[s] to neither mainland,” and which does not privilege two lados, but which exists in “a vectoral space of both transition and transitoriness.”³⁷

A subsequent excerpt from “aerial roots” has Perez continuing to reflect on translation and equivalencies across and amid languages. In this section, we find Perez remembering a canoe-paddling lesson he had while a high school freshman, as he is being taught to paddle in time with CHamoru-language counting:

is remembered mr flores explained that this was how our ancestors counted “hacha hugua tulu fatfat lima”—i had never heard these numbers before—when my dad counts he switches, tacks between english and spanish—grandma counts in spanish—when she read my first book she asked what does ‘hacha’ mean?—i said hacha means ‘one’—she looked surprised, ask in what language?—in chamorro, i said—she replied : i speak chamorro all my life and i never heard that word, one is uno in chamorro—no grandma, that’s spanish—she looked confused—hacha, hacha, she repeated, feeling the sound in her mouth—maybe you mean ‘hatsa’ she said, hatsa means ‘to hit’—uno is one i never heard of hacha—
(59)

If in traditional models of translation, translation is a ferry over the water that divides two languages, the father’s switching between English and Spanish is not a ferrying but is rather a *tacking*, or the strategic use of a sail’s angle to change a vessel’s direction while using the same wind. Within this model of translation-as-tacking, translation between Spanish and English is not a journey between islands but is rather a navigator’s use of sail technology, skill, and wind as a means of continuing on a larger journey, a journey much larger than the change in angles undertaken while tacking. Here, Spanish and English—these two major colonizing languages on Guåhan—are not the origin and destination but are, rather, contingent lados in the presence of a third lado, the CHamoru language, as we see in the poet’s conversation with his grandmother. Pathos and multiple levels of irony reside in Perez’s correction of his grandmother, an elder, on the speaking of the CHamoru language, with the scene’s attendant revelation that the grandmother has been a CHamoru speaker all her life but has apparently not known how to say *one* in her own language, has not known the literal *first thing*, but has instead believed the Spanish term, *uno*, to be *one*, to be *hacha*. On one level, the

grandmother has apparently mistaken an eddy in the obliterating wake left by the Spanish cargo ship for the wake of the light touch, the wake of the trace, the wake of the sakman. She has seemingly mistaken the colonial-continental (Spanish) for the Indigenous-archipelagic (CHamoru).

Further along these ironic lines, but at another ironic level, Perez closes this section by burrowing into the question of translation and etymology between Spanish and CHamoru: “in Spanish ‘hacha’ could mean a large candle, torch, or ax—the *gachai*, a chamorro traditional stone-tipped adze used to cut and carve wood, is said to sail from the spanish word ‘hacha’” (59). Here, readers are left to contemplate a situation in which, at first glance, the Spanish *hacha* and CHamoru *hacha* are neither equivalents nor etymologically related. But in which, on the other hand, Spanish brings in its colonial, world-remaking cargo, supplanting the Indigenous term for “a Chamorro traditional stone-tipped adze used to carve and cut wood,” translating it permanently as the Spanish-derived term *gachai*. Here, the Spanish cargo ship’s wake predominates in the sounds represented by *acha* (the Spanish *h* is silent so the sound of the Spanish *hacha* is perfectly preserved in the word). This evokes a rather startling image for someone dedicated to the restoration of the sakman (and/or archipelagic translation): before a paddler can even get to the *hacha* (the CHamoru numeral marking the first place in the paddling rhythm), the Spanish word *hacha* has worked the wood, via the materiality of the tool called the *gachai*. The Spanish *hacha* is first, before the first CHamoru *hacha* is uttered while paddling.

Grasping for Indigenous priority, someone might point out that the CHamoru body part, the hand, is in the first place because it shaped the *gachai*. And this recourse to the body part—and the CHamoru term for a specific body part—leads us back to a centerpiece of the poem’s form, namely, its prefacing of stanzas with the CHamoru terms for body parts. And here, the poem itself comes to resemble Perez’s grandmother, mis-taking Spanish words for CHamoru words throughout its own section headings. In the book [*hacha*], the CHamoru *brasu* is derived from the Spanish *brazo* (or *arm* in English). The CHamoru *sintura* is from the Spanish *cintura* (or *waist* in English). The CHamoru *pecho* is from the Spanish *pecho* (*chest*).³⁸ Later, in the book [*saina*], the CHamoru *lengguahi* and *bos* (21) are versions of the Spanish *lenguaje* and *voz* (which are both cognates with the English *language* and *voice*). The CHamoru *bíhiga* and *espinasu* (59) are derived from the Spanish *vejiga* (or *bladder*) and *espina* (or *backbone*). The CHamoru *hígadu* and *riñon* (105) are from the Spanish *hígado* (*liver*) and *riñón* (*kidney*).³⁹ This pile-up of Spanish words for CHamoru body parts lends intensity to Perez’s speculation in “aerial roots” that “we are evidence of / what words bury” (34), intensity to his assurance that “they can’t bury light / even if they burn / our word for light” (35), intensity to his assertion that “even without the names of the stars in chamorro— / even when we lost / contact—it will never be too dark / for us to see—” (105).

Ultimately, the poem's final recourse to materiality—the materiality of light, the materiality of stars, the materiality of CHamoru bodies—in the face of the ephemeral quality of language/lenguaje/lengguahi is distilled in the final paragraph/stanza of the related poem “(sub)aerial roots” in the collection [*guma'*]. In the first sentence of this stanza/paragraph, Perez writes of “the word *momongmong*, the sound of a heart-beat” (79), with the term's rhythmic thrumming clearly an onomatopoeitic imitation of the heart's sound, existing not between two languages but between language and flesh, discourse and incarnation, metaphor and materiality, and thus *amid* the ways each of these emit their thrummings across the whole Earth. Thus Perez's contemplations of language and translation resemble the archipelago, as elaborated in the introduction to *Archipelagic American Studies*: “a push and pull between the metaphoric and the material, in which the concept of archipelago serves to mediate the phenomenology of humans' cultural relation to the solid and liquid materiality of geography.”⁴⁰ And yet further, Perez converges with Glissant's commentary on archipelagic translation (previously quoted in the present essay) as working “to accumulate the expanse of all the beings and all the existences in the world,” tracing “the unforeseeable of what is now our common condition.” Our *momongmong* (the material sound) meets the CHamoru language's *momongmong* (or linguistic translation of that sound).

We see this amidness of materiality and metaphoricity in the five CHamoru numerals used in canoe paddling: *hacha*, *hugua*, *tulu*, *fatfat*, *lima*. While Perez's discussion with his grandmother focuses on *hacha*, and implicitly that word's (non)relation to the entire Indo-European language family of which the Spanish *uno* is a part, a different set of circumstances might have led Perez to discuss *lima*, which is the fifth numeral not only in CHamoru but is also a cognate with the fifth numeral in a large abundance of languages in the Austronesian language family, which extends from Madagascar to Rapanui (Easter Island) and from Taiwan to Aotearoa.⁴¹ I would speculate that this remarkable consistency across the Austronesian world may be a function of the material work of hands with *lima*/five fingers facilitating astounding feats of mobility, steering, paddling, hoisting, rowing, and translation amid the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Perez states at one point in “aerial roots” that there is a “burial / in every wave” (59). Creating waves that are also wakes, traditional models of translation offer burials, as seen at the beginning in the Spanish *uno*'s burial of *hacha*. But if every wave is a burial, then the receding of each wave may promise a resuscitation, which we see in *lima* and its network of many hundreds of cognates across the Austronesian world, a world of archipelagic *waka/sakman*/canoe routes and archipelagic translation. Hence, every interval between waves: an unburying of the dynamics among mobility, archipelagic thinking, and translation. And this burying/unburying motion may indeed flip the irony on its head, in the scene between Perez and his grandmother, as *lima*'s repeating existence reminds us that Perez's correction of his grandmother's speaking of the CHamoru language may be a mode of hypercorrection, an attempt to correct a formation that is both the ongoing remaking of the *world* and an Indigenous remaking

of a word, i.e., *uno*. A testimony that the languages we speak are never *one/uno/hacha*.⁴² Rather, they are translational, mobile, multiple, archipelagoes of discontinuous conjunction, attaining contingent coherence through the very notion of a language.⁴³

American Studies, the World, and the Mobilities of Archipelagic Translation

In [*guma*'], the third book of his *from unincorporated territory* series, Perez offers a follow-up poem to "aerial roots." This follow-up is titled "(sub)aerial roots," and in its concluding section/excerpt, Perez recalls traveling from Honolulu (where he now lives) to London, where he is to represent Guam at a weeklong poetry competition. He recounts the scene of his arrival at Heathrow Airport: "After arriving at the London airport, I give the customs declaration form and passport to the customs officer. 'You're American,' he says. I reply, 'No, I'm not American, but I'm a US citizen.' Then I explain what 'Guam' is."⁴⁴ One imagines that Perez might indeed use language from the title of his five-book series to explain Guam to the customs officer: Guam is an *unincorporated territory* of the United States, and Perez is *from unincorporated territory*, from a territory claimed by the United States but where the US Constitution only partially applies. Perez may well mention his own island of origin in tandem with the United States's other unincorporated territories: American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands. If he had time for a knottier and more extended discussion than most travelers would want to have with a customs official, he might have offered something along the lines of the conclusion to his 2017 poem titled "Guam, Where America's Voting Rights End": "Some activists now petition to extend voting rights / to the territories; instead, I want our decolonial / voices to be counted, I want Guam's liberation / from American presidents to be inaugurated."⁴⁵

Such statements on loyalty and voice meet up with material that appears in Vicente L. Rafael and Mary Louise Pratt's 2021 special issue of the *American Quarterly*, titled *Language, Multilingualism, and Translation in American Studies*. In the introduction to this volume, Rafael and Pratt discuss a genealogy of past and present US monolingualism in which "Theodore Roosevelt, one of the architects of the American Empire, ... consecrated the monolingualist dogma that ... takes hold of [US] politicians' brains" today.⁴⁶ The editors go on to quote from some of Roosevelt's 1919 statements to the American Defense Society, in which he asserted, "Every immigrant who comes here should be required within five years to learn English or to leave the country.... Any man who says he is an American, but something else also, isn't an American at all." Rafael and Pratt elaborate on Roosevelt's statements: "It is not just English that is an essential sign of loyalty, but *monolingualism* in English. Bi- or multilingualism by its very presence signifies divided loyalty, which, to paraphrase Roosevelt, is no loyalty at all."⁴⁷ Roosevelt's vision, which maps neatly onto present-day US monolingualism of the English-only variety, imagines *language speakers moving into US borders* and using language (among other things) to pledge absolute loyalty to the

United States. By contrast, Perez's vision reminds us that imperial *US borders have moved to circumscribe language speakers*, but the evocation of *unincorporated territories* has arrived without full US loyalty to the people of these territories and has unsurprisingly not evoked, within the colonized subjects, undivided loyalty to the United States. Indeed, the map of the United States would be radically reshaped within a mere five years if its colonized subjects applied the same loyalty test to the invading US nation-state as Roosevelt's US monolingualism would apply to US immigrants. And if the English language and US Constitutional rights are markers of loyalty, then as Rafael adumbrated in his 2016 study of the United States and the US-occupied Philippines, *Motherless Tongues: The Insurgency of Language amid Wars of Translation*, US territories that have not been incorporated into the United States promise to offer American Studies, whether transnational or of any other stripe, some of its most dynamic translational borderlands and borderwaters.

Looking toward such borderwaters, I have suggested in this essay that whereas Rafael and Pratt are attentive to “[t]ranslation ... both *between* and *within* languages,” thinkers such as Te Punga Somerville, Glissant, and Perez remind us of another preposition—something beyond *between* with its interlingual translation and beyond *within* and its intralingual translation. This preposition is *amid*, and its mode of translation is archipelagic. This *amid* of the borderwaters brings Transnational American Studies into interface with a wider world of “interdisciplinary global studies and world literary studies from the early modern to the present.”⁴⁸ Facilitated by the *amid*, we see three mutually reflecting and reconstituting categories that must always oscillate between focus and unfocus, knowing and unknowing, exploration and anti-exploration: translation, archipelagic thinking, and mobility. As read through Te Punga Somerville, Glissant, and Perez, discussions of global and world mobility (e.g., migration, tourism, refugee ships, academic conferences, roadtrips, ocean currents, space travel, etc.) need to be attentive to how translation, this fundamental subset of archipelagic thought, is constantly routing and rerouting our notions and experiences of the kinetic world. Elsewhere, contemplations of archipelagoes (whether the archipelagic Americas, imperial archipelagoes, Indigenous archipelagoes, decolonial archipelagoes, post-colonial archipelagoes, etc.) must take into account the ways mobilities and immobilities among sites including islands and waters and shorelines are always translational, frequently in simultaneously linguistic and spatial ways, hearkening to the two definitions of translation offered in this essay's introduction. And finally, studies of translation—and indeed translation studies—need to assume modes of thought that are not modeled on the bridge and betweenness but rather on understandings of the past, present, and future that exist amid translation's archipelago.

Notes

- 1 “translate, v.,” OED Online, Oxford University Press: <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/204841?rskey=70ljoL&result=2&isAdvanced=false-eid>.
- 2 Within translation studies, reliance on the verb *übersetzen* to underscore translation’s relation to movement has been commonplace over the years. See for instance Azade Seyhan, “German Academic Exiles in Istanbul: Translation as the *Bildung* of the Other,” in *Nation, Language, and the Ethics of Translation*, edited by Sandra Berman and Michael Wood (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 286; and John Felstiner, “Translating as Transference: Paul Celan’s Versions of Shakespeare, Dickinson, Mandelstam, Apollinaire,” in *Translating Literatures, Translating Cultures: New Vistas and Approaches in Literary Studies* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 168.
- 3 Astradur Eysteinnsson and Daniel Weissbort, “General Introduction,” in *Translation—Theory and Practice*, ed. Daniel Weissbort and Astradur Eysteinnsson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 1.
- 4 Ken Liu, “Translator’s Postscript,” in *The Three-Body Problem*, by Cixin Liu (New York: Tor, 2014), 397.
- 5 John Alba Cutler, *Ends of Assimilation: The Formation of Chicano Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 1–2.
- 6 Christina Schäffner, “Self-Awareness, Norms and Constraints: Dealing with Metaphors in Interpreter-Mediated Press Conferences,” in *The Changing Role of the Interpreter: Contextualising Norms, Ethics and Quality Standards* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 62.
- 7 For an overview of archipelagic thinking as it has emerged from multiple geographies and thought traditions, see Brian Russell Roberts and Michelle Ann Stephens, “Archipelagic American Studies: Decontinentalizing the Study of American Culture,” in *Archipelagic American Studies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017), 14–17; and Brian Russell Roberts, *Borderwaters: Amid the Archipelagic States of America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2021), 13–23.
- 8 Roberts and Stephens, “Archipelagic American Studies: Decontinentalizing,” 33.
- 9 Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel and Michelle Stephens, “‘Isolated Above, but Connected Below’: Toward New, Global, Archipelagic Linkages,” in *Contemporary Archipelagic Thinking: Toward New Comparative Methodologies and Disciplinary Formations* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2020), 3.
- 10 For work that has touched on the topic of translation’s relation to archipelagic thinking, see Dennitza Gabrakova, *The Unnamable Archipelago: Wounds of the Postcolonial in Postwar Japanese Literature and Thought* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill

- 2018), 137–52; and Ayano Ginoza, “An Archipelagic Enunciation from Okinawa Island,” in *The Challenges of Island Studies*, ed. Ayano Ginoza (Singapore: Springer, 2020), 3–14.
- 11 Aside from archipelagic-translational scholarship previously mentioned, see also Kaiama L. Glover and Martin Munro, “Translating the Caribbean,” *Small Axe* 17, no. 3 (Nov. 2013): 85–88; Giuseppe Sofo, “L’archipel de la traduction,” *Trans—Revue de littérature générale et comparée* 25 (2020): n.p., <https://doi.org/10.4000/trans.3379>; Brian Russell Roberts, “What Is an Archipelago? On Bandung Praxis, Lingua Franca, and Archipelagic Interlapping,” in *Contemporary Archipelagic Thinking: Toward New Comparative Methodologies and Disciplinary Formations*, ed. Michelle Stephens and Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020), 83–107.
 - 12 Aside from the example of Robinson that I offer in this paragraph, consider more recent commentary from Edwin Gentzler: “I argue that rather than thinking about translation as a somewhat secondary process of ferrying ideas across borders, we instead think about translation as one of the most important processes that can lead to revitalizing culture”; Edwin Gentzler, *Translation and Rewriting in the Age of Post-Translation Studies* (London: Routledge, 2017), 8. For an excellent overview and problematization of the bridge as a foundational translational metaphor, see Giuseppe Sofo, “Du pont au seuil: Un autre espace de la traduction,” *Trans—Revue de littérature générale et comparée* 24 (2019): n.p., <https://doi.org/10.4000/trans.2335>.
 - 13 Douglas Robinson, *The Translator’s Turn* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 134. For useful discussions of Robinson’s book, see Johnny Payne, review of *The Translator’s Turn*, *Comparative Literature* 47, no. 1 (Winter 1995): 85–88; and Douglas Robinson, “The Somatics of Tone and the Tone of Somatics,” *Translation and Interpreting Studies* 10, no. 2 (2015): 299–319.
 - 14 Robinson, *Translator’s Turn*, 184. The phrases “build a bridge or borrow a boat” and “have to swim across” are Robinson’s translations of commentary from the Finnish poet and translator Pentti Saarikoski.
 - 15 Alice Te Punga Somerville, “Our Sea of Anthologies: Collection, Display, and the Deep Blue Sea,” in *Cultural Crossings: Negotiating Identities in Francophone and Anglophone Pacific Literature / À la croisée des cultures: De la négociation des identités dans les littératures francophones et anglophones du Pacifique*, edited by Raylene Ramsay (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2010), 218.
 - 16 Te Punga Somerville, “Our Sea of Anthologies,” 221, 219.
 - 17 Frank Stewart, Kareva Mateata-Allain, and Alexander Dale Mawyer, ed., *Vārua Tupu: New Writing from French Polynesia* (Honolulu: Mānoa: A Pacific Journal, University of Hawai‘i Press, 2006).

- 18 Selina Tusitala Marsh, "Afterword," in *Niu Voices: Contemporary Pacific Fiction 1*, ed. Selina Tusitala Marsh (Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand: Huia, 2006), 217–20.
- 19 Kaleolani Akim, Noelani Arista, and Laiana Wong, "'Ōlelo Ho'ākāka (Language Policy)," *Ōiwi: A Native Hawaiian Journal* 3 (2003), 1.
- 20 Albert Wendt, Reina Whaitiri, and Robert Sullivan, "Introduction," in *Whetu Moana: Contemporary Polynesian Poems in English* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003), 2, 3. On intralingual translation, see Vicente L. Rafael and Mary Louise Pratt, "Introduction" to special issue *Language, Multilingualism, and Translation in American Studies*, *American Quarterly* 73, no. 3. (Sept. 2021): 423.
- 21 Epeli Hau'ofa, "Our Sea of Islands," in *A New Oceania: Rediscovering Our Sea of Islands*, ed. Eric Waddell, Vijay Naidu, and Epeli Hau'ofa (Suva, Fiji: Beake House, 1993), 7.
- 22 Wendt, Whaitiri, Sullivan, "Introduction," 2.
- 23 Édouard Glissant, *Introduction to a Poetics of Diversity*, trans. Celia Britton (Liverpool, UK: Liverpool University Press, 2020), 26. Subsequent citations of this book appear parenthetically and in-text.
- 24 Ottmar Ette, *Writing-between-Worlds: TransArea Studies and the Literatures-without-a-fixed-Abode*, trans. Vera M. Kutzinski (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 3.
- 25 "traduce, v." OED Online, March 2022, Oxford University Press: <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/204319?redirectedFrom=traduce>.
- 26 For a discussion of this phrase in the context of Transnational American Studies, see Shelley Fisher Fishkin, "Traduttore/Traditore: Motivated Mistranslation and the Unsettling of America," *American Literary History* 28, no. 3 (2016): 596–604.
- 27 José E. Limón, *American Encounters: Greater Mexico, the United States, and the Erotics of Culture* (Boston, MA: Beacon, 1998), 2–3; Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco, CA: Aunt Lute Books, 1987), 3; Gloria Anzaldúa, *Friends from the Other Side/Amigos del otro lado* (San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press, 1993).
- 28 Anzaldúa, *Borderlands*, 3. On this image of the back as bridge, see also Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, eds., *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, 40th Anniversary Edition (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2021).
- 29 Roberts, *Borderwaters*, 123.
- 30 Simona Bertacco and Nicoletta Vallorani, *The Relocation of Culture: Translations, Migrations, Borders* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2021), 30.
- 31 On moving islands in the Pacific and the Atlantic, see, respectively, Vicente M. Diaz, "Voyaging for Anti-Colonial Recovery: Austronesian Seafaring, Archipelagic

- Rethinking, and the Re-mapping of Indigeneity,” *Pacific Asia Inquiry* 2, no. 1 (Fall 2011), 25–27; and John Gillis, *Islands of the Mind: How the Human Imagination Created the Atlantic World* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 52. On moving islands in rivers, see Roberts, *Borderwaters*, 112–13; and Alana de Hinojosa, “El Río Grande as Pedagogy: The Unruly, Unresolved Terrains of the Chamizal Land Dispute,” *American Quarterly* 73, no. 4 (Dec. 2021): 711–42.
- 32 Craig Santos Perez, *from unincorporated territory [hacha]* (Kāne‘ohe, HI: Tinfish Press, 2008); Craig Santos Perez, *from unincorporated territory [saina]* (Richmond, CA: Omnidawn Publishing, 2010); Craig Santos Perez, *from unincorporated territory [guma’]* (Richmond, CA: Omnidawn Publishing, 2014); Craig Santos Perez, *from unincorporated territory [lukao]* (Oakland, CA: Omnidawn Publishing, 2017); and Craig Santos Perez, *from unincorporated territory [āmot]* (Oakland, CA: Omnidawn Publishing, 2023). Subsequent citations of *[saina]* appear parenthetically and in-text.
- 33 Perez, *[guma’]*, 39. This description is drawn from a related poem titled “(sub)aerial roots.”
- 34 Hsuan L. Hsu, “Guåhan (Guam), Literary Emergence, and the American Pacific in *Homebase* and *from unincorporated territory*,” *American Literary History* 24, no. 2 (Summer 2012), 301.
- 35 Hsu, “Guåhan (Guam),” 301.
- 36 The stanza headings for “aerial roots” in *[hacha]* take a slightly different form, with translational equivalents provided in parentheses.
- 37 Ette, *Writing-Between-Worlds*, 165.
- 38 For the appearance of these terms, see Perez, *[hacha]*, 43 and 45.
- 39 Within “aerial roots,” CHamoru names for body parts are very often Spanish-derived. However, Perez also features CHamoru names for body parts that speak to CHamoru migrations and connections within the archipelagic Austronesian world, as in *[saina]* the CHamoru term *to’lang* (or *bone* in English) is a cognate with the Malay *tulang* (80). Elsewhere, in *[saina]* the CHamoru terms *pulu* (*hair* or *feather* in English) and *talanga* (*ear* in English) are cognates with the Malay *bulu* and *telinga*, respectively (117).
- 40 Roberts and Stephens, “Archipelagic American Studies: Decontinentalizing,” 7.
- 41 On *lima’s* place in the Austronesian world, see John U. Wolff, *Proto-Austronesian Phonology with Glossary*, vol. 2 (Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia Program Publications, Cornell University, 2010), 952–53. For a wider view of *lima’s* cognate status within Austronesian languages, see the extensive compilations of computer programmer and amateur linguist Mark Rosenfelder: Mark Rosenfelder, “Numbers in Austronesian

Languages,” *The Zompist*, <https://www.zompist.com/anes.htm>. Accessed 14 March 2022.

- 42 Here I splice translational insights garnered from Perez’s poem with Jacques Derrida’s proposition, “On ne parle jamais une seule langue,” or “We never speak only one language”; Jacques Derrida, *Le monolinguisme de l’autre: ou la prothèse d’origine* (Paris: Galilée, 1996), 21; Jacques Derrida, *Monolingualism of the Other; or, The Prosthesis of Origin*, trans. Patrick Mensah (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 7.
- 43 I draw the phrase “discontinuous conjunction” from Antonio Benítez-Rojo, *The Repeating Island: The Caribbean and the Postmodern Perspective*, trans. James Maraniss, 2nd ed. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996), 2.
- 44 Perez, [guma’], 79.
- 45 Craig Santos Perez, “Guam, Where America’s Voting Rights End,” *Craig Santos Perez* (blog), August 9, 2017, <https://craigsantosperez.wordpress.com/2017/08/09/guam-where-americas-voting-rights-end/>
- 46 Rafael and Pratt, “Introduction,” 420.
- 47 Rafael and Pratt, “Introduction,” 421.
- 48 Heather H. Yeung, “Review Essay” of *Borderwaters: Amid the Archipelagic States of America*, by Brian Russell Roberts. *New Global Studies* 15 (2021), 351.

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