

(Self-)translation and migration

The political exile of Spanish scientists and scholars after the Civil War

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Since the 1970s, the circumstances of the twentieth-century migration of exiled intellectuals and scientists from Franco-era Spain to Mexico have aroused major interest in both Spain and Mexico (Fagen 1973; Abellán 1976–1978; VV.AA. 1982; VV.AA. 1987). The resulting studies shed light on the lives and careers of exiled Spanish scientists, many of whom went unnoticed by researchers within Spain for decades because of censorship under Franco's regime. This article focuses on one highly representative example of an exiled Spanish scholar, Pere Bosch Gimpera (1891–1974), in order to illustrate not only the importance of scientific migration and exile in this particular context, but also the role of inter- and intralingual translation for these exiled scientists.

Keywords: cultural translation, self-translation, migration, Spanish scientific exile, *transterrados*, Mexico, Pere Bosch Gimpera

1. Introduction

As has been well noted, “migrants [...] are always simultaneously influencing and being influenced by others” (Inghilleri 2017, 1). This article addresses this situation of migrants in relation to cultural translation, analysing the position of the migrant as both agent and object of translation, as well as (self-)translation. This analysis is informed by notions of identity, community, and belonging, and by the ways in which these notions relate to one another and interact with institutions (whether political or academic) in a given migratory context. Broadly speaking, this approach places the migrant in a place close to cultural mediation. In particular, it posits an idea of translation as practice in such a way that it is necessarily much broader than the purely linguistic (Bauman 1987; Bhabha 1994a; Fuchs 2009; Polezzi 2012). Viewed from this perspective, (self-)translation should

be studied not simply as a strategy for migrant assimilation and accommodation, but also as a means for migrants to manage their plural identities, with one foot in each country and culture. I am also interested, and no less so, in analysing the constant back-and-forth between the active subject and the object of translation that occurs within migrants in most cases. In short, one of the key concerns is studying the characteristics of the migrant's agency at the intersection of translation and migration, as Cronin (2006, 45) has suggested. The term 'self-translation' is used here in a broad sense. In line with the above, it does not refer (only) to the version of a given text in another language, produced by the same author, but to the need to express, explain, and 'translate' oneself into another language and culture, a phenomenon that becomes even more complex in situations of diglossia, as examined in this article. The examples that follow, taken mainly from Bosch Gimpera's correspondence, demonstrate, in practice and in argument, this profound need (first in relation to English, and then to Spanish when he emigrated to Latin America) and the problems that it causes.

Not all migrants have this much agency. There are different categories of migrants, "all of which are socially, legally, historically, and politically constructed" (Inghilleri 2017, 34). The category is by no means homogeneous or unchanging. Rather, it is subject to a process of transformation that unfolds over time, starting with the arrival of a migrant in a host society (or even before). It may involve the maintenance of strong ties to the migrant's culture of origin or, on the contrary, provide an opportunity for the migrant to integrate into the host society, by establishing a distance from their previous identity. In any event, language is a key element because it usually determines to a large extent the degree to which the migrant experiences inclusion or exclusion within the host society. This includes the migrant's access to knowledge and also the rules of conduct in the target culture, which is essential for integration. At the same time, language is also a marker of the difference between private and public space for the migrant. Against this backdrop, the migrant is constantly operating as a mediator, translating and self-translating in an incessant negotiation. It is not always easy for the migrant to make the effort in both directions in terms of identity; in other words, to maintain a bifocal perspective in relation to the culture of origin and the culture of the host society.

Since the 1980s, postcolonial theory has taken up and developed "the idea of diasporic and non-originary locations of identity" (Inghilleri 2017, 18), or the definition of identity as a space that is "hybrid, interstitial and resistant to any imposed attempts at universality or other totalizing concepts" (ibid.). This has made it possible to reread colonial and imperialist history and challenge the hegemonic (largely Eurocentric) viewpoint, partly through the overhaul of traditional dichotomies (e.g., here/there, inside/outside, core/periphery, us/them)

“through which individuals from once-colonised countries were historically narrated” (ibid.). The issue of identity is fundamental for the migrant in general, just as it is for one type of migrant in particular, namely the political exile, as will be shown in this article. The identity of the political exile is always, on the one hand, partly constructed on the memory of the (more or less idealised) reality that they have left behind. On the other hand, it is also articulated on the basis of the Other, drawing on “specific discursive formations” and “concrete declarative strategies” (Schwarzstein 2001, 199) from which a major inside/outside dichotomy emerges. This dichotomy defines the spaces of exclusion,¹ and helps new communities to emerge, which by and large are based on solidarity among migrants, regardless of differences of gender, class, age, social or cultural background, or even ideology.

Based on the parameters outlined above, the study reported on in this article examines a specific case of forced or involuntary scientific migration on political grounds that took place between Spain and various countries in Europe and mainly in Latin America. I focus on the refugees and asylum seekers who fled Spain in large numbers after the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) and settled as exiles in Mexico and other Latin American countries, sometimes after a short stay in France or the UK in the early 1940s. The result was a genuine Spanish diaspora, an exodus unprecedented in contemporary Spanish history.² Notably, the migrants did not flee out of economic necessity. Indeed, most enjoyed a generally high socio-economic status in Spain, they were politically more or less committed to the Second Republic (albeit with political views that were generally moderate), and they had university educations as well as professional careers that had been established to varying degrees in the interwar period and were then abruptly interrupted by the rise of the Franco dictatorship. As noted above, the group was quite large in size: for instance, roughly 40 000 Spanish exiles ended up in Mexico, of which some 14 000 were scientists. In addition, they had been engaged in the construction of a free society and the modernisation of Spain in the first three decades of the twentieth century. Many came from Catalan-speaking areas, although their training also covered a high level of mastery of

1. As Said has pointed out, “The relationship between nationalism and exile is like the Hegelian dialectic of master and slave, opposites, they inform and constitute each other” (Said 1984, 162; my translation). See the extensive and interesting discussion on this topic in Bhabha (1978, 1994b, 1996), as well as in Hall (1996).

2. There have been other events in Spanish history with partially similar consequences, such as the expulsion of the Jews in the Renaissance, or that of the Jesuits a few centuries later, as well as the exile of *Afrancesados* ‘Frenchifieds’ and liberals that took place as early as the nineteenth century, but none of these has approached the importance of the Republican scientific exile in the twentieth century, which brought about an unprecedented intellectual collapse in all fields of knowledge in Spain.

the Spanish language, as well as English, French, German, and other languages. When they arrived in Mexico (another Spanish-speaking country, although not the 'same' Spanish that was spoken on the Iberian peninsula), they were generally well received. In fact, they were able to continue their careers, encouraged by certain migration policies in the host country, discussed in more detail in Section 2.

2. Spanish Republican exiles and scientific diaspora

Republican exiles in general and the Spanish scientific diaspora in particular, are currently a subject of interest in Spain. To give just one example, in January 2019 the Spanish government paid tribute to seven members of the global scientific elite as part of the activities set out in the Law on Historical Memory. The commemoration not only honoured the efforts of the seven, but also those of all the scientists who had helped to put Spain on the world scientific map during the historical period known as the 'Silver Age'³ (the period of Spain's true scientific awakening in contemporary history). Most of the Spanish scientific community had been forced into exile from 1936 onwards and, in even greater numbers, at the end of the Spanish Civil War, or had been subject to the harsh reprisals of the Franco regime, losing their jobs, their university chairs, their scientific projects and laboratories, and so on. Studies on the subject began during Spain's political transition to democracy (which started with the end of the dictatorship after Franco died in 1975), in a period that was engaged with the restoration of the country's institutional memory and would continue on into the 1980s, shaped by perspectives associated with more modern forms of historiography (Barona and Lloret Pastor 2000, 401). Indeed, this line of research would become well established in the final decade of the last century through the efforts of several associations, the organisation of international meetings and conferences, the commemoration of anniversaries (in this respect, the anniversaries of 1999 were crucial), and the publication of newsletters and reports. The aim of all these activities was not simply to gain recognition for exiled scientists and to secure the restitution and – as far as possible – the return of the leading figures among them. No less important has been the rediscovery of individual trajectories that were largely unknown in Spain, retracing international scientific genealogies and lines of affiliation that are fundamental to the contemporary development of science in Spain.

3. Spanish historiography has provided varying dates for the beginning and end of the so-called 'Silver Age' (in contrast to the Spanish 'Golden Age'). In this article, I use the term to refer to the period that covers almost the first four decades of the twentieth century up to the end of the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939). With regard to the Spanish 'Silver Age', see Mainer (1983). For science in Spain during this period, see especially Sánchez Ron (1988).

The study of Spanish Republican scientists in exile is not an easy task because the sources and the people involved in the diaspora are widely scattered. Nonetheless, mapping the trajectories of Spanish Republicans in exile is a leading subject in Spanish cultural history of the second half of the twentieth century (Giral González 1994).

One result of the Spanish Civil War was the collapse of the country's intellectual, cultural, and scientific life in such a way that, when it began to recover, its centre was no longer in Madrid or Barcelona, but in Mexico City (Fagen 1973, 7). This fact has major implications both culturally and linguistically. Indeed, the Republican exiles succeeded in preserving, modernising, and advancing Spanish culture in exile⁴ during the first four decades of the dictatorship, although they were completely forgotten back in Spain, where they would receive no recognition until the end of the twentieth century.

At first, Spanish Republican exiles – and not only the scientists in their ranks – headed to Europe (France, England, Belgium, etc.), as already mentioned. Soon, however, the advance of Nazism forced them to move again, this time often to Latin America (although in many cases, Latin America had been their first choice). In the 1940s, they left in varying numbers for Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Colombia, Cuba, Brazil, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Ecuador, Paraguay, Bolivia, Peru, and Puerto Rico. Among their many destinations, Mexico stands out as especially popular, particularly due to the immigration policy adopted by the government of Lázaro Cárdenas (Gaos 1966; Fagen 1973), which welcomed the exiles generously and without restrictions. Many of the intellectuals in question had even been 'invited' by Mexico since 1937, during the Civil War. The *Casa de España* 'Spanish House', which was so important at the end of the Spanish Civil War, would shortly be renamed the *Colegio de México* 'College of Mexico' and go on to become a key institution in the country from the late 1940s onwards,⁵ achieving enormous importance in Mexican cultural life and also, to a

4. See the important work carried out in journals such as *Ciencia: Revista hispanoamericana de ciencias puras y aplicadas* 'Science: Latin American journal of pure and applied sciences', founded in exile by Dr Ignacio Bolívar in March 1940, which was a very valuable platform for exchange between exiled Spanish and Mexican scientists for thirty-five years (29 volumes). See also the many contributions by the Spanish exiles to other Mexican periodicals, such as the *Boletín del Laboratorio de Estudios Médicos y Biológicos de la UNAM* (BLEMB) 'Bulletin of the Laboratory of Medical and Biological Studies of the UNAM (BLEMB)', which regularly published Pi Suñer and Issac Costero, among many others, from which the highly regarded *Instituto de Estudios Biomédicos* 'Institute of Biomedical Studies' was born.

5. The *Colegio de México*, the UNAM (*Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*) and the *Instituto Politécnico* 'Polytechnic institute' were the three pillars of the professional and academic integration of the Spanish Republican exiles in Mexico. See Schwarzstein (2001, 34).

large extent, in Spanish cultural life during the Franco dictatorship. As well as Mexico, Spanish Republicans also went into exile in Argentina, where many had previous family ties (Schwarzstein 2001; Casas 2013).⁶ The result was a massive exodus of Spaniards between 1939 and 1945. Whole families set sail from Europe on board ships such as the *Sinaia*, the *Ipanema* and the *Mexique*, arriving in large numbers in Mexico (and elsewhere). At first, they were scattered around the country, but soon they converged on the state capitals (especially Mexico City).

Much has been said about the contribution by exiled Spanish scientists to their host countries, especially Mexico, and the vital modernisation that this brought to the country. It gave rise to flourishing new institutions and yielded leading scientific figures in the 1970s and 1980s, and even stimulated the publishing world (Hernández de León Portilla 1978, 119).

In reality, however, the exiles were *trasterrados*,⁷ that is, people torn between their loyalty to a Spain that they had left behind (to which they always thought they would soon return), and a Mexico to which they were grateful for welcoming them (but from which they felt culturally and linguistically alien). They were not native-born citizens, even if they were allowed to work there and were valued for their mainly intellectual contributions. That said, most of them succeeded in integrating into Mexican university life and obtaining citizenship in the early 1940s, when World War II made the situation in Europe even more difficult. However, contrary to what has been typically claimed in the framing of the supposed 'Latin American brotherhood' which had favoured Spanish exile in Latin America⁸ integration was not easy for them. Despite the Cárdenas policy of welcome (which was not replicated in Argentina or in other Latin American destinations, where immigration was much more restricted at the time), there was a certain amount of hostility (Márquez Morfín 1988; Schwarzstein 2001, 211) that made integration in Mexico quite difficult for a handful of reasons. First, at least initially, the Republican exiles only had their sights set on return – they regarded themselves as merely

6. In this article, mainly for reasons of space, I will only deal with the Spanish emigration to Mexico because the exile to this country presents a very interesting case of cultural translation, in line with the approach set out in Section 3.

7. I use the term *trasterrados* – and not actually 'banished' people – since the term alludes to the population "transferred from one homeland to another" in Spanish exile (Fagen 1973, 142).

8. In the early years of the Franco dictatorship (Medina Echavarría 1942), some even insisted that this brotherhood was the true proof of the existence of an 'Hispanic man'. At the time, it was not uncommon to find statements describing Mexico as 'the other Spain', or seeing the future of Latin America as part of the future of Spain. This approach, inherited from the colonial era, was further worsened by the ideological positions associated with the Franco regime, which was vindictive towards Spain's imperial past. In these circumstances, the Republican exile was forced to 'review' the Spanish colonisation of America from the point of view of exile.

‘passing through’ – and therefore held on to their cultural and linguistic identity in the host country. Second, there was some Mexican rejection of the Spanish exiles based on the mistakenly held view by some conservatives in the host country that – since they had fled the defeat of the Second Republic – the exiles were subversives and radical leftists, which may have strengthened the political left in Mexico.⁹ Third, there was hostility towards a certain image of Spaniards in Mexico, bound up with prejudices and stereotypes that had persisted since the colonial period – for example, in the figure of the arrogant, self-important Spanish *gachupín* –¹⁰ and which was now exacerbated by the fact that most of the exiles had little difficulty finding professional positions fairly quickly at a time of economic growth and rising standards of living in Mexico; this hostility – when it was not openly xenophobic, especially outside Mexico City – gave rise to clearly anti-Spanish positions and fed into the Mexican pro-indigenous discourse, which will be discussed in more detail in Section 3. Fourth, the *transterrados* actually did open Mexico up to foreign cultural influences at a key stage in its history – a fact of great importance in intellectual and university settings – and these new influences were perceived as a threat by official pro-indigenous positions opposed to cosmopolitanism. Fifth, there were very important cultural differences between the Mexicans and the Spaniards, namely those relating to national character¹¹ as well as language, which resulted in real problems of mutual understanding that were not limited solely to the pronunciation of the ‘s’ sound and to the accent (the peninsular Spanish accent was generally perceived as a sign of pretension and snobbery), since the Spanish language was often a ‘false friend’ and the supposed ‘Spanish linguistic community’ was a myth that may have facilitated the emigration of the exiles to Mexico, but now trapped them.

This condition of ‘living on borrowed land’, of being permanently displaced and decentred, is ultimately the alienation that the Spanish *transterrados* repeatedly convey in a variety of documentary accounts. It defines the double life of the *transterrado*, caught between the public and the private; in other words, between professional life and social contacts on the one hand, and private life on the other. In the first case (that is, professional life and social contacts, but generally not

9. Regarding the fear that Mexico would be filled with *rojos* ‘radical leftists’ due to the Spanish exiles, see Kenny (1962).

10. This was the name given to the Spaniards who had gone to Mexico to *hacer las Américas* ‘get rich in the colonies’ and had quickly made a fortune there. This figure was, therefore, linked to colonial plunder.

11. This fact could especially be seen in Mexico City. It was something ‘disconcerting’, according to all the testimonies of this time: Spaniards spoke ‘the same’ language but ‘differently’, in the accent, the expressions they used, the manners, the way of life. As plenty of testimonials reveal, for many Mexicans it was like experiencing a “second conquest” (Fagen 1973, 184).

friendships with Mexicans), it was conducted in Mexican Spanish, which was far removed from the Spanish spoken on the Iberian Peninsula, both for the Spanish-speaking and the Catalan-speaking exiles. In the second case (that is, private life, within families and circles of friends, like the numerous associations of compatriots that sustained a view of the community's identity, and amounted to a 'new family network' and support system in general), it was conducted either in the Spanish of the Iberian Peninsula or in Catalan, but in either case clinging to close emotional ties with Spain. However, this was a Spain that no longer existed after the defeat of the Second Republic, but had become a symbolic space, a lost paradise, a myth.

Behind the difficulty of integration (which meant that prejudiced attitudes and opinions about the Other were carried over into everyday life), it is possible to discern a historical and colonial subject. This colonial subject is not merely cultural (I am referring especially to the emergence of the Mexican indigenous substratum at the time), but also points to differences regarding cultural and even ethnic characteristics.¹² All of these issues underline the absolute relevance of cultural translation in the terms posed in Section 3. Moreover, these are issues that some Spanish *transterrados* did not always succeed in managing in a satisfactory manner. They mainly concern the first generation of exiles (and especially those who arrived as teenagers and suffered the greatest loss of identity). At the heart of this struggle lies the contrast between what the exiles thought they knew about Mexican culture (and the various features of Latin American culture in general), based on the training that they had received in Spain and their Eurocentric mindset, and the reality they encountered in exile. Their cultural differences with respect to Mexico revolved largely around the strong indigenous substratum, which the 'common' Spanish language could not overcome sufficiently to unite a common body of people. On the contrary, it testified to the Otherness of both communities. In this sense, for example, we can read a significant account collected by Fagen (1973, 177), which is only one of many:

El cambio de normas no nos hubiera sorprendido en China. Pero al llegar a México y escuchar a un Ramírez o a un González hablar en español, esperamos que se comporte como un González de allá. Nos molesta, nos sorprende, nos ofende en el corazón mismo de la lógica.

'The change of norms would not have surprised us in China. But when we got to Mexico and heard a Ramírez or González speaking in Spanish, we expected them

12. I refer to the pre-Columbian past, with strong ethnic and racial components, which was very much present in Mexico at that time and is a source of cultural diversity. At certain moments in Mexico's recent history, this cultural substratum has been defended against the colonial past and the persistence of the Spanish influence in contemporary history.

to act like a González back home. It troubled us, surprised us, affronted us at the very core of logic.'

Accordingly, the fact of being a Republican exile, by virtue of its characteristics, meant that the *transterrados* had to confront colonial history and their inherited image of Latin America, forcing them to 'rethink' the conquest of the so-called 'New World' and to 'reconsider' the idea of *Hispanidad* 'Hispanicity' or what it meant to be part of the Spanish-speaking world. Whether left-wing, revolutionary, or liberal, the *transterrados* were always regarded as part of Spain's colonial past, and as such, were difficult for the host country to assimilate. Some, such as the anthropologists Juan Comas and Pere Bosch Gimpera, were sensitive to the pre-Columbian reality of Mexico that was starting to be explored with fresh eyes, and they took a real interest in Mexican cultural history and its pre-Columbian past (as discussed in Section 3). In addition, the arrival of the Republican exiles amid the rise of the Mexican indigenous movement also served to renew the problems around identity in Mexico, which was at the time seeking to forge a present and future by rejecting the Spanish cultural tradition. In fact, this effort involved challenging the dominance of the metropolis – its hegemony and cultural paternalism – during a period of strong cultural self-confrontation between the indigenous and Spanish components in the country. Thus, what might appear to be a unifying factor – Spanish as the presumed 'common' language – was often a real locus of friction and confrontation, of divergence and failure to integrate, of tacit exclusion, and of mutual prejudice and mistrust. Spain's relationship with Mexico is in large part Mexico's relationship with itself (Hernández de León Portilla 1978). As Octavio Paz (1964, 17) so eloquently put it: "*La historia de México es la del hombre que busca su filiación, su origen*" 'The history of Mexico is the history of a man in search of his ancestry, his origins.'

This situation not only affected Spanish-speaking Republican exiles, but also their Catalan counterparts. Most Catalan-speaking Republican exiles displayed the same characteristics mentioned above, but they were also distinct in having their own specific Catalan culture and language, which they sought at all costs, even institutionally, to preserve and maintain in exile. At the same time, they were eager to maintain their distinctiveness from their fellow Spanish exiles. In their case, exile was national, ideological, and cultural: it was a kind of exile within an exile (Capdevila Candell 2009). For them, the aforementioned public/private dichotomy was accentuated by diglossia, which forced a constant self-translation: using Spanish for the public and professional sphere, and Catalan for family and friends; that is, in the affective and colloquial sphere. In their case, too, this distinction intensified their sense of exile, fostering ties to the homeland that proved much more enduring, while also increasing their desire for community cohesion

through their Catalan identity and language.¹³ At the same time, however, it proved to be less problematic and disruptive in terms of the decentring and displacement noted above; in other words, compared to the sense of alienation that a Spanish-speaking Republican might feel upon hearing Mexican Spanish. The general problem that is noted in many first-hand accounts — largely by writers, but also to a much smaller extent by scientists — was the lack of understanding in Mexico of what is referred to as the Catalan ‘differential fact’ within the Spanish reality: that is, the failure to understand the hegemony of Spanish in relation to Catalan (so much so that a good many of the Catalans in exile chose Mexican Spanish rather than Peninsular Spanish).¹⁴ In many cases, this situation made it difficult for Catalans in exile to integrate with the Spanish colony in Mexico. They became double strangers in a strange land, moving through channels that were mostly private and limited to Catalan-speaking circles.

3. Spanish scientists in Latin America: A study of a relevant scientific trajectory

Research has shown that around 50% of the teaching staff in Spanish universities were left unable to teach or conduct research because of exile, loss of freedom (or even loss of life), and the repression of the Franco dictatorship (Claret 2003; Otero Carvajal *et al.* 2006). These figures include lecturers who were dismissed from university chairs or fined for teaching certain concepts dubbed ‘subversive’, such as Darwin’s theory of evolution. In this respect, the victory of Franco brought with it the de facto dismantling of the scientific infrastructure that Spain had developed and established during the Silver Age during the so-called *Años Azules* (the ‘Blue Years’, which refer to the 1940s). Similarly, renewal and modernisation were abruptly interrupted in many scientific fields, and international networks of collaboration and funding (Barona and Lloret Pastor 2000; Sánchez Agustí 2001; Barona 2010), which had been established during the 1920s and 1930s

13. Cultural efforts in defence of Catalan in exile were very important, especially in the face of the harsh repression of the language by the Franco regime. This defence ranges from the publication of many political/cultural periodicals, both journals and newspapers (32 in total), to the creation of Catalan cultural associations, or even the publication of books in Catalan (268 in total, 38% of which in Mexico between 1939 and 1947).

14. This parallelism is clearly seen on several occasions in the *Revista dels Catalans d'Amèrica* ‘American Catalans’ journal’ (1939, 35), when referring to Spanish-Catalan bilingualism: “*Mèxic ens torna a plantejar el problema, però d’una manera més crua, més descarnada*” ‘Mexico raises the problem again, but in a more raw, more brutal way’. The problem was, of course, the relationship between Catalan and Spanish cultures and languages.

with the backing of Spanish institutions, were left in tatters. Moreover, cutting-edge Spanish research projects were simply abandoned, and a veritable brain drain was set in motion. As Barona and Lloret Pastor (2000, 397) put it:

El grupo de científicos que en 1939 se vio abocado al exilio constituía el núcleo fundamental de esa élite que desarrolló el proyecto de modernización científica de la sociedad española en las décadas anteriores [...] Salvo excepciones, la ruptura histórica que representó la guerra civil desmontó los grupos organizados de investigadores y decapitó la actividad científica española.

‘The group of scientists that in 1939 was forced into exile constituted the fundamental kernel of that elite that developed the project of scientific modernization of the Spanish society in the previous decades [...] With few exceptions, the historical rupture that the Civil War represented, dismantled the organized groups of researchers, and decapitated the Spanish scientific activity.’

The vast majority of Spanish scientists in exile first passed through Paris, although they were not permitted to work in France. In the French capital, they set up the Union of Spanish University Professors (UPUEE) (Giral González 1994), the original nucleus of the *Universidad del Exilio* ‘University of exile’, which went on to spread around the world following the Nazi occupation. From Paris, most of the exiled scientists emigrated to Latin America, especially to Mexico – or ‘New Spain’, as they called it. However, the impact of the exiled scientists arriving in Mexico is not only the consequence of their numbers, but also of the high level of their qualifications: more than 300 held university chairs, 500 were doctors, and more than 100 were internationally renowned scientists in various fields (Chemistry, Pharmacy, Physics, Biology, Anthropology, Mathematics, etc.).

In addition, a small number of exiled Spanish scientists initially succeeded in making their way to the UK, where they pursued their careers for a brief period before emigrating permanently to the Americas. This group included figures such as Severo Ochoa, Josep Trueta, and Pere Bosch Gimpera, who I will shortly return to. The issue for all of them – regardless of their respective specialisations – was not only how to rebuild their private and family lives in exile under the highly precarious economic conditions that came with the advent of World War II, but also how to rebuild their scientific careers: how to find work; gain access to labs, infrastructure, resources, and funding; and publish their research findings – in a foreign country and, above all, in another language.

In February 1939, the anthropologist Pere Bosch Gimpera (1891–1974), who had been a professor (since 1916) and Rector of the University of Barcelona (1933–1939), and Minister of Justice in the Catalan Republican government (June

1937 – February 1939), suddenly went into exile for political reasons.¹⁵ After a very brief stay in Perpignan (France), he was one of the lucky few able to secure a place at Oxford University, where he spent the 1939–1940 academic year, until he was forced to emigrate to Latin America (first to Panama and subsequently, for a very brief time, Colombia, before finally settling in Mexico in 1941). In Mexico, he was granted citizenship in 1942, when it became increasingly clear that his exile was going to be prolonged. Eventually, he went on to hold chairs at UNAM, the *Escuela Nacional de Antropología* (ENAH) ‘National School of Anthropology (ENAH)’ and the *Colegio de México* ‘Mexico College’. Thanks to his undisputed international reputation, he would also go on to head the Division of Philosophy and Humanities at UNESCO (1948–1952)¹⁶ and serve as Secretary-General of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES) between 1953 and 1966. Indeed, he was a scientific figure of undisputed prestige not only back in pre-war Barcelona, but also internationally, including in Mexico, where he returned in 1953 after leaving UNESCO, and where he finally retired in 1967 as Professor Emeritus of UNAM, having received numerous honours and distinctions.¹⁷ He is undoubtedly one of the great European prehistorians of the interwar period.

Nevertheless, Bosch Gimpera’s professional career was dramatically interrupted by his exile. He would never again return to Spain (he died in 1974, shortly before Franco, on 20 November 1975). Initially, his research in Spain had focused on the prehistory of the Iberian Peninsula, the cultures of Europe and the western Mediterranean, primitive ethnology, the historical formation of the peoples of Spain, migrations of the Celts, and so on. However, it was certainly not easy to explore these subjects in Mexico, on the other side of the Atlantic. Nevertheless,

15. The personality and career of Pere Bosch Gimpera is extensively documented thanks to several private archives and those of the University of Barcelona, as well as photographs and numerous epistolary correspondence (e.g., the epistolary with his disciple Lluís Pericot, whose legacy is deposited in the *Biblioteca de Catalunya* ‘Library of Catalonia’, or the epistolary with his friend Juan Comas, who was also an anthropologist exiled in Mexico). For more detailed information on Bosch Gimpera, his professional career, and international prestige, see especially Gracia Alonso (2011, 221–240).

16. As Fagen (1973) points out, a significant number of the Spanish Republican exiles left Mexico in the 1950s to work for the UN, UNESCO or the *Organización de Estados Americanos* ‘Organization of American States’. Bosch Gimpera is a prime example of this, as is the Catalan Republican diaspora, which was present in almost all the major international organisations in the second half of the twentieth century.

17. For example, the Fray Bernardino de Sahagún Prize, from the *Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia de México* ‘National Institute of Anthropology and History of Mexico’, in 1972, among other prizes and awards (Díaz-Andreu 2005). See also Comas (1976) and Gracia Alonso (2011).

Ignacio Bernal of Mexico's National Museum of Anthropology noted at the time of Bosch Gimpera's death that:

Creo que México nunca había tenido quien tratara como él temas –para nosotros esotéricos– con tal visión. A los estudiantes mexicanos, por razones históricas y por muchas limitaciones, Don Pedro abrió una puerta grande y horizontes y perspectivas insospechadas. [...] Jamás noté la amargura que pudiera esperarse en un hombre que, ya en la cúspide, lo había abandonado todo y había, si no que volver a empezar, cuando menos que hacerse un nuevo camino en un país nuevo. [...] Por mucho que éste le hubiera acogido con los brazos abiertos, nunca podría tomar el lugar de su Cataluña adorada. (Comas 1976, 77–78)

'I believe that Mexico had never had anyone who treated topics – esoteric for us – with such a vision as he did. To the Mexican students, for historical reasons and due to many limitations, 'Don' Pedro opened a big door and unsuspected horizons and perspectives. [...] I never noticed the bitterness that could be expected in a man who, already at the top, had abandoned everything and had, if not to start over, at least to make a new path in a new country. [...] As much as the latter had welcomed him with open arms, he could never take the place of his beloved Catalonia.'

Against this backdrop, Bosch Gimpera succeeded in immersing himself quickly in the university world and Mexican research in his field, despite being far from his native country and language. More importantly, he understood how to 'discover' a pre-Columbian anthropological reality, remaining unusually alert to Mexican *indigenismo* 'indigenism' and attentive to a country that offered up so many opportunities for anthropological research beyond the Hispanic world in which he had once specialised. His adaptability and his capacity to relate to the prevailing climate in the country – no doubt due to his empathetic nature as well – led him to 'rethink' Spanish colonisation and the official Hispanic discourse that prevailed on the Iberian Peninsula and was reinforced by the Franco regime.

Certainly, this aspect brings us back to reflections on cultural translation, which are even more evident in the case of Bosch Gimpera because of his scientific specialisation. His correspondence contains numerous examples of his need and efforts to translate and self-translate during his years in exile (at first in relation to English, but very soon after, having moved to Latin America, in relation to Spanish).

An initial set of examples that focus on (self-)translation relate to his earliest months in exile and appear in his letters to Carles Pi Sunyer written in Oxford (1939–1949). During this initial stage, Bosch Gimpera not only worked as a professor, gave several lectures, and attended a number of international conferences

in his field of expertise, but also fulfilled the role as a representative of the Presidency of the *Generalitat* — the Catalan government — in exile in the UK, where he was invested with full powers. In this respect, his activities covered a number of aspects. First, it was a cultural activity — he was responsible for various projects that never fully came to fruition because of a lack of financial resources. Second, he was to provide cohesion for the Catalan Republicans in exile in the UK, and work especially to distinguish them from their Spanish counterparts. Third, he was to ‘explain’ the activity of the Second Republic to British institutions (such as the Royal Institute of International Affairs, better known as Chatham House) which, in the turbulent international context that preceded the World War II, feared that they had opened the door to politically subversive Republican and extremist elements. In any event, Bosch Gimpera’s work was essential, and it was carried out largely by means of translation (especially in relation to the second and third points mentioned above). In this last respect, for example, the efforts of the Catalan exiles, with Bosch Gimpera at the forefront, were to “[f]er-se conèixer en els nuclis britànics (polítics, intel·lectuals, acadèmics) més importants; aportar informació escrita rellevant sobre la República, la guerra civil, el paper de Catalunya, el futur polític i territorial de la península ibèrica” ‘[m]ake themselves known in the most important British centres (political, intellectual, academic); provide relevant written information about the Republic, the civil war, the role of Catalonia, the political and territorial future of the Iberian Peninsula’ (Vilanova i Vila-Abadal 1998, 15).

At the time, Bosch Gimpera’s main priority was to explain Catalan political activities during the Second Republic by means of reports and memos that he submitted to the British Foreign Office through his contacts at Chatham House. It was also important for him to, as far as possible, influence English public opinion and to publicise the reality of Catalonia within the general situation of Spain. His main aim was to create distance from the disruptive image of the Spanish Republic in the grip of anarchists and communists which caused so much concern among Western allies at the time — none more so than in a monarchy like the UK.¹⁸ Thus, we find:

18. According to Bosch Gimpera, the opinion of the Spaniards held at Chatham House was very clear: “for Madariaga Chatham House will say that they have agreed that the only two European peoples of the Peninsula were the Basques and the Catalans and that the rest were bloodthirsty Africans” (Vilanova i Vila-Abadal 1998, 80; my translation). In general, Spain was regarded as a country too immature for democracy at that time, one “that has to be educated by a higher international power” (96; my translation).

S'ha fet tot el possible per desfer l'equívoc i suplir la manca d'informació. En les esferes més enterades (Chatham House, per exemple) s'ha aconseguit fer rectificar molts prejudicis. Se'ls ha enviat molts informes i se'ls ha explicat verbalment tot el que es feu en matèria d'ordre públic, administració local, finances, cultura, justícia i règim carcelari, els darrers intents de normalització del règim de la propietat i de pagament del cupó, les dificultats per la derogació dels decrets de col·lectivitzacions, etc.
(Vilanova i Vila-Abadal 1998, 259)

'Everything possible has been done to remove the misunderstanding and make up for the lack of information. In the most informed spheres (Chatham House, for example) many prejudices have been rectified. Many reports have been sent to them and verbal explanations have been given of what is being done in matters of public order, local administration, finance, culture, justice and the prison system, the latest attempts to normalize the property system and *pay'ent* of the coupon, the difficulties arising from the abolition of collectivisation decrees, etc.'

The correspondence to his friend Pi Sunyer, written in Catalan, is peppered with Anglicisms that clearly show Bosch Gimpera's unmistakably rapid 'Britishisation' in his efforts to quickly adapt to the culture of his host country.¹⁹ He makes constant use of English terms (often written in italics) such as "appointment," "rapport," "state agent," "week end," "black out," "xerry party," "lunch," "agreement," "degree," "deputy," "Christmas cards" (or "Xmas cards"), "businessmen," "flu," "el [the] job," "immigration officers," "el seu [his] entourage," "disappointment," "dilapidations," "throwpence," "steward," "swimming pool," and "holy stone." Likewise, there are many English expressions that are Catalanised and perfectly integrated into a highly hybrid discourse, such as, for example, "intensivament" 'intensively', "el [the] service del [of the] pastor," "great neutrals," "les [the] news," "no és massa [it is not very] fair," "això és [this is] workable," "ser del [be of the] team," "Spanish atrocities," "I wonder si [whether]...", "fellows de [of] colleges," "further consideration," "exit permit," "la política de [the politics of] wait and see," "la política d'apeacement [the politics of apeacement]," "elogiar el [to praise the] brave people of Barcelona," "fer un desdèjuni amb [to have a breakfast of] eggs and bacon," "varem produir el [we issued the] certificate," "que al nou

19. At the beginning of this set of letters written in Catalan there are many phrases and idiomatic expressions in Spanish, including "cielo de panza de burro" 'donkey belly sky', referring to the weather in Oxford; "largo me lo fiais" 'long may you trust me'; "las virtudes de la raza" 'the virtues of the race', referring ironically to Hispanism; "Ahora bien" 'However'; "el no va más" 'this is the ultimate'; "la voz de su amo" 'his master's voice'; and "como cambian los tiempos" 'how times change'. In some cases, he is even making fun of them (for instance, "ti pongas como ti pongas," which corresponds to "te pongas como te pongas" 'whether you like it or not'). All these examples are taken from Bosch Gimpera's correspondence, in which they recur multiple times.

home hi trobin [may the new man be found in] peace,” “un petit [a little] trouble,” and “aquí hi ha [here there is] plenty of time.”²⁰ There are also ironical comments that show this deliberate effort to adapt on their part: “Aquí ens teníeu fent d’oxonians” ‘Here you had us playing Oxonians’ (Vilanova i Vila-Abadal 1998, 43), and “comencem a aprendre’ns el ‘Britannia rules the Waves’” ‘we started to learn the “Britannia rules the Waves”’ (47). His efforts to assimilate can also be seen in his comments on Spain that circulated in the UK, such as those on the book entitled *Catalonia Infelix* by E.A. Peers (head of the Hispanic Studies Department at Liverpool University), “which seems to me to be where the information that the English have of Catalonia ends,” as Bosch Gimpera notes in one of his letters (53). In the same vein, his review of Peers’ book, which was published under the title “Spain, the Church and the Others” (1939) in *The Voice of Spain*, spoke of the Church in Spain and, as the author confessed, “it will do a good deal of harm because it yet again stirs up the issue of persecution” by the left-wing Spanish Second Republic” (78).

All of this highlights the extraordinary importance of translation in explaining oneself in a foreign country and dispelling ingrained prejudices among one’s hosts. It also stresses the need for the migrant not only to *know* English, but also to *achieve a native speaker’s mastery* of the language. Bosch Gimpera confesses as much on a host of occasions: “We’ve translated the document that you sent me for UK readers and now Dr. Collier²¹ is tasked with putting it *into suitably Shakespearian English*” (29; my italics); “where we will fail, though, will be in the editing of the English or in the translation. [...] *If we cannot reel in a Catalan fellow who is sufficiently ‘Britishised’ to write proper English, we are lost*” (118–119; my italics).

However, Bosch Gimpera faced major difficulties in explaining the difference (i.e., culturally, ideologically, and politically) between the Catalan Republican exiles and their Spanish counterparts.²² So much so, that at one point he comes to the following conclusion:

20. All these examples come from Bosch Gimpera’s correspondence.

21. Josephine Dorothy Collier, a sympathiser of the Spanish exiles, who played a key role in helping them settle in the UK between 1939 and 1940 (see Vilanova i Vila-Abadal 1998, 29, in note).

22. See, for example, the letter to Pi Sunyer dated Oxford, 27 April 1940: “sempre ens atendran i ens ajudaran personalment i ens admetran a les seves *parties*, però quan els parlem del pervindre de Catalunya no en faran cap cas” ‘they will always serve us and help us personally and admit us to their *parties*, but when we talk to them about the future of Catalonia, they do not pay any attention’ (179; italics in the original).

Ni racial ni històricament es pot dir que no siguem espanyols. Malauradament tenim tots els defectes dels espanyols també. [...] La unitat d'Espanya està mal feta o millor no està feta encara sinó per la força i sense soldar les parts. Però no serà mai possible trencar-la (i no són pocs els catalans capaços de fer-ho per moltes raons) ni ens ho deixarien fer les potències occidentals, França i Anglaterra: França perquè una Catalunya o un Euskadi independent li faria por a les seves pròpies minories catalana i basca, i tant França com Anglaterra perquè s'acaben d'enterar del problema, troben més senzill tractar amb una Espanya que amb tres i ademés els castellans i el paisatge de la meseta els tenen el cor robat encara que quan eren forts els espanyols²³ els haguessin empipat prou. (121-122)

'Neither racially nor historically can it be said that we are not Spanish. Unfortunately, we have all the faults of Spaniards, too. [...] The unity of Spain has been badly done or rather not done at all, except by force and without welding the pieces together. But it will never be possible to break it (and there are few of us Catalans capable of doing it for many reasons), nor would the Western powers, France and England, allow it: France because an independent Catalonia or Euskadi would scare their own Catalan and Basque minorities, and both France and England because they have just found out about the problem, and find it easier to deal with one Spain than with three, and in addition the Castilians and the landscape of the plateau have stolen their hearts even though when Spaniards were strong they pissed them off enough.'

Bosch Gimpera devoted much of the 1940s to writing papers that sought to explain his views on Spain and Spain's relationship with Catalonia: a concern that features prominently in his correspondence with Pi Sunyer and others. Gimpera's capacity for transformation and adaptation, which has been noted above, can also be perceived in the same correspondence with his friend Pi Sunyer. When he wrote again on 15 October 1964, after been settled in Mexico for some time, his correspondence was now entirely free of anglicisms.

Their letters were written mainly in Spanish (not their native language, but the usual one used in their professional field) and they were posted from many places in Latin America (Guatemala, Cuba, Honduras, Mexico, etc.) on the back of trips that Bosch Gimpera made for professional reasons. He wrote to Pericot in Catalan only (the usual language the pair used when they had both been in Barcelona), significantly when he left Mexico for Paris to take up his post with UNESCO (his letter dated 19 October 1948, for example, is written entirely in Catalan, without any Spanish words or phrases). Overall, his correspondence with Pericot is less personal than his correspondence with Pi Sunyer. Also, the letters contain no jokes or ironic expressions at all. Indeed, they are much more

23. In reference to the conflicts between Britain and the Spanish Empire in earlier centuries.

formal as a whole, beginning with the use of the formal third person *Ud.*, and the writers are almost always discussing professional matters of mutual interest to each of them. On many occasions, the correspondence features remarks by Bosch Gimpera on his recent international publications, his access to up-to-date US bibliography (much harder to obtain in Spain), his contributions to international conferences, and so on. In a letter sent from Havana on 9 October 1943, Bosch Gimpera goes on at great length about his enormous interest in Mexican archaeology (Gracia, Fullola, and Vilanova 2002, 233). In this vein, by early 1947, he notes that he is preparing a volume entitled *Prehistory of the New World*.

In addition, through his contact with Mexico (and other Latin American countries), Bosch Gimpera began shifting his perspective on the Spanish conquest of the Americas, the colonial relationship between Spain and Latin America, and even his view of the reality of Spain as a whole (i.e., as one that is linguistically and culturally plural and not homogeneous). This new perspective, which was certainly far removed from the official Francoist discourse of the period, also reflected a move away from the prejudices that had affected his own training in the years leading up to the Spanish Civil War. Thanks to his exile in the Americas and his contact with cultures with very deep indigenous roots, Bosch Gimpera was forced to engage with a process of deep self-reflection. Not only did he develop a new way of looking at the Americas, but he also developed a fresh view of Spain itself: a view ‘from outside’; in other words, from the Latin American periphery (and not just from exile as a *transterrado*). In turn, Bosch Gimpera was spurred on to review the very concepts that he had inherited from the Spanish historical tradition. Therefore, for example, we find the significant following remarks from the same year (22 January):

Cerrando el capítulo americano le diré que me encuentro muy a gusto aquí ya que el país es realmente interesante. Lo mismo los demás países de América y deseo acabar dando la vuelta por ella. En España no se tiene idea de lo que es esto y del problema curioso histórico-antropológico-estratégico que representa. Además, aquí se comprenden mejor muchas cosas de España. (240; my emphasis)

‘To close the American chapter, I will tell you that I feel very comfortable here as the country is really interesting. The same with the other countries in America and I want to end up going around them. *In Spain there is no idea of what this is and the curious historical-anthropological-strategic problem that it represents.* In addition, *many things about Spain are better understood from here.*’

The new vision of both the Americas and Spain, which emerges from reflections based on his experience of Mexico (and Latin America more generally), is something Bosch Gimpera openly acknowledges in the following terms: “*Estoy escribiendo además una serie de artículos y ensayos sobre problemas de interpretación de*

Historia de España,²⁴ *que supongo que serán aún más discutidos y que algún día reuniré en un libro* [Bosch Gimpera 1978]” ‘I am also writing a series of papers and essays on interpretation problems in the History of Spain, which I suppose will be even more contested and which I shall one day compile in a book [Bosch Gimpera 1978]’ (239). Consequently, his exile was also a ‘journey’ of return to Spain on an intellectual (if not actual) level, which was undoubtedly made possible in part because of his personal attributes (his adaptability and his innate empathy), but partly also because of his historical knowledge and anthropological interests. As a crucial element in his ‘journey’ and his ‘review’ of Spanish history and Spain’s pluricultural reality, translation — and also self-translation — stands as a true cornerstone. Viewed in a broad and cultural sense, Bosch Gimpera’s transformation/evolution could not have occurred without translation.

4. Conclusion

This article has analysed the emigration of Spanish Republican exiles for political reasons and the role played by translation and self-translation in these circumstances. It has demonstrated how the ‘common’ language, Spanish, promoted the selection of Mexico as a destination in most cases, after a short stay in the UK or France. Yet this ‘common’ language soon proved to be a double-edged sword due to the strong differences between the Spanish spoken on the Iberian Peninsula and the Spanish spoken in Mexico. This made it difficult for the exiles to integrate and fostered a dichotomy between public and private as a function of linguistic and cultural differences, which in the case of the Catalan Republican exiles also took the form of diglossia between Spanish and Catalan, exacerbated by the differentiation of linguistic registers and cultural asymmetries.

By comparing this false ‘Hispanic community’ with the real one that the Spanish *transterrados* faced in Mexico, the exiles were forced to adopt a *bifocal view* (of a mythical Spain and of a real Mexico that did not correspond to the image they expected of the country). For this very reason, the exiles had to continuously negotiate between their plural identities from the position of exile. The discovery of this ‘similar’ but ‘alien’ reality (i.e., the estrangement and displacement experienced by the *transterrados*) led some of them to reconsider the idea of *Hispanidad* ‘Hispanicity’ and the historical tradition in which they had been trained in Spain: in other words, it fostered an ‘eccentric’ view of the native country from the periphery, and a growing awareness of the colonial relationship that

24. For more information on these articles and essays, of which a great many date from the 1940s, see note 609 in Gracia, Fullola, and Vilanova (2002, 239).

always underpins the connection with the Mexican people, but especially amid the rapid rise of Mexican *indigenismo* ('indigenism') at the time. Bosch Gimpera, by virtue of his personality, profession, and status, provides a highly illustrative case of the issues that have been addressed in the present article in relation to (self-)translation by Spanish scientists in exile after the end of the Spanish Civil War, a (self-)translation that goes well beyond mere linguistic translation, with very important cultural implications.

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