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Translating Positionality

On Post-Colonial Conjunctures and Transversal Understanding

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In my current research on Latin American migrant women working as domestic workers in Berlin and Hamburg, I have noticed an interesting paradox in our conversations. Being a Spanish speaker myself I assumed that we didn't need a translator to communicate. My hastily made assumption began to crack in the moment of our encounter. I remember when I met Carla in Berlin. She was a migrant from Otavalo, a tourism and commercial city in the north of Ecuador. In attempting to explain my interest in the topic of new migration to Germany, I started the conversation by telling her about my own background. I told her that my parents migrated from Andalusia to Germany in 1962 and that I grew up in Germany where my childhood was marred by the experience of racism towards so-called guest workers. This experience was situated in the Fordist Europe of the 1960s and 1970s at a distance from the Europe of the 21st Century, where Spain has become one of the leading European countries in imposing new laws against migration (Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2005). Listening to my story, Carla answered:

"Disculpe, también pasa eso en tu mismo país, si somos de diferente cultura pasa lo mismo, porque a mi me ha pasado. Yo soy

de otra cultura y yo hablaba otro idioma. Mi mamá hablaba otro idioma y yo hablaba el idioma de ella. Entré a la escuela hablando el idioma de mi mamá, entonces en la escuela aprendí a los seis años a hablar español, yo no sabía hablar español, pero no pasa como te digo por diferente pais sino que pasa a veces en el mismo país."

“Sorry, this also happens in your own country, if we are from different cultures, because this has happened to me. I am from a different culture and I used to speak another language. My mother spoke another language and I used to speak her language. I started school speaking my mother’s language, and then in school I learned to speak Spanish when I was six years old, I couldn’t speak Spanish. So, it does not just happen because one is from a different country, it also happens in the same country.”

Carla started to talk about the racism she experienced during her childhood as an "indigena". Her childhood was marked by the experience of forced assimilation under Spanish rules. As her mother tongue, Quichua, was forbidden at school, she could only speak it at home. She emphasised the incompatibility of our different positionalities. Carla subtly focussed on the differences between my story and hers, situated in post-colonial conjunctures and disjunctures.

The presupposed identity between us as Spanish speakers was questioned by the differences in our social position inflected by colonialist legacies, Fordist capitalism and the new axes of Empire. New lines of interdependencies and strategies of global capital accumulation alter this historical and political conjuncture. Profound lines of division due to social inequalities structure interrelated spaces, in which commonalities are expressed and differences experienced. In the micro-spaces of the everyday we are embedded in this historical, political, social and cultural

complexity. If we start with the Spanish language as something held in common, this implies a reduction in the differences that constitute our positionalities. The articulation of individual particularities, reflecting social positionalities, appears as points of departure in a speech act that needs some mediation to establish a communication between them. The mediation or attempt to make oneself understood bearing in mind positionalities, requires in the case of two Spanish speakers not a linguistic or literal translation, but one that acknowledges the cultural context of each person's speech.

It is in this context that the question of "cultural translation" emerges. How do we trace the (un)translatability of social positionalities in encounters based on a presumed common identity expressed, for example, by a common language or gender? How do we read the interruption or gap articulating the social disjuncture in a global conjuncture? How can we unravel moments of *différance* – as a radical differential movement? Could the term "cultural translation" serve as a tool to sketch out the ambivalent character of these encounters occurring within the tension of identity and difference? Following these questions, I will explore the concept of "cultural translation" as a process, in which ambivalent social and cultural positions are negotiated. Thus translation procures understanding at the same time that it points to the potentiality of un-translatability. Following the question of Rada Iveković, my question here is »must the translatability or un-translatability of two terms inevitably be regarded as diametrically opposed? Is there no middle, or *queer* way to approach this dichotomy?« (Iveković 2002, 121)

To limit these questions to a concrete field, I will focus on ethnographic research. First, I will start with Birgit Scharlau's analysis of discourses on "translation" within the work of linguists

and ethnographers on Spanish colonialism. (Scharlau 2004) Through a focus on post-structuralist and post-colonial approaches to translation, I will develop my interest in translation as a tool for creating spaces for "transversal understanding". In the last section, I will introduce projects of militant research that may illustrate the handling of different positions of power and sociality in fieldwork. What this kind of per spective may offer us is a thinking of translation through irritations and irrationalities, thus resisting the attempt to incorporate the "other voice" into our own syntax or script. This approach may hinder the re-iteration of the classical paradigm of the subject-object relationship in field research. How to distribute the means and terms of the production of knowledge should be at the centre of a methodology that introduces "cultural translation" as a method of deconstructing ethnographic work. This is an approach that can be traced back to the first work on translation in the Spanish colonial context, as we will see in the following.

Translation and Colonialism

Postcolonial theory has emphasised the role of translation as a moment of hegemonic incorporation of the "other voice" in the colonial process. It has also shown the potentiality of resistance in the process of translation per se (Bhabha, Spivak, Nirinjana). Translation has been seen as a tool of representation that contributed to an understanding of the "New World" as described in the terms of colonial power. It is this process of translation that Tejaswini Nirinjana (1992) traces in the context of the British Empire in India, where she observes a transfer of Western epistemology through the process of translation. Ultimately, translation becomes an episteme of a Western tradition, a concept, which is based on the idea of an objective representation of reality.

This perception omits at the same time its discursive embeddedness. Translation thus described is not just a linguistic function but a cultural and political tool, used in hegemonic struggle. The shift in the idea of translation as being merely a linguistic tool, to that of translation as an instrument of power, is also reflected in scholarly discourses on "translation". Birgit Scharlau differentiates between several discursive approaches to translation within her research on Spanish colonialism in Latin America.

Translation as a linguistic tool appeared in linguistic and ethnographic texts in the 1930s and 1940s. As an example, Scharlau mentions Robert Ricard's study on the transformation of spiritual and religious ritual in the indigenous population of Mexico in the sixteenth century (La Conquete spirituelle du Mexique, 1933). In this study Ricard emphasised the role of the Catholic Church, "la iglesia novohispana", in the process of hispanisation through the translation of the bible and religious scripts into the native languages. Focusing on the role of the missionaries he shows how they were engaged in reproducing an "authentic copy" of the religious nomenclature in the indigenous language. They studied these languages because of their limited knowledge of Nahuatl and Quichua, producing basic dictionaries and grammar books. This process of standardisation was preceded by the Spanish crown's attempt to standardise Castilian as a national language. While in the colonies Castilian was translated to establish colonial rule, within the Peninsula a process of standardisation of Castilian as the national language was reflected in the first dictionary of Castilian from Nebrija in 1492. The dictionary accompanied the imperial ambitions of the Spanish crown to create a Spanish nation, ruled by one religion, Catholicism, one national identity, Spanish, and one language,

Castilian. Ethnographers in the 1940s and 1950s shifted their view from the Spanish colonisers as translators to the Amerindian population and the role of some as translators.

Scharlau mentions in this context the work by Kubler (1946), Rowe (1957) and Gibson (1959/60), engaged in the impact of the Spanish on the indigenous population. Dealing with the transformation that the Spanish language experienced under colonial rule they examined the role of intermediaries in transferring the legal and administrative matters of the colonial power to their communities. Scharlau highlights Vicente Guillermo Arnaud's (1950) study on the role of translators in the process of discovery, conquest and colonisation in Rio de la Plata. Arnaud studied the role of "interpretes de negros" and "interpretes de idiomas extranjeros" in Rio de la Plata in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the beginning of the nineteenth century. The work of the translators was to mediate between the enslaved population, the Spanish colonisers and the English traders. Arnaud's work in comparison to previous studies threw some light on the role of the interactive encounter between the different communities and the role of translation, focusing on intermediaries as translators between the colonisers and their communities.

In the 1960s and 1970s Scharlau perceives a shift in the studies on translation. Translation disappeared as a reference for describing the process of colonisation in merely linguistic terms or in relation to cultural encounters. Rather, indigenous resistance attracted the interest of scholars engaging in questions of language, politics and power. It is in relation to this approach that the role of the translator as a mediator between his/her own community and the colonisers has been critically called into question. Here, translation is questioned as a tool of communication and discussed in terms of the appropriation of the language of the subaltern under colonial

rule. This perception rejects focusing on the dialogic character of colonialism and emphasises the endeavour of the indigenous population to preserve their languages and cultures. This *anti-colonial turn* in the analysis of the relationship between colonisers and colonised of the 1960s and 1970s, shifted in the 1980s to a *cultural turn*.

The analysis of the use of translation as a cultural phenomenon within the overall strategy of colonisation became essential in ethnography (Taylor 1985, 155). In relation to this *cultural turn* the figure of the translator reappears as one of the axes in the process of acculturation (Scharlau 2004, 102). The discourse on acculturation emerges within the debates around syncretism, focusing our attention particularly on the role of historical and political figures as cultural translators in ethnographic research, tours and political negotiations, focusing on cultural interaction. Such an approach introduced ideas around cultural difference and conflict. Attributing to the task of translation the ability to build bridges between cultures, this approach omitted the **context** of translation, which meant that translation was perceived as a universal, neutral and decontextualised act of communication.

It is in the second half of the 1980s and in the 1990s that this perspective underwent a critical enquiry. This puts questions of equivalence and fidelity in the translation process to one side and focused on the process of *translation per se*. The preoccupations with the concept of "translation" as an analytical tool in cultural theory reveals an epistemological dimension through the work of postcolonial theorists such as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Homi Bhabha and Tejaswini Niranjana. Meanwhile, feminist and Latin American ethnographers such as Ruth Behar (1993) and Mary Louise Pratt (2002) consider the act of translation as an aspect of critical enquiry in ethnographic work. Pratt in particular links the

notion of translation to Fernando Ortiz's concept of transculturation. On the basis of his groundbreaking study on Afro-Cuban culture Fernando Ortiz developed the term "transculturation" in 1947 as opposed to that of "acculturation". In general, he tried to describe through this term the uneven relationship between the colonised, marginalized and oppressed culture and the dominant and hegemonic culture. Complicating concepts emphasising the synthesis of cultures outside a framework of power, transculturation intends to name the radical imbalance of power involved in the encounter between colonisers and the colonised and enslaved population, and later on that between white settlers and the indigenous population. Nonetheless, this perspective focuses on the dialogic aspect of this encounter without ignoring the mechanisms of violence involved in it. In literary studies this approach was developed by Angel Rama in the 1970s. I am using it here in the sense of Mary Louise Pratt and Phyllis Peres. Transculturation emphasises culture as flux at the same time as it points to the dominant and hegemonic framework in which it emerges as a reiteration of the conditions of life, but also as glimpses and shifts of resistance. It is in relation to this notion of transculturation that the project of cultural translation understood as an attempt to create spaces of transversal understanding emerges. Considering the epistemological implications of translation as a process linked to the relationship between power and knowledge production, the *poststructuralist turn* and the *postcolonial turn* in translation theory raise relevant questions for the debate on representation and alterity. Following these lines, I will engage now in the attempt to use translation as a tool of "transversal understanding".

Representation, Différance and Transversal Understanding

How we perceive and interpret the world is not an innocent practice, but rather it depends on social negotiations and hegemonic strategies of representation. Such perception refers to representation as a discursive formation, embedded in the logic of the production of truth. This logic evolves for Michel Foucault within occidental knowledge production on the basis of the creation of dichotomies. This is a dynamic that Judith Butler has also analysed in relation to the discursive production of gender on the basis of a heterosexual matrix. As I have pointed out, the act of translation is not just involved in the transference of literal meaning, rather it carries the engagement with a whole philosophical system of the production of knowledge. It is profoundly engaged in epistemology and thus in the formulation of "universal truth". Translating gender to different linguistic or cultural contexts will hold the acknowledgement of a whole "Weltanschauung" – perception of the world. Gender, which is understood discursively, institutionally and on the level of practices as a universal truth because it is supposed to signify masculinity and femininity, represents a "global common". It is a "global common" that seems not to incorporate local particularities or networks of knowledge. The translation of gender seems not to demand a closer look as it is based on the universal truth of the existence of "two sexes". If we take the example of gender, the translation of this category will follow a heterosexual matrix of assignation, producing binary gender models in societies in which this classification model might not exist, but also omitting other articulations that go beyond the dichotomy of man and woman. "Queering" the translation of gender will demand a transversal understanding of gender, one that goes beyond the dichotomy of man and woman.

Keeping this in mind we may conclude that the process of translation goes hand in hand with the act of reading and interpreting. Reading is not a task merely limited to the written text as poststructuralists like Roland Barthes have suggested. For Gayatri C. Spivak it is a prerequisite for understanding society as:

> "Everyone reads life and the world like a book. Even the so-called 'illiterate'. But especially the 'leaders' of our society, (...): the politicians, the businessmen, the ones who make plans. Without the reading of the world as a book, there is no prediction, no planning, no taxes, no laws, no welfare, no war. Yet these leaders read the world in terms of rationality and averages, as if it were a textbook. The world actually writes itself with the many-levelled, unfixable intricacy and openness of a work of literature. If, through our study of literature, we can ourselves learn and teach others to read the world in the 'proper' risky way, and to act upon that lesson, perhaps we literary people would not forever be such helpless victims." (Spivak 1988, 95)

The ability to read society as a text demands the transfer of one code system into another. This transference does not necessarily imply two different languages, but works with the idea of idioms as different code systems. Translation, as we have seen already in the case of Spanish colonialism, is the tool that enables this transfer. This is the case because translation is not only a medium for realising communication, but also for mirroring the original text on the basis of our horizon of knowledge. This process of reading on the basis of a Gadamer's hermeneutic understanding presumes a moment of identification, in which the original text is inscribed within the setting of meaning available to the translator. To translate is related to the production of coherent meaning. This

creates the risk of simply reverting the original to a copy of itself, reducing the moments of un-translatability in the process of translation and the different social and cultural contexts in which the translation is negotiated, to a merely functional linguistic process. It is against this translation practice that Walter Benjamin wrote his article on the task of the translator, "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers" (1923).

A translation that is guided by the purpose of conveying meaning is for Benjamin a failed translation. Translation as a process of incorporating the voice of difference into that of sameness destroys the potentiality of understanding the other voice in motion, inscribed in a movement of difference. Similarly to a heuristic project, a good translation could be recognised by the impossibility of creating a mirror image of the original. He writes: „There is a matter of showing that in cognition there could be no objectivity, not even a claim to it, if it dealt with images of reality; here it can be demonstrated that no translation would be possible if in its ultimate essence it strove for likeness to the original." (Benjamin 1999, 73)

Benjamin's statement has been taken by some poststructuralist readings of translation as a starting point to question the theory of the reproduction of the original, formulated by Wittgenstein through his concept of „Abbildtheorie" (Wittgenstein 1995). This theory presupposes the identical reflection of reality through language, articulated in translation through the aim of giving a literal translation of the original. Following Benjamin, Derrida (1981) takes up this argument and develops it further, discussing translation as flux, as a transitory movement. It is in the movement between the two poles of the translation that an over-determination, a supplement, is produced. This supplement is composed by the dynamic of the two poles and by the dispersion in

the transference from one to the other. It is this movement of "différance" that goes beyond identity and difference, creating an undefined more, a supplement, which points towards a deconstructing of the premises on which the translation is culturally based. This supplement, which is not inscribed in a recognisable or identical language, cannot be made intelligible just through the creation of a third term as: » (...); the supplement is neither a plus nor a minus, neither an outside nor the complement of an inside, neither accident nor essence« (Derrida 1981, 43). Translation leaves here the space of a cultural dichotomised model of culture and contact. Rather it points to transgression. Such understanding drives us to define translation in methodological terms, focusing on questions of method, of how to read the unsaid or the irritations in a cultural or social text. Therefore, this project of translation is engaged in the correlative and differing encounter of different interfaces of idioms, ways of speaking or understanding the world.

Thus, the question of translation implies working around and through gaps, irritations and irrationalities, as the task of the translator starts where the limits of intelligibility are apparent, as Spivak (1992) suggests. For Spivak, translation is a way of getting nearer to the limits of our own identity. This captures the persuasive character of translation as: »One of the ways to get around the confines of one's identity as one who produces expository prose is to work at someone else's title, as one works with a language that belongs to many others. This, after all, is one of the seductions of translating. It is a *simple miming* of the responsibility to the trace of the other in the self.« (Spivak 1992, 177)

Ultimately, a "true translation" is for Benjamin and Spivak one that does not copy the original text or voice. Rather as Benjamin tells

us: „A real translation is transparent; it does not cover the original, does not block its light, but allows the pure language, as though reinforced by its own medium, to shine upon the original all the more fully. This may be achieved, above all, by a literal rendering of the syntax which proves words rather than sentences to be the primary element of the translator. For if the sentence is the wall before the language of the original, literalness is the arcade." (Benjamin 1999, 79)

Spivak, in reference to Benjamin, regards the process of translation in terms of rhetoric, "Wörtlichkeit" (words), privileging the context of the translation, "die Arkade" (arcade), over that of syntax, "der Satz" (sentence), which as Benjamin notes represents the wall, the barrier that hinders the fluidity inherent in the task of translating. A translation, for Benjamin and Spivak, that captures the traces of the other in oneself by working "around the confines" of the context in which these articulations are taking place, is engaged in a creative process of understanding the sensual and intimate side of the language. A good translation will then be a translation that works through the tension of difference and identity and respects, as Benjamin suggested, the individuality and originality of the presence of the other voice. The translator needs to be a close reader, working through the intimate relationship between her/him and the text. The aim is to enable the love between the original and its shadow, a love that permits the dissolution between the knowledge context of the translator and the text or the other voice. The task of translation is thus overwhelmed by the ambivalence created through the intimate moment of opening up the dimension of rhetoric. The translator will not focus on what has been said, but how and where it has been said. The translation will engage with the affective, cognitive and contextual levels of the articulation. Focusing on the level of

rhetoric involves working between and through the silence between the words, to perceive how different logics are working together or questioning themselves.

Eventually, this task of translating is not engaged in the outcome of the translation itself, but in the process of communicating. Language is then perceived as composed not only of signs, but also of gaps, of silence that mobilises dissemination (Derrida 1991). This kind of dissemination cannot be converted into the dominant logic of the text as this rhetorical move undermines it (Spivak 1992,178). Questioning the identical relationship between rhetoric and logic, this movement deconstructs the contingency of the epistemological order, showing the possibility of randomness, non-equivalence and coincidence (Spivak 1992, 184/185). It is in the tension between logic and rhetoric that an approach to translation is created, in which the context of the different layers in the text can be revealed. Considering that there are moments of non-communication and an understanding beyond the desire of recognising ourselves in the other voice, this approach to translation links to questions of postcolonial feminist methodology and epistemology. This leaves us with the question of how to spell out heteroglossia in ethnographic work with an eye to the means and terms of knowledge production.

Post-Colonial and Feminist Methodology Meet Militant Research

The approach of "cultural translation" as a method to unleash spaces of transversal understanding leads us to the debates in feminist and post-colonial methodology in the 1980s and 1990s. In feminist epistemology the subject-object relationship in field research was critically questioned (Hill Collins 1990, Haraway 1991). In particular, feminist epistemology has discussed the

asymmetrical relationship between researcher and participant, thinking through participatory methodology. Questioning the position of objectivity, feminist epistemology has explored the situatedness of the production of knowledge. Post-colonial epistemology has questioned the discursive construction of the other as "native informant" as fundamental for the constitution of a hegemonic self, authorised through academic knowledge to represent the silenced, marginalized or subaltern voice (Spivak 1988). Questions of authenticity and authoritativeness have been critically reviewed, situating the production of knowledge within a post-colonial and gender productive framework. Following this tradition of contested knowledge and linking to participatory action research in the 1970s and 1980s (Mies), projects of militant research convert these paradigms within the context of social protest and mobilisation. This reminds us also of the groups of "concientización" and "capacitación feminista" in Latin America, engaged in instigating political consciousness about social inequalities and providing tools for collective organisation within which new forms of the production of knowledge through forums of debates and communication evolved. These new methods are influenced by post-modern debates on the production of knowledge, by new ways of explaining exchange, dependencies and interrelations beyond binary schemes. Aiming for a project engaged in participatory militant research, they connect with new notions of understanding the social as mobility, knowledge production, bodies, affective networks and difference.

Precarias a la Deriva, in particular, introduce a way of creating a continuum between research action and intervention in their militant research on women's precariousness. Considering the militant survey one without researchers and researched, they dissolve the asymmetrical relationship between researchers and

researched (2004). This methodology was accompanied by the method of the drift, strolling around in the city with the aim of creating spaces of communication and intervention. Other political groups, such as the Argentine collective Situaciones, are engaged in metropolitan surveys and militant research, refusing to be co-opted by the dominant factories of the production of knowledge, the universities, using at the same time methods like life stories, narrative interviews and diaries to circumscribe the itineraries of encounters, points of departures, meeting and dissolution in their everyday and the spaces they inhabit. Relating to these streams of thought, they have developed notions of common intelligence, collective subjectivity and strategies of intervention as well as autonomous networks of knowledge production (Mala 2004).

Even though these political projects situate themselves outside the academic production of knowledge, they refer to academic debates. A process of translation between academic and militant knowledge or vice versa is at stake here. At the same time, the moments of negotiation of different social positionalities, voices and localities demand the act of translating positionalities following the lines of transversal understanding I have sketched out. This approach might facilitate the spelling out of "différance" without uniting this movement under the umbrella of one single identity or a "common global", which could be gender. It will imply not abandoning the idea of a common name like woman, but creating a space for debating, negotiating and struggling along different lines of experiencing femininity, involving different incorporations of it. This could be related to a system of production, in which gender is produced and used, but this relationship does not imply a literal translation of the signifier in use on the level of empirical embodiments. The articulations of gender could be then perceived as varied and not identical with the attributed binary system of

man and woman. Whilst these articulations are taking place in the tension of this epistemological framework, they are surpassed on the methodological level of experience and broken narratives.

Translating Representation

Taking these ideas from the standpoint of somebody sitting in the factory of the production of knowledge, I approach cultural translation as a method of reading the moments of the un-translatability of existence within the normative framework of translatability. It is a strategy to diffuse the relationship between researchers and participants, but also between the institutionalised and subaltern production of knowledge. The project of translation is an ambivalent project: even as it promises the possibility of transmission, it is fundamentally based on the impossibility of it. This is a context that is marked by the *aporia* that binds and pushes apart the geo-political situatedness of our positionalities. Positionalities that are bound together through the global logic of capitalist production and accumulation as well as the legacies of colonialism and the social, political and cultural impact of sexual, gender and migration control regimes. It is in the coming together of these different social lines that the practice of translation as a form of negotiating positionalities takes place. If we consider "translation" as Rada Iveković suggests a "condition as such – not that of a place, but that of a primordial move" (Iveković 2002, 124), we are permanently engaged in translation as a process of communication. Translation as a movement involves a constant transformation of meaning. As such we find ourselves in permanent translation. So, as the above example of my conversation with Carla shows, the act of translation does not necessarily imply the translation from one language to another.

Rather it delineates a process of (un)communication, in which both sides struggle for meaning and authority.

In my attempt to transform the authority of writing under the conditions of the academic production of knowledge, I refer to feminist ethnographers like Ruth Behar. In her book “Translated Woman. Crossing the Borders with Esperanza's Story”, Behar translated the story of an indigenous Mexican woman Esperanza. Esperanza agreed to contribute to Behar’s research having in mind her own project of crossing the Mexican-US border. Both women contributed to each other’s projects during their journey. Behar as an ethnographer becomes a translator in a triple sense, as the linguistic translator of the story; as the epistemological translator of a life story of a person marginalized and silenced by the West; and as a translator interested in the universal ethical “question of whether feminism translates across borders” (Behar 1993, 276). These different positionalities of the researcher in the research, even though they are neatly spelled out, delineates an ethnographic approach that can reflect upon the material condition of the production of knowledge, but may not dissolve the aporia in this encounter. Then as Behar notes “any ethnographic representation (...) inevitably includes a self-representation. Even more subtly, the act of representing ‘almost always involves violence of some sort to the subject of representation’, using as it must some degree of reduction, decontextualization, and miniaturization.” (Behar 1993, 271). Centring Esperanza’s story in her book, by recording it as a testimony, does not dilute the hierarchical system in which this representation is published. In the second part of the book Ruth Behar’s theoretical reflections are the focus, not her life story. This produces the effect of theory-experience, one related to the Western academic and the other to the Mexican campesina. So the questions which become pertinent are: What process of translation

took place in this representation and does it reflect an aporia that is tied to the uneven development of capital accumulation and the commodification of knowledge in the West and other parts of the world, in the case of Behar the rural Mexican border region and the United States?

Behar confronts this situation by stating that the problem of ethnographic representation is inherently paradoxical. This is, as she quotes Said, “a process by which each of us confronts our respective inability to comprehend the experience of others even as we recognise the absolute necessity of continuing the effort to do so.” (Said quoted in Behar 1993, 355) Nonetheless, we should try to create a space, in which the process of representation can be shifted at its limits. It is this deconstructive move that might open up the space for ways of thinking and representation beyond the logic of identity and difference: a representation in translation.

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