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Luisa Capetillo in translation: Notas para un testimonio

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Abstract

The article is a theoretical testimonio of my experience as a translator of Luisa Capetillo (1879-1922), pioneering feminist, anarchist, union organizer, activist, and espiritista. Translating *Mi opinión sobre las libertades, derechos y deberes de la mujer* provoked many questions about the nature of translation and gender: What happens when a male author translates a female author? Do you simply put the female author in the male role, and vice versa so that everyone involved ends up cross-dressing, so to speak? Does language become a father tongue instead? Is there a way that translation can be seen in a less adversarial, predatory or suspicious light that still respects gender, sexual, and racial difference? What are the political implications of translating Luisa Capetillo into English, since in her time and to this day Puerto Rico is a colonial possession of the U.S.? The article offers a tentative model of gender-sensitive translation based on Gemma Corradi-Fiumaras philosophy of listening and the ethical-erotic mechanisms of feminist self-representation as they apply to Capetillo and her Spiritist beliefs.

Keywords

philosophy of listening, gendered translation, anarchism,
visibility of translator, theories of translation

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