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Love Yourself, *Maricón*:
The Gay Man's Guide to Psycho-Emotional Success

(a translation of excerpts from *Quiérete mucho, maricón:*
Manual de éxito psicoemocional para hombres homosexuales by Gabriel J. Martín)

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Translator's Foreword

Introduction

I welcome all who, by the very nature of the title of this work, come seeking psychological and emotional guidance and find themselves with enough bravery to open the cover. Whether what drew your attention, dear reader, happened to be the descriptive subtitle of this book or the rather shocking or confusing title (the former applying should you happen to speak a bit of Spanish), it is my hope that the words "Translated by" do not frighten you away. As the late Italo Calvino once said, "Without translation, I would be limited to the borders of my own country. The translator is my most important ally. He introduces me to the world" (MacShane, 1983). In much the same way, the purpose of this translation of the original work *Quiérete mucho, maricón* is, first and foremost, to allow the English-speaking world insight into the study of gay affirmative psychology as interpreted by Gabriel J. Martín, but also to open the figurative harbors of the mind to the differences and similarities that gay men can face all over the world.

As one may expect, the adaptation of a book that is both scientific and cultural in nature, while also containing all the unique slang and personality that the gay community holds no matter the country, is not without its own set of challenges. After all, if our heteronormative counterparts sometimes struggle to understand LGBTQ+ terminology while speaking the same language, what kind of difficulties might be present when going from standard peninsular Spanish to American English? That is not to say that I, for a single moment while translating the first three chapters of this work, underestimate the reader's intelligence and ability to comprehend cross-cultural ideas. Rather, I take opportunities to preserve the author's original

intent and cultural sphere all while curating a similarly enjoyable experience for English-speaking readers.

Within the following pages, you will find a summary of the difficulties, linguistic and otherwise, that I faced, and the strategies that I employed in response. Thus, it serves to afford the reader greater understanding should certain passages provoke questions and to support the integrity and authority of this adaptation. While my translation and resulting foreword are academic in nature, destined as a master's degree thesis under the guidance of Professor Luis A. García Nevares, they never stop considering how the average reader, no matter their sexuality, would perceive and benefit from this translated work. Without further ado, let's delve in.

Problems (Sense and Sensibility)

The first set of linguistic problems that I faced when translating a book about the psychology of gay men was, effectively, the differences in LGBTQ+ terminology and its accepted usage between English and Spanish. As is the case with many modern and scientific terms, it cannot be denied that the English language has influenced concepts used in other cultures; however, it also becomes apparent that our terminology, as used here in the United States, can oftentimes quickly evolve. Terms that were once commonly accepted become outdated or even pejorative, and older, offensive jargon may enter mainstream usage and be reclaimed by communities. None of these processes are exclusive to the English language, of course, but it cannot be stated that the same process is guaranteed to affect the same word in a similar way across languages.

One such word that can cause a variety of issues is "homosexual," spelled the same in both Spanish and English. In fact, the word is present on the very cover of the Spanish book, in

which Martín addresses his guide to *hombres homosexuales* — a term I took the liberty to translate as "Gay Man" in my own adaptation of the subtitle. However, there are a myriad of instances in which I preserve the word "homosexual" in the English text; so, why this inconsistency? In English, "homosexual" has adopted a slightly negative connotation for certain speakers: the American Psychological Association has published that "The word *homosexual* has several problems of designation. First, it may perpetuate negative stereotypes because of its historical associations with pathology and criminal behavior" (Concerns, 1991). Even the government of Portland, Oregon addresses the term in a "Terms to Avoid" list, further explaining that "Because of the clinical history of the word […], it is aggressively used by anti-LGBTQ extremists to suggest that people attracted to the same sex are somehow diseased or psychologically/emotionally disordered" (Caselton, 2019). Therefore, we can observe a trend reaching as far back as at least the 1990s favoring other terms over "homosexual" due to its pathological or criminal associations.

However, it is precisely due to this clinical association that the term becomes acceptable in the scope of this work. Martín initially clarifies that his clients and subsequent intended audience of *Quiérete mucho, maricón* are homosexual men. Due to his work as a psychologist, Martín guides men who deal with the effects of homosexuality on themselves and their lives; his work, while written in a casual tone, deals with many complex topics that can border on being entirely clinical or scientific in nature. In preserving the cognate term in certain instances in English, the reader is seated squarely in this professional context. The use of "homosexual" in English serves as a reminder of Martín's psychological authority, while his relaxed and sarcastic tone softens any clinical aftertastes. If this were not enough justification, there remains the fact

that neither "*homosexual*" nor "*homosexualidad*" in Spanish have adopted this disparaging connotation. Whether this may change in the future, one cannot be certain; however, for the time being, it remains a perfectly acceptable term and one that I employ given the graces of the context in which the readers find themselves.

Along this same vein of thought concerning terms and expressions that are common among the LGBTQ communities in either culture, the Spanish to English translator can face a variety of situations that require a critical approach. I should assert that many of the linguistic decisions that I have made concerning this work were taken from the perspective of bringing the culture of origin, namely gay culture in Spain, and making it ever so slightly accessible to the American reader, whether gay, straight, or anywhere in between (if we happen to consider sexuality as a binary, how passé!). In fact, Dr. García Cruz, a straight urologist, during his collaborations with Martín mentions how he recommends his works to his patients, also mainly straight, because his explanations do not only apply to gay men; they are useful to everyone (García Cruz, 2023). Therefore, there is a choice to be made when it comes to these terms and their popular variants in the respective target culture: should I preserve the term as it is used in Spanish or choose the closest equivalent in English? Should I presume that the book's audience has an intimate understanding of the difference between sexual and romantic orientation or that they can rapidly name off every initial of the LGBTQIA+ abbreviation?

As always, my objective is to respect the intelligence of the reader, but also to not assume that everyone who approaches this translated version will have had the same lived experiences. After all, this book very well could be someone's introduction to gay affirmative psychology, or perhaps a work chosen by a young, struggling queer person who feels confused about their own

sexuality, without mentioning all the various expressions and orientations that exist. It is for this reason that I chose to utilize the most common and widespread terminology in the United States presently to ensure comprehensibility for the greatest number of readers. Where this is not possible, explanations in English within footnotes suffice for concepts that would otherwise not be understood.

Within the first few pages of Martín's introduction and explanation on how he set foot on the path to gay psychology, he brings up the concept of *orientación sexoafectiva*. At first glance, it may seem to represent a rather obscure psychological concept concerning emotional attachments, but in reality, and as the University of Talca, Chile, states in their Guide to Diversity: *orientación sexoafectiva* is the "physical, romantic, affective, and/or sexual attraction of one person towards people of a different gender to their own, or toward the same gender, or more than one gender or gender identity, as well as the capacity to maintain intimate and/or sexual relationships with said people[1]" (Universidad de Talca, 2021). Therefore, we can see that the term itself is but an all-encompassing way to compactly explain what we English speakers refer to as sexual and romantic (affectional) orientation. Personally, I find it rather convenient that Spanish can express the varying aspects that exist within the sphere of attraction, where English must rely on a separate distinction for the two terms. Perhaps such a linguistic compound is in the cards for English-speaking psychologists in the near future.

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[1] Translation Stallings

There are also many other examples that highlight the small but significant differences between gay cultures. In Spain, the most common abbreviation to refer succinctly to the "gay" community as a whole is LGBTI, standing for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex respectively. This abbreviation also seems to be the most common for European and International organizations, being found on the websites of the UN Refugee Agency, the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, and the Council of Europe. For all intents and purposes, I see nothing wrong with using this abbreviation across languages and cultures, as it includes and recognizes the connection that those who are intersex may have with communities traditionally marginalized for their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. However, having come of age and continuing to live every day as a gay man in American society, it is without question that the most common abbreviation on this side of the pond is LGBTQ, keeping the first four letters of the previous abbreviation and adding a Q for queer or questioning, as some would claim.

Unfortunately, I view this option as an imperfect solution, given that it does not specifically include the "I" that represents those who are intersex: an essential part of the community considering that the very author of this work is intersex. Yet, to achieve this, the next most common abbreviation for the community would have been LGBTQIA+, and while this is generally the most "inclusive" form thus far, for some, it may cause more confusion than elucidation. There still seems to be no clear consensus on whether the A stands for "asexual" or "ally," and the many variations that exist have not yet become standardized across organizations and rights groups. Thus, for simplicity's sake, I believe that LGBTQ is the most appropriate translation for the audience.

As anyone who either belongs to or is familiar with a particular community will know, these tend to have their own forms of humor and jokes that may have arisen from reclaimed words originally intended to harm members of said community. At the same time, anyone familiar with two or more languages and cultures will know exactly how difficult it can be to transmit the same humorous message across linguistic barriers. What one culture finds amusing can provoke confused and incredulous stares from another, and translators must frequently deal with this exact issue when they are faced with humor in a text. Puns and turns of phrase that hold significance in the source language can be entirely incomprehensible when translated directly and, oftentimes, a relative equivalent may not exist in the cultural experience of the target community. Such is the case with the concept of "*plumas*" or feathers in reference to gay men in some Spanish-speaking countries. To claim that a gay man has lots of "feathers" can allude to him having very effeminate characteristics and mannerisms, sometimes in a pejorative way when used by those with ill intentions. While the concept is easily imaginable once explained in English, Martín is able to use this one word masterfully to include a pun in his discussion about the presence of homosexuality in nature – namely, among avians. Respecting this same context, it would be difficult to translate his direct passage and preserve the same joke that he implies in his footnotes. That being said, the presence of the footnote allows the translator to take liberties and explain the cultural joke to the audience should their curiosity so require. Naturally, there is a pun one could make in English concerning woodpeckers and gay men, but it would be a tad more vulgar than the Spanish reference and lose the original meaning of effeminacy. In this case, it seemed more logical to explain the joke at the expense of possibly losing the more subtle humorous quality.

On one final and brief note concerning "gay" terminology between languages, I find it particularly important to highlight the current social acceptability of the word "transsexual" in the Spanish-speaking world: a word that has become rather taboo in most social contexts in the United States. As previously discussed with the word "homosexual," this word has undergone much the same process in the two cultures. Whereas transsexual very well was an appropriate term in previous decades to refer to someone whose gender identity did not align with their biological sexual characteristics, this term has all but been replaced by "transgender" except in perhaps strictly medical concepts and has thus taken on a slightly pejorative connotation.

On the other hand, transsexual continues to be used to refer to members of said community in Spanish without the same negative connotation in English. This is not to say that the two terms refer to strictly the same concepts in either language, although they are closely related. As the Real Academia Española's dictionary states: transsexual, "2. Adj. said of a person, who feels of the opposite sex and adopts their dress and behaviors" and "3. Adj. said of a person, who through hormone treatment and surgical intervention acquires the sexual characteristics of the opposite sex[2]." The Spanish language authority's entry on transgender (added in 2021 with update 23.5) is "1. Adj. Said of a person, who does not identify with their anatomical sex" (Real Academia Española, n.d.). As you can see, there does exist a subtle difference between the two: while a person who is transgender is identified by their feelings of personal identification not aligning with their anatomical sex, someone who would be defined as transsexual would be understood to have taken either medical or social steps to present as a

[2] Translation Stallings

member of the opposite sex. In this sense, English speakers tend to restrict transsexual to its strictest medical sense or avoid its use all together, opting for transgender as a safe alternative, which also avoids assuming whether a transgender person has undergone surgeries during their transition – an understandably delicate topic for many community members.

While Spanish speakers continue to use *transexual* as a way to refer to said individuals, the RAE's inclusion of transgender in its dictionary can be taken as an indication that the word is gaining traction among speakers. Again I ask, could the same social connotational shift occur in Spanish-speaking countries? Would it be due to the influence from English-speaking countries? Would Martín, in 2023, opt for writing *transgénero* in his book instead of *transexual*? Does this change in connotation occur specifically with words like homosexual and transsexual due to the base word "sex" in the term, contributing to its taboo-like nature? While some of these questions border on the philosophical, they may present as ports of entry for how languages may continue to change in the future.

Impossibilities

As you can see, there are many questions that emerge while cross-analyzing the cultural and linguistic circumstances surrounding two countries. Simply finding the appropriate equivalent for a given term can be the source of a headache! Yet, what is there to do when an equivalent *does not* exist, or perhaps a word is not translated at all by choice of the translator? There can be many reasons for such situations, and they may range from specific cultural inventions, traditions, or cuisines that have no established presence or awareness in the target culture to words that tend to be easily identifiable with a certain language. In preserving such words from

the original text, a translator plays an active role in figuratively moving the reader back and forth between their own cultural sphere and the next; this strategy in translating is referred to as foreignization of the text, and its opposite concept is the aptly named domestication. For the intents and purposes of my translation, and dare I say for most translations, I find that foreignization offers ample opportunities for two very important things: preservation and education.

It is no secret to translators that most U.S. readers are not accustomed to reading works from other cultures that have been translated into English. In fact, "only about 3% of all books published in the United States are works in translation" (Diment, 2019). Diment, who works in the Translations Department at ALTA Language Services, goes on to explain that "getting a US editor to stake their reputation on a foreign language book is notoriously difficult" and "On one end, US publishers cannot evaluate foreign language books without linguistic and cultural context, on the other, European publishers cannot market successfully without an understanding of the US market." Due to these circumstances, English-speaking Americans have a certain privilege in that we tend to read about our own culture and in our own language, rarely faced with the necessity to leave our cultural sphere, or perhaps bubble, unless we specifically choose to do so. Therefore, while reading a foreignized text may be a privilege that one only seeks out should they have the desire to, such a work represents something much more important than simply words on a page. It is the direct representing, sharing, and imparting of cultural knowledge to another person who is external to those experiences. The culture is preserved and memorialized by the very work, and the reader, in being forcibly yanked from their linguistic comfort zone, is enlightened on the everyday reality of others. For me, this exchange, while

sometimes unequal, is the heart and soul of translation. Thus, I sought to preserve ever so slightly the author's culture in the translation as he provides for learning opportunities.

The subjects covered in the translated chapters are not unique to one culture in particular: gay psychology is apt to study and seek to explain common trends in homosexuality worldwide. For example, the evidence and scientific studies that Martín references in defense of homosexuality in nature are not directly tied to his native culture in any discernable way, allowing this text to effectively transfer over without cultural interference, and thus, without many opportunities for bringing the foreign culture to a forefront. However, a major goal of this translation is to present English-speaking readers with a slightly different perspective on not only this form of gay psychology, but also another country's language and culture. I reconcile these facts by preserving certain terms in Spanish even in the translation, some so remarkably peninsular that one cannot help but be squarely seated in Spain. Some of said words include *chiringuito* and *tortilla de patata* – two concepts directly tied with Spanish culture and cuisine and not easily translated – and others like *chaval, sí,* and, perhaps most importantly, *maricón*.

The decision to keep *maricón* in Spanish was, in fact, a difficult one to make. After all, for a Spanish-speaker, this word evokes a unique experience for many: One could feel shocked at the profanity, amused by the directness, or perhaps even afraid if the word had been used negatively against them in the past. Yet, for the average English speaker, the word does none of that, while the direct translation, "faggot," does it all. So, what possible justification could there be for leaving this word in Spanish in the title and depriving readers of that initial impression?

For one, I seek to acknowledge the fact that Americans are not all monolingual English-speakers. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2019, some 41.7 million people in the U.S. spoke Spanish or a Spanish Creole in their home (Dietrich & Hernandez, 2022). Many news articles have gone into detail on how the United States is now considered the country with the second-highest number of Spanish speakers, losing first place only to Mexico. While it is true that, in maintaining certain cultural aspects and words in Spanish, I bring the reader closer to the culture of origin, I feel as though I am also bringing them closer to a part of their own culture at the same time. Nowadays, it is impossible to define U.S. culture without acknowledging the impact and influence that Spanish history, culture, and the Spanish language have exerted on it. Therefore, not only does keeping "*maricón*" throughout the work and, most importantly, on the cover of the book show other Spanish speakers that the work is related in *some* way to their own culture, but it also grabs the attention of English speakers by presenting a concept that is both foreign and familiar.

Secondly, and this is a point that Martín himself also brings up at the beginning of his book, there is the question of blatantly including profanity on the cover of his work: a work that, for all intents and purposes, is also a product meant to sell. It truly begs the question of if certain markets and consumers are able and willing to look past the shock value of the word and identify its value as literature. That is not to say that the shock value does not add something to the book's appeal, but such tactics could be seen as too risky for publishers or retailers. In fact, when *Quiérete mucho, maricón* was brought over to Mexican audiences, the word *maricón* was removed, or perhaps more aptly worded, censored from the title and copies in Mexico are sold under the name *Quiérete mucho*. While I personally believe that there are very few cases in

which censorship is an acceptable practice, one must consider such questions when writing or translating a book meant for sale to the public. Would such a word limit the results in search engines? Do bookstores have qualms against openly displaying profane titles? After all, the words “damn” or “hell” on a cover page hardly have the same impact and connotation that “faggot” would. By maintaining the word “*maricón*” on the cover, I avoid the initial gut reaction that some may have to the English equivalent and any of the negative feedback which may result.

Finally, and on par with the reasoning and logic behind preserving other words in Spanish throughout the translation, keeping *maricón* maintains a bit of the connection that the original title of the work has with Martín’s sign-off to his readership. He explains that he ends each and every one of his entries with the key phrase that also serves as the title of the book, and *maricón,* in this sense, serves as a term of solidarity among a community that is all too frequently subject to hatred and discrimination. The word itself, such as faggot or queer in English, is reclaimed in order to empower the very men who were once on the receiving end of such slurs and degradation. While the non-Spanish speaker will be forced to muddle through the confusion for the first couple of pages, I do provide a translation for the term once Martín begins to discuss in depth his reason for using it. However, at least for a brief moment, the translator influences what knowledge the reader is privy to and what impression they may have.

Duly Noted

While it can be all too easy for the translator to lose themselves in the minutiae of debating the translation for individual words and linguistic challenges, these problems do not exist within a

vacuum. As I have briefly touched on while explaining my reasoning behind my approach for certain words, there are many extralinguistic factors at play when it comes to translation. These may vary from textual and spatial limitations to structures and characteristics of the text that the original author includes. The translator must sometimes analyze and decide what aspects are actually necessary and contribute to the translation audience's greater understanding and what may simply cause confusion, as they are not the audience that the author originally intended. Additionally, the use of direct quotations and concepts originally from sources written in either English, Spanish, or another language entirely can require extensive research in order to find versions that may have already been translated and available for free use. To begin, let us address the additions and deletions, typically in the form of the author's footnotes, that were necessary due to the important change in audience.

At various moments in the chapters, Martín offers his audience tidbits of information in the form of footnotes or parentheticals with the intention of clarifying or explaining additional details. While the vast majority of these inserts are quite useful and applicable to the reader no matter their culture of origin, there are certainly a few that are not so easily integrated into the new text. This can often be a difficult distinction to make for a translator who, on the one hand, wishes to respect and preserve the author's original intent and writing, but on the other, recognizes that the inclusion of such details could prove mind-boggling to the reader and, consequently, remove them from their immersion within the text. This, even more so than the removal of the original notes, can be detrimental to the experience that the reader is intended to have and be an injustice to the author's original work, thus justifying the removal of the footnotes.

The first instance in which this becomes applicable is, in fact, Martín's very first footnote in the book, which he links back to the word *gais* in the text. Curiously, Spanish happens to share a relatively similar orthography rule with English when it comes to plurals for words ending in -y. While it is not a hard and fast rule that applies to every word, in general, the plural for a noun that ends in -y will remove the final letter and replace the ending with -ies, as is the case with "story" and "stories" or "country" and "countries." In the same vein, a small group of nouns that end in -y in Spanish, frequently loanwords that have been adapted to Spanish orthography rules, form their plurals by turning the -y into an -i- and adding an -s to the end of the word (FundéuRAE, 2023). We see evidence of this with words like *espray-espráis, jersey-jerséis,* and *gay-gais*; however, these spelling changes as they apply to the plural of *gay* in Spanish is not always used in casual contexts. Native Spanish speakers frequently employ the spelling of *gays* on social media platforms and even in academic journal articles, as seen in "Los gays en México: la fundación, la ampliación, la consolidación del ghetto" written by Carlos Monsiváis (2002) and published by the Center for Gender Studies and Research of UNAM. Thus, there can be a great deal of variation of the spelling of the term, and some Spanish speakers may not even realize that the preferred spelling of the plural according to the RAE is written *gais*. All this to arrive at the conclusion that, although this information may prove helpful and informative for a Spanish speaker, it ends up being superfluous and unnecessary for an English speaker's comprehension of the text.

This one example is far from the only instance in which text is eliminated or compensated for due to cultural changes among audiences. It is often not perfect linguistic knowledge that makes a translator; after all, we have a plethora of tools and resources at our

disposal to fill in the gaps in our knowledge. Very few of us may be fully bilingual since childhood, and even then, bilinguals will have a more dominant language with which they feel more comfortable. According to Colin Baker, “A bilingual is not two monolinguals inside a single person. Bilinguals rarely achieve the same level of proficiency in both their languages as monolinguals. Most adult bilinguals have one dominant language which can change according to circumstances” (2006). However, perhaps what is even more important sometimes than a translator’s linguistic knowledge is the cultural and thematic knowledge that one aspires to attain. The key to a good translation is to understand the target audience, their needs, and their current knowledge and to use that understanding to shape the translation in order to fulfill those needs. This tends to be very difficult if not impossible for someone who does not possess a wide breadth of cultural competencies and background knowledge related to not only the topic of the work, yet also both countries’ historical, political, socioeconomic, or even religious circumstances. It is only through this knowledge that the translator will be equipped to research and solve such extralinguistic challenges.

Another difficulty that is related to understanding the geographical and political landscape of Spain is the author’s sparing use of words in Catalan, typically in reference to institutions or works produced in Barcelona or Catalonia as a whole. Many of you may hear “Catalonia” and already have an idea of the complicated history and relationship the autonomous community has with Spain, while some may not even be able to distinguish Catalan from Spanish. Although Martín’s work is written in Spanish and intended for Spanish-speakers, he does not offer up translations for the names of institutions such as the Institut d’Estudis de la Sexualitat i la Parella, nor for the name of the blog *L’armari obert*, as they are generally

unnecessary. Written Spanish and Catalan may seem alike, and the two languages share a high lexical similarity despite not being mutually intelligible. A person who has grown up in Spain, even if they do not speak any Catalan, has more than likely been exposed to various words and would have minimal difficulties in understanding these names; however, this is simply not the case for the average English-speaking American.

To remedy such situations and those that are similar, such as when Martín provides the reader with URLs in the footnotes to access information, oftentimes the simplest solution for the translator will be to include a bit of text in between brackets to explain the discrepancies in their own words, even if they do not actually form part of the text that is being translated. Some may argue that doing so should be used as a last resort should the brackets appear within the text itself; however, since Martín already frequently employs footnotes to leave his own comments, adding my own notes when necessary does not take away from the experience for the reader and in fact works to avoid confusing the reader should no explanation be offered. Said footnotes especially became necessary when Martín discusses his initial concerns about publishing a book with a slur on the cover, but then quickly realizes that there are many different books with such vulgarities on bookshop shelves, a few of which he then proceeds to name. In Spanish, these titles would hold little significance for the English-speaking reader and translating each name in the paragraph of text would appear clunky and disorganized. Instead, with the use of a simple footnote and brackets, I can offer my own translation for these works so that the audience may better understand the types of titles to which Martín was comparing his own.

Quote me!

Finally, the time has come to address perhaps the most challenging extralinguistic difficulty that I faced throughout the entire translation of this excerpt: Martín's artistic and descriptive use of direct quotations, works, and poems from other authors, whose works are often originally written in English or have an established and authoritative English translation. Now, this may cause you to question why such instances are so challenging if the translator does not even need to provide a translation themselves, but rather copy whatever the true source text says. In theory, this is very true: the text has already been written, so what could be the problem? Well, my dear reader, the issue arises due to the need to preserve the accuracy of the work and respect for the original author's words. What this implies then is performing the necessary research to find these direct quotes in the works cited through reverse translating the segments that Martín has picked out from the works. Or, in the case of works originally written in Spanish or another language, researching and hoping that a translator and publisher have made their own version available on the internet. For me, this investigation was, without a doubt, the most time-consuming part of the entire process, yet perhaps one of the most important in order to preserve the work's integrity and respectability as a translation.

There are three instances in which Martín utilizes poetic works that were not originally written in English: a passage from the *Epic of Gilgamesh* originally written in Akkadian, a poem by Federico García Lorca in Spanish, and two Arabic homoerotic poems written in the Muslim-ruled Iberic state of Al-Andalus. Concerning the first two, said works are quite well known in the literary world: one being a tale passed down through the ages and the other written by a famous Spanish poet and playwright that also happened to be homosexual. In both of these

instances, due to the works longevity and recognizability, there may exist multiple translations. My responsibility, in this case, is to discover what version may be available to me and to a reader wishing to discover more, the fidelity to the Spanish translation that Martín includes, and what makes the translator qualified. Admittedly enough, for the homoerotic poems from the age of Muslim-ruled Spain, originally by Ibn Abd Rabbih and Ibn Quzman, I only found evidence of one reputable translation into English by the late Louis Crompton, a professor from the Department of English at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln. If not for his works *Male Love and Islamic Law in Arab Spain* and *Homosexuality and Civilization*, there would have been no recourse available to me except to translate the poems myself: an unfavorable option for one with little experience in the translation of poetry and song (Crompton, Homosexuality and Civilization, 2006).

Returning for a moment to the former works, Martín uses García Lorca's poem "Ay voz secreta del amor oscuro" as an opener for his first block of content. While there is something to be said for truly appreciating poetry as it was originally written, the reader who does not speak Spanish would lose a good deal of context surrounding how Martín connects the experience of questioning your sexuality with the torturous feeling of a secret and hidden love. Upon researching versions available in English online, I came across A. S. Kline's digital publisher, Poetry in Translation, through which he provides open access for non-commercial use to classic works that he has translated. Convincingly enough, as recently as 2023 had he translated García Lorca's *Poems of Love and Death* (2023), of which the previously mentioned poem forms part. I found that his translation transmitted García Lorca's original message skillfully and I also

recognized the additional benefit of sourcing from an author and publisher that would have more poems and works freely available to whoever may desire to read them.

As for the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, translations have consistently emerged in past decades, basing themselves either closely or loosely on the original Akkadian text; although, all translations find themselves filling in gaps left by the loss of the original tablets over the course of history. What is considered one of the most definitive and loyal to the source text English translations is by British Assyriologist and academic Andrew R. George. Now Emeritus Professor of Babylonian at the University of London, George specialized in Babylonian literature, religion, and intellectual culture (SOAS University of London, n.d.). In comparing the appropriate lines from Martín's referenced version with the equivalent text from George's translation, I noted that they seemed to have a greater correspondence than with *Nancy Sandar's prose synthesis of the ancient poems* from 1960 (George, 2016). It can be said that the translation by George is much more faithful line by line than Sandar's relatively outdated version, and this reflects through its similarity across languages and translations. Thus, I found this more modern translation apt to use, and I gratefully thank those who are experts on Babylonian literature for their knowledge and contributions in a sphere in which my own do not overlap.

Moving on from poetry, the last aspect that I would like to address are the in-text references and explanations to non-poetic works, which required similar strategies in order to faithfully translate them. Naturally, no respectable book on gay psychology could hope to avoid the mention of religion and its impact that it has on the LGBTQ community. However, Martín here does not address the impact of religion, but instead uses passages from the Bible as further proof that homosexuality has existed in every human culture and civilization throughout time,

even if it was not known by such terminology or concepts. In this case, finding an English translation of the Bible is perhaps as easy as opening Google or the bedside table at a motel. That said, among the many distinct translations available on the market, which would be appropriate to choose? Well, as of August 2023, the New International Version (NIV) was the most-sold translation of the Bible according to the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association (Shellnutt, 2023). Biblica, the original financial sponsor of the NIV touts the translation as a "trustworthy, accessible Bible translation for the whole English-speaking world" (Biblica, n.d.). For these reasons, I found this version to be preferable over a perhaps more traditional version, such as the King James Version that has been criticized for alleged mistranslations.

Last, but not least, Martín addresses the concept of love; that is to say, he allows Robert Sternberg's research and triangular theory of love to speak on the various manifestations that the feeling can take on when one of its three key aspects is absent. As with all of the previously quoted work that Martín implements throughout his text, it is imperative that the original text as stated by the author be present in the translation; to do so otherwise with an inaccurate translation would impede those who would seek out the original sources and perhaps delve deeper into this research. Beyond that, to provide a translation that is inconsistent with a source text would diminish my credibility as a translator and encroach doubt into my competence to translate this work for the audience. By attempting to back translate the excerpts that Martín uses along with his own citations for the work, I can work backwards to find the passages I need and accurately quote Sternberg's work on love. In respecting the sources, I, in turn, respect the audience and their intelligence, as has been my goal throughout the entirety of this translation.

(Famous) Last Words

As you can see, my dear reader, there is thought weaved into every page of the work you are about to begin. Just as Martín's original words provide humor, comfort, and scientific authority, often in the same breath, I hope that my explanation and justification for the decisions I make reflect the desire I have that this book be the most authentic and true version for English speakers. Whether you are straight, gay, transgender, or any other social identity that has made you feel as if you need guidance or simply to know that you are not alone in the world, I hope my words transmit to you the importance that you hold, reader. Translation is not simply the literal transfer of words from one language to another: it is an exchange of culture, knowledge, and experience that is perhaps easier said than done when facing linguistic and extralinguistic difficulties and differences. However, this exchange is something that we strive for, as we know that, as humans, we cannot live in a bubble, isolated from those who are different from us. Cultural exchanges enrich the lives of everyone around us, and just as the LGBTQ community has their own unique perspectives and experiences to offer others, so do the countless linguistic communities around the world. Without translation, their stories, insights, and encouragements may only reach a select few: a reality we cannot hope to accept when, to save a life, sometimes all you need to hear is that you are natural, you belong, and you deserve to be happy. So, as you learn about these cultural differences and similarities that exist for all of us, consider what a Spanish book on gay psychology could represent for you, no matter who you are. After all, we're all just trying to love ourselves, *maricón*.

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