

Translation, the 'Folk Process', and Socially Committed Songs of the 1960s

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"Now and then music sends out hesitant cues as to the existence of innate organisms which, if fittingly translated and interpreted, may help us pinpoint the embryos of a universal musical grammar. [... Such a discovery] could contribute to exploring musical experience as a "language of languages", establishing a constructive interchange between diverse cultures and a peaceful defense of those diversities".

Luciano Berio, "Translating Music"

Whose tomorrow is tomorrow?

And whose world is the world?

Bertolt Brecht, "Solidarity Song"

Abstract:

Edward Larkey describes a 'global-local nexus' of dynamic flows and permeable spaces (2003, 149) for languages, cultures, communities and identities to be forged. This study will consider song translations as international products that often effaced their own origins as translations. The scope of investigation is restricted to performance-to-performance translations and adaptations, not only recorded versions but those sung in demonstrations, workers' strikes, and other political gatherings, rather than those that are performance-to-page (liner notes or lyric sheets). Mayoral, Kelly, and Gallardo (1988, 356, qtd. in Pezza Cintrão, 2009) describe non-linguistic meaning systems as potentially creating conditions of *constrained translation*, though political song lyrics have found channels of unrestraint in cases where new music was found or written for lyrics (e.g. Långbacka) or where old tunes are placed in the service of new lyrical meanings via translation/adaptation. The political songs considered here treat labor relations, pacifism, Civil Rights, gender, and linguistic politics in locally or globally relevant ways, sometimes both. Finally, six transfer processes that characterize these adaptations are typologized.

Keywords: song lyric translation, song adaptation, the 'folk process', authenticity

Resumen: Edward Larkey describe un "nexo mundial y local" de los flujos dinámicos y los espacios permeables (2003, 149) para las lenguas, las culturas, las comunidades e identidades que se forjan. Este estudio considerará la traducción de canciones como productos internacionales que, a menudo, pierden sus propios orígenes como traducciones. El alcance de esta investigación se limita a las traducciones y adaptaciones no sólo de las versiones grabadas sino de aquellas que se cantan en protestas, huelgas de trabajadores u otras reuniones políticas, en lugar de aquellas representadas en páginas (notas en la carátula o letras en papel). Mayoral, Kelly y Gallardo (1988, 356, citados en Pezza Cintrão, 2009) describen sistemas de significación lingüística como aquellos que crean condiciones que limitan la traducción, aunque la letra de las canciones políticas han encontrado canales de libertad en casos en que se encuentra nueva música o ésta ha sido escrita para adecuarse a las letras, (por ejemplo Långbacka) o donde viejas canciones se ponen al servicio de nuevos significados líricos a través de la traducción o la adaptación. Las canciones políticas consideradas aquí versan sobre las relaciones laborales, el pacifismo, los derechos humanos, el género y las políticas lingüísticas, sea a nivel local o mundial. Finalmente , se identifican seis procesos de transferencia que tipifican estas adaptaciones.

Palabras claves: Traducción de canciones, adaptación de canciones, autenticidad.

Résumé

Edward Larkey décrit un « lien global- local » des flux dynamiques et des espaces perméables (2003, 149) pour que les langues, les cultures, les communautés et les identités soient forgées. Cette étude examinera des traductions de chansons en tant que produits internationaux qui souvent effacent leurs propres origines comme traductions. Le champ d'investigation s'étend à des versions enregistrées de chansons traduites et adaptées performance-à-performance, mais aussi à celles qui sont chantées à des manifestations, des grèves et autres rassemblements politiques, plutôt que ceux qui sont performance-à-pages (notes de pochette ou feuilles des paroles). Mayoral, Kelly, et Gallardo (1988, 356, QTD. Dans Pezza Cintrão, 2009) décrivent des systèmes de signification non linguistiques comme ceux qui potentiellement créent les conditions qui limitent la traduction, si les paroles des chansons politiques ont trouvé canaux de liberté lorsque l'on trouve de la nouvelle musique ou que celle-ci a été écrite pour paroles (par exemple Långbacka) ou lorsque de vieux airs sont placés au service de nouvelles significations lyriques par moyen de traduction/adaptation. Les chansons politiques considérés ici traitent sur des relations de travail, sur le pacifisme, les droits civils, le sexe et les politiques linguistiques à la manière locale et/ou globale. Finalement, on identifie six procédés de transfert que typifient ces adaptations. **Mots-clés:** traduction des paroles

1. Introduction: translation and the 'folk process'

The use of translated songs in the 1960s was widespread, whether new translations or adaptations of existing ones. The in-country translation of foreign songs, often in localized versions, played a role in the international market, as did translations made for export. Many language phenomena emerged in parallel to, or in response to, a new globalist consciousness: in addition to *untranslated* foreign lyrics (Pete Seeger's Spanish Civil War songs), the advent of *semi-translated* lyrics ("Le Déserteur" by Peter, Paul and Mary), crowdsourced lyrics, and self-covers had arrived. *Non-translation* in rock songs became a marker of cosmopolitanism and modernity (Wallach, 2003, 63). Cases of pseudotranslation in song translation, moreover, are not unknown. This study makes visible the mode of translation, 'laying bare the device' in the production of revolutionary songs, the term Victor Jara preferred (Jara, 1984, 121). Songs of this genre have also been called songs of hope and faith, protest songs, topical songs, agitational songs, freedom songs, message songs, movement songs, social conscience songs, solidarity songs, songs of resistance, spirituals of resistance, sorrow songs¹, songs of liberation, songs of dissent, the people's songs, and political folk music. In passing we will refer to subgenres of anti-war songs, Civil Rights songs, rebel songs, battle songs, labor anthems, and others. This generation of music, broadly, marks a transition from music understood largely as entertainment to music conceived as a potential vehicle for change or to 'speak out'—or in the phrase of the progressive magazine from the era, to *Sing Out!* Many songwriters, singers, and adapters took an internationalist approach to the problems of the day, as the songs reflect.

While socio-politically aware songs began to be composed or adapted, other semiotic systems besides lyrics arguably were themselves signifying resistance: the very folk, rock, or folk-rock forms, which are all inscribed in traditions of truth-telling from outside the structures of power, though not always outside power's ability to censor them. And the translations across languages followed the 'folk process'--borrowings

and transformations that characterized works in the tradition, which often had vague antecedents or a diffuse authorship. The 'folk process', a phrase attributed to folklorist Charles Seeger, is "the process by which cultural artifacts are changed, whether minutely or in significant amounts, to form new cultural products" (McDonald, 2005, 4). The process parallels cultural flows in translation:

Folk music is the product of a musical tradition that has been evolved through the process of oral transmission. The factors that shape the tradition are: (i) *continuity* which links the present with the past; (ii) *variation* which springs from the creative impulse of the individual or the group; and (iii) *selection* by the community, which determines the form or forms in which the music survives.

(International Folk Music Council, 1954, in Karpeles, 1955, 6)

Moreover, folk music's privileging of *authenticity* and debates over what defines it (see for example Bendix, 1997) mirrors translation's problematic status in discussions of originality, though now the latter concept generally has come into question.

The claim is widespread, though some revivalists balk at the notion, that "[a]ll forms of popular music, folk revival music included, constitute adaptation, translation and a claim to shared artistic ownership, regardless of the geographical origins of the 'root' music style" (Mitchell, 2006, 594).² Toynbee and Dueck (2011, 10) describe the arc of 'migrating music' in general, which is the entire song network in which a work circulates, including adaptations of adaptations:

... [F]ollowing an original moment of mimesis, the copied music undergoes further developments and transformations. [...T]he copied object often becomes familiar, localized and indigenized and is then elaborated in response to the most pressing concerns of the people who have appropriated it.

This paper will consider translation in the adaptive dissemination of popular music as a form of resistance, and the ways, large and small, it performs the cultural triage of continuity, creation, and selection. While we in no way pretend to be exhaustive, we will consider highlights of intercultural traffic that helped shape popular music of the day. Underlying our survey is Venuti's simple assumption--with complicated implications--that to move towards what he calls a "translation culture", we must "appreciate translations as translations" (2011, 248). Song translations will be the focus of that appreciation here. We will limit our field to works that appeared in the 1960s either in their original languages or in translation, and mostly to those works with English in the language combination. We aim to consider the questions, In what ways were songs of hope and protest re-fashioned to local realities?, and, How do the adaptations made via the 'traveling culture' of the folk protest movement challenge our ideas about translation constraints in this domain?

1.1. Refritos and fusiles: *self-translations and sound-alikes*

Zolov (1999, 63) chronicles how translations of songs in the late twentieth century at first were strategic moves by transnational record companies to prevent local cover versions:

With the growing importance of foreign markets for recorded music during the late 1950s, one of the transnationals' strategies was to promote an artist by producing several versions of a hit sung in the local language, most often French, Italian, Spanish, or German. The idea was to preempt competition from a version of the same song performed by a local artist. [...] Peter, Paul and Mary [...] recorded in German and French as well as Italian. [...] The recording companies found "[translation] highly economical since only the vocal has to be rerecorded...." Ironically, this switch to local language translations was a reversal of an earlier trend by European performers who had made English language versions of their own hits "slanted to crash the American market." ("Warner Bros Pushes Int'l Mkt" *Variety*, 14 August 1963, 55; "Learning the Lingo of Hits," *Variety*, 7 December 1960, 61)

In Mexico, for example, after the *refrito*, or Spanish-language local version, 'translations' in sound-alike English of English-language bands came into being:

These exact English language covers of the original became known as *fusiles* or *el arte de fusil*, literally "the art of projection" (from the verb *fusilar*, "to take aim"). As greater importance was placed on access to the originals, a concept of authenticity explicitly grounded in English language performance and the imported album [emerged, and] the idea of the *refrito* was disparaged [...] Whereas earlier the lyric content had been less important than the musical rhythm—allowing for the wide success of the *refritos*, which often took liberties in their translations from the original—now *what* was said became as important as *how* it was said. (Zolov, 1999, 94)

Zolov also notes (*ibid*, 186) how self-translating into English functioned as a code, a way to elude direct censorship. Curiously, Ramet (1994) describes the opposite trajectory in Eastern Europe: first came English, then the local language. Whatever the evolution, authenticity was the goal.

2. Portability: reinvention through translation

[Songs] are seemingly fluid and portable. They can cross borders, be translated into many languages, change meanings, and span eras. Nourished by the spirit of solidarity among peoples suffering under authoritarianism, a resistance song is open to appropriation, adaptation, and reinvention....
Cullianano and Gimenez Maceda, "The Power of Song", 51

2.1. Communal Songs

Many of the songs of the 1960s were for participating in, for singing en masse, not for listening to lone performers sing. An archetypal example is the Internationale, which was written by Eugène Pottier (music by Pierre Degeyter) in 1888. In the May 1968 student uprisings, the song assumed three roles: “signaling a generalized sense of oppositionality; interpellating the working class as a political actor; and traversing the various barriers that separated different social groups from one another” (Drott, 2009, 31). The song has been adopted by liberation movements in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. During the Lawrence, Massachusetts labor strikes of 1912, the song was sung in Irish, German, Polish and Italian, all at once, and during the resistance to fascism during the Spanish Civil War, the song would be sung by volunteers from more than forty countries (Miller, 2000). The words call for, and foretell, a collective Becoming: “Debout les damnés de la terre / [...] / Le monde va changer de base / Nous ne somme rien, soyons tout” (“Arise, ye wretched of the earth, / ... / A better world’s in birth. / ... / We have been naught, we shall be all”). Billy Bragg, seeking to “translate [it] into the twenty-first century”, added verses about not clinging to possessions, shunning racism (“respect makes the empires fall”), and seeking freedom for all (ibid.).

The *huelga* (strike) songs offer another example of anthemic songs meant for crowds, or adapted from first-person laments to the *first person plural*. “We Shall Overcome” was a song Mexican-American strikers adopted as “Nosotros venceremos” and as “Hemos de triunfar”. “We Shall Overcome” itself evolved from pre-Civil War tune “No More Auction Block for Me” and Charles Tindley’s “I’ll Overcome Some Day” (1900). When the song lost momentum in the United States around 1965, it gained new life in South Africa, where it was used to protest apartheid, as well as Eastern Europe, Israel, and India (Lynskey, 2011, 50). In 1971, during the Bangladesh War of Independence, the Calcutta Youth Choir recorded a translation, “Ek Din Surjyer Bhor”, which became one of the top selling Bengali recordings ever. “Solidaridad pa’ siempre”, with lyrics by Augustín Lira, Luis Valdez and Felipe Cantú, was adapted from “Solidarity Forever”. The latter was itself a repurposing of “The Battle Hymn of the Republic”, which was an ennobling re-write of the tune to “John Brown’s Body”. Azcona (2008, 95) notes that to Mexicanize the song, the march was made into a 2/4 polka with a legato vocal. The haste with which many such songs were composed gave testament more to the historical moment and urgency of the events in which they would play a part—the effect of the message, the ease of learning the songs—than to the songs’ aesthetic contribution to music.

2.2. Trivialization

Just as not every song version conveyed the same content, the degree of political commitment would also vary in the adaptation. Victor Jara, an iconic Chilean musician who was martyred during Pinochet’s coup, recorded a Spanish version of “If I Had a Hammer” (Pete Seeger and Lee Hays) entitled “El martillo” (The Hammer).

While a pro-justice, hopeful song of fraternal love in both English and Spanish, the latter of which begins with a church canticle, the Italian version, "Datemi un Martello" by Rita Pavone, gives voice to a disgruntled young person at a party who wishes to use a hammer to punish romantic rivals, happy couples, and members of the out-crowd. Umberto Eco (1965, 295) scorns the version for its object-less contrarianism: "Pretesto per la danza, la canzone si pone come espressione di un baldanzoso anarchismo giovanile, dichiarazione programmatica *contro* qualcosa, in cui cio che conta non e il qualcosa, ma l'energia dispiegata nella protesta" (A pretext for dancing, the song stands as a bold expression of juvenile anarchy, a programmatic statement *against* something, whereby what matters is not the something, but the energy deployed in protesting.) The early 1960s band Los Apson, from Mexico, recorded a version of the traditional folksong, "The Midnight Special" (*The People's Song Book*, Hille, 1961, 28-29), a prison lament made famous by Huddie Ledbetter (known as 'Leadbelly' or 'Lead Belly') about poor treatment on a chain gang and in a prison camp. While the English version expresses the prisoners' hope for the light of 'salvation' from a legendary passing train, the Midnight Special, the Mexican version, "A la media noche" [sic] (At Midnight) reduces the work to a simple song about separated lovers. On other fronts, however, the band was subverting old orders by listing itself as *co-authors* of many of the American songs on the album: "These proto rock en español compositions were already blurring the line between original and translation and between model and copy, thus delegitimizing the very cultural supremacy of the center... (Kun, 2002, 271). A third trivialized song adaptation is found in Filipino versions of "Tom Dooley" ("Tom Dula", in Lomax, 1960, 262-263), which modified the tune and lyrics. For example, in the 1960s, the Kingston Trio's 1958 recording was indigenized to "Siya obpay dis din damo", an adaptation to a local folk song form called the *salidummay* (Craig and King, 2002, 49). Cover songs in the same language could also move peripheral songs, even banned songs such as Boris Vian's "Le Déserteur" (see below), to mainstream acceptance. Such treatments can neutralize a song's original force: "Richard Anthony's upbeat cover version of [the song], which was initially intended as a censure of the Algerian war, was reworked so as to be politically acceptable and commercially profitable, to the extent that the final product was positively innocuous and uncontroversial" (Cannon and Dauncey, 2003, 142n).

2.3. Radicalization

The translation process can just as easily intensify the political. Sometimes politicization occurs in large part due to the context: "No nos moverán" ("We Shall Not Be Moved") notably was sung by Joan Baez shortly after Generalissimo Franco's death, breaking a decades-long ban on the song in Spain. The song was also performed during the United Farm Workers' grape boycott (1965-70). In other cases, the adaptation radicalizes the content explicitly. In 1970, Joan and Victor Jara jointly translated Malvina Reynolds' "Little Boxes" (1962), an excoriation of bourgeois conformity and urban sprawl in America that Pete Seeger would sing starting in 1963. The adaptation to the Chilean context added an order of magnitude to the song's condemnation through a strategic emphasis of foreignness—Americanness—in its use

of class markers, including signifiers of things out of joint: imported positional commodities, English-language borrowings, and 'First World' standards of beauty. Joan Jara recalls:

Victor made a Chilean adaptation ("Las casitas del barrio alto" [The little houses in the upper-crust neighborhood]) in which this rather gentle satire on life in the rows of villas overlooking San Francisco [California] was applied much more caustically to the barrio alto of Santiago. He added on extra verse which shocked people out of their laughter, referring to right-wing gangsters in Austin Minis who made a sport of murdering generals. It made a sinister contrast with the bright little polka tune. Later Malvina was to refer with approval to the 'political elevation' of her song. (Jara, 1984, 159-160)

Jara's adaptation condemned those in the upper classes that approved of the recent kidnapping and murder of General René Schneider, commander-in-chief of the Chilean army, during the 1970 Chilean election campaign (Lynskey, 2011, 223). Joan Jara would later read an English translation of the 1969 song "Te recuerdo Amanda" [I Remember You Amanda], a monument in Nueva Canción opposition to the Chilean dictatorship, in *Manifiesto* [1974], a posthumous collection released in her late husband's name. The rarity of the song's bilingual format, interlinear simultaneous interpretation, is noteworthy. In the 1970s Pete Seeger recorded a spoken-word English version, with musical accompaniment, of Victor Jara's unfinished "Estadio Chile" (Chile Stadium), the Chilean's last song (ibid., 229); an excerpt follows: "*We are five thousand/ here in this little part of the city./ We are five thousand,/ how many more shall we be/ [...]/ How much humanity/ with hunger now, cold, panic, pain and terror!/ [...]/ Is this the world you created, oh my God,/ in seven days?*"

2.4. Pacifist Songs

Two other anti-war songs were global phenomena. "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" was born of a translation and evolved through translation. Pete Seeger developed these lines he read in Mikhail Sholokhov's *And Quiet Flows the Don* (Stephen Garry's translation): "Where are the flowers? The girls have plucked them. / Where are the girls? They've taken husbands. / Where are the men? They're all in the army." The novel quotes from a Ukrainian folk song called "Tovchu, Tovchu Mak", the theme of which is the Cossack soldiers going off to join the army. The song would be rendered into more than twenty-three languages, including versions by the singer-actress Marlene Dietrich, who recorded it in French and German and sung it abroad. "Le Déserteur" (Boris Vian [words], Harold Berg [music]; 1954) is another of the best-known pacifist songs of the period, with known translations into forty-seven languages (see "Canzoni contro la guerra"). The Vian-Berg composition underwent a partial translation, titled "The Pacifist", serving as an introduction to the song in Peter, Paul and Mary's rendition ("le Déserteur", 1964). Perhaps aiding its translatability was its accessibility: the open letter assuming the voice of a conscientious objector. American poetics has many such works, such as Langston

Hughes' "Dear Mr. President". Hughes' "Little Old Letter" uses the trope of the letter from the point of view of the draftee.

Another letter that inspired an international standard was "Hasta siempre, comandante" [We're With You Always, Commander], a reply to Che Guevara's "Carta de despedida" [Letter of Farewell] to Fidel Castro when Guevara was leaving Cuba. Composed by Carlos Puebla (1965), the commemoration has been recorded in translation or bilingually in German, Finnish, Greek, Hungarian, Persian, Dutch, Italian, Polish, Russian, Spanish and French, Spanish and Russian, and Spanish and Swedish.³ And Seeger's "Waist Deep in the Big Muddy" (1967), told in the voice of a soldier, laments a foolhardy general's orders that risked the lives of his platoon, and was covered in French in 1968 ("Jusque'a La Centure" by Graeme Allwright). Scathing denunciations also came from *chansonnier* Jacques Brel's work in music theater. "The Bulls" ("Les Taureaux") compares the "cruelty of bullfighting ... to the horrors of war" (Tinker, 2005, 183) and adds American topical references. Translated by Alasdair Clayre, "La Colombe" (The Dove) is told from the vantage point of a French lieutenant watching recruits board a train to fight in the Congo. Using the device of anaphora—repeated 'why...?' constructions—the song, popularized by Judy Collins, questions the human toll of war and "the same still birth that victory always brought". War's glory costs senseless sacrifice of life and love: "We are not here to sing / We're here to kill the dove".

Collins came to be identified with another revolutionary anthem, "Marat/Sade", a tune written in German for the stage by Peter Weiss (1964). Translation often 'de-constrained' tunes from lyrical content and served a recombinatory aesthetics. A Turkish poem by Nâzım Hikmet Ran was translated into song by Jeanette Turner, often attributed to Pete Seeger, and set to the tune of "Great Selchie of Shule Skerry" (or "Silkie") (Unterberger, 2003, 7), demonstrating the flexibility of the folk process, as new songs could accommodate old melodies for new purposes. The resulting song, "I Come and Stand at Every Door" (aka "Hiroshima Girl" and "The Little Dead Girl"), was recorded by The Byrds in 1966. Its lyrics narrate the lament of a ghost child killed at Hiroshima who goes door to door, asking nothing for herself, but looking for adherents to the cause of stopping war. The popular version has the young girl asking in the last stanza that "for peace / you fight today", though in the original Turkish, and in some English versions, she is requesting *names*, or by extension, personal commitments to peace. Songs that lamented particular wars came to stand for opposition to war in general. Joan Baez, for example, recorded "Dona Dona" (aka "Dana Dana", 1960), a pacifist song from Yiddish for the musical *Esterke* (1940-1941, music by Sholom Secunda, lyric by Aaron Zeitlin)⁴; Donovan recorded a version in 1965. The rich interpretability of the central image, a calf led to slaughter, makes the song meaningful in a broad array of readings both secular and religious.

2.5. Nation and Transhistoricization

The national origins of songs on occasion were backgrounded in translation in order to produce more transhistorically relevant lyrics. "Song of the French Partisan", a French Resistance song from World War II, was written by Anna Marly (English words by Hy Zaret, arranged by Walter Russell) with a faster time signature than it came to be known in Leonard Cohen's lilting 1969 version. Cohen's recording advertised its status as a translation by featuring a French chorus for three stanzas, which differ from those that appear in *The People's Song Book* (Hille, 1961, 61) where Cohen drew his inspiration. Curiously, the French interludes in the song give the impression, though they are the source text, of departing from many of the adaptations made in the English: the old man in the attic giving shelter to the partisan is a woman in English, and four verses are sung, untranslated, in which the Germans demand the narrator sign some papers, though he defiantly takes up his weapon. This militaristic trace, symbolically, is absent from Joan Baez' lyrics in her 1972 version.⁵ Perhaps most significantly, Cohen's line "and some of them are with me", referring to allies he has on the journey, derives from a clearly French nationalism: "Et j'ai la France entiere", though the Canadian singer's version is often referred to as "The Song of the French Partisan", or "The (Song of the French) Partisan". It is an irony that the line "The frontiers [national borders] are my prison" should appear in a song that has traveled through many incarnations, and language barriers, via translation.

2.6. Politicization

Some songs that gained popularity in the 1960s were political only by association. "De colores" (In Colors), for instance, was a centuries-old folk song that re-emerged out of 1940s Spain to become virtually the anthem of the United Farm Workers union in the United States, though the lyrics are entirely innocuous, though in English and Spanish they have been added to or recontextualized to celebrate unity and racial and ethnic inclusion. The 1928 song "Guantanamera" ("Guajira Guantanamera"), was an unlikely one for revolutionary status, as its lyrics were mild; its most provocative lines were from José Martí: "Con los pobres de la tierra / Quiero mis versos echar" (Among the poor of the earth / I wish to cast my verses.). However, through marches, rallies, and worker movement activities, the song became emblematic of solidarity with the poor and leftist causes in general. The song as we know it was not so much a song as a framing device. In Radio Havana in the 1940s and 1950s, Joséito Fernández would adapt the lyrics daily to comment on events of the day, especially gory violent crimes (Moreno, 2007, 59). "Guantanamera", save for the well-known chorus, changed with the performance. Composer Julián Orbón added lines from José Martí's *Versos sencillos*, which his student Hector Angulo performed in the United States in 1961; Pete Seeger heard it, and adapted and copyrighted the song in Fernández' name. "'Guantanamera'" notes Allatson (2002, 159), "circulates as a world-renowned cultural product but one subject to constant revision with no correct, original, or authoritative lyric."⁶

2.7. Local Adaptation

Songwriters have localized lyrics through analogy, reimagining the song for the new target culture. Randy Newman's "Birmingham" exemplifies this phenomenon of local adaptation, providing

a strong example of the way in which a translated lyric can be creatively reworked in a way that relates to a particular regional situation. Newman's original version presents a satire of a dimwitted, white working man who glorifies life in ... Birmingham, Alabama, while remaining blind to racism and other negative elements. [Heli Deinboek's German] turns Alabama into Oberwart, a small town in the Austrian countryside known for its racial prejudice and where four Gypsies were murdered by unknown assailants in the mid-1990s. (Larkey, 2003, 138)

In Creedence Clearwater Revival's "Fortunate Son" (1969), the lyrics indict the politically connected highborn sons of "patriots" who are quick to send others into harm's way. Johnny Hallyday's 1971 French version, "Fils de personne", substitutes a stanza mocking those born for the "paradise" of a government sinecure, a criticism of indolence more resonant with a European audience. The societal privileges of modernity are also questioned in song. Protest of rapid technologization, of dehumanizing progress, propels the melodramatic "In the Year 2525 (Exordium and Terminus)" by Zager and Evans, a major hit from 1969. The song depicts an apocalyptic, post-human future in which humanity is heir to mind control, rendered complacent or redundant due to ubiquitous robotics and genetic engineering, victimized by its own guilt and environmental havoc, and subjected to divine judgment. This dark vision was remade in Finnish, Italian, French, Spanish, German, and Greek.⁷ All of these languages are the national languages of countries that underwent rapid industrialization and modernization in the twentieth century, and it is not unreasonable to link the attraction of a 'future shock' song to the anxieties attendant to such changes. "Eve of Destruction" (Barry McGuire, 1965, written by S.L. Sloan) paints a bleak tableaux through a litany of contemporary political calamities and social injustices. Pino Masi covered the song in Italian ("L'ora Del Fucile"), actually a cover of another Italian cover, in 1971. Rather than predicting the end times, Masi's version instead *calls for violence*, in keeping with Italian ultra-left ideas of the time, in particular the Lotta Continua (Cavallucci and de Amicus, 2010, 78). The song's narrator suggests that peace is capitulation, that "the America of Nixon, Agnew and McNamara" has learned a lesson from the Black Panthers:

...finché ci son padroni non ci sarà mai pace;
la pace dei padroni fa comodo ai padroni, la coesistenza
[è truffa per farci stare buoni.

[...until we are masters there will never be peace;
the peace of the owners is convenient to the owners, coexistence
[is a scam to make us feel good.]

L'ora Del Fucile--"time for guns"—celebrates the struggles of labor against capital, invoking marchers in Spain and Poland who had taken to the streets singing the Internationale.

2.8. Race and Class: Civil Rights and the Brechtian Struggle

Some internationalized songs had violent undertones of a war of race and class. Singer Nina Simone used Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht's song "Seeräuber-Jenny" ("Pirate Jenny") from *Threepenny Opera*, transforming Jenny from a Victorian prostitute in London to a black woman in the American South under Jim Crow, and in the process prophesying an impending uprising:

You people can watch while I'm scrubbing these floors,
and I'm scrubbing the floors while you're gawking.
Maybe once you'll tip me and it makes you feel swell,
in this crummy southern town in this crummy old hotel.
But you'll never guess to who you're talking.

(translation by Marc Blitzstein, qtd. in Berman, 2004, 176)

Simone's rendition features a 'Black Freighter' ship arriving to free the protagonist, Jenny, from servitude. Jenny escapes on it with pirates after wreaking revenge (in the narrator's fantasy) on the exploitative town. The image, for the listener, parallels the incipient Civil Rights movement (Demetriou, 2009, 54). Simone, writes Feldstein (2005, 1363), "associated her own antiracism with Brecht's antifascism and evoked a historical alliance between African American musicians and an interwar political Left." Curiously, it is not through a change of lyrics but through historical context, and its singer's canon as a whole, that this subtext adheres to the version. Berman (ibid.) calls this a process of *refamiliarization*.⁸ In Simone's case, this shift can be seen in her politicizing the "imaginary locations of Brechtian struggle" (ibid., 178) into real settings, in "Pirate Jenny" as well as Brecht's "Alabama Song", at the same time 'translating' Brecht's detached epic theatricality, his distanciation (*Verfremdung*), into a countercultural appeal to emotion (ibid., 178-181). Thus the song is adapted not only from German to English but from nowhere in particular into a historicized, subjective identity. Bob Dylan's "When the Ship Comes In", incidentally, harvests the energy and imagery of "Pirate Jenny", particularly that of a ship as harbinger of a day of reckoning. Brecht's songs seem to have almost imperceptibly entered polysystems around the world, sometimes even breaking free of their original music, as in Finland:

One more important level in Brecht's influence was the Brechtian "song." The "song movement," that of the political song, was very popular, and the use of Brecht for this concept was very important. Few young people in our country had not sung some of the Brecht songs by the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s. They were like [Finnish] folk songs of our own. Mainly political songs, like the "Solidarity Song" [...]. A lot of his poems were translated and the music used was not always the original music of the Brecht songs.

(Långbacka, 1995, 130 n4)

Bertolt Brecht's "Solidarity Song" ("Solidaritätslied", lyrics by Brecht, music by Hans Eisler, 1930) re-emerged in the 1960s in impromptu marches and public meetings. "Song of the United Front" ("Einheitsfrontlied") appeared in the influential Folkways series in 1961. The liner notes to *Songs of the Spanish Civil War*, the 25th anniversary commemorative collection of songs, tell us that Ernst Busch sings the song in four languages in the recording. Adolfo Celdrán, moreover, set two of Brecht's poems to music in Spanish ("General, tu tanque es poderoso" and "Otra vez se oye hablar de grandeza" became the track "General", 1969). Brecht's devastating verses from these compositions are among his best known: "General, man is very useful. / He can fly and he can kill. / But he has one defect: / He can think." (Brecht, 1976/1979, 289).

The anti-discrimination song, "Angelitos Negros" (Little Black Angels), written for the 1948 film of the same name by the actor Pedro Infante (music by Manuel Alvarez Maciste) from a poem by Venezuelan poet Andrés Bello Blanco, took on new life as "Paint Me Black Angels" in Earth Kitt's rendition in English. Untranslated versions of the song, sung by such artists as Roberta Flack, which "links march, cause, and faith in its critique of racist exclusion and affirmation of black pride" (Delgadillo, 2006, 423), were produced contemporaneously with the version in English (lyric by Bob Marcus). The song takes to task an implied audience, a painter, for not painting black angels in church iconography of heaven. The poem, and the song versions that followed from it, present a critique of Eurocentric models—the representation in art of only white angels—rather than the multiracial reality of the Americas (ibid., 411-412). A Venezuelan poem by way of a Mexican song and film thus wound up in the service of black power discourse in 1960s United States. Delgadillo (ibid., 408) sheds light on this song as a marker of the way "*mestizaje* and *diaspora* [can] signal both distinct historical conditions of racial mixture and dispersal and practices of solidarity and affiliation." Another of Nina Simone's songs of racial affirmation, "To Be Young, Gifted and Black" (1969; lyrics by Weldon Irvine, Jr.), was translated and performed in Chinese (Barnett, 2007, 153). Yet it is not the denotations of race or color but of the source culture's *race relations* that challenge the song translator. Translated out of American English, a song like Bob Dylan's "The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll" (1964) needs explicitation, reminding us of all the listener of the original *knows without being told*, and how the unspoken configures shared cultural experience, a largely unconscious part of aesthetic pleasure:

...when covering [in French] "The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll," Hugues Aufray and Pierre Delanoë clearly wanted to make it understood that the victim was black (which was evident to American listeners in their own context). How is this information to be expressed, then? *Elle était noire, sa peau était noire, elle était d'origine afroaméricaine*, or *elle était petite-fille d'esclave*? None of these options coincide with the poetic tone of the original. The adapters settled for "*Hattie Carroll était domestique de couleur*," a well-intended, clumsy, bourgeois expression (the 1995 version will use the somewhat better

“*Hattie Carroll était plutôt noire de couleur*”). (Froeliger, 2007, 184)

2.9. Language and Politics

Non-translation as an ideological strategy in political songs lends itself to readings that reveal how *solidarity can be transmitted in language choice itself*. For example, Spanish is semanticized as an emblem of marginalization in the case we considered above—“Angelitos Negros” sung in Spanish to largely Anglophone audiences—which enacts a kind of *inclusionary othering*, to use Canales’ (2000) term. A non-native singer producing a foreign language song can reinforce this phenomenon. Language choice can make a strong political statement, of course, and can politicize an otherwise mildly political song. Such is the case with Dafydd Iwan’s Welsh version (1966) of Woody Guthrie’s “This Land Is Your Land”⁹, entitled “*Mae’n Wlad I Mi*”, which replaced American place names with Welsh ones, in the Welsh language:

...Dafydd Iwan’s Welsh lyrics bring an entirely different message to the song than is present in Woody Guthrie’s original. The Welsh language speaks to a different political need, one more pertinent to Wales in 1966. [... Iwan was singing] in a language impenetrable by seventy-four per cent of the population of Wales. He was, in essence, crystallizing in words what a minority of the population believed to be true: that Wales, with these specific borders, these specific sites of natural beauty, these resources, has Welsh place names and belongs to Welsh people. For a popular song, it is protective and exclusionary. It is territorial and subversive. (Hill, 2007, 109-110)

Here was a song, then, that staked a paradise, but against the encroaching majority language—English—speakers. The song opens the land not to, in Hill’s words, “the dispossessed and the common man” as Guthrie’s does, but closes it for “those who were seemingly meant to live there” (ibid.). This powerful version “fulfills a political agenda unimagined by Woody Guthrie” (ibid.). We find, again, translation’s facilitation of a local authenticity with a borrowed sensibility. To give another example, linguistic politics play out in the highly localized Dutch version (1969) of Tom Paxton’s 1963 satire, “What Did You Learn in School Today?”, which criticizes the reproduction in schools of unquestioned ‘knowledge’. The Dutch version adds cynical lines alluding obliquely to the assertion of Flemish and the codification of the Dutch-French ‘language border’ in 1963 in Belgium: “*Wij leerden dat Brussel tweetalig is / want anders loopt het in België mis*” (We learned that Brussels is bilingual / otherwise things go wrong in Belgium).

2.10. Patriarchy

Sexual politics, too, of course, were tumultuous in the 1960s, and one song in particular evoked the tyranny, injustice and moral corruption of the patriarchy. The mid-century standard “Anathea”, the modern recorded Ur-text of which is “The Gallis Pole” by Lead Belly in 1948, revolves around the story of a girl who fell captive

to pirates. The outrage in the lyrics of the song arises from the fact no family member would pay her ransom, or in other versions, that it is paid in sexual favors to the judge, who sentences the girl's father (or brother) to hang anyway. For the judge's betrayal, the girl, like Pirate Jenny although seemingly with effects not limited to her imagination, places a curse on the man. Despite the work's Shakespearean echoes, specifically *Measure for Measure*, and while the song is commonly traced to ballad #95 ("The Maid Freed from the Gallows") in Francis James Child's 1882 work on English and Scottish ballads, Béla Bartók's 1906 collection, *The Hungarian Folk Song*, provides a more credible ancestral link to Hungary's early folk tradition in the form of "Fehér Anna", also known as "Fehér László Lovar Lopott" or "Ladislav Fehér" (1981, 107-110). The Italian "La povera Cecilia" offers another possible source (Cheesman and Rieuwerts, 1997, 174). Bob Dylan's 1963 "Seven Curses" shifts the point of view, but tells the story recognizably. Odetta's 1957 version is notable. Other renditions called the composition "Hangman, Hangman", "Prickly Holly Bush", "The Briery Bush", or "Gallows Pole" and are a mainstay of the canon. Judy Collins' "Anathea" (1963) tells the tale of Lazlo Feher—an unmistakably Hungarian name--and the man's sister; Lazlo predicts the betrayal, which is announced by a chorus at the end.

3. Functions of political songs

Dorsey (2011) has approached the translation of socially conscious songs from a speech act theory or functionalist perspective:

... Nakayama [1969] asserts that Japanese adapters of American protest songs should worry not about "understanding" (*wakaru*) the originals but rather the "functionality" (*kinōteki*) of their adaptations. This translation culture shifted focus from conventional concerns such as "is the music good" and "is the translation correct" to practical concerns such as "what is the music good for" (i.e. its functionality, or how it could be deployed for political purposes). Through this process of translation new linguistic, musical and cultural realities emerged.

Functionality for this song type can include solidarity, remembrance, awareness-raising, protest, provocation, prophecy, criticism, moralization, shaming, and exercise of free speech. Also, the functionality of a song depends in part on the contextual conditions for receptivity. If we take Ed McCurdy's 1950 anti-war standard, "Last Night I Had the Strangest Dream", we find it has seventy-six extant translations.¹⁰ What accounts for the tremendous popularity of this song in 1960s Denmark, for example? We can venture a hypothesis: the Danish version, "Jeg drømte en drøm i nat", closely echoes in form and imagery an old, well-known Danish ballad from the early 14th century, "Drømde mig en drøm i nat" (Dreamed a Dream in the Night), one that was already a part of the country's collective memory. Kaindl, following Worbs (1963), makes the points that "the meanings of popular songs are contextually contingent and... their translation depends on the socio-cultural background" of the receptors, and that translation research must therefore look at the socio-semiotic

frameworks—the systems and relationships that structure meaning (2005, 237-238). Signifying elements may even be intersemiotic and translanguistic. The Beatles' musical quotation of Claude Joseph Rouget De Lisle's "La Marseillaise" at the introduction of "All You Need is Love" (1967) wordlessly links popular uprising to a message of unity among all people, and thereby creates a nuanced idea: human bonds constitute a revolutionary force against oppression. The history of "La Marseillaise" shows that a song can be both nationalistic and anti-monarchy, depending on who was doing the singing and at what point in history (Drott, 2009, 29).

Finally, while many politically committed songs were unequivocal about injustices and solutions, some were ambiguous. Bob Dylan's "Blowin' in the Wind" features a famous refrain, "the answer is blowin' in the wind". In the contemporary French (Pierre Dorsay lyrics; performed by Richard Anthony, 1964) the line is rendered as "Écoute la réponse dans le vent" [lit., Listen to the answer on the wind], as if the answer were available; yet the case can be made that the original song offers no such closure, and functions as a rhetorical answer to rhetorical questions—that is, there are no answers just as easily as there are. Such matters of tone in song translation choices at bottom affect functionality.

4. 1960s political songs: six intercultural transfer processes

From our brief survey we can discern six general adaptation processes or their effects that 1960s political songs have undergone in their intercultural transfer:

Localization: the song about topical politics is adapted to other topical politics; example: "Birmingham"

Universalization: the song about a local reality is expanded to broader potential referentiality; example: "Marat/Sade" in Judy Collins' English

Trivialization: the political song is rendered non-political; example: "If I Had a Hammer" in Rita Pavone's Italian

Politicization: the relatively non-committed song by association¹¹ becomes a song of resistance; example: "Guantanamo" in English

Radicalization: the political song is transformed into a more violent, accusatory, or activist song; example: "Little Boxes" in Victor Jara's Spanish

Demilitarization: the song of armed struggle is made non-violent; example: "The Partisan" in Joan Baez' English

5. Conclusion

The dawn of World Music meant not only that genres were fusing but that songs were now international and cross-culturally evolving. Lest our study give the opposite impression, the translational 'trade barriers' in the universal song exchange were not entirely down in the 1960s. A.L. Lloyd (Lynskey, 2011, 46) took the stance that the

British folk revival should restrict itself to only genuinely British songs. For his part, Victor Jara lashed out against the commercialized 'protest music' from abroad that erected false idols constrained by the music industry, that "neutralized [young people's] innate spirit of rebellion" and constituted a "cultural invasion" (Jara, 1984, 121). These ideas point toward a conception of revolutionary song, particularly in the folk tradition, as exclusively *local*. In other instances we find a global consciousness—about war, human rights, class, labor—that finds expression in lyrics intended to be timeless, and unbound by specificities of place or language. Folk music, the tradition in which many of the works under consideration here fall, continues through the 'folk process', an intralingual and, as we demonstrate here, interlingual evolutionary course that incorporates change, editing and expurgating, reappropriation, and reinvention. The music may change, or the semantic content of the lyrics. Translated songs, as Kaindl reminds us, are mediated objects in an ideological, not merely textual, matrix, and should be considered "multiple texts that are inextricably linked to the institutions and social settings of musical production and reception" (2005, 240-1). And this is the lesson of translation, the malleability of the cultural artifact from place to place and through time, at once identity and difference, constituting a force for change as it itself changes.

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Notes:

¹ 'Spirituals of resistance' was Alan Lomax's term (1960, 450) for passed down ante-bellum slave songs; 'sorrow songs' is W.E.B. Dubois' (ibid.).

² I am using the revival as a catch-all for popular music of the day; as Cantwell notes, revival music made common cause from many sociopolitical positions against "the same adversary—mass or commercial culture. The various musics that prefigured or informed it—jazz, blues, calypso, rock-and-roll—were each of them touched with the spirit of protest" (1996, 356). I am, with similar flexibility, including a few works from the early 1970s in this study as part of the 1960s periodization, and works from neighboring genres. Naturally, several of the songs here became part of the 'commercial culture', perhaps paradoxically.

³ <http://alltheversions.blogspot.com/2010/06/carlos-puebla-1917-1989-cuba-spanish.html>; source for Dutch, French, and Russian: <http://www.marxists.org/subject/art/music/puebla-carlos/lyrics/hasta-siempre.htm>.

⁴ http://songlyrics2000.blogspot.com/2010_01_14_archive.html

⁵ Marc Gaffie, <http://leonardcohensite.com/partisaneng.htm>, consulted December 10, 2012.

⁶ This has become one of the most legally contested songs of recent years. Parties for Seeger-Orbon-Martí and Fernández, respectively, are wrangling in the courts over oral, collectivist tradition versus capitalist intellectual property (Manual, 2006, 124). As the works and translations of songs' original creators pass into the West, questions about exploitation arise (ibid., 142).

⁷ <http://alltheversions.blogspot.com/2010/09/in-year-2525-1969.html>

⁸ Garcia (2002) calls this process *restoration*, whereby the translation reterritorializes the work.

⁹ Guthrie's unexpurgated "This Land Is Your Land" is actually quite subversive; a parody of "God Bless America", its verses that indict America's inequalities and private property rarely see the light, furthering the misconception that the troubadour's critique is a schoolchildren's song.

¹⁰ <http://www.antiwarsongs.com>

¹¹ That is, songs sung at marches, picket lines, rallies, protests, jails, etc. assume the force of the context, whether or not their overt modes of signifying betray a political song.