



Vol. 10, No. 1, Fall 2012, 124-146
www.ncsu.edu/acontracorriente

Antonio Skármeta's Uniqueness

Randolph D. Pope
University of Virginia

I. "Juntos pero no mezclados" [Together, but not mixed]

What makes a writer unique? Why should we care about Antonio Skármeta (b. 1940) and wonder about his international success? So much is shared among writers—language, historical circumstances, methods of production and distribution, gender, a similar bone structure—that one can easily lift away from the particular and get a bird's eye view of a general framework that includes Skármeta as well as thousands of other writers. And yet there is a resilience that prevents his exchange for another male Chilean writer who participated in the political events that branded so many in his generation: Allende's election, Pinochet's coup, and exile.¹ We are not searching for a single factor that accounts for distinction. The uniqueness of an author is diverse from case to case, subtle, faint, a tinge more than a full color, and blended into a vast amount of shared

¹ For the impact of exile and diaspora in recent decades, see Amy K. Kaminsky's thoughtful and informative *After Exile: Writing the Latin American Diaspora*.

experiences, topics, concerns, traditions, and all that goes into writing. As cities share elements, such as streets, stores, sewage treatment, traffic rules, mail distribution, and so on, ultimately constituting synergistically very different Cochabamba, Mendoza, Santiago, or Paris, so writers are a constellation, a wide system rooted in time and space, collective and personal memory, main language systems and slang, with millennia of literature at their disposal, and a creative capacity which manifests itself differently. As there are many cities, there are innumerable producers of literature, among them some essential providers for the entertainment industry, others modestly typing ephemeral instant messages, all with their own merit. And yet a few stories or novels gain for themselves at least a temporary widespread presence and are reiterated in numerous editions, pinned into anthologies, encrusted in curricula, mentioned at conferences and morphed for television or movies. Skármeta's "La Cenicienta en San Francisco," "El ciclista del San Cristóbal," "La composición," *No pasó nada* and *Ardiente paciencia* are examples of survivals in the hunger games of literary distribution.²

There is one more step to consider beyond becoming particularly recognizable in the original language and in the area of its circulation. Very few writers acclaimed in their country and language actually become international bestsellers and surface in translations with real success. There are of course numerous translations that never take flight, yet do serve to add glow to writers' profiles and receptions at embassies. They await to be

² For an excellent overview of Skármeta's work one can consult Grinor Rojo's "Celebración de Antonio Skármeta," and, for an earlier period, Donald L. Shaw's *Antonio Skármeta and the Post Boom*. "El ciclista del San Cristóbal," beyond its original publication in Santiago by Quimantú in 1973, is included in *Cuentos hispanoamericanos*, edited by Mario Rodríguez Fernández and published in Santiago in 1994, reprinted in 2003; *16 cuentos latinoamericanos: Antología para jóvenes*, published in 1992 (with a Brazilian translation including "O ciclista do San Cristóbal," published in São Paulo); Poli Délano's 1996 *Cuento chileno contemporáneo: Breve antología* "The Cyclist of San Cristóbal Hill," for example, is included in *The Vintage Book of Latin American Stories*, edited by Julio Ortega and Carlos Fuentes in the year 2000. It was translated into German as *Radfahrer vom San Cristóbal* by Willi Zurbrüggen and published in München in Piper, 1986, reprinted in 1991; a French translation, *Le cycliste de San Cristobal* appears in Éditions du Seuil in 1984 and is reprinted in 2002. It was made into a movie, directed by Peter Lillienthal, in 1987. Today, of course, it is available in several sites of the internet such as <http://www.literatura.us/skarmeta/ciclista.html> [6/1/2012], and <http://www.letras.s5.com/skarmeta030303.htm> [6/1/2012].

discovered, and perhaps find unexpected readers in Helsinki or Budapest, but I am pointing here to those that take residence in many other literatures. As paragons, Cervantes and Goethe, Rumi and Ibsen, Balzac and Dostoevsky are familiar, nested and prolific in numerous and simultaneous languages and traditions. They are commodities, satisfying needs in vastly different markets without it mattering, to non-expert consumers, who produced them. Some of these international writers are pushed by metropolitan centers and strong publishing conglomerates, and often possess only a meteoric existence. A minuscule minority endures and receives the rare acclaim both of general readers and the attention of specialized literary critics. Of previous generations, to provide examples, among those who justly excel locally but fade abroad one finds Carlos Droguett (1912–1996), Elena Garro (1920-1998), Eduardo Mallea (1903-1982), and Héctor A. Murena (1923-1975), to name randomly a few notable figures, and among the few Latin American writers with deep and ample international presence we find Borges (1899-1986), García Márquez (b. 1927), and Vargas Llosa (b. 1936). From Spain, García Lorca (1898-1936) belongs in this rarefied group. To provide parallel examples from another languages, we will consider later in this essay the Japanese Haruki Murakami (b. 1949), who presents some similarities to Skármeta. Let me stress that this is not an allocation of quotients of quality, but the acknowledgment of a diversity of modes of circulation. For the purposes of Chilean literature, Alberto Blest Gana, María Luisa Bombal, and Manuel Rojas are irreplaceable, yet not particularly well known abroad. Stephen King is entertaining and may top the charts the world over, but leaves nary a trace.

Skármeta's novels and short stories have been translated into tens of languages, receiving significant honors: the Boccaccio International Prize of Literature for the Italian translation of *No pasó nada* in 1996; the Medici Prize for best foreign book published in French in 2001 for *La boda del poeta*, which also received the Grinzane Cavour prize in Italy that same year, the UNESCO Prize of 2003 for *La redacción*, and the Ennio Flaiano International Prize in 2006 for his work in general, but especially for *El baile de la Victoria*, prizes in addition to the ones he has received in

Spanish: Premio Casa de las Américas in 1968 for *Desnudo en el tejado*; Premio Altazor in 1999 for *La boda del poeta*; Premio Planeta 2003 for *El baile de la Victoria*, which also received the Premio Municipal de Literatura de Santiago de Chile in 2004, and finally, up to this writing, the 2011 Premio Planeta-Casa de América for *Los días del arcoíris*. This recitation is not an idle exercise in commemoration, but the reaffirmation of the validity of the question we pursue here: What makes Skármeta an internationally successful writer? The variety and importance of the prizes demonstrate he has attained that category, but do little to explain why.³

II. Visionary Writing

The printed page, the text, made Borges, García Márquez and Vargas Llosa into world-renowned writers. There is something solid, recognizable as their imprint, which does not quite melt into the air as it transmutes to various languages. As with Kafka, Faulkner, or Flaubert, when asked about them we must point to their unique way of crafting a story, mapping a world with words, completing a sentence with a *mot juste*, that is, creating a page which cannot be abstracted or stated differently, explicated, without betrayal of its unique power of fascination. While some of their pages inspired movies and operas, the result has been far from memorable.⁴ The writers who followed, though, have struggled to have an

³ Skármeta's excellent "página oficial" in the internet has a comprehensive list of translations:

<http://www.clubcultura.com/clubliteratura/clubescritores/skarmeta/index.htm>

⁴ A sharp and witty contribution by Lulu de la Nausée, which I assume is a penname, to Opera-L Archives states: "Faulkner novels would of course provide much drama for an opera! All those secrets, all that sweat and grime and faded glamour....," but continues wisely, considering *Absalom, Absalom*: "This novel is as much...or more...about how one constructs a story as about what the story itself is, and I would be offended were an opera to present just the 'Thomas Sutpen story'." <http://listserv.bccls.org/cgi-bin/wa?A2=ind0002C&L=OPERA-L&P=158215> [May 29, 2012] *Offense* is worth meditating upon. An opera libretto by Laura Jehn Menides exists for *As I Lay Dying*. Opera Memphis has produced a one-act operatic version of the first chapter of *Light in August*, and a project for an opera based on *As I Lay Dying* was not completed, both written and composed by David Olney, Tom House, Karren Pell, and Tommy Goldsmith (Kartiganer xxv–xxvi). Daniel Catán second opera, *Florencia en el Amazonas*, was inspired by *Love in the Time of Cholera*. The libretto is by Marcela Fuentes-Berain. It was premiered in Houston on October 25, 1996. Matthew Welch has composed an opera based on Borges and which has received its first performance on May 2012. <http://roulette.org/events/experiments-in-opera-borges-and-the-other-with-music-by-matthew-welch-and-a-text-adapted-from-jorge-luis-borge/> The

equal recognition. As Juan Armando Epple noted in a pioneering and perceptive effort to trace a profile of what he called “Estos novísimos narradores hispanoamericanos,” those writers who were starting to publish around 1960 have “un afán de renovación” (144). Since Epple is too close to the phenomenon he is trying to describe, he justifiably fails to give a precise diagnostic.⁵ Looking back it is clear that there were many different ways in which this renovation occurred, but for Skármeta we can indicate a new vocabulary and a new attitude, in addition to the fact that he knew how to tell a story without becoming trapped in the whirls and ostentations of literary language. (Nothing wrong, of course, with Pedro Prado or the masterful Lezama Lima or Carpentier, but Skármeta is not competing with them.)

Remembering Skármeta's short stories, at least in my case, is not being haunted by a happy phrase or a bunch of words to treasure, but to keep memories of having inhabited a world and shared an experience. I believe, as I am sure many readers do, I pedaled my way up the San Cristóbal with his prodigious cyclist. I almost remember being such a penniless foreign student in New York that I sold my blood, spending then the proceeds, ashamed and defiant, to hear Ella Fitzgerald sing live. I seem to have known the Chilean adolescent in Argentina and Germany who earned his friendships with fistfights. And wasn't I there when one of my former students, now a policeman, came to greet me in what seemed a coded warning? And so on. His description of a terrorist shooting in the Fiumicino airport of Rome (in “De la sangre al petróleo”) is so vivid, it so

Ecuadorian composer Mesías Maiguashca composed *Los enemigos*, premiered in Karlsruhe, Germany, in 1997, based on Borges' “El milagro secreto.”

⁵ “Los rasgos básicos que, a primera vista, los han ido distinguiendo frente a la tradición anterior, conforman una articulación muy especial: por una parte, demuestran un conocimiento atento de la literatura precedente y una apropiación libre de todos los valores que ha gestado (concepción de la literatura, procedimientos narrativos, etc.), y por otra, hacen gala de una desenfadada capacidad para subvertir los modelos consagrados por esa tradición y tentar nuevas vías de apropiación y organización de esa experiencia vital, vías que van fundándose como una aventura lingüística en que el ludismo y la imaginación desacralizan constantemente lo estatuido poniendo al desnudo las constantes precarias de la realidad” (145). This is a good description of what any generation does to distinguish itself from the previous one. From close to seventy writers he mentions among these *novísimos*, only five are women, missing one of the most important and lasting revolutions of the period, as women authors went from marginal in the canon to essential and even of predominant interest.

much put me in place, that I asked Skármeta in jest if he had been there during the incident. He had, truly. As a storyteller, then, he creates the illusion of transparency, attaining the most difficult appearance of ease. The traces of labor have been wiped away, leaving only the incandescent, three-dimensional event.

When approaching a period of the past and its creative production, they seem givens, but are the result of inertia from the many and of an enormous creative effort by the few. Antonio Machado in his autobiographical poem “Retrato” noted that “a distinguir me paro las voces de los ecos”, describing not just the poet’s quest, but also the task of critics. Skármeta arrives with a creator’s voice, an imaginative voice, hardly an echo. There is much more to it, but the starting point must be to recognize him as a creator, a visionary of sorts. To avoid misunderstandings, the claim is that this is one of the factors of Skármeta’s irreplaceable nature, not the only one, and there are other writers of this generation who share this admirable talent. Ariel Dorfman’s (b. 1942) *Death and the Maiden* and Luisa Valenzuela’s “Cambio de armas,” for example, also excel by creating a complex, believable, emblematic—yet not bloodless—situation that is then seen both as newly minted and apparently existing beyond the page, a sort of unforgettable literary trompe l’oeil.

As is always the case in any generation, beyond the general similarities, the writers who excel have their own very particular voices, different among them and markedly distinct from their predecessors. In what follows I attempt to describe Skármeta’s unique intervention in a wider conversation, where topics are shared (repression, social concerns, diverse media, and so on), but no one would mistake a text by Luisa Valenzuela, Diamela Eltit, or César Aira with one by Skármeta. The depth and variety of this generation is impressive, especially when considered, as in this collection of essays, as a cohort of very diverse individual creators.

III. The Choice of Words

There is, evidently, the language of this voice. The first time I saw Skármeta, he was on a TV screen, being interviewed by José Promis on the occasion of the publication of *El entusiasmo*, a short stories collection

published by Zig Zag in Santiago in 1967. He did not look or sound at all as any of the writers then in vogue in Chile, who usually were correct, diplomatic, anxious to show their literary sophistication, and boring for young university students in Valparaíso as I was then. Skármeta read part of "La Cenicienta en San Francisco." The adventures of Chileans who had gone to California were well known: Neruda recalls one in *Fulgor y muerte de Joaquín Murieta*, which was published in 1967 by Zig-Zag and Fernando Alegria's *Caballo de copas* (1957, also published by Zig-Zag) had been successful. But Skármeta's story was very different. It was not only that it corresponded to the shift of the cool from Paris to London, New York and California, but the tone was unmistakably ours, with guitars and beer, an irreverent mix of Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and Saint-John Perse (still alive then [1887–1975]), Goethe and Cinderella, and casual sex in a bramble of cities connected by the inscrutable wanderings of a youthful quest: San Francisco, Rio de Janeiro, Puerto Montt, New York, and Santiago.⁶ The protagonist even peed on the fire escape and on the bus... Irreverent indeed, uncouth, shocking.⁷

These early stories and his first two novels incorporated numerous words that were colloquial and yet seemed perfectly in place, not just snippets of local color sprinkled in italics. Ariel Dorfman noted, writing about *La insurrección*, that "toda la obra de Skármeta ha sido una búsqueda de renovación del lenguaje, intentando refrescarlo, desabrocharlo, desnudarlo, volverlo a vestir como para una boda" (*Hacia la liberación* 166). The 1975 edition in Editorial Planeta in Barcelona of *Soñé que la nieve ardía* brings just the text, daringly expecting Peninsular Spanish speakers to work out the meaning of Chilean references and words,

⁶ It is fortunately hard to even remember now how impossibly wild and improbable it seemed then in a very conservative Chile to make love in an attic to a woman whom the character had just met and would leave a few hours later. Ah, San Francisco! That some change has occurred since then, but not too much, can be seen in Pía Rajecic's *El libro abierto del amor y el sexo en Chile*, who writes: "en plena transición el escenario había cambiado y era un secreto a voces que se había tendido un manto de silencio sobre ciertos temas, entre los que curiosamente se encontraban la sexualidad y distintos aspectos de la vida amorosa" (17).

⁷ Rita Felski in her wise *Uses of Literature* suggests four categories towards a positive phenomenology of reading, including recognition, enchantment, knowledge, and shock, the last one rooted in perceptions about the storyteller made famous by Walter Benjamin. All these categories work well to understand Skármeta's effectiveness as a writer.

but the second edition appeared six years later in LAR containing a glossary, prepared by Soledad Bianchi, entitled “Mínimas explicaciones (en el orden de la novela),” with data about proper names, places, and expressions. These fourteen pages are the scars of the travel, of the text’s errancy, the result of derretorialization, of becoming foreign. Bianchi affirms in her prologue that “la maestría en el uso del lenguaje es uno de los mayores logros de esta novela” (6), indicating the variety of registers used by the characters, including at times a “buscada cursilería” (6), which is part of the faithful reproduction of the period’s linguistic energy. Skármeta, as he becomes an international writer, at times will bleach out the traces of the local. In his 2001 *La chica del trombón*, a novel with many pages of lively dialogue and engaging characters, one can find nevertheless paragraphs that seem airbrushed of all personal flavor:

Cuánta más bella era la muerte en la pantalla que en la mediocre vida. En el cine los hombres horadaban la dulce tierra con palas y picos, transpiraban gruesas gotas de sudor verdadero, los empleados de las funerarias se ubicaban en un semicírculo como en un coro solemne, el cura, siempre un pariente del difunto, oraba con gesto hierático y el responso final incluía alguna cita poética que intentaba darle sentido al dolor de todos los deudos y de nosotros, los espectadores.

Los parientes vestían de espeso e impecable luto, y a viuda arrojaba con dignidad, superando en última instancia los vértigos de un desmayo, la simple flor sobre el féretro antes que cayera la tierra final sobre su lustrosa madera. (63)

These correct yet very standard sentences conceal many choices: *bella/hermosa/bonita* or any other term young people would use today for this term, *pantalla/telón*, *horadar/cavar*, *transpirar/sudar*, *funerarias/pompas fúnebres*, *oraba/rezaba*, *gesto hierático/solemne*, *espeso/grueso*, *arrojaba/tiraba*, *féretro/ataúd*, *lustrosa/brillante/pulida*, and so on. In each case the choice decides in favor of the more international and traditionally literary term, defanging the prose, writing in that international “depurated” Spanish to which we are used in academic conferences.

In this temporary claudication for a broader audience he is not alone. A comparison between early Vargas Llosa and his recent publications is disheartening, since much of the spark is gone. In his 1967 *Los cachorros*, for example, one finds crisp and lively youthful expressions:

“... los estudios comenzaron a importarle menos. Y se comprendía, ni tonto que fuera, ya no le hacía falta chancar: se presentaba a los exámenes con promedios muy bajos y los Hermanos lo pasaban, malos ejercicios y óptimo, pésimas tareas y aprobado. Desde el accidente te soban, le decíamos, no sabías nada de quebrados y, qué tal raza, te pusieron dieciséis” (63). In his introduction to the first edition of *Los cachorros*, Carlos Barral recounts meeting Vargas Llosa and being struck by his pattern of speech: “Construye con precisión, como en la lengua escrita, en una prosa complacida, a menudo salpicada, como sus textos, de locuciones que no deben ser ni peruanismos, que deben pertenecer a un habla de grupo, que deben ser localismos atesorados con sensualidad” (43). José Miguel Oviedo writes in the introduction to *Los cachorros*:

La intimidad (o complicidad) con el lector está asegurada también por el uso copioso de expresiones de la jerga colegial y por la insinuante captación de los timbres orales (un poco cariñosos, un poco pícaros) del lenguaje limeño. La jerga y los usos locales no son una novedad para los que han pasado por las novelas de Vargas Llosa, pero su frecuencia es aquí mucho más alta que en cualquiera de sus otras obras, y hasta puede temerse que los menos familiarizados con esos giros perderán muchos matices importantes de la historia. (33)

In contrast, Vargas Llosa's 2010 *El sueño del celta* is so decaffeinated and stilted that my first expectation as a reader was that I would soon discover the first chapters, as in the case of many in his masterful *La tía Julia y el escribidor*, would be dead-on parodies of an alien literary style. A characteristic example:

El prefecto recibió a la Comisión en su despacho y les ofreció vasos de cerveza, jugos de frutas y tazas de café. Había hecho traer sillas y les repartió unos abanicos de paja para que se airearan. Seguía con el pantalón de montar y las botas que lucía la víspera, pero ya no llevaba el chaleco bordado, sino una chaqueta blanca de lino y una camisa cerrada hasta el cuello, como los blusones rusos. Tenía un aire distinguido con sus sienes nevadas y sus maneras elegantes. (165)

Amazing.

As literary critics it is far too easy to discount the importance of the marketplace and the price a writer pays when she or he becomes mired in local slang and local problems to the point readers can no longer follow. This is not just a concern for Spanish speaking writers, as excellent as

Vargas Llosa and Skármeta are. The most successful Japanese writer today in the US is Haruki Murakami (b. 1949). Some of his novels, such as *Norwegian Wood*, which propelled him to international fame in 1987, and *Kafka on the Shore* (2002), are about young rebellious, dissatisfied, loners, familiar with rock music and suffering various forms of frustrated love. A translator into Japanese of Raymond Carver, Murakami's short stories have the quirkiness and rapid trace that characterize also Skármeta's. In my opinion his most complex and fascinating novel is *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, which starts out with an unemployed lawyer cooking spaghetti, moves on to the search of a lost cat, and then slashes away onto brutal events of the Japanese past, while spending time in dry magical wells trying to reconnect with the protagonist's wife.⁸ What surprises many readers, though, is that this novel, written mostly while Murakami was a writer in residence at Princeton, seems so familiar in its references. It is only when one reads the very small print that one realizes that it was "translated and adapted from the Japanese by Jay Rubin with the participation of the author." A citizen of Tokyo can of course boil a potful of spaghetti "while whistling along with an FM broadcast of the overture to Rossini's *The Thieving Magpie*" (5), conducted by Claudio Abbado. "A well without water. A bird that can't fly. An alley with no exit" (66), the basic elements in the set of the novel's action, could be anywhere. And it is possible that the owner of the cleaner's is listening to "an Andy Williams tape" (80), but this is Japanese-light, adapted for the market. An amusing piece by Sam Anderson in *The New York Times* of 21 October 2011, "The Fierce Imagination of Haruki Murakami," started out as follows:

I prepared for my first-ever trip to Japan, this summer, almost entirely by immersing myself in the work of Haruki Murakami. This turned out to be a horrible idea. Under the

⁸ I believe Michiko Kakutani missed the point in her negative review in *The New York Times*: "While Mr. Murakami seems to have tried to write a book with the esthetic heft and vision of, say, Don DeLillo's *Underworld* or Salman Rushdie's *The Moor's Last Sight*, he is only intermittently successful. *Wind-Up Bird* has some powerful scenes of antic comedy and some shattering scenes of historical power, but such moments do not add up to a satisfying, fully fashioned novel. In trying to depict a fragmented, chaotic and ultimately unknowable world, Mr. Murakami has written a fragmentary and chaotic book." Why should an internationally successful novel be "fully fashioned"? Fragmentary and chaotic, how delightful! If I bring this comparison into play is because often Skármeta is placed in the wrong context and misjudged.

influence of Murakami, I arrived in Tokyo expecting Barcelona or Paris or Berlin—a cosmopolitan world capital whose straight-talking citizens were fluent not only in English but also in all the nooks and crannies of Western culture: jazz, theater, literature, sitcoms, film noir, opera, rock n' roll. But this, as really anyone else in the world could have told you, is not what Japan is like at all. Japan—real, actual, visitable Japan—turned out to be intensely, inflexibly, unapologetically Japanese.

Indeed, one critic, Myles Chilton, has spoken of Murakami's invented Tokyo.⁹ Adalberto Bolaño Sandoval in a study of *Kafka on the Shore*, which he finds develops “un concepto de ficción más atractivo, más acorde con las necesidades de un tipo determinado de lectores—y con la globalización” (1), indicates correctly that

a Murakami lo ha seguido una caterva de insobornables lectores, pero al mismo tiempo el desdén de críticos y colegas de su propio país y de otras latitudes, pues consideran de poco valor una narrativa que apela—señalan—a lo popular, a las viejas y socorridas temática del amor, la soledad, el sexo y la música, a lo extranjero, pero, por sobre todo, por retomar lo fantástico como elemento constante de su narrativa.(2)¹⁰

Skármeta succumbed to the temptation of the purely international in *Match-Ball*, which in spite of being a clever, intertextual novel which involves a Harvard-educated doctor and a fifteen-year old German tennis player, has not found much favor among his critics. Marcelo Coddou started an interview with Skármeta stating, “Extraña novela ésta dentro de tu producción narrativa” (“Entrevista” 579), but also wrote a very

⁹ Susan Fisher in “An Allegory of Return: Murakami Haruki's *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*” describes well the tension in Murakami between Western models (“He even claims to have developed his distinctive style by writing first in English, and then translating into Japanese” [155]), and his embracing of Japanese tradition. Postcolonial theory has analyzed extensively the difficulties of writing in languages controlled by a metropolitan center. For the realities of the distribution of literary texts, Pascale Casanova's *The World Republic of Letters* is invaluable, in spite of her natural overvaluing of Paris as most important center up to the seventies of the past century.

¹⁰ Bolaño Sandoval gives a perfect description of Murakami's craft, one that in many ways could also apply to Skármeta: “Lo que hace atractiva la lectura de Murakami es la conjugación de diversos motivos y temáticas: la tragedia convertida en susurro cotidiano, la nostalgia de un pasado que no se cumplió y el presente no puede redimir, una escritura envolvente e hipnótica, los personajes perdidos en medio de la resignación, la soledad y la confusión en esas experiencias, la profusión de elementos oníricos y mágicos que muestran a los personajes con sus inseguridades y miedos, transformándose la literatura en un arcano de lo inexplicable pero cotidiano, y al mismo tiempo una estrategia de Sherezada para crear historias dentro de la historia y manejar la tensión o expectativas”(2).

encomiastic review in which he stressed its “humor a todo dar” and predicted that “la novela hará el deleite de quienes ven a un escritor en total posesión de su oficio, multivalente, con proyecciones amplias y diversas, dueño y señor de un lenguaje propio, desenfadado, irreverente” (“*Match Ball*, novela de Antonio Skármeta”). But this topic, which still allowed his playful language, had unmoored him from his other strengths, connected to the middle class and Chilean history. European aristocracy and jetsetters had many other writers to sing their critical rhapsodies. Skármeta saw himself lucidly: “I am a writer who derives pleasure from framing his characters within the problems of his own lifetime, and as a citizen it is my vocation not to accept the repressed language that society prescribes. I am a naïve believer in literature as praxis not only of fantasy but also of freedom” (“The Book Show” 49). As Antaeus, he remains strong as long as he is in contact with the ground. The whole point of this section has been to suggest that even among towering writers an amazing skill with words cannot sustain their work by itself. As I will indicate next, the topic matters.

IV. An Engaging Dialogue

A moment in the “La Cenicienta en San Francisco” can help us highlight another characteristic that defines Skármeta: the smiling humor of many of his dialogues. He is seldom sarcastic or drastically ironic, his approach being more compassionate and nibbling, rather than mordant. The protagonist, named Antonio, which serves to stress the autobiographical aura of the story, attempts to explain to Abby, his partner for the night, where Chile is, spreading out a map of Latin America he keeps folded within a pocket book. After Antonio points out the representation of the Andes, which he has told Abby he sees in Santiago every morning as he goes to the university, she concludes Chile must run parallel to the mountain range and misidentifies Argentina as Chile. Later historical events and the easier access to information about the world have made Chile today a well-known player, but the experience of invisibility we Chileans experimented abroad in the sixties (similar to what today many citizens of African countries must encounter in Latin America) is superbly captured in the following lines:

—Mira, Antonio, si ahí está el mar—indicó con un dedo el azul del Pacífico—y aquí la cordillera de los Andes, que tú ves todas las mañanas cuando caminas, emputecido por Santiago, y aquí está la Argentina, entonces Chile está en la Argentina y tiene que ser esto que está aquí.

—No—repliqué—. Lo que estás mostrando es Mendoza. Una ciudad de Argentina.

—¿Has estado allí?—preguntó.

—Sí—dije.

—¿Y aquí?—señaló Salta.

—No—contesté.

—¿Por qué?

—No sé. Fíjate bien ahora.

Puse la uña del dedo central en el punto del mapa que decía Arica,¹¹ y la tiré hacia abajo dejando una frágil hendidura en el papel ajado por tantos ajetreos.

—¿Ves eso?—pregunté.

—Sí—dijo.

—Chile.

—¡Eso! (32–33)

Much of Skármeta's work has continued this early, seminal scene, with the writer responding to the gasp of surprise from Abby, who can hardly believe a thin line of territory can be a real country.¹² In 1960 California had 15, 850,000 inhabitants, almost double Chile's eight million. What Skármeta highlights in this story, and later in many of his works, is that while people are not happy in Chile, they are far from crushed: "están empezando" (34). This should remind us that happiness, a state of mind exalted as an ideal and attached as a supposed byproduct of objects (cars, shoes), activities (travel, vacations), accomplishments (admission to a university, attainment of tenure), is, as Schopenhauer exactly saw, transient, disappointing, and enervating. The true energy comes from a healthy dissatisfaction, a longing for a better future, as superbly described by Ernst Bloch in his *Dass Prinzip Hoffnung* and a fact well known in Madison Avenue. Skármeta's writing is seeped in enthusiasm, attentive to harshness, injustice, and frustration, but never defeatist or dejected. There

¹¹ Oddly the translation of this story in from *Watch Where the Wolf is Going* is "the point of the map that said America," but the original reads "en el punto del mapa que decía Arica" (*El entusiasmo* 33). This erasure of Arica under America is amusing or distressing, or both.

¹² Chile has been intriguing to Chilean writers themselves, as the examples of Isabel Allende's 2003 *Mi país inventado* and the much earlier *Chile o una loca geografía* (1940) by Benjamín Subercaseaux (1902–1973).

is a surprising definition of Antonio's (the character in the story) conception of being a writer:

- ¿Qué haces? —dijo.
- ¿Qué quieres decir?
- ¿A qué te dedicas? ¿Qué haces en Chile?
- Quiero ser escritor—dije.
- ¿No lo eres ya?—preguntó.
- Me gusta la vida—respondí.
- ¿Toda la vida?
- Toda.
- Las enfermedades y las guerras, y el dolor y la soledad, ¿también?
- En cierto sentido, sí. (26)

This *sí* is enormously powerful and reminds me of Molly Bloom's final *yes* in Joyce's *Ulysses*. In spite of everything, of the humility of one day, only faintly connected to the great epic by resonance and echoes, Antonio and Molly affirm the worth of living. Liking life would hardly be an appropriate characteristic to describe the writers of the boom and their predecessors. They may have loved the land, great literary works (especially European), travel and the fireworks of language, but life was too contaminated by centuries-long injustice, widespread corruption, racism, economic exploitation, and senseless violence to make it more than the subject of criticism and denunciation. Too much celebration risked being naïve, reactionary, and even a form of betrayal of the writers' responsibility to their continent. This mantle of reasonable gloom—there is much in our history, as in most other regions of the world, to repudiate and not let slide into comfortable oblivion—has continued in most other writers of Skármeta's generation, feeding the general tendency, especially in the US, to concentrate teaching and research on the Latin American dismal: dictators, poverty, dirty wars, corruption, and so on. (This is not too different from the fact that one of the most frequently offered seminars about Spain is on the Spanish Civil War.) With copper, fruit, flowers, cellulose pulp, and coffee, Spanish-speaking countries have provided the United States another valuable commodity, a steady flow of reasons to feel good about the US and its exceptionalism, only disrupted by tornadoes or a heavy snow storm. A rather longish but I hope justifiable quote from Ariel Dorfman's *Los sueños nucleares de Reagan*, the start of a section entitled "Nuestra nieve invisible," brilliant in its formulation of a pedagogical

comparison, exemplifies this tendency to decant the great variety of daily life in Latin America to its faults and shortcomings:

Después de casi diez años de exilio, sólo tengo que mirar por la ventana para sentirme de vuelta en mi país. Este invierno norteamericano, el peor del siglo, ha transformado el paisaje en algo tristemente familiar.

No es la nieve, le digo yo a mis amigos. Al sur, la nieve es algo que adorna los falsos árboles de Navidad, las remotas cordilleras, los ventisqueros antárticos. Lo que resulta familiar es más bien el desastre que ha traído esta nieve.

Basta con mirar por la ventana o mirar por esa ventana menos amplia que es el televisor con sus noticias inmisericordes, y heme ahí, de nuevo en el Tercer Mundo, como si nunca hubiera tenido que salir de mis propias tierras.

Millones de niños sin escuela; gente muriéndose en las calles; un transporte atestado, que no respeta horarios; incontables hogares que carecen de agua o electricidad; fábricas funcionando a medio vapor; un panorama que he visto, y sufrido, antes. Hasta el ritmo de la vida rememora la lentitud de otras latitudes, como si la nieve nos hubiera atrapado en una cámara que apenas anda. La famosa eficiencia norteamericana se ha convertido en un pantano.

Así son las cosas siempre, todos los días, en nuestros países, les explico a amigos y a conocidos, absurdamente feliz de haber hallado una imagen que comunique y esclarezca nuestra infamante situación. (221-22)

Dorfman's perception is partly accurate, but his insight has also the proverbial blindness rolled into it. On the one side, dreadful schools and unemployed workers do not magically stop north of the Río Grande. On the other, a visit to contemporary Santiago, Buenos Aires, or Mexico City (and countless other cities—I mention only those I know relatively well) reveals that they easily dwarf most cities in the US not only in development, but also in opportunity and sophistication. The rich intellectual vigor of writers of the generation of '72 emerges from a strong city culture, be it Bogotá, Buenos Aires, Havana, México City, Montevideo, or Santiago. If they become exiles instead of expatriates or *transplantados*, it is because their roots are deep in societies which incorporate European and United States' cultural elements (not always to their liking), but have their own very specific, and valuable, irreplaceable life. The accomplishments of Latin American industry, education, and art are immense, yet I have found myself often defending them in front of administrators who wish to internationalize the university by establishing centers in Hungary (where

few in my institution speak the language) or in the far East, instead of the more reasonable and familiar Latin America. Few of my undergraduate students are interested in researching the amazingly resilient creative aspects of a prosperous economy, but their eyes light up with dictatorship and torture. The constant stream of negative information—exact, well-meaning, but partial—does little to provide a broader picture of contemporary Latin America, where the situation is not wholly *infamante*. A recent article in the 2012 *Latin American Research Review*, “Satisfacción de vida en Costa Rica,” by Mariano Rojas and Maikol Elizondo-Lara, starts out from the puzzling, even scandalous result of a 2008 Gallup poll of 140 nations which concluded Costa Ricans have the highest level of life satisfaction in the world, even if their per capita income is relatively low, a point worth mulling over. This is a Scylla and Charybdis situation: each generation must remember anew and dispel its own surrounding darkness (and risk being swallowed up by the past in bitter darkness), but also must find its own ray of hope to travel forward (and risk faulty maps, treasonable illusions, and complicit silences).

Skármeta, I would claim, has found a wise middle road. His first novel, *Soñé que la nieve ardía* (snow again, but this time on fire with enthusiasm), starts out with individual hope, provincial Arturo’s pursuit of soccer success in the capital. He will be swept away into a larger wave of hope, the movement that resulted in the election of a socialist president opening the way to move from utopian thought to its implementation. Grínor Rojo observes that the displacement from margin to center, from private dream to shared project, from superficial to profound, is frequently found in Skármeta’s work. His choice of words is most insightful:

Estoy aludiendo a su frecuente trabajo sobre un asunto que no por estar cargado de tradición es menos suyo; que no tenía antes y que mucho menos tiene ahora para él nada de imaginario; que se halla inscrito en su biografía y que desde ella se abstrae e influye en la composición de un gran número de sus relatos haciendo que éstos articulen sus fábulas en torno al desplazamiento del protagonista desde un *habitat* conocido a otro desconocido. (“Notas” 100)

The topic of transitioning to a different environment and facing a reconfiguration of the self is indeed old and frequent, and Skármeta himself went from Antofagasta, in the North of Chile, to Santiago, from there to

Buenos Aires, back to Santiago, and then to an exile that would lead him to many years in Berlin. What needs to be stressed, though, is that these successive uprootings could have led to chaos and destruction. The predominant definition of the novel at the time of Skármeta's early writing was Georg Lukács', who claimed that the great model was Balzac, who had created "the novel of disillusionment, which shows how the conception of life of those living in a *bourgeois* society . . . is shattered by the brute forces of capitalism" (*Studies in European Realism* 47). In consequence there was no space for personal fulfillment, and "only those who have given up or must give up their personal happiness can pursue social, non-selfish aims" (52). This is an accurate description of what happens to Arturo, who only by renouncing his personal pursuit and blending into a social aim attains friendship and love.

The inner form of the novel has been understood as the process of the problematic individual's journeying towards himself, the road from dull captivity within a merely present reality—a reality that is heterogeneous in itself and meaningless to the individual—towards clear self-recognition. After such self-recognition has been attained, the ideal thus formed irradiates the individual's life as its immanent meaning; but the conflict between what is and what should be has not been abolished and cannot be abolished in the sphere wherein these events take place—the life sphere of the novel; only a maximum conciliation—the profound and intensive irradiation of a man by his life's meaning—is attainable. The immanence of meaning which the form of the novel requires lies in the hero's finding out through experience that a mere glimpse of meaning is the highest that life has to offer, and that this glimpse is the only thing worth the commitment of an entire life, the only thing by which the struggle will have been justified. The process of finding out extends over a lifetime, and its direction and scope are given with its normative content, the way towards a man's recognition of himself. (*The Theory of the Novel* 80)

One may be puzzled today, in a time of ironic skepticism, about how such a description was so meaningful for our generation, when the belief in the effectivity of communal action still was dogma and the images of Fidel's entry into Havana were deeply engraved in social discourse.¹³ There had

¹³ It is worth noting that the postmodern skepticism is limited outside academia (in a sense, unfortunately), where conviction drives stark contests in politics and the law. A recent article by Alan Kirby in *Philosophy Now*, "The Death of Postmodernism and Beyond," claims that "the terms by which authority, knowledge, selfhood, reality and time are conceived have been altered, suddenly

been enough problematic individuals, falling into nausea, caught in no exit rooms or cast as outsiders, circulating gloomily in black and white Nordic landscapes, perhaps playing chess with Death, or hearing that outside the Church there was no salvation as a cold eclipse swallowed up the neon lights of aseptic new cities, so that new voices were necessary. Skármeta once and again presented the radically uncomplicated belief in the value of solidarity, political action for justice and a better world, intermingled with good sex, laughter and even sports. While *Ardiente paciencia* ends tragically and a bitter taste, Skármeta affirms that “expresa la alegría del crecimiento humano, la expansión de la democracia en Chile. Es todo el pasado democrático chileno el que yo celebro en mi literatura” (Figueroa 27). While celebration prevails, he adds that “también expreso el dolor de la convivencia perdida.” In *Soñé que la nieve ardía*, *La chica del trombón*, and *Ardiente paciencia* one of the protagonists is the political transformation that is encompassing all private concerns and moving the country to the socialist government. More than expressed ideologically, it is represented as an energy tide that has a transformational effect. If in two of the novels we can see the end of the dream—*La chica del trombón* ends with a young boy, the future generation, sounding the claxon in celebration—the main focus is a radiant activity that touches and improves people. *La insurrección* pursues the same topic in Nicaragua. Finally, in his most recent novel, *Los días del arcoíris*, he presents the publicists’ improbable feat of tipping the balance towards a negative vote in the 1988 national plebiscite that proposed that Pinochet continue for another eight years. (*La boda del poeta* and *El baile de la Victoria* have other main topics.)

Each one of these novels about Chilean politics would merit a detailed analysis, but for our present purposes we need just to state that

and forever,” noting the most of the novels taught in courses about postmodern literature were written before most students were born. Skármeta cannot be described as postmodern and this may make him more contemporary. Another obituary concerns postcolonial theory, discussed by Robert JC Young in “Postcolonial Remains.” He notes that “the desire to pronounce postcolonial theory dead on both sides of the Atlantic suggests its presence continues to disturb and provoke anxiety: the real problem lies in the fact that the postcolonial remains. Why does it continue to unsettle people so much?” (19). I believe a reading of Skármeta’s work as in part postcolonial and unsettling would be useful, since he exemplifies that the oppressed will not be silenced or ultimately defeated.

Skármeta has found here a subject with international resonance for which he cares deeply and for which he has shown a unique angle, still imbued with enthusiasm in spite of the difficulties of an obstinate classist society and strong, unbridled capitalism. But, in addition, there is a relatively infrequent factor to take into consideration: the morphing of his narrative.

A disconcerting phenomenon associated with Skármeta's novels is that they surface under a variety of names. While it is customary to find short stories reshuffled and packaged under different titles, the same is not usual with novels. *Ardiente paciencia* is translated as *Burning Patience*, but then becomes *The Postman (Il Postino)* in English, and *El cartero de Neruda* in Spanish; *Match ball* is *Love-fifteen* and then *La velocidad del amor*; *El baile de la Victoria* becomes *The Dancer and the Thief*. Clearly some of these changes are due to the great success of the 1994 movie *Il Postino*, directed by Michael Radford, others to making the title more marketable. But beyond the softness of the original title there is in several cases a great variety of approximations to the topic which decenter or reframe the novel as part of a continuing creative process. Yanis Gordils, who studies some of these variations, calls them "metáforas en espejos repetidos" ("El mundo como metáfora" 331), but they seem to me more as jazz melodies implemented always with some difference in various media.

With the German film director Peter Lilienthal he collaborates in *La Victoria* ([a reference to the victory of socialism and to a poor neighborhood in Santiago] 1973), *Es herrscht Ruhe im Land* (En el país reina la calma [the Chilean coup recreated in Portugal] 1976) and *Der Aufstand* (La insurrección [on Nicaragua and the triumph of Sandinismo] 1980). The novel *La insurrección* was then preceded by the movie. Similarly *Ardiente paciencia* will migrate in different incarnations, including a radioplay, a play on the stage, a film directed by Skármeta himself in Portugal in 1983, a novel in 1985, the movie *Il Postino* in 1994, a musical *The postman and the Poet*, performed in London in June 2011, and the opera *Il Postino* with music by Daniel Catán from 2010, in which Plácido Domingo sung the role of Neruda both at the LA Opera House and in Paris. The movie deviated significantly from the novel, changing the time period, moving the action from Isla Negra to Capri, and removing most of

the political implications of the action.¹⁴ Equally, his writing about the 1988 referendum began with a play which received a few presentations, one of them in Madrid during the Semana de Autor dedicated to Skármeta in the Casa de América in April of 2009, which served as the basis to the script for the movie *No*, directed by Pablo Larraín and with the protagonism of Gael García Bernal, premiered in Cannes. The film received the Art Cinema Award in the Directors' Fortnight section and will be distributed by Sony Pictures Classics, which promises a repeat of the success enjoyed by *Il Postino*. The novel *Los días del arcoíris* (2011) also focuses on the referendum, but with a larger number of characters and a slightly different story. One can imagine that eventually it will be retitled *No...* Several of Skármeta's novels appeared first in translation and then in Spanish, among them *No pasó nada* (also titled *Chileno!*) and *La insurrección*, and there are in this later case several differences between versions. Speaking about the different outlets for his narrations, he recently wrote in "Elogio del papel":

Para mí el problema de la literatura no es el tipo de soporte sino la falta de lectores. Si hago el elogio del libro de papel con entusiasmo es porque hasta ahora éste ha sido el vehículo que me ha permitido contactarme con lectores en más de treinta lenguas. Pero también lo han conseguido los filmes hechos sobre mis novelas y las óperas que las han cantado. No temo a las transformaciones: al contrario, las aliento. Trabajo con ellas. Sé que cualquiera que sea el soporte de las cartas que le lleva mi cartero a Pablo Neruda la emoción que tendrá el lector del libro, del i-pad, del e-book, o de la pantalla de cine, o de los escenarios teatrales, será la misma. Un discurso que convivirá entre marejadas de otros para ocupar en el alma de su gente un espacio inmaterial.

As I argued at the beginning of this essay, Skármeta is first and foremost a visionary who then pursues in different ways to bring what he has imagined to the theater, movies, and the printed page. His work, then, has to be understood in this ample range of creation, and not just as the written text. His inspired creation of a dialogue between a postman and Neruda has the same sort of life as Don Quixote, they have left the text.

¹⁴ Irene B. Hodgson in "The De-Chilenization of Neruda in *Il postino*" does a detailed and perceptive analysis of the differences between novel and movie. Skármeta was in St Louis as a Distinguished Visiting Professor at Washington University when Radford came to discuss with him the final details of the script. Skármeta argued strenuously to bring the film closer to the novel, but to no avail.

They are sure to reappear in even newer versions, true to a deeper self that has connected them with spectators and readers all over the world. Equally, the story told in *No* of a country voting peacefully to send a dictator home, facing impossible odds and winning with good humor, cheer and youthful spirit is the sort of inspirational story that will become the standard definition of the power of creative imagination over oppression. When the film was shown in Cannes on May 18 of this year, it received a long ovation which may stand for now as the most recent evidence of Skármeta's unique way of creating a story that is meaningful, moving, and important, a story that will cross borders and find a home in different languages, and endure.

Works Cited

- Anderson, Sam. "The Fierce Imagination of Haruki Murakami." *The New York Times Magazine* October 21, 2011. Web. 15 May 2012.
- Bianchi, Soledad. "En el fondo la realidad tiene un sabor a verdadero," and "Mínimas Explicaciones (en el orden de la novela)." In Antonio Skármeta, *Soñé que la nieve ardía*. 2nd ed., Madrid: Ediciones LAR, 1981. 3-7 and 229-42. Print.
- Bolaño Sandoval, Adalberto. "Paraíso perdido y contracultura de la imaginación en Haruki Murakami." *Espéculo: Revista de Estudios Literarios* 14, 44 (2010). Web. June 2, 2012.
- Casanova, Pascale. *The World Republic of Letters*. Trans. DeBevoise, M. B. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2004. Print.
- Chilton, Myles. "Realist Magic and the Invented Tokyos of Murakami Haruki and Yoshimoto Banana." *Journal of Narrative Theory* 39.3 (2009): 391-415. Print.
- Coddou, Marcelo. "Entrevista a Antonio Skármeta de *Match Ball*. *Revista Iberoamericana* 56 (1990): 579-82. Print.
- . "Match Ball, novela de Antonio Skármeta." *El Sur*, September 17, 1989, p. vii. Web. June 2, 2012.

- Dorfman, Ariel. *Hacia la liberación del lector latinoamericano*. Hanover, N.H.: Ediciones del Norte, 1984. Print.
- Dorfman, Ariel. *Los sueños nucleares de Reagan*. Buenos Aires: Editorial Legasa, 1986. Print.
- Epple, Juan Armando. "Estos novísimos narradores hispanoamericanos." *Texto Crítico* 4.9 (1978): 143-64. Print.
- Felski, Rita. *Uses of Literature*. Blackwell Manifestos. Malden, MA ; Oxford: Blackwell Pub., 2008. Print.
- Figueroa, Gabriel. "Fantasías y ternuras de Skármeta." *Hoy* (15-21 September, 1986): 26-28. Print.
- Fisher, Susan. "An Allegory of Return: Murakami Haruki's *the Wind-up Bird Chronicle*." *Comparative Literature Studies* 37.2 (2000): 155-70. Print.
- Gordils, Yanis. "El mundo como metáfora en *El Cartero De Neruda o Ardiente Paciencia* y en *Il Postino*." *Torre: Revista de la Universidad de Puerto Rico* 6.20-21 (2001): 331-79. Print.
- Hodgson, Irene B. "The De-Chileanization of Neruda in *Il Postino*." *Pablo Neruda and the U.S. Culture Industry*. Ed. Longo, Teresa. New York and London: Routledge, 2002. 97-113. Print.
- Kakutani, Michiko. "Books of the Times; On a Nightmarish Trek through History's Web," *The New York Times, Arts* October 31, 1997. Web. June 1, 2012.
- Kaminsky, Amy K. *After Exile: Writing the Latin American Diaspora*. Minneapolis, MN: U of Minnesota Press, 1999. Print.
- Kirby, Alan. "The Death of Postmodernism and Beyond." *Philosophy Now*. May/June (2012). May 25 2012.
- Lukács, Georg. *Studies in European Realism*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1964. Print.
- . *The Theory of the Novel*. 1971. Whistable, Kent: The Merlin Press Ltd., 1988. Print.
- Murakami, Haruki. *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle*. Trans. Jay Rubin. New York: Vintage International, 1998. Print.
- Rajecić, Pía. *El libro abierto del amor y el sexo en Chile*. Santiago: Planeta, 2000. Print.

- Rojas, Mariano, and Maikol Elizondo-Lara. "Satisfacción de vida en Costa Rica: Un enfoque de dominios de vida." *Latin American Research Review* 47 (2012): 78-94. Print.
- Rojo, Grinor. "Notas sobre *Chileno!* de Antonio Skármeta." *Texto Crítico* 7.22-23 (1981): 96-108. Print.
- . "Celebración de Antonio Skármeta." *Anales de Literatura Chilena* 3 (2002): 139-50. Print.
- Shaw, Donald L. *Antonio Skármeta and the Post Boom*. Hanover, N.H.: Ediciones del Norte, 1994. Print.
- Skármeta, Antonio. *El Entusiasmo*. Santiago: Zig-Zag, 1967. Print.
- . "La Cenicienta en San Francisco." *El Entusiasmo*. Santiago de Chile: Zig-Zag, 1967. 9-41. Print.
- . *El ciclista del San Cristóbal*. Santiago de Chile: Quimantú, 1973. Print.
- . *No pasó nada*. Barcelona: Editorial Pomaire, 1980. Print.
- . *Watch Where the Wolf Is Going: Stories*. Columbia, LA, USA: Readers International, 1991. Print.
- . "The Book Show," in *The Writer in Politics*, edited by William H. Gass and Lorin Cuoco. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois UP, 1996. 39-51.
- . *La chica del trombón*. Madrid: Areté, 2001. Print.
- . *Los días del arcoíris*. Santiago de Chile: Editorial Planeta, 2011.
- . "Elogio del papel." *Clarín, Revista de Cultura*, April 4, 2012. Web. May 20, 2012.
- Skármeta, Antonio, and Alfonso Ruano. *La composición*. Madrid: Ediciones SM : Ediciones Ekaré, 2000. Print.
- Vargas Llosa, Mario. *Los cachorros*. Barcelona: Editorial Lumen, 1974. Print.
- Vargas Llosa, Mario. *El sueño del celta*. Madrid: Alfaguara, 2010. Print.
- Young, Robert JC. "Postcolonial Remains." *New Literary History* 43 (2012): 19-42. Print.