

Paratext ideas?

La Resaca – Enrique Laguerre

Part Four: Chapter Six



Timeline:

1498 – Spain invades Cuba

1508 – Spain invades Puerto Rico

23 September, 1868 – Grito de Lares: Puerto Rico revolts against Spain. They are defeated on September 24th, after successfully taking the town of Lares, in the adjoining town of San Sebastián.

10 October, 1868 -10 February, 1878 – Grito de Yara and 10 Year War. Both Lares and Yara were supposed to happen at the same time yet Puerto Rico was betrayed and forced to revolt beforehand. The Cuban revolt led to the 10 Year War and was the base for the Spanish-American War.

1869 – Setting of “La Resaca,” one year after the failure of the Grito de Lares.

Chapter 6: His Path was Dark* and Slithery

Dolorito Montojo and his men kept* themselves in continuous comings and goings, here today, there tomorrow, between the mountain ranges of Jayuya and the outskirts of Juana Díaz. They could not stay/remain in a single place *for fear of giving away their whereabouts* (delación?) or a running into the civil guards. The guards (they?) had terrorized the farm hands/simple folk, who barely dared to leave their homes. Word was spreading of abuse done by the civil guards and the inconditionals* (what are they? Make footnote, probably keep in Spanish in italics): incinerated houses; military courts; *jíbaros*¹ tied up elbow to elbow; men handled through kicks, slaps, and struck with rifle butts; multiple arrests...

Almost all news came from the small towns and places in the West and South. Lázaro and Cortijo almost convinced José Dolores (would I change this to Dolorito or have an explication that Dolorito and José Dolores are the same person?) that it was prudent to backtrack* over their own steps toward the hills of Barranquitas, Comerío, Gurabo; who knows, maybe return to the region of the Yukiú.² If the civil guards behaved in a brutal manner towards the pacific/pacifist? *jíbaros*, worse was to befall them if they were to suddenly happen upon and fall into the hands of the uniformed squadron. When all was at their disposal to advance into the Central Mountain Range (leave as Cordillera Central since all other places are left in Spanish?), José Dolores received news of a possible disembarking of conspirators by the southern coast of the Island. Once more, the topic of smuggling weapons, from an expedition from the Dominican Republic, from revolutionary activities on the islands surrounding Puerto Rico.

— We have to wait –decided José Dolores–; is everything is true, we have to stay close to lend a hand.*

Even though their pristine revolutionary ambitions had to be replaced by mugging/robbery,* José Dolores would've put his remaining* enthusiasm to the service of the revolution. It hurt him to see his liberation plans, incubated/hatched* in La Mina foiled. What must've come of don* Pedro and his group? Nothing more was ever heard of them. Who knows if don Pedro has gone off to a better place. He couldn't comprehend why the plans couldn't come to fruition* in real life. Sometimes he felt the civilians/country men* were as much to blame as the (proprios?) oppressors; especially the comfortable civilians*, who, to preserve a sense of wellbeing, looked on indifferently at any subversive movement or frankly allied themselves with the unconditionals.

In these exact instants (change plural?) the General Palacio was making Puerto Ricans suffer his bloody tyranny. Since he, José Dolores Solares, couldn't consecrate himself to the fight for the freedom of his country, why not offer himself for the cause of the Cubans, like other

¹ *Jíbaros* was the word used to refer to the people from the country side/mountains of Puerto Rico. Usually people who laboured on the land and were of scarce resources and limited education. Although it is now used as a pejorative term, its original meaning is not insulting.

² The mountain and region is named after Yukiú who is considered the god of fertility and goodness by the Taino natives of Puerto Rico and other regions in the Caribbean. The word means sacred or white lands. That region is now the National Rainforest El Yunque.

Puerto Ricans had done? The idea started to spark in his mind when he learned of the imprisonment of the autonomist leaders.

So things, the news of the smuggle of weapons through the South coast, the possibility of an expedition from the Dominican Republic. In the hours of the night, José Dolores and his men circled* the beaches, from Ponce to Salinas, in wait of the occurrences/events.* They exposed themselves to be captured. Here is where Sandalio fell victim to the malaria fever. When the weeds and the roots of the same Cortijo failed,* José Dolores resorted to the generosity of a fisherman, who allowed the sick man to find shelter in his hut* he owned in the mangrove. Terrible days and nights of uneasiness and restlessness passed over José Dolores, Manuel Domingo, and Lázaro, among the dead waters*, until the sick man ceased to exist. It was a long and pitiful agony, full of deliriums. He died speaking of ghosts, who knows if he was deafened of himself, after having lived like that.

Examples, doubts, and challenges:

1. My first difficulty in translating is with the chapter title. The most literal translation would be: It Was His Path Darkness and Slippery. That obviously sounds wrong. I changed it a bit, but am concerned about how it comes across. The “dark” doesn’t work quite as well and while I prefer slithery to slippery, I wonder if the metaphorical connotations of the original chapter title are lost.
2. I’d originally translated *delación* as betraying/betrayal but then made it into a new phrase. Does this work?
3. I kept names in their original language and added footnotes yet for the Cordillera Central and the *incondicionales* I translated them. I know I need to choose one or the other for uniformity and I want to keep the names in Spanish, however, since *la cordillera central* is just a mountain range and the *incondicionales* are a type of military/police, would it be fine to translate?
4. The phrase “handle through kicks, slaps, and struck with rifle butts” is especially challenging. The original is “*puntapiés, bofetones y culatazos*.” I feel the translation loses some of that Puerto Rican flavour and the change of *culatazos* to struck with rifle butts is really jarring for me. Any suggestions?
5. I struggled to translate the word *paisanos*. Civilians or country men doesn’t have the same connotation for me. Suggestions?
6. I also didn’t like translating *choza* as hut. Would shack work better? And still, I feel neither word carries the meaning of the humble home.
7. Does the phrase “dead waters” exist in English? I did a literal translation of “*aguas muertas*” but was unsure.
8. There are other issues I’ve marked but these are the main ones for now.