

## **CURRERE AND PROLEPSIS: A LITERARY ANALYSIS**

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Literary scholars and English teachers will recognize the word *prolepsis* as a term describing the moment in a short story or novel when the reader becomes fully cognizant of past, present, and future events all in one instant. This is a moment of heightened insight, transcending historical sedimentation. “A proleptic moment is any experience” of a text that shifts the reader/viewer/listener outside of “linear segmentation of time and creates a holistic understanding of the past, present, and future simultaneously” (Slattery, 2013, p. 305). *Prolepsis* is the moment when all of the events of the narrative coalesce. The proleptic experience may unfold in the opening pages of a novel like the progressive moment of *currere*, as in Faulkner’s (1929/1990) *The Sound and the Fury*. Or, perhaps the proleptic experience is a regressive *currere* or climax at the end of a film or narrative that is self-evident but not comprehended, as in *Murder on the Orient Express*. As a literary device, often called a “flash forward,” the narrative is taken forward in time to show events that are expected to occur, or that have already occurred in the future, even though the main part of the narrative is further back in the past. *Prolepsis* as literary analysis foreshadowed the emergence of *currere* in curriculum theory in the 1970s. Currently, literary analysis can be useful for deepening our understanding of time and context in curriculum studies. *Prolepsis* is the synthetical moment of Pinar and Grumet’s (1976) *currere*.

We use novels and autoethnographies in our various graduate and undergraduate courses as a vehicle for stimulating proleptic moments before we introduce and explore *currere*. We invite students to experience the fourth stage of *currere*, the synthetical moment, through literary analysis in the regressive, progressive, and analytic stages of *currere*. Our goal is to deepen awareness of the complexities of the course content in relation to the “complicated conversations” (Pinar, 2012) of self-awareness. We select two works of literature each semester that will, perhaps, open dialogue and understanding not only of the courses we teach (curriculum development, multicultural education, special education, cultural studies, and foundations of education), but also the social and historical context of the individual in the first stage of *currere*, the regressive moment.

In a recent semester, we used two texts that appear, on first impression, to be unrelated and perhaps even contradictory. We purposely select texts that challenge assumptions and “sedimented perceptrs” (Slattery, 2013). In this paper, we present our process of *currere* by juxtaposing these two texts: *Moby-Dick, or The Whale* by Herman Melville (1851/2014) and *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* by Gloria Anzaldúa (2007). In this short essay, we do not report on our pedagogical process, nor do we evaluate the students’ experiences. Our pedagogical analysis will be presented in future publications. Rather, our intention in this essay is to provide a concrete example of the collaborative process of *currere* among diverse professors.

We are four educators from different disciplines with various genders, sexual identities, ethnicities, and nationalities, which provide unique perspectives born from our complicated experiences. The autobiographical mix of authors’ perspectives and experiences not only provides us with a recognition of a certain character’s plight, but more to the point of this paper, our unique experiences mirror the variety of perspectives and experiences of students in the classroom. Thus, our process of complicated

conversations in the spirit of *currere* models the pedagogical moments in our classrooms. This article serves as an example and guide for initiating the process of *currere* through literary analysis of multiple perspectives that exist in these particular works of American literature and cultural studies.

Gloria Anzaldúa (2007) believed in the power of the written word as she explained that there is “the ability of the story (prose and poetry) to transform the storyteller and the listener into something or someone else” (p. 88). We believe that literature can be used to promote social justice through examining the lives of the characters. It is within the traditional canon of American literature that we encounter the narrator Ishmael in Melville’s *Moby-Dick*. We reconfigure and problematize the white, male canon by juxtaposing Melville’s nineteenth century land and sea dichotomy with Anzaldúa’s twentieth century U.S. and Mexican integrated borderlands. As we will read below, the insights of both authors wrestle, challenge, and eventually merge in our syncretical moments of *prolepsis*. Like our students, we seek to experience, discover, and understand the complexity of the journey of education and life. Those who wrote the Common Core curriculum want our students to believe that simply learning skills is all one needs to develop a fulfilling life. Banks and Banks (2010) countered:

We should educate students to be reflective, moral, caring, and active citizens in a troubled world (Banks, 2008). The world’s greatest problems do not result from people being unable to read and write. They result from people in the world—from different cultures, races, religions, and nations—being unable to get along and to work together to solve the world’s problems. (p. 5)

Again, we should provide our students with glimpses into the epistemological understandings found in art and literature. Maxine Greene, a great philosopher of education, shared her perspective, telling us, “I don’t read literature to find the answers, I read to find the questions” (Hancock, 2001). Greene (2011) addressed the act of critical reflection when she wrote to teachers that,

by becoming aware of ourselves as questioners, as makers of meaning, as persons engaged in constructing and reconstructing realities with those around us, we may be able to communicate to students that notion that reality depends on perspective, that its construction is never complete, and that there is always more. (p. 38)

Because most of the information that is presented to the American public is produced and manipulated to further the ends of the neoliberal, capitalistic machine, learning to identify the message of a text as only one of many interpretations present in the world is a vital skill for members of a democracy, but it is a skill that is not being developed in the age of standardized education. Thus, we juxtapose the texts by Melville and Anzaldúa to counter the deskilling and depersonalization of contemporary education.

We share our ideas about how Melville’s words in *Moby-Dick* and Anzaldúa’s autobiographical text in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* disrupt the dominant discourse, which supports unjust status quo socio-economic arrangement. We believe, in particular, that through *Moby-Dick*—ironically—our students can learn to engage and interact and come to syncretical moments of *currere* with the literature to develop an understanding of Anzaldúa’s borderlands.

*Moby-Dick* is a story told by the narrator, Ishmael. Similar to the way Anzaldúa creates a conversation with her readers, Ishmael invites the reader not only to hear

his conversations with others, but his thoughts as well. His thoughts demonstrate his internal conflict with and his personal challenges to the dominant discourse of the mid-nineteenth century in the U.S. Clearly, Ishmael's thoughts and comments still need to be heard today.

Ishmael's constant conversation with the reader addresses and challenges the binaries of Western perspective that serve to maintain a structured and organized status quo. It is our belief that teachers should embrace these challenges. Keating (2002) explains:

Driven by our fear of difference-as-deviation, we ignore, deny, and misname the difference among us. We hide our differences beneath a façade of sameness and erect rigid boundaries between self and other. But these differences don't go away just because we reject them. They grow stronger as we seek refuge behind stereotypes, monolithic labels, and false assumptions of sameness. (p. 519-520)

Through challenging ourselves and our students to engage in this intimate understanding of Ishmael, the reader can experience much of his personal growth as he attempts to disrupt the racist, ethnocentric, homophobic, and ableist status quo. Again, Anzaldúa (2007) argues, "The answer to the problem between the white race and the colored, between males and females, lies in healing the split that originates in the very foundation of our lives, our cultures, our languages, our thoughts" (p. 102). Ishmael's self-reflexive, critical examination of his culture can be instructive to students who have not been taught to engage and experience their world through a lens of social justice. This understanding of the world through the eyes of those who live in the borderlands will be, as Anzaldúa said, "a massive uprooting of dualistic thinking in the individual and collective consciousness" but will be only "the beginning of a long struggle" (p. 102). The following are just some of the examples of Melville's invitations to the reader to engage in disrupting the marginalization of certain people in society.

### **QUEERING *MOBY-DICK* THROUGH AN ANZALDÚAN LENS**

As an openly transgender man of color (Mario Suarez) from the border town of Eagle Pass, Texas, first reading Anzaldúa as an undergraduate studying Mexican American Studies resonated so much with my experience. Coming to terms with my gender identity and sexuality and blurring of the metaphorical borderlands so prevalent in Anzaldúa's work gave me the comfort I sought when I felt alone. I questioned hetero- and cisnormativity. I remember reading this text under the covers with a nightlight before sleeping. I did not want my family to suspect that I was a transman.

Though I had heard of *Moby-Dick* as part of the cannon, I had never read it. However, I was intimately invested in *Borderlands/La Frontera* and had read it several times. As a former high school mathematics teacher, I often wonder what my childhood would have been like had I learned from my teachers that it was not abnormal to question my gender identity and sexuality—that I was not alone. Teaching *Moby-Dick* through a queer lens is central, not only to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer/questioning (LGBTIQ+) students, but for all students to become more aware of LGBTIQ+ experiences in a heteronormative society. The addition of the intersection of race, gender, and identity is an added marginality for many minority students, which, for this novel, can be viewed from an Anzaldúan lens. I used to struggle in finding ways to reach my LGBTIQ+ students with the pre-packaged curriculum that was given to all teachers.

Luhmann (1998) writes,

The queer pedagogy that I imagine engages students in a conversation about how textual positions are being taken up or refused, for example when reading lesbian and gay texts or when listening to somebody speaking gay. What happens to the self in this dialogue? What does the student actually hear and how does he or she respond to the text? Can queer teaching, rather than assuming and affirming identities, take on the problem of how identifications are made and refused in the process of learning? (p. 123)

It is my hope that by analyzing the text of *Moby-Dick* and the relationship between Ishmael and Queequeg through an Anzaldúan lens, the novel can become more accessible to LGBTQ+ youth of color and their teachers.

Initially, Ishmael hesitates in sharing a bed with Queequeg when he checks in at The Spouter Inn and finds that the inn is full. Ishmael dislikes the idea of becoming Queequeg's bedmate. He speaks of how the "more [he] pondered over this harpooner, the more [he] abominated the thought of sleeping with him" (Melville, 1851/2014, p. 14). Ishmael sees Queequeg as some sort of savage because of the stories told to him by the landlord. The cuts on Queequeg's face, from what Ishmael assumes are fights, are juxtaposed by the admiration Ishmael has as Queequeg undresses to get into bed with some double entendre that can be read as admiration of his body. While he watches Queequeg undressing, almost mesmerized by the marks on his legs, chest, and arms, he tells the reader, "A peddler of heads too—perhaps the heads of his own brothers. He might take a fancy to mine—heavens! Look at that tomahawk!" (p. 20). After some time, Ishmael comes around to the idea of sleeping with Queequeg, but only with the condition that Queequeg not smoke in bed. "What's all this fuss I have been making about, thought I to myself—the man's a human being just as I am: he has just as much reason to fear me, as I have to be afraid of him" (pp. 22-23). After waking up, Melville describes how Queequeg has his arm around Ishmael in the "most loving and affectionate manner" (p. 24), in addition to throwing his legs over him. By Chapter 11, they feel completely at ease with each other. "[S]o entirely sociable and free and easy were we" (p. 53).

The transition that Ishmael makes parallels what Anzaldúa (2007) refers to as the "Coatlihue State." Coatlihue represents,

depending on the person...duality in life, a synthesis of duality, and a third perspective—something more than mere duality or a synthesis of duality.... Coatlihue depicts the contradictory....Every increment of consciousness, every step forward is a *travesía*, a crossing. I am again an alien in new territory. (Anzaldúa, 2007, pp. 68-70)

This duality translates to the idea of physical and metaphorical borders as we see Ishmael go through a metaphorical "crossing" himself in his relationship with Queequeg. Anzaldúa (2007) states,

Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them....Los *atravesados* live here: the squint-eyed, the perverse, the queer, the troublesome, the mongrel, the mulato, the half-breed, the half dead; in short, those who cross over, pass over, or go through the confines of the "normal." (p. 25)

In this sense, Ishmael by then has reached a certain level of intimacy with Queequeg from which he cannot turn back, and in a way, many LGBTIQ+ students feel that way in their interactions with society. The LGBTIQ+ population has been marginalized throughout history and seen as second-class citizens, but as human rights policies and laws continue to evolve, society has, in a way, also gone through a *travesía*.

Can a book like *Moby-Dick* help disrupt heteronormative notions? Luhmann (1998) ends her chapter with this thought,

Such queer pedagogy does not hold the promise of a successful remedy against homophobia, nor is it a cure for the lack of self-esteem....[This pedagogy] is an inquiry into the conditions that make learning possible or prevent learning. It suggests a conversation about what I can bear to know and what I refuse when I refuse certain identifications. (p. 132)

As educators, we must acknowledge and embrace our students' whole identities and the experiences they bring into the classroom, as they can contribute to the greater education of the human race that is taught outside the four walls of the classroom. As Anzaldúa (2007) writes, "Chicanos need to acknowledge the political and artistic contributions of their queer. People, listen to what your *jotería* is saying" (p. 107). I did not realize how important my voice and experience were until I read *Borderlands/La Frontera*. It was through the syncretical moment of *currere* that I began to actively choose to share my experiences with my students and coworkers as an educator, because not many understand the intersectionality that exists in being a transgender man from the border who is also an educator.

### CULTURE AND *MOBY-DICK*

As a Korean male who has only lived outside of South Korea for the past two years, I (Sungyoon Lee) have not had much opportunity to contact and learn about other cultures. In South Korea, surrounded by sea and a military border to the North, one would never find the place that can be called the *borderland* in an Anzaldúan sense. Korean culture has been the only lens through which I view and grasp the world around me, and further, that Koreans are culturally identical is widely accepted and a source of pride. Given these, reading both Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* and Melville's *Moby-Dick* gave me a mixed experience that is not only a bit challenging, but also thought provoking.

While reading the two texts, I found that juxtaposing them is mutually beneficial for understanding each text. From my reading, disclosing cultural tyranny is one of the major tasks in both *Borderlands* and *Moby-Dick*. Consequently, when we read both in relation to culture, one way of juxtaposing is to discover how both Anzaldúa and Melville disclose the cultural tyranny in different contexts. While Anzaldúa uses her autobiographical narrative, Melville's description is full of analogy and metaphor. Thus, Anzaldúa provides vividness to what Melville reveals through literary devices; Melville gives fictional contexts where we can further understand the Anzaldúan concept of culture. By this reciprocal reading, we are eventually able to connect the real meaning of culture, possession, and power to our lives.

Chapter 89 in *Moby-Dick*, "Fast-Fish and Loose-Fish," ends with Ishmael's question: "what are you, reader, but a Loose-Fish and a Fast-Fish, too?" (Melville, 1851/2014, p. 387). Seemingly taking a question form, this sentence actually means

that we, humans, are a Loose-Fish and also a Fast-Fish. As introduced in the Chapter, the terms, *Fast-Fish* and *Loose-Fish*, came from two simple laws regarding possession in whaling. They are: “1. A Fast-Fish belongs to the party fast to it, 2. A Loose-Fish is fair game for anybody who can soonest catch it” (Melville, 1851/2014, p. 384). From the political view, the Fast-Fish stands for what is possessed, and the Loose-Fish is not possessed. As Ishmael points out, the two laws have become fundamental principles in our society. Indeed, possession has been the most important concept that determines every human affair, and by extension, it is regarded even as a mode of human existence.

Meanwhile, regarding culture, Anzaldúa (2007) writes, “[d]ominant paradigms, predefined concepts that exist as unquestionable, unchallengeable, are transmitted to us through the culture” (p. 38). In this quote, she explained that dominant paradigms and predefined concepts are taken for granted, without question, by people living in that culture. When something is done as a cultural practice, we do not ask why it should be done in the same way it has been done. Many times, questioning or problematizing the status quo is considered an irreverent attitude toward tradition. Anzaldúa continues, “[c]ulture is made by those in power” (p. 38). Culture practiced without questions usually serves the interests of those with power who are privileged in the society.

Anzaldúa’s perspective on culture explains how possession has been congealed within or among us. The possessive relationship in *Moby-Dick* would be one of the dominant paradigms and predefined concepts handed down by culture. In other words, possession and the possessed have been justified by cultural tradition. As Ishmael points out, therefore, possession has become half of the law and often is considered the whole of the law, which means no one cares about “how the thing came into possession” (Melville, 1851/2014, p. 386). Humans are even defined or identified by whether they have or have not. When possession becomes our mode of existence, we are a Fast-Fish like, as Ishmael enumerates, “Russian serfs...Republican slaves...villain’s marble mansion...[and] hereditary towns” (pp. 387-388). Here, what should be noted is that it is ourselves who make us a Fast-Fish. By being cultured or by willingly accepting social norms, we become a Fast-Fish, and thus, we are possessed by those in power. We overlook that the cultural norms have been selected to benefit a particular group of people.

In *Moby-Dick*, a Loose-Fish is described as the state in which something or someone is waiting to be possessed. A Loose-Fish could be fastened in the future, but it is not fastened yet. It is by refusing to be possessed that we can continue to be a Loose-Fish. Anzaldúa tells us how we can resist being possessed. Because the possession is made and maintained by different cultural practices, the way we can prevent ourselves from being possessed, or the only way to stay a Loose-Fish, is to avoid being habituated by dominant culture. In doing so, we should actively acknowledge the cultural tyranny and the arbitrary nature of cultural practices. Anzaldúa (2007) points out that having *mestiza*, or hybrid, consciousness of borderlands will provide us with an eye for realizing that culture is not a permanent truth. The hybrid consciousness of borderlands allows us to remain loose. Regarding this state, Anzaldúa (2007) writes,

I am cultureless because... I challenge the collective cultural male-derived beliefs... yet I am cultured because I am participating in the creation of yet another culture, a new story to explain the world and our participation in it, a new value system with images and symbols that connect us to each other and to the planet. (pp. 102-103)

In South Korea, the cultural sameness is the dominant paradigm that has rarely been questioned. On the one hand, the sameness has played a role of tying and bonding people, but on the other hand it has been violence against those who are different or those who like to be different because it makes us view something different as something wrong. How desperately we have fastened ourselves to the dominant culture in order not to be stigmatized as wrong. Reading *Borderlands* and *Moby-Dick* and experiencing the syncretical moment of *currere*, I realized that being a Loose-Fish or having *New Mestiza* in South Korea means the following: I am cultureless because I challenge the cultural sameness that sometimes oppresses people who are different, but I am cultured because I am participating in the creation of a new value system in which difference can never be discrimination and the formation of a harmonious community where people respect their own differences.

### STRENGTH OF THE FEMININE AND DISABILITY IN MOBY-DICK

I (Kristin Hall) worked as a special education teacher for 17 years. For many of those years, I taught English in both the general and special education settings to students labeled with a variety of disabilities. My choices, both personal and professional, have been filtered through the lens of feminist theory, to which I was exposed in my undergraduate studies in the late 1980s. I recently, and reluctantly, read Melville's *Moby-Dick* because it came strongly recommended to me by my mentor. I was amazed at how forthrightly Melville displayed the issues of race, gender, ability, and sexuality, among others in *Moby-Dick*. In a syncretical moment of *currere*, I realized that I could use this text from the cannon of American literature to teach issues of social justice. Through my reading, I found the next two examples of social justice in Melville's work.

Once the whaling expedition had begun in *Moby-Dick* and a whale had been killed and dismembered, the crew was perilously extracting every drop of oil from the animal. One of the harpooners, a Native American "that wild Indian" named Tashtego, fell into the carcass of the whale hanging from the side of the boat (p. 333). The only two men who attempted to rescue him were the other two harpooners, one you met earlier, Queequeg, and the other, Daggoo, an African. During the rescue attempt, the carcass separates from its tackle and falls into the water. Seconds later, Queequeg dives into the water. Ishmael's description of this selfless act is described with the metaphor of a birth. His description of this birth is ripe with the skills of a midwife, not the professional doctor. Ishmael reflects on the acts of Queequeg and states, "And thus, through courage and great skill... the deliverance, or rather, delivery of Tashtego, was successfully accomplished.... Midwifery should be taught in the same course with fencing and boxing, riding and rowing" (Melville, 1851/2014, p. 335-336). This great act of saving, or delivering, another man's life was described in terms of giving birth with a midwife, a clearly feminine roll. This description of arguably one of the most selfless and courageous acts in the book demonstrates Melville's recognition of the strength of women.

Melville's admiration and respect of traits that Western society has deemed feminine is again seen in Captain Ahab's compassion shown to the young deckhand, Pip. After Pip had fallen from the whaleboat into the ocean a second time and had been left in the water during the hunt, the twelve year old boy is traumatized. Although Pip is physically recovered from the sea, his mental state has been severely damaged. The crew shows little concern for Pip's impaired mental state. It was the fierce and driven, yet physically disabled, captain who empathized with Pip's condition. Ahab could see

past Pip's current mental state to recognize and affirm the humanity of the boy. Ahab invited Pip to live in the comfort and protection of the captain's quarters. In thanking the captain, Pip states, "Ah, now, had poor Pip but felt so kind a thing as this, perhaps he had ne'er been lost!" (Melville, 1851/2014, p. 510).

As a White woman who considers herself a feminist and one who values critical theories, I assumed that there would be nothing in the traditional canon of American literature from which I could teach issues of social justice. I was amazed to find an ally in Herman Melville who wrote over 150 years ago. But as Anzaldúa (2007) explained,

It is not enough to stand on the opposite river bank, shouting questions, challenging patriarchal, white conventions. A counterstance locks one into a duel of oppressor and oppressed; locked in mortal combat, like the cop and the criminal, both are reduced to the common denominator of violence...But it is not a way of life. At some point, on our way to a new consciousness, we will have to leave the opposite bank, the split between the two mortal combatants somehow healed so that we are on both shores at once. (p. 100)

It was during my reading of *Moby-Dick* that I had a syncretical moment of *currere* and found this opportunity for a literary bridge between the canon and social justice.

#### **READING *MOBY-DICK* FROM THE BORDERLANDS**

I (Patrick Slattery) have lived on the U.S.-Mexican Border twice in my life. As a young teacher in downtown El Paso in 1975, I could see both sides of the Rio Grande from my classroom window. I was surprised to discover that about half of my students lived in Juarez. Many of these students who lived in Mexico were U.S. citizens, and some of the students who lived in El Paso were Mexican citizens. Faculty members from both sides of the border often walked together in El Paso or Juarez for drinks or meals. During this time, I came to understand the border as a connection between cultures and families and not a dividing line between countries. We shared our educational experiences as equals. Several years later, I moved to Chula Vista, California, and lived within sight of border fences. Helicopters raced overhead day and night. At the beach, I saw the fence described by Anzaldúa (2007); "I press my hand to the steel curtain—chainlink fence crowned with rolled barbed wire—rippling from the sea where Tijuana touches San Diego unrolling over mountains and plains and deserts" (p. 24).

The border felt militarized and harsh in California. Whether fluid or fixed, my immersion in the U.S. and Mexican border of Juarez/El Paso and San Diego/Tijuana was experienced from a psychological distance: I was an Anglo man of privilege from New Orleans temporarily living in a new culture that I found both complex and fascinating. By allowing myself to listen and understand the culture, as well as contribute to the educational advancement of the communities, I grew more sensitive and alert. I have been able to connect these border experiences with the context of many other border crossings in my life in order to become a more informed and compassionate activist for justice.

One important area of my research and advocacy is related to gender and Intersex issues. While some feminist and queer theorists caution against using biological diversity as a starting point for addressing sexual and gender equality, I have found that investigating the border culture of Intersex persons expands understanding and compassion. Gloria Anzaldúa addresses this issue specifically when she writes about



mita' y mita' who were believed to possess supernatural powers. Socially defined abnormalities was a price a person had to pay for this inborn extraordinary gift.

Anzaldúa (2007) explains:

There is something compelling about being both male and female, about having an entry to both worlds. Contrary to some psychiatric tenets, half and halves are not suffering from a confusion of sexual identity, or even from a confusion of gender. What we are suffering from is an absolute despot duality that says we are able to be only one or the other.... But I, like other queer people, am two in one body, both male and female. I am the embodiment of the hieros gamos: the coming together of opposite qualities within. (p. 41)

This coming together of opposites dramatically unfolds in Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*, particularly in the relationship between Ishmael and Queequeg. I have read this novel many times in my life. As a gay man, I can only imagine that a person with queer sensibilities could possibly have written Chapter 10, titled "A Bosom Friend." Listen to Ishmael's inner voice trying to make sense of the juxtaposition of himself, "a good Christian born and bred in the bosom of the infallible Presbyterian Church" (Melville, 1851/2014, p. 52), and Queequeg, a dark skinned pagan idolator:

Now, Queequeg is my fellow man. And what do I wish that this Queequeg would do to me? Why, unite with me in my particular Presbyterian form of worship. Consequently, I must then unite with him in his; ergo, I must turn idolator. So I kindled the shavings; helped prop up the innocent little idol; offered him burnt biscuit with Queequeg; salamed before him twice or thrice; kissed his nose; and that done, we undressed and went to bed, at peace with our own consciences and all the world...Thus, then, in our hearts' honeymoon, lay I and Queequeg—a cozy, loving pair. (p. 52)

After the expression of mutual love has taken place, Ishmael and Queequeg join their lives as a double exile. Not only are they separated from their own homes, but now they are exiles in the lives of the other. Cesare Casarino (2002) explains: "Queequeg's vow to exile himself to Ishmael is clearly articulated in the trajectory that takes him from his night 'hospitalities' to the matrimonial declaration of eternal friendship" (p. 162).

Ishmael concludes in Chapter 10, "he pressed his forehead against mine, clasped me round the waist, and said that henceforth we were married; meaning, in his country's phrase, that we were bosom friends; he would gladly die for me, if need should be" (Melville, 1851/2014, p. 51). In this vow, Queequeg articulates at once a translation, a transposition, and a transgression. Casarino (2002) explains that the translation of "his country's phrase" provides a conceptual idiom that is comprehensible to Ishmael, and the transposition of "his country's ritual" of friendship in a foreign land and on a foreign body constitute an event of cultural transgression.

This vow also marks a similar transition for Queequeg: in translating and transposing this ritualized seal of friendship, Queequeg, too, is abandoning his "old rules" for new interpretations and applications of them...he is taking risks with his "old rules" by bestowing the honor of this seal of friendship outside of its validating cultural space and upon a Christian other for whom such a seal and such rules may well turn out not to be binding. (Casarino, 2002, p. 162)

Here we see a desire to live in the place of the other without proselytizing or converting in a new placeless place of love and friendship. This is a place that Ishmael and Queequeg can enter and inhabit only together and only with respect to their unique placeless contexts.

Perhaps, I would suggest, this is Gloria Anzaldúa's experience of herself in *Borderlands/La Frontera*? Perhaps, this is the *New Mestiza* that she advocated and yearned to birth? Perhaps, this was the translation and transposition of my own experiences on the boarder? Perhaps, finally, this may be the place of love and friendship for transformation that can bring justice and compassion to all of the militarized and hostile borderlands in our world today.

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