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The Gay Immigrant and the Use of Spanglish in Ángel Lozada's *No quiero quedarme sola y vacía*: A Linguistic Transgression or a Struggle to Assimilate in the Late Capitalist City?

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Ángel Lozada's *No quiero quedarme sola y vacía* (2006) is the story of a homosexual from Puerto Rico, linked to the success and failure of the neoliberal mercantilist system during the end of the twentieth century and beginnings of the twenty first century. The presence of Spanglish throughout the novel, more than a characteristic element of a linguistic transgression, is a parody of the protagonist's struggle to overcome the hostility of New York and to be accepted into the cultural and social environment of his host city through the use of language, without luck. This acceptance can be accomplished by his purchase and debt capacity that grants him access to the goods and services offered by the system and portrayed in New York as the Mecca of consumerism. The only possible visibility offered by the city for him is his credit history. If his credit capacity fades away, he becomes useless, just like many of the underprivileged citizens living in the city. Here, the narrator describes the way New York takes care of its underprivileged citizens.

Hurry, hurry, take the A train. Dentro de mí se monta La loca. . . . Se levanta cuando uno de los homeless apuestos choca contra ella, y angustiada, se fija en lo que le espera: miro a los viejitos montarse en el tren, a veces con andadores y a la gente que no les cede las sillas. . . . Yo transporto la muerte. . . . Y de nuevo se enfocaba en las paredes llenas de anuncios: I can live with foot pain, but why should I? Retrato de un pato boricua y un negro: dos buenas razones para hacerse la prueba del VIH y que le recuerda su caso: Como si a los únicos que nos diera SIDA fuera a nosotros los latinos y a los negros. (Lozada 25–26)

This passage coincides with what Slavoj Žižek (2008) calls “systematic violence of capitalism” (12). This violence is more extraordinary: violence not proffered by any other direct agent and defined solely in an objective, methodic and anonymous way as the one proffered by ideologies. In that way, the metaphor represented by the A-train of New York summarizes the violent and classist image of the city as a body transporting its waste through its entrails. These people, viewed by the city as waste, seem to be on their way to be eliminated and are represented as the most marginal elements of its society: the elderly, the beggars, the sexual, ethnic and racial minorities, and the sick, who also are mentioned in the dominant discourse of AIDS advertisements, a discourse that describes “Afro-Americans, female and male prostitutes, bisexuals and gays, drugs consumers and immigrants as the causes of the propagation of HIV” (La Fountain-Stokes 2009: 46).

Lozada does not leave in this novel any open space for a vindication of his sexual freedom. He does not propose a transgression to the system in which he is forced to live. For La loca, New York is only a monster, which condemns its marginal and underprivileged inhabitants to being isolated and meaningless, being forced to disappear out of the glamour of the city by getting inside of it, or in its outskirts destined for them. Therefore, one can understand the magnitude

of La loca's physical and psychological degradation when he discovers that his only empowering instrument, his credit history, is fading away, sentencing him to stay *sola y vacía* in the once utopic city of New York.

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