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1. Introduction
In his illuminating 2003 study Life in Search of Readers: Reading (in) Chicano/a Literature, Manuel M. Martín-Rodríguez observes:

[A] significant split seems to be taking place at the core of [recent Chicano/a literature], a divide that I propose to summarize (and somewhat simplify) as the tension between ‘the market’ and ‘la marketa,’ that is, between those works that are now directed to the literary establishment and those that are addressed to the (always elusive when it comes to definition) Chicano/a community. (110)

My essay will discuss Luis J. Rodriguez’ 2002 short story collection The Republic of East L.A.¹ and his 2005 novel Music of the Mill² with regard to this observation on the existence of different readerships and the changing publishing market for Latino fiction. In particular, I will study the different ways of representing time and temporality and the different use of language in the texts in this light of readerships and the publishing market, but will also consider generic differences.

The Republic of East L.A. is a collection of twelve stories representing scenes from Chicano life in East L.A., a young limo driver's dreams of success in a rock band, a drop-out son who abandons his wife and child and ends up as an alcoholic in the streets, violence and sexual abuse in a girl gang, a dying father's death-bed reconciliation with his son, exploitation and frustration at work on a construction site, life in and around the steel mill, the story of a young Marine who shot himself after witnessing the murder of a Panamanian child during the operation against Noriega, two Mexican American brothers debating immigration policies, an ambitious young reporter trying to solve the murder of a neighbourhood beauty queen, the operation of la migra against an illegal settlement, an elderly woman's joyous affirmation of life in the face of economic hardship. These stories about “the daily survival of Mexicans living in East Los Angeles, their broken dreams and complex cultural identities” are, as Ana Mendieta writes in a laudatory review, “powerful, painful portraits that make us wonder why the American dream has not reached certain parts of society, such as the Mexican families in East Los Angeles, even after they have spent decades of hard work raising families in America.” (n.p.)

¹ Further references will indicate the title of the story and the page number in Rodriguez 2002.
² Further references will abbreviate the title to MM and will indicate page numbers in Rodriguez 2005.
Rodriguez' 2005 novel *Music of the Mill*, on the other hand, which a number of reviewers (Clark, Ruiz, several reviews quoted in the paperback edition) have compared to Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*, traces three generations of Mexican Americans living in East L.A., from Procopio, who comes from Mexico in 1943 and begins to work in a steel mill, via his son Johnny, who after an early career as a gang member ending up in prison also works at the mill for decades, all the way to the third generation, represented by Azucena, who tries to escape a life of drugs and alcohol and to make a living as a singer after the closing down of the mill in the 1980s. Especially in the longest and most important middle section of the novel, Rodriguez “uses Johnny's experience in the mill to explore vast subjects such as labor union corruption, battles for civil rights and equal opportunity employment, the decline of American industry and the gradual transformation of Los Angeles's Mexican neighborhoods into dangerous ghettos” (Rich n.p.).

Both texts, which in terms of narrative are fairly conventional, were published by Rayo, the bilingual Latino imprint of HarperCollins founded in 2001; Spanish translations appeared in 2003 and 2007 respectively (cf. Rodriguez 2003 and 2007).

In order to point out how changing readerships and marketing imperatives shape key features of the text, I will first of all comment on the significant differences in the representation of chronology and dates and the use of language in both texts. In my discussion of questions of readership and a changing audience of Latino fiction, I will also show how these changing contexts correlate with a changing use of language, in this case the use of Spanish in both texts. In addition to considering the texts in the context of the publishing market and the reading public, I will attempt to account for some of the differences by looking at generic conventions.

2. Temporality vs. timelessness in *The Republic of East L.A.* and *Music of the Mill*

There is a strong sense of timelessness in the entire collection of short stories. Hardly a single event or situation in these stories is precisely dated. These vignettes of Latino life in *The Republic of East L.A* frequently appear to leave open the time of their setting. Most hints at temporal setting are by means of references to popular culture, though even these are remarkably vague and only indicate a fairly long time span, as in the case of a reference to “a young Mexicano who sold bootleg cassettes of Mexican recording artists – Ana Gabriel, Los

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3 The fact that these stories were written over a period of some twenty years – “Sometimes you dance with a watermelon” (225-239) appeared in a different form as early as 1979 – does not sufficiently explain the lack of precise dating and of temporal coherence; the dating might easily have been synchronized or harmonized before publication.
Tigres del Norte, and Vicente Fernandez” (“Shadows” 26), who have all been active for decades. Similarly, a reference to “a poster of the singer Madonna with pointy breasts” (“Shadows” 26) could refer to any moment after about 1982; and “that goofy pink bunny in the Energizer commercials” (“Chain-Link Lover” 153) has also been well-known since 1989. A few hints do allow for somewhat more precise dating: there are references to “a CD of Pavement” [after 1989] (“My Ride, my Revolution” 11), to “Mariah Carey [after 1990], Destiny's Child [after 1990], and N'Sync [after 1995]” (“Shadows” 26) or to “Beverly Hills High School – 90210” [after 1990] (“My Ride, my Revolution” 8). But even these still allow for a span of some ten years or more; and they are all somewhat oblique and hardly central enough to give the stories any precise temporal “feel”.

In a related vein, there a number of references to previous key events in the life of the community and in Chicano history; thus, the protagonist of “My Ride, my Revolution”, the young limo-driver and would-be “rap-and-rock” singer (3) Cruz Blancarte, refers to his mother as “a Chicana activist from back in the day – you know, the sixties and seventies: the Chicano Moratorium, el movimiento, Aztlán Libre” (4). This, however, hardly allows for a dating of the events of the story. Further references are to the 1970 East L.A. riot and the death of Ruben Salazar (“Las Chicas Chuecas” 60); in an excursus on the history of James A. Garfield High School in East L.A., there are references to the school's weak academic performance in the 1970s, to the 1988 film Stand and Deliver set at the school, or to an (undated) visit by President Clinton (“Las Chicas Chuecas” 56f.). Finally, there are references to Chicano soldiers in the operation against Noriega in Panama in 1989 (“Oiga” 142). However, all of these are clearly marked as having occurred at some point in the past, not allowing for any dating of the main events of these stories. Thus, the back-story of events in these narratives may well be dated to provide verisimilitude, but the events themselves are left undated.

Where temporal markers are concrete, they are dateable only to an insider audience familiar with the history of the East L.A. Latino community: “The area, however, had recently undergone major redevelopment – the Aliso Village had been torn down, leaving only rubble, which eventually became a vacant lot.” (“Pigeons” 169). Similarly, a reference to “Brooklyn Avenue (now called Cesar Chavez Avenue – but I haven't quite got used to this yet)” (“Miss East L.A.” 180) will not immediately pinpoint a specific point in time for everyone. Though everyone even remotely interested in American politics, history and culture will know Cesar

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4 Cf. also the reference to the number of people in his band: “There are four of us – four like most garage bands like Metallica [after 1981], like Rage Against the Machine [after 1991], like Limp Bizkit [after 1994].” (4)
Chavez, the reference hardly yields a precise date. Chavez died in 1993 and Brooklyn Avenue was renamed “Cesar Chavez Avenue” shortly after his death, but the first streets and institutions were named after Chavez as early as the 1970s and such renamings continue until the present day.\textsuperscript{5} The erasure of Aliso Village occurred in 1999 and thus makes the story a contemporary one at the time of publication, but in a collection which leaves most other stories entirely without any concrete dating and in which there is no sense that all of these stories are necessarily precisely contemporary, such references serve to define an in-group and allow insiders to date the individual story, but the references hardly contribute to a dating of the stories as a whole.

Rodriguez' 2005 novel \textit{Music of the Mill}, on the other hand, is consistently dated (with notable exceptions\textsuperscript{6}), literally from the very first page of the text:

> It's 1943 and Procopio lives in Yaqui country, in the northern Mexican state of Sonora. (3)
> Procopio and Eladia begin to have children. Boy after boy, one a year, from 1945 to 1950. (20)
> It's August of 1959 … (23)
> Most of Johnny's troubles start around 1963. (25)
> It's May 1970. (31)
> It's the early 1970s … (51)
> [The area] was still mostly Mexican in the 1970s. (127)
> It's 1980. (144)
> My Dad had already left the steel mill … in 1982, when I was around eight. (224)
> I was sixteen. (225)
> I was twenty-eight years old. (269)\textsuperscript{7}

References such as these are frequent throughout the text. But the novel not only consistently dates events and developments, it also generally places local and familial events into the context of national, even global developments:

> It's 1980. For some ten years, many changes have occurred in industry, including the loss of thousands of jobs to overseas competitors or to companies moving their operations to cheaper labor markets in the Southern United States, Mexico, Central

\textsuperscript{5} On October 9, 2007, for instance, a statue of Cesar Chavez was unveiled on the campus of the University of Texas, Austin. Cf. [http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/cesarchavez/index.php, accessed December 30, 2007]. For the renaming of parks, streets, and buildings after Chavez's death in April 1993 cf. Sanchez, n.p.

\textsuperscript{6} After some 200 pages of heterodiegetic narration in parts I and II, “Procopio's Prelude” (3-27) and “The Nazareth Suite” (28-195), covering the first two generations of the Salcido family in the US, the last 110 pages are taken up by the autodiegetic narrative of Azucena, Procopio's granddaughter and daughter to Johnny. It is only in this part that concrete dates become scarce.

\textsuperscript{7} Cf. also 21 (“The couple stop having children in 1952: This is the year their only daughter is born.”), 188 (“Two years have passed …”), 191 (“in the 1980s”) \textit{et passim}. 
America, or Southeast Asia. … By the mid-1980s, such industry-laden cities as L.A., New York, and Chicago will become centers of homelessness. (MM 144)\(^8\)

Thus, while the stories frequently do not date events and situations at all, the novel is consistently dated almost throughout. In the following, I will attempt to account for these differences in the context of developments in the publishing market for Latino fiction and in terms of generic differences.

3. Rodriguez, the reading public and the mainstreaming of Latino fiction

It is tempting to see this development in the context of the mainstreaming of Chicano literature in the US book market (cf. Geuder 303 and Martín-Rodríguez 107-138). Though the “Latino boom” in the publishing market is frequently associated with the growing interest in minority literatures since the 1980s (cf. Geuder 299ff), mass appeal and major critical recognition may be said to have begun in 1990 with the award of the Pulitzer Prize to Oscar Hijuelos for *The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love* as the first Pulitzer for fiction to be won by a Latino. Recent years, however, have certainly seen yet a further rise in interest.\(^9\) Thus, the Association of American Publishers (AAP) made 2003 “The Year of Publishing for Latinos” and AAP’s “Publishing Latino Voices for America Task Force” declared June 2004 the “Latino Books Month” (Geuder 310). On the consumption side, over 10% of turnover in the book market in 2003 was generated by Latino consumers (Geuder 310), a figure that appears set to rise further. As a visible symptom of the increasing importance of Latino/a fiction in the US publishing market, the foundation of Rayo\(^10\), the bilingual Latino imprint of HarperCollins established in 2001 which published both *The Republic of East L.A.* (2002) and *Music of the Mill* (2005) can surely be cited in evidence of this development.\(^11\)

In the context of this adoption of Latino literature into the publishing mainstream, Geuder argues: “Indeed, a shift has occurred in Chicana/o literature from a Chicana/o frame of reference to a US-American frame of reference, a shift that has been concomitant with a

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\(^8\) Cf. also for instance the reference to “the various battles around Los Angeles – the 1992 riots, the bilingual education struggles around proposition 187, the earthquake, the Ramparts police scandal, and all that” (242).


\(^11\) For the role of Rayo in the Latina/o publishing market cf. Geuder 348-351 *et passim*.
changed self-image and a changed use of language.” (313). In a long-term perspective, the “changed use of language” Geuder refers to of course primarily meant a tendency to use English rather than Spanish. In our case, however, it is not so much a shift from Spanish to English. Both texts I am looking at were originally published in English, though they now do exist in Spanish translations, also published by Rayo. However, even in the three years between the 2002 story collection Republic of East L.A. and the 2005 novel Music of the Mill there is a shift in the way Spanish phrases and expressions are used in an otherwise English text.

The stories in The Republic of East L.A. frequently use Spanish and Caló expressions and phrases without translation:

[A]t first I thought Ruby was half off her mecedora. (6)
“¿Qué pues, compa?” he declared. “¿No tienes cambio? Para ayudar un paisa, ¿no?” (27)
“¡M’ijo!” Mona screamed into the phone. “Your father is gone again. ¡Que caray! Nunca faltan de lios con este hombre.” (78)
“El mismo pinche rollo – will you stop it!” Espie said. (124)
“Pinche cabrón, hijo de la …” A woman's voice. “¡Borracho! Get out of my house!” (225)

Phrases and expressions such as these occur on almost every page – without translation or paraphrase. In contrast to the stories in The Republic of East L.A., Spanish expressions in Music of the Mill are almost always translated or explained, sometimes elegantly and obliquely, but often quite obtrusively. What follows are merely a few out of many examples:

Procopio [overhearing a conversation] picks up a few words including acero, the Spanish word for “steel” (12)
“Estamos chingados,” Eugenio remarks. “Man, we're fucked.” (13)
At one point, the men and women begin to share popular sayings they remember from back home. … “Si tu mal tiene remedio, no te apures; y si no tiene remedio, para qué te

14 Cf. also 2, 6, 14, 22, 23, 30, 32, 34, 35, 37 and throughout.
apurá? (If your troubles have a solution, don’t worry about them; if they have no solution, why worry about them?)” (16f.)
“We’ll straighten this out,” I say. … “No need for problems. Nada más queremos lo que es mío, I just want what’s mine.” (201)
“How you doing, muñeca?” he said (he always calls me muñeca, which means “doll”). (233; cf. also 201, 210, 211, 219 and throughout)

These translations are not given in footnotes or glossaries that one could choose to consult or ignore; they are rather obtrusively given in the text. In the sense of a development towards the mainstream, this translation of Spanish expressions can be read as a strategy allowing a non-initiate readership to follow more easily, to Latino readers or to anyone with a knowledge of Spanish, however, the occasionally obtrusive translation in Music of the Mill might well be downright annoying. In that sense, the use of Spanish and Caló expressions in Anglophone Latino fiction has been seen as a form of folkloristic “ethnic” enrichment. Geuder diagnoses an increased use of Spanish expressions in Chicano fiction since the 1990s and reads this as an expression of “a playful ethnic flair” (313) geared towards mainstream reception.

As far as the use of Spanish expressions in general is concerned, a subversive reading of this use of language might understand it in the sense of the “metonymic gap” as defined in post-colonial theory, where it designates a form of distancing oneself from the dominant discourse by means of linguistic strategies. Ashcroft defines the metonymic gap as “that cultural gap formed when appropriations of a colonial language insert unglossed words, phrases or passages from a first language, or concepts, allusions or references which may be unknown to the reader.” (75). Applied to the situation of Mexican Americans and to Rodriguez’ novel, these Spanish insertions are synecdochic of Mexican American culture and – while use of English as the dominant language generally continues –, they simultaneously “signal and emphasize a difference from it.” (Ashcroft 75). They thus help to appropriate the

15 For examples of a more innovative and playful use of code-switching cf. for instance the poetry and prose of Sandra Cisneros, especially Caramelo; for literally bilingual novels cf. for instance Morales, Reto en el paraíso or Braschi, Yo-Yo Boing!. For enlightening discussions of different linguistic strategies available to Latina/o writers cf. for instance Keller, “Literary Stratagems” and “Stylistic Analysis”, as well as Martín-Rodríguez, 107-138.
16 There is reason to assume some degree of influence from the publisher here, attempting to make the text more marketable to mainstream audiences. I am indebted to Karen Van Hooft and Gary D. Keller and their immense knowledge of the publishing market for Latina/o fiction for a discussion on this point.
17 A further marketing device is the slotting of Chicana/o texts into familiar publishing categories and traditions. In this vein, the blurb on the back cover of Music on the Mill compares the novel to the work of John Steinbeck (Grapes of Wrath being the obvious association). In a section appropriately titled “Marketing and Labeling Chicano/a Literature: On the Uses and Abuses of Magical Realism”, Martín-Rodríguez (123-138) discusses this marketing strategy by pointing out how Chicana/o publications are frequently marketed under the label of “magical realism”, especially by means of “routine comparisons with García Márquez’s work” (126).
English language while subverting its hegemonizing implications. For Chicano readers, as Geuder (313f.) argues, Spanish expressions invite identification with protagonists and allow readers to feel part of an insider group.\textsuperscript{19}

Thus, the use of untranslated expressions in the short stories plays a double game with two groups of recipients. In both senses, it is eminently political: for the in-group, it induces a feeling of belonging and community and instils solidarity. Against the “out-group”, it functions as a subversive form of inverting the hierarchies and stereotypes of who is knowledgeable, educated and in control.\textsuperscript{20}

However, I am not concerned with the question to what extent the boom in Latina/o fiction is merely an attempt to increase consumption in the Latino audience or to sell exotic ethnic fiction to the American mainstream (cf. Geuder 320-326 \textit{et passim}). What interests me here is the question to what extent the shift from the short stories with their lack of dating and the unglossed use of Spanish to the meticulously dated novel, which generally provides translations of Spanish phrases can be read in the light of the mainstreaming of the development “from a Chicana/o frame of reference to a US-American frame of reference” diagnosed by Geuder (313). One further strategy of ensuring transcultural accessibility common in Chicano fiction that is also apparent in \textit{Music of the Mill} is that of providing explanations of cultural phenomena either through the initiation of child protagonists or other uninitiated protagonists, so that information can unobtrusively be given to unknowing readers. In this vein, Azucena's introduction to the indigenous roots of Chicano culture and to indigenous spirituality and rituals such as the sweat lodge ceremony (\textit{MM} 273-287) serves also to inform readers unfamiliar with this cultural repertoire, a strategy Martín-Rodríguez outlines as follows: “[T]ranscultural Chicano/a literature often includes what could be defined as an anthropological or ethnographic discourse that becomes a cultural explanation of sorts for the benefit of the distant readers” (116).

In terms of two approaches to the representation of the Latina/o experience which José Antonio Gurpegui tellingly referred to as “writing for my barrio” vs. “writing for my country” (cf. Geuder 313) – or Martín-Rodríguez's distinction between “marketa” and “market” (110) – the implicit dating with its reliance on insider “neighborhood” knowledge and the unglossed use of Spanish in \textit{The Republic of East L.A.} suggests a “writing for my barrio” approach while the explicit dating and the glossed use of Spanish expressions in the later novel might indicate a “writing for my country” approach, though these opposites should be seen as constituting a

\textsuperscript{19} For a sociolinguistic study of Chicano English, its use of Spanish expressions and language attitudes among its speakers in a community in Los Angeles County cf. Fought.

\textsuperscript{20} For further functions of such linguistic and cultural markers cf. also Martín-Rodríguez, esp. 107-138.
scale rather than a black-or-white dichotomy. However, these approaches by no means have to be mutually exclusive, as one reviewer suggests: “[Rodriguez] prose is an education, first, I think, for the people he grew up and ran with, and then, too, for Americans who are hungry to hear the voices of the dispossessed” (Clark n.p.).

However, while it is suggestive to see the shift from the short stories to the novel in the light of the mainstreaming of Chicano fiction, the mere three years between Republic of East L.A. and Music of the Mill alone are not sufficient to explain the differences.

4. Temporality and Genre: From Story Collection to Historical Novel

The short stories in The Republic of East L.A., on the one hand, can be seen as self-contained renderings of archetypal events and constellations in barrio life, as paradigmatic situations outside a temporal order which do not require any dating. On the other hand, as far as the novel is concerned, a number of reviewers have pointed out that Music of the Mill is ultimately a historical novel. Thus, New York Times reviewer Nathaniel Rich writes that the novel “provides a brisk history of the last half of the American 20th century through the story of the Salcidos” (Rich n.p.). Similarly, in a review for the Washington Post, Neely Tucker, commenting on the novel's portrayal of decades of life in the mill, states that “Rodriguez sees all this in grand historical terms” (Tucker BW 14; cf. also Clark n.p.). There is indeed, as we have seen, a tendency to situate events in the novel in the context of nationals and even global developments. It is clear, I believe, that the genre of the multi-generational family saga in Music of the Mill inherently requires the dating of key events and developments.

A closer comparison of The Republic of East L.A. and Music of the Mill shows that a number of paradigmatic vignettes from the collection reappear in the later novel. One of the situations and constellations in the earlier stories which reappear in the novel is the estranged father dying of cancer and the death-bed reconciliation with his son (cf. “Finger Dance” 73-89; MM 295f., 307f.). Similarly, the relationship between the political activist mother and the politically more complacent offspring (“My Ride, my Revolution”) is comparable to the relationship between Aracely, communist community activist, and her less politically inclined daughter Azucena in Music of the Mill. In “Las Chicas Chuecas”, the story of a girl gang, Noemi, sixteen, drinks too much at a party that gets out of hand and is raped by several members of a rival gang (63f.). In Music of the Mill, Azucena, also sixteen, hangs out at excessive parties in an abandoned hotel. Having drunk too much, she falls asleep and is raped by several members of a rival gang (225f.). Similarly, the drop-out son who becomes an

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21 For comparable reconciliation scenes between fathers and their offspring cf. MM 84 and 270.
alcoholic and drinks himself to death in the street prominently appears in one of the stories and in the novel:

[W]hen Rudy was not in the apartment he was at the corner liquor store, drinking and talking with the local winos in an alley. … At night, the bottles seemed to have a life of their own. [Rudy] grabbed a bottle and drank, letting the alcohol rush through his system … It was his only comfort during those days. Days of not knowing. Days of not feeling. Days of not caring if he woke up or not. … Rudy landed an occasional job, but he’d lose it for one reason or another. (35f.) Rudy had begun drinking heavy again after he and Fabiola had a big fight. … He came home intoxicated, out of control, filthy. Fabiola, afraid and confused, would whisk little Santos away to a neighbor's house or to her inlaws. This drove Rudy to frenzied states; he would scream, throw things around, then leave. (‘Shadows’” 41f.)

There is a very similar character in *Music of the Mill*:

[Junior] became an alcoholic and eventually wasn't any good to anyone … Junior abandoned [his wife] MerriLee and the kids. He couldn't hold a job. He pretty much hung out by the railroad tracks or derelict hotels, with the homeless and hoboes, the winos and tecatos. … He’d be drunk, asking for money so he could get more booze. … But one day Junior went to Lito's house and they had a terrible fight. …Junior picked up a lamp and threw it against a wall. … Johnny, Bune, and Rafas had already stopped drinking … But Junior never did stop. … He died, having abused his system far too much. … A couple of police officers driving through an alley just off Florence Avenue found Junior splayed out on dirt and overgrown weeds, amongst strewn garbage, next to graffiti-scrawled cinder blocks. (*MM* 207, 228, 230)

*La vida loca* of gang life in East L.A., rendered in “Las Chicas Chuecas” (45-71) and also the subject of Rodriguez 1993 memoir *Always Running* also again features in the novel when Azucena talks about the violent deaths of two of her boyfriends in gang warfare (cf. 221f., 241) and in the life of her brother Joaquin, imprisoned for crimes committed as a barrio gang member (cf. 209f., 291-301). Even more directly, one of the stories, “Mechanics” (107-133), can be seen as a kernel or summary version of the novel anticipating most of its key concerns: life in and around a steel mill with the gruelling work in shifts, the meanness of superiors at work, alcoholism, gambling and prostitutes on payday, family trouble, the premature death of many former steelworkers only months after retirement, unemployment after the shutting down of the mill, the “small maintenance crew remain[ing] to dismantle the machines, furnaces, and forges.”

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22 This remains Rodriguez' most widely read work; cf. also footnote 13 above. Though thematically relevant to my discussion in that it “indirectly […] traces a genealogy of discrimination, hate, disenfranchisement, an excessive regime of surveillance, and a sense of alienation from a complete sense of belonging within and to the nation” (Brown 62), *Always Running* will largely be left out of my discussion here, because, as a memoir, it follows different generic conventions.
(123f.). Passages such as the following read like a précis of *Music of the Mill*, like a condensed version to be unfolded at greater length in the novel:

The steel mill was history. ... Many smaller bucket shops and rolling mills that surrounded the plant were moving south to Mexico or to Taiwan, where labor was cheaper. To compete, the mill had to move as well. Times were indeed changing. ... There were fathers, grandfathers, and in some cases great-grandfathers who had worked there. When the company first established the mill the mostly Mexican families brought in to do the menial labor lived in old barracks established for them. ... Other people ended up here as well: Southern, mostly skilled, white workers; black manual laborers; Cherokees and Hopis; Poles and Yugoslavs. ... Decade after decade, the mill's furnaces roared its monstrous song. It fed families, allowing some to buy their first homes; it sustained whole communities. ... Now, this would be no more. ("Mechanics" 122f.)

Situations, constellations, events and even the wording of paragraphs from “Mechanics” reappear in the novel. In a flashback, former millwright Enrique's situation at the time of his hiring by the steel mill is described as follows:

Everything then – so long ago – seemed right; he was married to a beautiful woman and living in a small but pleasant apartment that he rented only a month before the wedding. On top of that, Enrique had just gotten a job at the steel mill as a millwright apprentice. Although the first level of apprentices were called “oiler greasers,” which sounded derogatory to him, it was a job that promised up to fifteen dollars an hour within two years ... ("Mechanics" 109)

In *Music of the Mill*, Johnny's prospects after being hired by Nazareth Steel are rendered in remarkably similar terms:

[Johnny] manages to get a position in the “oiler-greaser” gang, the first level of the millwright craft crews at Nazareth. Although the term *oiler-greaser* sounds derogatory to Johnny, he knows this is good news. ... His bride is a beautiful eighteen-year-old South Central L.A. girl, formerly named Aracely Velasco. Everything seems to be looking up for Johnny. Everything. (MM 33)

Thus, the earlier story collection in many ways reads like a gathering of material for the novel; and it is the generic transformation from story collection to novel, I believe, that accounts for the telling differences, especially the differences in the dating and chronology of events and developments. Different genres and their specific modes of emplotment require a different treatment of time and chronology: The genre of the multi-generational family saga with a continuous plot inherently requires a syntagmatic organization of the narrative material, while the genre of the short story collection with twelve largely self-contained individual texts that could basically be rearranged within the volume without a significant loss
or alteration of meaning. Ultimately, the novel can be seen as the emplotment or syntagmatic arrangement of these paradigmatic scenes into a narrative sequence.

To conclude, while the shift from untranslated Spanish expressions in *The Republic of East L.A.* to the consistently translated use of Spanish in *Music of the Mill* as well as a number of other strategies of ensuring transcultural accessibility appear as an attempt to write for a larger audience and can thus be seen in the context of the changing market for Latino fiction, this is only part of the explanation for the differences in the dating of events and the resulting differences in temporality. While the implicit dating of the stories in *Republic of East L.A.* also functions to define an in-group for those familiar with developments in the community, the shift towards the consistent dating of events in *Music of the Mill* is also the result of generic differences.

**Works Cited:**


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23 For an interesting perspective on the role of “two incommensurable temporalites” in the narrative construction of communities cf. Bhabha, “DissemiNation.”, esp. 157ff. Bhabha is here indebted to Benedict Anderson. The two temporalities outlined by Bhabha do not, however, quite map into the two types of temporality outlined above for Rodriguez’ texts.


