

ARCHETYPAL PATTERNS IN FOUR  
NOVELS OF ALEJO CARPENTIER

by

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to investigate the function of myth in the novels of Alejo Carpentier. He began his literary career during the Cuban vanguardist movement of the 1920's. His novelistic production spans two generations and has conferred upon the author both the position of forerunner and distinguished contemporary proponent of the twentieth century Latin American novel.<sup>1</sup> His works have merited numerous editions, translations, and critical articles. Yet, it was not until 1966 that an extensive critical study was devoted to the author.<sup>2</sup> Since that time two more critical works have appeared, but none have sought to analyze the function of myth in the novels of Alejo Carpentier.<sup>3</sup> In fact, "myth criticism" has found little or no application in Latin American literature.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, a profound need for new methods of criticism has been recognized by critics of the contemporary Latin American novel. It is generally agreed that, since 1940, the novel can no longer be approached through traditional methods of classification:

Es artificial, pues, hablar hoy de una novela "de la tierra" y de una novela "de la ciudad" y más artificial aún, creer que la novela de la tierra es la expresión típica del novelista hispanoamericano. Eliminadas estas fórmulas, el lector común y crítico buscan en la novela hispanoamericana, cualquiera que sea su tema, su ambiente y sus personajes, un común denominador de excelencia artística y un equivalente

esfuerzo de comunicación universal, Novelistas como Yáñez, Carpentier, Asturias, Rojas, Mallea, Sábato, Roa Bastos, Arguedas, Fuentes, se mueven en el ambiente total de sus respectivos países, abarcan toda su realidad y, desbordando las líneas nacionales, buscan las raíces de su propia responsabilidad en el drama del mundo contemporáneo.<sup>5</sup>

During the years since 1940, a large number of excellent novelists have produced works worthy of universal acclaim. They can no longer be described according to regionalistic or thematic classifications, nor do they correspond to such terms as Romantic, Realistic, Naturalistic, Existentialist, or Psychological. To be sure, there were earlier Latin American novels of universal value, but they had never been so numerous.

We suggest that, in part, this exceptional growth of the novel resulted from the conscious recognition of certain patterns of human existence, allowing the novelist to perceive, within the particular temporal and spatial manifestations of life, configurations of archetypal and universal significance. Psychological and anthropological studies in the first part of the twentieth century led to such discoveries: Freud and Jung in their exploration of the unconscious; Leo Frobenius, Sir James G. Frazer, and later schools of anthropology and comparative religion in their accumulation of data on man's ritual and mythic behavior. These extra-literary discoveries did have an profound effect upon literary movements, particularly upon two movements with which Carpentier was intimately related: Afro-Cubanism and French Surrealism.<sup>6</sup> Both addressed themselves to a

reality, contained within, but transcending the external world of objective phenomena as reproduced by photographic realism. This second, or transcendent, reality has many characteristics peculiar to the religious experience of the absolute or divine realm, and the methods of approaching it in literature exhibit patterns similar to those of primitive ritual and to the psychological processes of confronting the unconscious. To equate what has been classified as Magical Realism in Latin American literature with religion in the traditional sense is, of course, untenable. Yet, language and religion do serve a common symbolic function, allowing the individual to perceive "the sensuous in the suprasensory in the sensuous."<sup>7</sup> The literary production of Carpentier reveals such an interpenetration of the real and the marvelous, the particular and the universal, the temporal and the eternal; and we maintain that the conscious recognition of archetypal patterns discovered in the fields of anthropology and psychology did profoundly influence the author.

Peter G. Earle, finding the traditional thematic and regionalistic methods of classification inapplicable to the contemporary novel, suggests that criticism devote itself to a study of structure:

Creo que la insuficiencia de estos ejercicios es evidente, porque cualquier análisis serio de las mejores novelas demuestra inesperadas combinaciones y variedades de temas, y así resultan arbitrarios y gratuitos casi todos los cuidadosos cuadros de clasificación. Es preciso que otros métodos y perspectivas nos libren de la enfermedad temática y nos conduzcan a una nueva y más

completa valorización de la novela hispano-americana. Uno de los fundamentos de esa valorización debería ser el estudio de su estructura.<sup>8</sup>

He identifies the quest-voyage as the fundamental structural element in the contemporary novel. Also, he cites numerous literary antecedents for this basic novelistic structure: The Odyssey, Don Quijote, Moby Dick, Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man and The Magic Mountain. Many other works could be mentioned, of course, but the main point of his well taken thesis is that the contemporary novel is characterized by an intensification of the quest-voyage motif and that the motif exhibits structural significance. While accepting the importance of the literary antecedents cited by Earle, we consider this intensification of archetypal patterns to have been strongly influenced by discoveries in the fields of anthropology and psychology and that myth criticism affords us a method for interpreting and elucidating these patterns.

Although, at present, there is no firm consensus upon a final definition of either myth or myth criticism, John B. Vickery has indicated one of its fundamental contributions:

While myth criticism endorses the autonomy of literature and its study, it does not consign the critic to the vacuum-sealed container of his own brain. Instead it links him to other disciplines, notably anthropology and psychology, and so broadens his approach to reality and the modes of experiencing it. In this it aspires to reverse the practical achievements of the New Criticism which was largely to cut off the critic from direct, explicit access to the resources of science, sociology, and philosophy. By espousing

the necessity of extra-literary knowledge for the critic while reserving the right to adapt that knowledge in accord with the needs of literary study, myth criticism makes a third contribution of considerable importance. It serves as a reminder of the dangers of concentrating too narrowly upon limited areas and approaches, as past philological, historical, and rhetorical studies have done. To avoid its own form of narrowness is the challenge confronting myth criticism.<sup>9</sup>

Like all criticism, myth criticism endeavors to heighten the perception of theme, structure, and character in specific literary works. In doing this, it emphasizes the relevance of anthropological and psychological knowledge to literature.

To be sure, myth is not literature. The latter is characterized by a higher degree of consciousness than is present in primitive myth. The esthetic tendency is to withdraw psychological projection from the external world and to recognize the symbols of mythology as revelations of an interior reality:

They confess themselves to be illusion as opposed to the empirical reality of things; but this illusion has its own truth because it possesses its own law. In return to this law there arises a new freedom of consciousness: the image no longer reacts upon the spirit as an independent material thing but becomes for the spirit a pure expression of its own creative power.<sup>10</sup>

The esthetic experience requires an active collaboration between the external and internal realities, between the contents of the ego-consciousness and of the unconscious. Carpentier was aware of this necessity early in his literary career:

...nuestro esfuerzo creador debe tender a liberar la imaginación de sus trabas, a hurgar

en la subconciencia, a hacer manifestarse el yo más auténtico del modo más directo posible.<sup>11</sup>

In order to discover man as a total and authentic being, one must come to terms with not only the empirical reality given in the field of ego-consciousness; but it is even more important that one treat the contents of the unconscious. Carpentier clearly recognized the interdependence of these two realities, and they manifest themselves in his literary production as an interpenetration of the real and the marvelous realms.

The contents of the unconscious are, in themselves, basically formless. Jung defines them as patterns of instinctual behavior, pre-existent forms, or archetypes.<sup>12</sup>

Erich Neumann relates them to art forms:

The archetypes of the collective unconscious are intrinsically formless psychic structures which become visible in art. The archetypes are varied by the media through which they pass--that is, their form changes according to the time, the place, and the psychological constellation of the individual in whom they are manifested. Thus, for example, the mother archetype, as a dynamic entity in the psychic substratum, always retains its identity, but it takes on different styles--different aspects or emotional color--depending on whether it is manifested in Egypt, Mexico, or Spain, or in ancient, medieval or modern times. The paradoxical multiplicity of its eternal presence which makes possible an infinite variety of forms of expression, is crystalized in its realization by man in time; its archetypal eternity enters into a unique synthesis with a specific historical situation.<sup>13</sup>

Through the symbolic representation of this archetypal reality, the eternal breaks into and becomes manifest in the temporal realm. Unconscious contents enter into the field of ego-consciousness, with a subsequent release of psychic



energy, producing an experience of a revelatory or illuminative nature. Carpentier describes this experience in terms of the religious miracle:

...lo maravilloso comienza a serlo de manera inequívoca cuando surge de una inesperada alteración de la realidad (el milagro), de una revelación privilegiada de la realidad, de una iluminación inhabitual o singularmente favorecedora de las inadvertidas riquezas de la realidad, de una ampliación de las escalas y categorías de la realidad, percibidas con particular intensidad en virtud de una exaltación del espíritu que lo conduce a un modo de "estado límite".<sup>14</sup>

This experience transcends the limits of ego-consciousness and is, in effect, the perception of the archetypal reality. In order to give form to this experience, in order to communicate it, the artist frequently calls upon man's infinitely rich heritage of mytho-religious symbols, adapting them to his particular time and place.

This mythopoeic faculty in man responds to a basic human need to come to terms with himself, both individually and collectively, as a significant and authentic being. It requires a confrontation not only with the phenomena of the empirical world but even more importantly with the contents of the unconscious. From earliest times, man has projected these contents upon the external world in the forms of gods, demons, and other supernatural powers. His encounter and battle with these powers often appeared in the form of a voyage, filled with perilous ordeals and threatening trials. Thus, the archetypal pattern of the voyage emerges in numerous mythologies as the adventure of the hero.<sup>15</sup> Also, the hero archetype is extremely significant psychologically,

occurring during a process described by Jung as "individuation," the open conflict between ego-consciousness and the unconscious from which is forged the complete individual.<sup>16</sup> Finally, this same pattern appears in primitive initiation rites as a three-part transformative voyage: separation, transition, and incorporation.<sup>17</sup> Carpentier, through his affiliation with the Afro-Cuban and Surrealist movements, was undoubtedly aware of these archetypal patterns.<sup>18</sup>

In order to determine the function of myth and archetypal patterns in the novels of Carpentier, we will analyze the structure of four representative novels: Ecue-yamba-ó (1933), El reino de este mundo (1949), Los pasos perdidos (1953), and El siglo de las luces (1962). These novels have been selected in order to obtain a comprehensive view of the evolution in his novelistic structure. The first novel has not merited a second edition and is definitely inferior to his later works, but we have included it because it already exhibits characteristics and elements developed in the later novels. Also, it complements Los pasos perdidos in that both works focus upon a single major protagonist. The other two novels treat a collective historical movement: the beginning of the Latin American Wars of Independence. Although his shorter prose works reveal similar characteristics, we have omitted the nouvelle El acoso (1956), and the short stories "Oficio de tinieblas" (1944),<sup>19</sup> "Los fugitivos" (1946), "Viaje a la semilla" (1944), "El camino de Santiago" (1958), and "Semejante a la noche" (1958). At present, Carpentier is working on a trilogy devoted to the Cuban

Revolution. A chapter of the first volume, El año 59, has appeared in the journal Casa de las Americas,<sup>20</sup> but we do not attempt to analyze this fragment.

## Footnotes

1. José Juan Arrósm places Carpentier within the generation of 1924 to 1954. Esquema generacional de las letras hispanoamericanas: ensayo de un método (Bogotá: Instituto Caro y Cuervo, 1963), pp. 197, 204. While Carpentier did begin his literary career during the vanguardist movement, his literary production extends well into the generation of 1954. See also: Luis Harss and Barbara Dohmann. Into the Mainstream: Conversations with Latin-American Writers (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1967), p. 38.
2. Klaus Müller-Bergh devotes the entire first chapter of his dissertation to a biographical and generational study of Alejo Carpentier. Also, he includes an extensive bibliographical section. Rather than duplicate this information, the reader is referred to the following: La prosa narrativa de Alejo Carpentier en Los pasos perdidos (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms, Inc., 1967), pp. 1-58, 216-25. The first chapter was later published as "Alejo Carpentier: autor y obra en su época," Revista Iberoamericana, vol. XXXIII, núm. 63 (enero-junio, 1967), pp. 9-43.
3. Armand Fred Baker, "El tiempo en la novela hispanoamericana: un estudio del concepto del tiempo en siete novelas representativas," Dissertation Abstracts, vol. 28, no 7 (Jan., 1968), p. 2673-A; and Juan Manuel Alonso, "The Search for Identity in Alejo Carpentier's Contemporary Urban Novels: An Analysis of Los pasos perdidos and

El acoso," Dissertation Abstracts, vol. 28, no 8 (Feb., 1968), p. 3173-A.

4. Marcelino C. Peñuelas states that there is a surprising absence of Hispanic names in the extensive contemporary bibliography on myth: Mito, Literatura y Realidad. (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, S.A., 1965), p. 23. An exception is Carlos Santander's excellent article: "Lo maravilloso en la obra de Alejo Carpentier," Atenea, Año XLII, tomo CLIX, no. 409 (jul-sept, 1965), pp. 99-126. This is the first attempt to study the function of myth in Carpentier's novels, but the analysis is limited to Los pasos perdidos.

5. Fernando Alegría, Historia de la novela hispanoamericana (México: Ediciones de Andrea, 1965), p. 208. This transformation of the novel--surpassing regionalism and achieving universal stature--has equally impressed other critics, who have in turn expressed the need for new critical methods: Angel Flores, "Magical Realism in Spanish American Fiction," Hispania, vol. XXXVIII, n<sup>o</sup>m 2 (May, 1955), p. 187; Alberto Zum Felde, La narrativa en Hispanoamérica (Madrid: Aguilar, 1964), pp. 25-26; Peter G. Earle, "Camino oscuro: la novela hispanoamericana contemporánea," Cuadernos americanos, Año XXVI, 3 (mayo-junio, 1967), pp. 204-08.

6. G. R. Coulthard documents the influence of these discoveries upon the Afro-Cuban movement: Race and Colour in Caribbean Literature (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 27-39. Anna Elizabeth Balakian accomplishes a similar study in regard to Surrealism: Literary Origins of Surrealism: A New Mysticism in French Poetry (New York:

- King's Crown Press, 1947), pp. 16, passim.; and her Surrealism: the Road to the Absolute (New York: Noonday Press, 1959), pp. 91-111.
7. Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, trans. Ralph Manheim (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), vol. II, p. 253.
8. "Camino oscuro: la novela hispanoamericana contemporánea," p. 206.
9. Myth and Literature: Contemporary Theory and Practice, ed. John B. Vickery (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), p. x.
10. The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, vol. II, p. 261.
11. Alejo Carpentier, "Algunas actitudes del 'Surrealismo'," Social, vol. XIII, núm. 12 (dic. 1928), p. 74.
12. Carl Gustav Jung, The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, trans. R.F.C. Hull (New York: Pantheon Books, 1959), pp. 43-44.
13. Erich Neumann, "Art and Time," in Man and Time: Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks (New York: Pantheon Books, 1957), pp. 3-4.
14. Alejo Carpentier, Tientos y Diferencias: ensayos (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1964), p. 132.
15. For examples of this archetypal pattern, see: Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces (New York: Pantheon Books, 1949), pp. 3-46.
16. The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, p. 288.

17. Arnold van Gennep, The Rites of Passage, trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp. 10-11.
18. Fernando Alegria, "Alejo Carpentier: realismo mágico," Humanitas, Año I, núm. 1 (1960), p. 355.
19. Alejo Carpentier, "Oficio de tinieblas," Orígenes, Año I, núm. 14 (invierno, 1944), pp. 32-38.
20. Alejo Carpentier, "El año 59," Casa de las Américas, vol. 4, no. 26 (oct-nov, 1964), pp. 45-50.

## CHAPTER I

¡ECUE-YAMBA-O! (1933)

Ecue-yamba-o is the first extensive prose work of Alejo Carpentier. As the subtitle Historia afro-cubana suggests, the work corresponds to the Afro-Cuban movement of the late 1920's. A salient characteristic of this movement is the re-evaluation of the Negro in Cuban literature: the Negro arises from his role of a picturesque element to occupy center stage as a vital factor in Afro-Antillean culture.

Much of this literature is permeated by a strong vein of social protest, as is the nativistic literature of the rest of Latin America in the first part of the twentieth century; but its most fundamental motivation is found in the authentic desire for national self-expression, which manifests itself in the search for those characteristics which distinguish that nation from all others. Carpentier stresses this search for identity as a motivating factor in the Afro-Cuban movement:

La posibilidad de expresar lo criollo con una nueva noción de sus valores se impuso a las mentes.... Súbitamente, el negro se hizo el eje de todas las miradas. Por lo mismo que con ello se disgustaba a los intelectuales de viejo cuño, se iba con unción a los juramentos ñañigos, haciéndose el elogio de la danza del diablito. Así nació la tendencia afrocubanista, que durante más de diez años alimentaría poemas, novelas, estudios folk-



lóricos y sociológicos. Tendencia que en muchos casos, sólo llegó a lo superficial y periférico, al negro bajo palmas ebrias de sol, pero que constituía un paso necesario para comprender mejor ciertos factores poéticos, musicales, étnicos y sociales, que habían contribuido a dar una fisonomía propia a lo criollo.<sup>1</sup>

Although there is no question as to the existence of an African tradition in Antillean culture, this emphasis upon the Negro as its major distinctive element may appear rather naive, especially if it goes no farther than the superficial description of Negro life and customs. However, if we envision the Negro as the contemporary embodiment of primitive man, we shall gain greater insight into the fixation upon the Negro in this search for national identity.

The search for identity, be it on the national or the individual level, usually results in a return to origins. When the cultural context stagnates in a tyrannical one-sidedness no longer responsive to the needs of the individual, it ceases to incorporate the individual into the transpersonal collectivity known as society but instead becomes a foreign and oppressive entity. This was the situation under the dictatorship of Machado, which was rooted not in the needs of the Cuban people but in the contingencies of an external economic exploitation. The alienating effect of this regime was deeply felt by the intellectuals of Carpenter's generation. He himself was imprisoned for protesting against it.<sup>2</sup> Such an alienated condition, a failure to identify with a transpersonal reality, is often accompanied by a loss of faith in rational order. Then, as Jung so

brilliantly affirms in one of his excellent metaphors. the individual "is thrown back upon himself; his energies flow towards their source and wash to the surface those psychic contents which are at all times there, but lie hidden in the silt as long as the stream flows smoothly in its course."<sup>3</sup> In more prosaic terms, man in an alienated or disoriented state may revert to more primitive modes of behavior.

The most primitive element in Cuban culture was the Negro. In his ritualistic behavior, he was the embodiment of that participation mystique which resolves the duality between subject and object and abrogates the resulting alienation between man and his environment.<sup>4</sup> Since the Indian had been exterminated in Cuba, and therefore was unable to exert as lasting an influence in Cuban national development as he had in much of Latin America, the Negro also represented the most autochthonous element in Cuban culture. It is for this reason that Carpentier exalts the Negro as the defender of Antillean tradition: "Sólo los negros, Menegildo, Longina, Salomé y su prole conservaban celosamente un carácter y una tradición antillana."<sup>5</sup>

This fixation upon the Negro element as the contemporary embodiment of the primitive within the Cuban-Antillean culture was fed, on the intellectual level, by the explosion of anthropological data on the African. The most universally read works on this subject were those of Leo Frobenius which along with others gave rise to the expansion of the study of primitive cultures in Paris, where

Miguel Angel Asturias was to investigate his own indigenous background.<sup>6</sup> However, in Cuba the most direct influence upon the writers of the late 1920's was exerted by Fernando Ortiz and Chacón y Calvo, both Cuban folklorists.<sup>7</sup>

Therefore, we find Carpentier and other Cuban writers of that period oriented toward the Negro in their search for distinctive national characteristics. They read the numerous anthropological and sociological studies of their time and were able to evaluate the concepts they found in these works by attempting to apply them to their vision of Cuban reality. Carpentier gave form to this subject matter in Afro-Antillean poetry and librettos for musical pieces, but his most lasting contribution was in prose fiction. This form has constituted and continues to constitute the most extensive part of his literary production.

His first novel, Ecue-yamba-6, describes the decisive phases in the life of a single protagonist, the Negro Menegildo. The work is divided into three major parts: "Infancia," "Adolescencia" and "La ciudad." The first, "Infancia," treats the birth and childhood of Menegildo. He is born of Negro parents, the old Usebio Cué and Salomé, owners of a small farm near the Cuban sugar mill of San Lucio. From the very beginning Carpentier counterpoises the rhythm of Negro life, a primitive mode of existence which allows a participation mystique between man and his environment, to the rhythm of the impersonal system of economic exploitation which the sugar industry imposes upon him,

mechanically regulating his life until he becomes little more than an automaton, alienated from himself and his environment. This is the situation into which Menegildo is born, and against which his life will unfold in his struggle to achieve an authentic existence.

The first three chapters of the first part describe the situation and introduce Menegildo into it. The first, "Paisaje (a)," presents Usebio at the beginning of a sugar harvest during World War I. The San Lucio sugar mill, controlled by a North American company, disrupts the natural rhythm of life:

De la disciplina de sol a la disciplina de manómetros. De la yunta terca, que entiende de voz de hombres, a la máquina espoleada por picos de alcuas. (p. 10)

During a period of several months, this tyrannical dictatorship of the "gigante diabético" (p. 15) progressively converts the workers into "hombres, asexuados, casi mecánicos" (p. 16). Immediately following and counterpoised to this vision of men dehumanized by machinery is "Paisaje (b)." Here we are presented with the figure of Salomé washing clothes in front of Usebio's hut. The cart drivers briefly pause to greet her on their journey to and from San Lucio. She is the mother who in the third chapter, "Natividad," gives birth to Menegildo during the sugar harvest. Menegildo is the human harvest which is contraposed to the mechanized harvest of the sugar mill.

The following four chapters describe the entrance of Menegildo into this world, his first discoveries of its

mysteries and dangers. As a creeping infant he begins his exploratory adventures in "Iniciación (a)." In the first years of his existence, having tired of the confines of his rude crib, Menegildo "emprendió, a gatas, un largo viaje a través del bohío..." (p. 23). As Menegildo explores the undersides of furniture and the waste strewn about the floor, Carpentier captures the child's point of view and his sense of adventure in this "primera ojeada sobre el universo" (p. 24). The climax of this first adventure is the "maravilloso descubrimiento" (p. 25). He suddenly spies and is fascinated by the magic theater, the sincretic altar of his parents which is a mixture of Catholic and African deities. This represents his first encounter with the supernatural powers that govern the universe, but he is thwarted in his attempt to physically reach them by Salomé who returns him to his crib. His awareness of the efficacy of these powers is heightened in the following chapter.

At three years of age Menegildo in "Terapéutica (a)" encounters for the first time the physical dangers of this world and the consequent abrogation of these dangers through the invocation of sacred-magical powers. He is bitten by a cangrejo ciguato, and falls ill. The old warlock Beruá is called to cure him. Through the application of manteca de majá and the recitation of the prayer to the Justo Juez, he saves Menegildo and protects him from future "persecución de hombres y alimañas" (p. 26).

If the invocation of the powers of the Justo Juez

protected Menegildo from persecution by men and animals, it did not protect his father Usebio. For Usebio, like many other small landowners of the vicinity, is obliged to sell his land at a ridiculously low price to the North American company which controls the refining process. Thus in the following chapter, "Bueyes," we find Usebio reduced to the occupation of carretero, in which he is assisted by his son of eight years, Menegildo. Nevertheless, this new occupation has its advantages; for the carretero is not obliged to suffer the dehumanization imposed by work in the sugar mill itself, but maintains a certain degree of freedom and aloofness. This is the socio-economic context in which Menegildo develops. Furthermore, he is not subjected to formal education, but rather, through immersion in popular music and dance, free reign is given to his "innate" feeling for primitive rhythm. In "Ritmos" he becomes a "doctor en gestos y cadencias" (p. 33). Music and dance are integral parts of the Afro-Antillean religious cults; and, although Menegildo only participates in them on the profane or secular level at this point, he already is dimly aware of the "ciencia que hacia bajar el santo" (p. 38). Another mystery of which he acquires an awareness is sex, and this manifests itself in "un asomo de cólera contra su padre" (p. 39). It becomes apparent at this stage that we are approaching the separation from childhood as an asexual state.

The concluding four chapters of Part I, "Temporal (a,b,c,d)," although four separate chapters, are a struc-

tural unit and represent the end of or separation from childhood. They describe a hurricane, a cataclysmic natural event which devastates the home of Usebio Cué. Although it is universally frightening, it most poignantly strikes terror in the heart of Usebio, the head of the family. Menegildo plays no active role in this episode, rather the conflict centers upon Usebio and Paula Macho.

Paula enters in the first of these four chapters with a warning about the imminent arrival of the hurricane. The widow of the butcher Atilano, she is a "trastorná" (p. 40) with the reputation of "deflowering" the youths of the village. Worst of all, she is reputed to assist in the Voodoo rites of the immigrant Haitians which deal with the spirits of the Underworld and the Dead. Unhappy with the treatment and offerings received from Salomé, she pronounces a curse upon Usebio's home: "Quiera Elegua que se les caiga la casa en la cabeza!" (p. 42). Thus, on the magical plane, she is the active cause of the destructive force unleashed upon Usebio and his family.

The second chapter presents us with a general view of the destruction and terror which the recently arrived hurricane causes. In the third chapter, when Usebio's hut is destroyed, he and his family flee to a cave which he had excavated at the foot of a ceiba tree. Wet and miserable, Usebio leaves the cave to seek a more secure refuge for his family. The final chapter shows him battling the elements in this frantic search for refuge. He forces his way into a

building occupied by Haitians where he discovers Paula officiating at a Voodoo rite. The ceremony, because of the dress, top hat and dark glasses, obviously is in honor of Ghede, the Voodoo Lord of the Underworld and the Dead.<sup>8</sup> Usebio flees from the building, swept by a "resaca de terror, por un pánico descendido de los orígenes del mundo ...sin pensar ya en la tormenta" (p. 55). This unpremeditated action of Usebio, braving the natural destructive force of the hurricane in order to escape the high priestess of Death, underlines the nature of the conflict in this episode. Usebio is motivated not only by the primordial fear of Death, but Death incarnate in the person of Paula, who is also the seducer of the youths in the village; therefore, the arouser of the sexual drive in them. She represents not only the Death threat to him as an individual, but also as father and head of the family. Thus, even though Usebio returns to the cave and he and his family survive the hurricane, the episode represents a threat to him as father and a dramatic way of depicting the separation of Menegildo from childhood.

The second part, "Adolescencia," treats the transitional phase of the protagonist's life, that is, the period in which he is gradually introduced to the realities of adult life. Carpentier divides these realities into three spheres: religious, sexual and social. The first chapter, "Espíritu Santo," describes the cosmology of the Cuban Negro, which is that of a universe animated by a mysterious



force superior to man, but which may be controlled by him for good or evil ends through the strict execution of rituals. When Menegildo reaches age 17, Salomé imparts to him her knowledge of the occult forces governing the universe. However, Menegildo is most deeply impressed by the magical powers of the old brujo-curandero Beruá who not only knows of the occult forces but knows how to direct and control them. Faith in and reverence for this mysterious animating force is the reason that Menegildo makes his weekly offering of bread to the Espíritu Santo.

The following eight chapters develop the flowering of sexual impulse in Menegildo and its satisfaction in the person of Longina, a Cuban concubine of a Haitian immigrant. In "Paisaje (c)" we are given an overview of the emotional state of Menegildo, and his motivation for attending the New Year festival in Central San Lucio. It is symbolic that this crisis coincides with the New Year festival which celebrates the death of the demon of the old year and the coming of the new one to replace him. Menegildo, in this transitional stage between childhood and adult life, is obsessed with the desire for the privileges enjoyed by others: "pensaba vagamente en las cosas de que disfrutaban otros que no eran mejores que él" (p. 65). Most specifically he is possessed by "un poderoso anhelo de mujer" (p. 67). But, as a result of his lack of experience, this desire remains a vague yearning, unattached to any definite object. His entrance into the animated workers' section of the

settlement, described in "Fiesta (a)," immerses Menegildo in a multitude of foreign immigrant workers whose strange customs and language tend to alienate him from the festival. This sense of alienation increases in "Fiesta (b)." Here we witness the celebration by the elite in the administrator's colonial home, a celebration rooted in the tradition of slavery, and the false vulgar merriment in the North American bar counterpoised with the popular festivities of the preceding chapter. Menegildo finds himself repulsed by this environment and, shortly after the stroke of midnight, departs for home.

He abandons the regular route and strikes out on a short cut. Under the full moon, as he forces his way along the overgrown path, an owl announces the portentous nature of this journey. In this chapter, "Encuentro," he encounters Longina, who is to become the object of his sexual desire. A Cuban Negress, native of Guantánamo, she is at present the unhappy concubine of a Haitian immigrant. Menegildo, because of his inexperience, is reduced to a state of inadequacy and is unable to fulfill his desire this night. He returns home, and in the following chapter, "Lirismos," we find him in almost a romantic state of abandonment which Salomé interprets as the result of some brujería. He remains in this passive love-sick state and is unable to satisfy his desire until in "Hallazgo" he finds a piece of white cloth which Longina has left for him along the road.

Yet it is not until the next chapter, "El Embo," that

we fully comprehend the significance of this piece of cloth. It is a sortilegio de brujería, an object which has been in intimate contact with Longina and, therefore, retains part of her spirit. With this object, Menegildo can now have a ritual conducted which will give him complete power over her. We may consider this course of action only a psychological ploy which will shore up Menegildo's confidence and thus aid him in accomplishing his end. But, within a cosmology which conceives of a universe animated by occult forces, it is necessary that these forces first be predisposed to one's own ends before undertaking any important task, and the sortilegio is an essential element in the necessary ritual. Menegildo enters into the sanctuary of the old warlock Beruá where the enamoramiento ceremony is conducted. He then returns home, convinced of the efficacy of the ritual, and feeling "más nervudo, más ágil que nunca" (p. 93). The following chapter, "Iniciación (b)," represents the final satisfaction of the sexual desire and brings Menegildo one step closer to adult life. Symbolically, the act itself coincides with the coming of spring, the period of resurgence of the life force in nature, and Menegildo, having fulfilled his desire in Longina, is vaguely aware that "un nuevo equilibrio se establecía en su ser. Era como se hubiese cambiado de piel, bajo el influjo de un clima insospechado" (p. 97). He has been introduced to the sexual sphere of adult existence, but there yet remains the social sphere, the interaction between individuals and the laws

governing their interaction.

The concluding eight chapters of the second part depict the introduction of Menegildo to this social sphere. The root of the conflict is still his sexual attraction to Longina, but now he must confront the social reality: Longina, although she desires Menegildo, is the concubine of the Haitian immigrant Napolión. Therefore, he must somehow liberate her from the Haitian's domination in order to secure his own claim to the privileges of adult existence. In the first chapter, "Juan Mandinga," the grandfather of Menegildo, Luf, attempts to introduce him to the laws governing this social realm through the evocation of the familiar past. Luf exalts to an epic plane the character and deeds of Juan Mandinga, great-grandfather of Menegildo, constantly interspersing the didactic "¡Ay, sí, niño!" (pp. 98-99). Juan Mandinga, a native of Guinea, was the slave of a liberal Cuban landowner prior to the War of Independence. Having already won the respect of his owner, he joined in the fight against the Spanish army, for which action he was awarded a grant of land. During the subsequent slave revolts he remained faithful to his owner, but bravely cautioned him: "Si la tiñosa quiere sentarse, acabarán por salirle naigas..." (p. 102). . . A more prosaic rendering of this warning would be that nothing can oppose itself to the will of the strong. But Menegildo remains obsessed by Longina, ignoring the message offered by Luf, and only dimly aware that he will have to assert himself against the Haitian in

order to retain Longina.

This passion which consumes Menegildo is projected in the conflagration which engulfs the valley in "Incendio (a)." All are called to combat it. Menegildo, upon discovering Napolión among the fire-fighters, departs the field of combat to seek his pleasure with Longina, in "Incendio (b)." But he dallies too long in the arms of his lover, and Napolión, returning from the extinguished fire, discovers him and proceeds to give him a thorough thrashing with a club. Menegildo, feeling miserable and cowardly, manages to stagger back to his own hut, where his family receives him with much lamentation. They call old Beruá who administers the cure, and announces that he will recover, in "Tera-péutica (b)." The following chapter, "Mitología," treats the delirious state of Menegildo as he vacillates between life and death. It is a surrealistic nightmare, populated by various manifestations of the occult forces which govern man's fate. The controlling image is the thirst for life, a hand grasping for the life-giving waters:

La mano de Menegildo se acercaba al agua.  
Se hacía enorme, se proyectaba, se crispaba.  
Y súbitamente, la laguna hufa como un ave ante la mano llena de zumbidos (p. 114).

However, he does recover and during his convalescence meets his cousin Antonio, "El negro Antonio," who will serve as mentor and guide in his further development. Antonio, a bootblack from Havana, political organizer and ñáñigo<sup>9</sup> of the Potencia Enellerüellé, is the idol of Menegildo. He is a man of knowledge and power. He advises Menegildo to

abandon his relations with Longina as they will lead to another confrontation with the Haitian, and this is not the job for an adolescent but for a macho. Menegildo replies: "¡Macho he sío siempre!" (p. 123). Antonio invites him to a tavern near San Lucio sugar mill, where he proceeds to introduce Menegildo to the political realities of Cuba. They are a farse controlled by North American imperialism which has converted the island into one huge sugar plantation incapable of producing the goods needed to sustain itself. This economic dependency has caused the Cuban to bow before the foreign power, denying himself and his tradition. The only bulwark against this imperialistic aggression is the Negro:

Sólo los negros, Menegildo, Longina,  
Salomé y su prole conservaban celosamente  
un carácter y una tradición antillana.  
(p. 129)

Nevertheless, political activity is useful, for it is the only direct contact with the gente de arriba, and therefore, one of the few instruments for action open to the Negro. This talk, along with the rum, excites Menegildo to action, and he departs in search of the Haitian Napolión. The final chapter of the second part, "El Macho," reports the act briefly and indirectly: Napolión was found nearly mortally wounded by a knife; Menegildo was arrested. Thus, through this act of machismo, he separates himself resolutely from his childhood and adolescent environment and commences his journey to the city and to adult life.

The third part, "La ciudad," treats this journey to the city and the process of incorporation there into adult

life. The journey, although begun unwillingly and as a prisoner, quickly assumes the aspect of an adventure into a mysterious new world. "Rieles" shows Menegildo passively being led to the train station by the guardias rurales. There he is separated from his family and boards the train for Havana. Once on his way, in the chapter "Viaje," the rhythm of the train fascinates him, producing "un placer insospechado" (p. 139). He is alone and uprooted from his home, but he is also treading "los umbrales del misterio," (p. 139) and he reveals the will to "extraer ventajas de aquella aventura" (p. 141). These first two chapters serve to separate him physically from his prior environment and thrust him over the threshold into the new.

The following three chapters deal with his confinement in prison. This period furthers the process of individualization, and serves as a preindoctrination into his new life. Although the walls of the prison confine the natural roundness of the sky and horizon within rectangular shapes, the old Spanish fortress with its medieval elements assumes an aspect of extraordinary portent for Menegildo. During the "complicado ritual" (p. 145) of induction into prison, he is amazed at the attention afforded his person:

Su delito lo hacía merecedor de aquella solicitud que la sociedad sólo sabe prodigar generalmente en favor de los creadores, los ricos, los profetas y los bandidos. A veces bastaba una puñalada certera para que un hombre surgiera de la masa anónima de los que sólo existen en función de sus votos, sus fibromas o sus futuros ataúdes, para destacarse con el relieve de individuo capaz de dar cuerpo a una decisión digna de litigio. (p. 146)

Thus, at the end of "Rejas (a)," we notice that Menegildo's awareness of himself as an individual is deepening. "Rejas (b)," the longest of these three chapters, describes the hierarchy and activities of prison life. Here he is introduced into a society which might be interpreted as corrupt and perverse, but it is a society which fulfills the instinctual needs of its members within the given context, and like most others is governed by the strong. No doubt much of the descriptive material is taken from the author's personal experience in the prison of Havana, August 1-9, 1927 (p. 225). But the most important element regarding Menegildo's development is his contact with the ñáñigos of the Sexteto Boloña. They teach him apapa, the ritual dialect of the ñáñigos, and reveal to him "los hábitos y misterios de la ciudad" (p. 151). In the final chapter dealing with his imprisonment, "Rejas (c)," Menegildo receives two visitors. The first, his cousin Antonio, marvels at the transformation in Menegildo's character. He is now arrogant and aggressive, in short a macho. Antonio complements him: "¡Cuando sagga, te va a tenel que metel a ñáñigo!" (p. 157). Menegildo realizes the import of this invitation to adult existence, and expresses his conviction in the efficacy of the ñáñigo rituals: "¡Con loj Abonecue [those initiated in the ñáñigo rites] no hay quien puea! ¡Etá uno protegío pa toa la vfa!" (p. 158). His new found protector and guide also announces that he will shortly secure his release from prison. The second visitor, Longina, relates how she aban-



doned her Haitian "husband" and followed Menegildo to the city. She will await Menegildo, who is to be released within a week, in an apartment which Antonio is furnishing them. Thus the period of confinement is about to terminate and Menegildo will shortly venture into the city to confront his new environment as a free man.

This freedom is symbolized by "Cielo redondo," a transitional chapter between his confinement and his actual incorporation into the fiáñigo sect Enellegüellé. Here, as he strolls about the city with Antonio and Longina, the open forms of the city and the sea are contrasted with the rectangular confining forms of the prison. Antonio accompanies them to their new home in the "Solar de La Lipidia" and introduces them to the neighbors. For Menegildo and Longina this is a veritable paradise, and they vow never to return to San Lucio. Antonio leaves them, reminding Menegildo to bring a black rooster and four pesos to the initiation ceremony.

This ceremony is treated in the following three chapters. It commences on Saturday night and continues some eighteen hours until Sunday evening. The first part, "¡Ecueyamba-ó!"--praised be God--centers on the ritual death of the initiates and their separation from the secular world. In the dead of night, the drums call them to the ceremony, their rhythm fusing with that of nature:

El ritmo metálico, inflexible, de la ciudad, se había borrado totalmente ante la encantación humana de los atabales. La tierra parecía escuchar con todos sus poros. (pp. 173-174)

Protective crosses are drawn upon the neophytes' bodies, and blind-folded, they are led before the threshold guardian Famballén where each one sacrifices a black rooster. To these protective measures is added the purification with the Palo Macombo by Nazacó, one of the four major ñáñigo dignitaries. Finally they are conducted, still blind-folded, into the Cuarto Fambá. In this womb-like sanctuary, abode of the universal animating force Ecue, they are subjected to the fearful noise of the bull-roarer--"RRRRrrrrruuu" (p. 178)--which symbolizes the death threat. But through baptism with the Mocuba, they are revived, and after swearing an oath to the ñáñigo sect, the blindfolds are removed and they are presented to the members of the sect.

After having suffered ritual death and having been reborn to a new existence, they are now introduced to the four major ñáñigo dignitaries--Nazacó, Iyamba, Isué and Munifambá--and allowed to manipulate the sacred instruments. This part of the ceremony, described in "¡Ireme!", begins with the dawn, which symbolizes the rebirth of the newly initiated, and continues into the afternoon. During this period the neophytes are incorporated into the sect through the sharing of a common meal, the Iriampo (p. 185). The final element of the ceremony occurs towards evening, in "Iniciación (c)." It entails the sharing of the communal meal with the dead, and thereby incorporates the initiates not only with the present members of the sect but also with those of the past. Thus at the end of this long eighteen-hour ceremony, Menegildo has finally been incorporated into

a full adult life, which gives meaning to his individual existence.

The following chapter, "Niños," serves as an epilogue to the three chapters dealing with his initiation. Here we see the action of the preceding chapters reflected in the games of children. Cayuco and other children of the neighborhood have found a deserted house which they convert into their sanctuary, the Cueva de las Jaibas. As the Cuarto Fambá was for Menegildo, for the children the Cueva de las Jaibas is a sacred place separated from profane existence, where they render homage to their own diety. Menegildo laughs at these games but is also attracted by them, for they are a reflection of his own world. He has achieved an existence which is as spontaneous as that of children; he has

una conciencia total de su facultad de existir. Se sentía a sí mismo, pleno, duro, llenando su piel sin espacio perdido, con esa realidad esencial que es la del calor o del frío. (p. 196)

A sense of totality without conflict fills his existence. His needs are fulfilled under the protection of the ñañigos: he gains enough playing with the Sexteto Física Popular to support himself, Longina and their expected child. This is the apogee of his life.

From this high point the fortune of Menegildo can only decline, and the following three chapters prepare the stage for this decline and the resulting death of the protagonist. The first chapter, "La decapitación del Bautista," furnishes

several important elements. It describes the activities in the Centro espiritista of Cristalina Valdés. It is here where the massacre in which Menegildo is to die will take place. Although these ceremonies do not constitute a formal part of the ñáñigo rituals, they possess similarities which have attracted some members of the Potencia Enellegüellé. All famous men of the past are accepted as transmisores of a cosmic force which animates the universe, and, through the invocation of the spirits of these men, one may gain insight into the secrets of the past, present and future. The purpose of the ceremony is not unlike that of bajar el santo in the ñáñigo rites. At one of these meetings Antonio offers Menegildo a job in a sideshow where he will portray the executioner of St. John the Baptist. Menegildo accepts the position and plays the part with conviction. Simultaneously there is a renewal of hostilities between Menegildo's Potencia Enellegüellé and a rival ñáñigo sect. As the author expresses it, the stage is set for violence: there was an "olor a sangre en la atmósfera" (p. 206).

This violence crystalizes in an attempt upon the person of Antonio by three Negroes of the Potencia Efo-Abacara. In "El diablo," Menegildo witnesses how this attempt is thwarted by the intervention of occult powers. A member of the rival sect tries to provoke Antonio, but the latter simply confronts the aggressor with a collar de cuentas negras and thus causes him to flee. The string of black beads is the diablo, a charm which through certain

rituals has been infused with "una vida tan real como la que hacía palpar el corazón del hombre" (p. 209). Menegildo is enormously impressed by the efficacy of these occult powers.

But the ñáñigos of the Potencia Efo-Abacara do not rest and their next attempt, which occurs in "Nochebuena," results in the massacre of Menegildo and many of his companions. The attack occurs on Christmas Eve, as Cristalina Valdés gives a party at her Centro espiritista for her friends, including some members of the Potencia Enelle-güellé. By evening the festivities have attained a frenzied pace, and ritual elements of ñáñigo music and dance are introduced. The climax is reached with the possession of Cristalina by a spirit. As they recover from this state of religious exaltation, the rival sect attacks. Menegildo throws himself into the melee. There are cries in the dark, then silence.

The following chapter, "¡Quiquiribú! [he died]," announces the death of Menegildo. Longina finds his body soaked in blood which is still warm. She calls for help; but he is already dead, his juglar vein severed by a knife. Thus on Christmas some 18 years after he was born the cycle closes, Menegildo's life has run its course from childhood, through adolescence, to adult life and death.

The final chapter of the third part, and of the novel, "Menegildo," resurrects Menegildo in the person of his son, and gives a new beginning to the cycle. Longina, with an

"orientación instintiva" and "queriendo cumplir un obscuro deber" (p. 224), returns to Menegildo's home near San Lucio, where she is to give birth to Menegildo's son. She returns to the place of origin and offers to the mother Salomé a new life for the one that has been taken. It is almost a re-enactment of Menegildo's birth, for he is ushered into the world with the same cry of Salomé: "¡Y pon a sanchocal las viandas pal almuerzo! ¡Orita vienen Usebio y Luf..." (pp. 21, 225), and the new Menegildo is also protected from harm by the "velita de Santa Teresa" burning in his honor before the image of San Lázaro-Babayú-Ayé (pp. 25, 225).

Much effort has been expended to separate this work from the subsequent production of Carpentier. The author himself said:

Esta primera novela mía es tal vez un intento fallido por el abuso de metáforas, de símiles mecánicos, de imágenes de un aborrecible mal gusto futurista y por esa falsa concepción de lo nacional que teníamos entonces los hombres de mi generación.<sup>10</sup>

It is true that the author does not achieve the degree of interpenetration between the real and magical planes that he does in his later works. It seems that he is struggling against the tradition of objective observation inculcated by the French naturalists:

Au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, l'influence du naturalisme français de Zola a été capitale. Zola jouissait d'une véritable audience en Amérique latine. Il se rendait par exemple jusqu'à une mine ou à un lieu de travail déterminé, puis il écrivait un roman à propos de ce qu'il venait de voir. Mais il faut se détacher de cette observation.<sup>11</sup>

Carpentier continues to affirm that the external nature of this tradition of objective observation was instrumental in thwarting his attempt to bring a new vision of the Negro to Cuban literature in Ecue-yamba-ó. The extensive use of photographs and the lengthy Glosario appended to the novel tend to reduce the work to the superficial level of a social document depicting the picturesque regionalisms of language and customs. However, the simple elimination of the photographs and Glosario would not appreciably increase the value of the novel. The external nature of objective observation seems to have dimmed the author's awareness of the transcendental and universal quality inherent in the subject matter. In the search for his nation's identity he was drawn with excessive enthusiasm to the unique and local, and his most evident innovation remained on a stylistic level, that is, the mechanical imagery of the futuristic tendency.

Although Carpentier admits to having failed in capturing the reality of the Cuban Negro, a certain amount of the force latent within this reality found its way into Ecue-yamba-ó. Later he was to become more acutely cognizant of this force and stated:

Y la verdad es que no ha entendido [el naturalista-regionalista], acaso, que tal fase de un baile folklórico es el estado presente de un antiquísimo rito solar o de liturgias tónicas que--como ha sido demostrado muy recientemente al estudiarse prácticas de la "santería" cubana--habían viajado del Mediterráneo al Nuevo Continente pasando por el Africa.<sup>12</sup>

Whether we accept Jung's theory of the collective unconscious or the theory of cultural transfer which Carpentier seems to suggest here, it is evident that we are dealing with the prelogical mythical conscious which gives transcendent and universal value to the elements of ritualistic behavior. In Ecue-yamba-ó the elements of initiatory ritual give unity to a novel which Marinello characterized as episodic and without essence.<sup>13</sup> By analyzing the relationship of these elements to the structure of Carpentier's literary production we shall discover a unity, not only in this first novel, but in his total production; for at the beginning various elements are already present which will permeate his later work giving it this quality of the real maravilloso.

The most salient of these elements is his inclination towards the primitive participation mystique which allows an integration of man and his environment, and which accepts the intervention of "supernatural powers" as a reality. This is evident in the Negro culture from which Menegildo springs, and it is constantly contrasted with the alienating North American culture which dominates the island. The music and dance of the Negroes are elemental and telluric, of a ritual efficacy which unite them with the natural universe.

Música de cuero, madera, huesos y metal,  
¡música de materias elementales...! A  
media legua de las chimineas azucareras,  
esa música emergía de edades remotas, preñada  
de intuiciones y de misterio. Los instru-  
mentos casi animales y las letanías negras  
se acoplaban bajo el signo de una selva in-  
visible. (p. 34)



And the intervention of supernatural powers is a constant from the first ministrations of Beruá in "Terapéutica (a)" through the enamoramiento in "El Embó" to the collar de cuentas negras in "El diablo."

A second element of prime importance is of a structural nature. The work is divided into three major parts and each part has its respective chapter entitled "Iniciación." From this it appears that the rite of initiation constitutes the fundamental structural element of the novel. Van Gennep in his book The Rites of Passage subdivides the rite of initiation into three steps: rites of separation, rites of transition, and rites of incorporation.<sup>14</sup> These three divisions coincide with and elucidate the three major parts of the novel. The first, "Infancia," treats the birth and childhood of the protagonist and ends with his separation from childhood as an asexual state. The second, "Adolescencia," depicts the transitory stage between childhood and adult life and terminates with his departure for the city. The third, "La ciudad," deals with his incorporation into the ñáñigo sect, his achievement of a full adult existence and his death. It is characteristic of rites of initiation that they involve a process of ritual death and resurrection: it is necessary to annihilate the old mode of existence before entering into the new. This is evident in all three of the initiations depicted, but most clearly delineated in the ñáñigo initiation, for it is the most formal of the three. As Mircea Eliade affirms in Birth and

Rebirth, this cyclic process of ritual death and rebirth gives a new value to death.

If we can say that initiation constitutes a specific dimension of human existence, this is true above all because it is only in initiation that death is given a positive value. Death prepares the new, purely spiritual birth, access to a mode of being not subject to the destroying action of Time.<sup>15</sup>

Thus the negative value of death is abrogated by the structure employed, and in the concluding chapter the protagonist is virtually reborn in his son, the new Menegildo. The use of cyclic structure to overcome time and death, and the use of participation mystique to resolve alienation are elements that we shall encounter again and again in the work of Carpentier.

## Footnotes

1. Alejo Carpentier, La música en Cuba (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1946), p. 236.
2. Luis Harss and Barbara Dohmann, Into the Mainstream: Conversations with Latin-American Writers (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), pp. 38-39.
3. Carl Gustav Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul, trans. W. S. Dell and Cary F. Baynes (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1939), p. 235.
4. Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, Les fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures, deuxième édition, (Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1912), p. 452:  

Connaître, en général, c'est objectiver; objectiver, c'est projeter hors de soi, comme quelque chose d'étranger, ce qui est à connaître. Quelle communion intime, au contraire, les représentations collectives de la mentalité prélogique n'assurent-elles pas entre les êtres qui participent les uns des autres! L'essence de la participation est que précisément toute dualité s'y efface, et qu'en dépit du principe de contradiction, le sujet est à la fois lui-même et l'être dont il participe.
5. Alejo Carpentier, ¡Ecue-yamba-ó!: historia afro-cubana (Madrid: Editorial España, 1933), p. 129.  

Note: further references to Ecue-yamba-ó are from this edition and will be given within the text.
6. Harss and Dohmann, Into the Mainstream, p. 76.
7. Alejo Carpentier, "Este gran Don Fernando," Repertorio americano, Cuadernos de Cultura Hispana (San José, Costa Rica), Tomo XLVII, no. 15 (15 de marzo 1952), pp. 227-28.

Also see: José Antonio Portuondo, Bosquejo histórico de las letras cubanas (La Habana: Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Departamento de Asuntos Culturales, División de Publicaciones, 1960), p. 61.

8. For a description of the Voodoo loa Ghede see: Maya Deren, Divine Horsemen: the Living Gods of Haiti (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1953), p. 107, and compare with Carpentier's description in Ecue-yamba-ó, pp. 54-55.

9. For a description of the ñáñigo sect as a religious mutual protection organization see Carpentier's Glosario in Ecue-yamba-ó, pp. 233-34.

10. César Leante, "Confesiones sencillas de un escritor barroco," Cuba: revista mensual (Habana), vol. 3, no. 24 (abril 1964), p. 32.

11. Claude Fell, "Rencontre avec Alejo Carpentier," Les langues modernes 59<sup>e</sup> année, no. 3 (mai-juin 1965), p. 360.

12. Alejo Carpentier, Tientos y diferencias: (ensayos) (México; D.F.: Universidad Autónoma de México, 1964), p. 11.

13. Juan Marinello, Literatura hispanoamericana (México, D.F.: Ediciones de la Universidad Nacional de México, 1937), p. 175.

14. Arnold van Gennep, The Rites of Passage, trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp. 10-11.

15. Mircea Eliade, Birth and Rebirth: the Religious Meanings of Initiation in Human Cultures, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), p. 136.

## Chapter II

## EL REINO DE ESTE MUNDO (1949)

Between the appearance of Ecue-yamba-ó (1933) and El Reino de este mundo (1949) Carpentier published relatively little in the field of prose fiction. Nevertheless, this period is of extreme importance in his literary development and must be investigated in order to understand the evolution of his literary production. Fernando Alegria has already indicated the general lines of this evolution:

Se advierte en la obra de Carpentier cierto desarrollo evolutivo relativamente fácil de identificar. Desde Ecue-Yamba-O hasta El acoso muévase en una búsqueda-vertical y horizontal--de las raíces mitológicas americanas para enfrentarlas en un afán de comprender los signos secretos que dividen su facultad creadora y su conciencia social. Fundamentalmente, le obsesiona la idea de traspasar los límites del tiempo, de superarlos y conseguir una síntesis histórica monumental en que el hombre cambia de circunstancia pero no de esencia y, en el fondo, repite una eterna fábula cuyo diseño es posible captar y fijar en la obra de arte.<sup>1</sup>

In our study of Ecue-yamba-ó we discovered the archetypal pattern of initiatory ritual to be the major structural element, but we also noted that the work remains encapsulated within a limited spatial and temporal world which diminishes the force of the archetypal pattern. In his later works Carpentier extends his vision both

temporally and spatially, vertically and horizontally in the words of Alegría, in his attempt to discover and capture Latin American reality. "Viaje a la semilla" (1944), "Oficio de tinieblas" (1944), and "Los fugitivos" (1946), three short stories published during this critical period, already extend this vision to Cuban colonial life. El reino de este mundo moves to Hispaniola at the time of the Haitian Wars of Independence. Of course, simple expansion in breadth and depth would not suffice to produce a transcendent vision in which man changes circumstantially but never essentially. As Alegría so aptly notes, this transcendent vision is a function of the eternal fable, the eternal fable being those archetypal patterns which repeat themselves again and again in the history of man. It is these patterns which give structure to what Carpentier calls the magical world in his later works. These two factors--the expanding vision of Latin American reality and the accentuation of the magical world--are the dominant factors in the evolution of the author's literary production.

Santander equates the magical or marvelous world of Carpentier with the second reality of the surrealists.<sup>2</sup> There is no doubt that the author did have intimate contact with and was influenced by certain French surrealists. He has admitted this in an interview:

J'ai eu de nombreux contacts avec certains des grands surréalistes français. J'ai fait la connaissance de Robert Desnos à la Havanne en mars 1928. J'ai rencontré en 1933, Antonin Artaud qui voulait pénétrer dans l'atmosphère du Mexique ancien. Je fus lié avec Tzara,

Eluard, Chirico; Tanguy. Mais la recherche de l'insolite dans le surréalisme a souvent été réduite à une question de formule. Après les grands surréalistes il y a une bureaucratie de l'insolite. En Amérique du Sud, on peut trouver du surréalisme partout sans le fabriquer. Les nouveaux écrivains sud-américains ont réussi à créer un merveilleux qui est merveilleux sans cesser d'être réel. Il y a en Amérique latine, dans les hommes, les objets, les constructions, etc..., certains points merveilleux qui peuvent être interprétés d'une certaine façon. Le surréalisme nous a aidés à connaître notre monde, à le montrer, c'est-à-dire à le rendre universal.<sup>3</sup>

As Carpentier explicitly states, surrealism was instrumental in discovering the universal content of Latin American reality, that is, in overcoming the dualism between the universal and the particular. However, the revolt of surrealism was not directed against the particular and the concrete, but against the rational dualistic manner of perceiving reality:

In the evolution of the art of linguistic representation of the "merveilleux," both a breaking down process and a building up process can be observed: the breaking down process is connected with the artist's changing concept of nature, while the building up process might be associated with the cultivation of a new state of mind, called in turn, "inconscient," "subconscient," "irrationnel," and culminating in a new logic based on the linking together and acceptance of contradictory entities.<sup>4</sup>

The break with the rational dualistic manner of perceiving reality is quite evident in the "automatic writing" of the surrealists and in their cultivation of "disorder" by the chance juxtaposition of contradictory elements. But, as Balakian suggests, this effort is not wholly destructive. Rather it is an attempt to achieve a new mode of perception

in which the dualism of rational order is surpassed. The merveilleux is a reality in which the logic of contradiction ceases to operate, where autonomous spheres of existence continually interpenetrate one another. It is this interpenetration of autonomous spheres which manifests itself in the works of Carpentier: the eternal and the temporal, the universal and the particular. Carpentier's contact with the surrealists not only heightened his awareness of the magical world but, undoubtedly, was also instrumental in expanding his vision of Latin America. In their quest of a second reality, some of the surrealists were drawn specifically to the indigenous cultures of Latin America. This interest of his literary colleagues, in addition to the author's nostalgia for his homeland as evidenced in his brief visit to Cuba in 1936,<sup>5</sup> re-enforced Carpentier's New World orientation. During these years in Paris, he passionately investigated and read about the origins of the New World:

Sentí ardientemente el deseo de expresar el mundo americano. Aún no sabía cómo. Me alentaba lo difícil de la tarea por el desconocimiento de las esencias americanas. Me dediqué durante largos años a leer todo lo que podía sobre América, desde las Cartas de Cristóbal Colón, pasando por el Inca Garcilaso hasta los autores del siglo dieciocho. Por espacio de casi ocho años creo que no hice otra cosa que leer textos americanos. América se me presentaba como una enorme nebulosa, que yo trataba de entender porque tenía la oscura intuición de que mi obra se iba a desarrollar aquí, que iba a ser profundamente americana.<sup>6</sup>

Since the author does not enumerate more specifically the works perused, this statement is of relatively little value to the critic in search of the source material for Carpentier's later works, but it does corroborate his expanding



vision of Latin American reality. Also, it does focus on the historical settings of his future works, namely the Colonial Period and the preparatory stages of the Wars of Latin American Independence.

However, there is available an extremely valuable source for the historical material incorporated in these later works. The bibliography of Carpentier's La música en Cuba (1946) leads us to a virtual mine of information which remains unexploited even at the most superficial level. While it is difficult to determine exactly when he conducted the research for his history of Cuban music, we do know that in 1945 Carpentier was commissioned by the Fondo de Cultura Económica of Mexico to write such a book, and that the book appeared in 1946.<sup>7</sup> Both of these dates are prior to the publication of El reino de este mundo (1949). Evidently the inspiration for El reino de este mundo itself came from his visit to Haiti in 1943, at which time he was made to experience the deep contrast between the impoverished fantasy of the latter day surrealists and the vital magical realism rooted in the history of Latin America.<sup>8</sup> But we are also advised by the author himself that thorough historical research preceded the actual composition of the work:

...es menester advertir que el relato que va a leerse ha sido establecido sobre una documentación extremadamente rigurosa que no solamente respeta la verdad histórica de los acontecimientos, los nombres de personajes--incluso secundarios--, de lugares y hasta de calles, sino que oculta, bajo su aparente intemporalidad, un minucioso cotejo de fechas y de cronologías.<sup>9</sup>

Therefore, we can safely assume that the material incorporated in El reino de este mundo should be reflected in historical reference works, most specifically in those contained in the bibliography of La música en Cuba. In fact, nearly every character mentioned in El reino de este mundo appears in one or more of the reference works listed in the bibliography, even some characters that had been considered purely fictitious. Also, the entire first part, which deals with the poisoning of the white population by the Negro rebel Mackandal, corresponds to the events described by Moreau de Saint-Méry in his Description...de l'isle Saint-Domingue.<sup>10</sup> The remainder of the work evidences further historical documentation which demonstrates Carpentier's concern for anchoring his magical world in historical reality. He seems to be stressing his point that one need not create le merveilleux in Latin America, for here le merveilleux is a reality. While it is not our intention to document at this time every episode in El reino de este mundo, we have felt obliged to demonstrate explicitly the basic historical nature of the subject matter in order to arrive at a more complete understanding of the work's structural elements.

As we mentioned above, the work deals with the Haitian Wars of Independence. Carpentier divides the work and the historical period into four parts. The first part describes the preliminary uprisings of the Negro slaves against their French masters and centers on the messianic figure of Mackan-

dal, a Negro rebel executed in 1758. The second part treats the organized Wars of Independence, beginning with the revolt of Bouckman in 1791 and terminating with the triumph of the Negro forces over the French in 1803. The third part focuses upon the reign of the Negro king Henri Christophe in northern Haiti which terminated with Christophe's death in 1820. The fourth and final part occurs during the reunification of Haiti under the mulatto Boyer (1820-43). Although the sequence of events corresponds rather strictly to a historical chronology, the over-all structure of the work is not that of a linear progression but is of a cyclic pattern-- a cyclic pattern which transcends the temporal and spatial limitations of the period. This cyclic nature manifests itself in the continual resurgence of heroic types who sacrifice themselves for the liberty and salvation of their people: Mackandal (Part I), Bouckman (Part II), Christophe (Part III), Ti Noel (Part IV).

The most comprehensive study done on the hero archetype is The Hero with a Thousand Faces by Joseph Campbell, and we shall use the results of this work in our analysis of El reino de este mundo. Campbell is quite aware of the variations encountered in the numerous manifestations of the hero archetype, but he does suggest an essential core or nuclear element:

...the hero's first task is to experience the antecedent stages of the cosmogonic cycle; to break back through the epochs of emanation. His second, then, is to return from that abyss to the plane of contemporary life, there to serve as a human transformer of demiurgic potentials.<sup>11</sup>

This adventure can be seen to divide itself into three major segments: the departure of the hero from his immediate surroundings, his penetration to and linking with the primordial source of life, and finally his return to contemporary life where he unleashes the power discovered in the primordial source. Campbell bases his theory of the hero archetype on the concept of the cosmogonic round, a cyclic process of emanations and dissolutions.<sup>12</sup> Concrete phenomena or emanations arise from an undifferentiated primordial source--energy on the cosmic level or libido on the psychological level--which linger for a while and then, as dissolutions, return to the primordial source to rise again in the form of emanations. The role of the hero in this cyclic process is to revitalize the cosmos through the overthrow of the past and the releasing of new energy:

For the mythological hero is the champion not of things become but of things becoming; the dragon to be slain by him is precisely the monster of the status quo: Holdfast, the keeper of the past.<sup>13</sup>

The metaphysical concept of the Eternal Return contained within Campbell's cosmogonic round is, of course, not original, but his synthetic formulation of the metaphysical, mythological, and psychological does give new vigor and meaning to the concept.

Carpentier makes use of a concept similar to the Eternal Return, or the cosmogonic round in El reino de este mundo. His source for the concept seems to have been the mythology of Haitian Voodoo, specifically the deity Damballah-Wedo. Da, as he is also called, manifests himself in the

form of a serpent and is, in the words of Carpentier, the "mística representación del ruedo eterno."<sup>14</sup> He is the primordial source of life, perpetuating himself through the cyclic process of emanation and dissolution of which his serpentine form is symbolic.<sup>15</sup> The other Voodoo deity, or loa, of which Carpentier makes extensive use is Ogun. He is a warrior hero, frequently depicted on the Voodoo altar by the chromo of the Catholic Santiago. But he is more than this particular manifestation of the warrior hero. He is the archetypal hero as Deren affirms: "If one were to assemble the various manifestations of Ogun and parade them in order, one would have, in fact, a procession of the herotypes of history."<sup>16</sup> These two archetypal patterns, the cosmogonic round and the hero archetype, constitute the major structural elements of El reino de este mundo. In our analysis of the work we shall demonstrate how Carpentier weaves together the historical and the magical, using these archetypal patterns to achieve a structural unity.

The first part of El reino de este mundo consists of eight chapters and is prefaced by a quotation from Lope de Vega's comedia "El Nuevo Mundo descubierto por Cristóbal Colón."<sup>17</sup> Carpentier later identifies the devil, who in Lope's comedy protests the entrance of Columbus into the New World, with Mackandal, the Negro leader of the early uprisings against the French colonists (p. 41). Thus we see Mackandal aligned with the forces of rebellion against the established order, or to use Campbell's terminology, against

the tyrant Holdfast.

Having established this identity we can better understand the first chapter, "Las cabezas de cera," which introduces the antagonistic forces and serves as a prelude to the forthcoming struggle. Lenormand de Mezy, a French colonist, and his young slave Ti Noel have come to Cap Français in order to procure a stud for the mares of Lenormand de Mezy. To the detriment of the dull-witted master, who has placed the selection in the hands of his slave, Ti Noel chooses a stud which will produce increasingly smaller colts. Thus from the very beginning we see Ti Noel undermining the position of his master. Lenormand de Mezy incarnates the decadent order headed by the king of France which is approaching its moment of dissolution, as Ti Noel incarnates the ascending order which will carry the Haitian people to their independence. This relationship is emphasized when Lenormand stops for a shave and his slave remains outside contemplating the waxen heads in the barbershop window and the calves' heads in the adjoining butchershop window. The displays in the two windows fuse in the mind of the slave, and Ti Noel imagines that "al lado de las cabezas descoloridas de los terneros, se servían cabezas de blancos señores en el mantel de la misma mesa" (p. 25). Ti Noel spies another head, that of the king of France, and mentally begins to evoke his own African heritage--as imparted to him by Mac-kandal--and contrasts it with the decadent French:

En el Africa, el rey era guerrero, cazador,  
juez y sacerdote; su simiente preciosa en-

grosaba, en centenares de vientres, una vigorosa estirpe de héroes. En Francia, en España, en cambio, el rey enviaba sus generales a combatir; era incompetente para dirimir litigios, se hacía regañar por cualquier fraile confesor, y, en cuanto a riñones, no pasaba de engendrar un príncipe debilucho... (p. 28)

The delineation of the antagonistic forces is complete: the French colonial order is void of vital energy and in the process of dissolution; the African heritage linked to the primordial source of energy is about to assert itself. The climax of the chapter is reached when Lenormand de Mezy leaves the barbershop, buys a calf's head, and offers it to his slave. Ti Noel, continuing the mental association of the waxen heads and the calves' heads, caresses the gift as if it were the head of his master (p. 29). In fact, it is symbolic of the eventual victory over the French colonial regime. As they leave Cap Français, Ti Noel sings to himself a refrain in which "se echaban mierdas al rey..." (p. 30).

The second chapter, "La poda," introduces Mackandal, the messianic figure who will dominate the remainder of Part I. In the first chapter we met him only indirectly through the thoughts of Ti Noel, but now we see him in the flesh, a portentous figure who already works an "extraña fascinación" (p. 33) over Ti Noel. The two slaves are busy extracting juice from the sugar cane on the plantation of Lenormand de Mezy. As they work, Ti Noel's thoughts reveal the heroic stature of his companion: his prowess with the women, his physical strength which is respected by the men,

his knowledge of the great cities and cultures of "Guinea" from whence Mackandal came. Suddenly, the left hand of Mackandal becomes enmeshed in the gears of the extractor, drawing in the arm up to the shoulder. Lenormand de Mezy, attracted by the general commotion, arrives and proceeds to amputate the arm with a machete. The loss of the arm is an historical fact,<sup>18</sup> but from the emphasis which Carpentier gives to it, we may suppose that it also connotes a more symbolic event. Jung has found mutilation, and the tearing out of an arm in particular, to be a common motif in the hero archetype. He regards it as a form of castration, that is, an attempt to rob the hero of his vital energy.<sup>19</sup> Here, the person that actually carries out the amputation is Lenormand de Mezy, the incarnation of tyrant Holdfast, and the one who stands to gain most from the emasculation of Mackandal. The symbolism of the hand becomes even clearer in the following chapter.

Chapter three is entitled "Lo que hallaba la mano." The one-armed Mackandal, now unable to perform normal physical tasks on the plantation, is made a shepherd. This event also is an historical fact,<sup>20</sup> but on the symbolic level it represents the first step in his withdrawal from contemporary life. While exercising his new position, Mackandal develops a keen interest in the plant life of the mountain pastures. The "hand", with evident phallic significance, begins to penetrate "la vida secreta de especies singulares" (p. 37). Specifically he is drawn to a certain



variety of mushroom which smells of poison. He tests it on the cattle and, upon finding it effective, proceeds to gather and store these poisonous mushrooms.

Later Mackandal, accompanied by his companion Ti Noel, begins to visit the dwelling of the old bruja Mamán Loi. She serves as Mackandal's mentor and guide into the magical world. She examines the mushroom he brings and instructs him in the powers of herbs. She tells of the transformation of animals into men and men into animals. Once, as she was approaching the best part of a story, she strangely fell silent and, responding to "una orden misteriosa, corrió a la cocina, hundiendo los brazos en una olla llena de aceite hirviente" (p. 40). Here the phallic-penetrative power of the arm-hand symbol is re-enforced. Her action is similar to the more elaborate Voodoo ceremony of bruler-zin, which is a means of recharging the life spirit.<sup>21</sup> The arm is immersed in the boiling oil, penetrating to the primordial source of energy and releasing it in order to revitalize the person. The Mamán Loi accomplishes this, without any signs of physical harm, and calmly proceeds with the story. One day, after their visits to the bruja, Mackandal and Ti Noel successfully employ the poison on a dog of Lenormand de Mezy. Then Mackandal decides that the moment has come for his departure, and he escapes to the mountains. Lenormand de Mezy conducts a half-hearted search for the one-armed slave, but Mackandal has already achieved his freedom.

The following chapter, "El recuento," shows the

unfolding of Mackandal's mission. Ti Noel, who has remained on Lenormand de Mezy's plantation, feels that Mackandal considered him too insignificant a person to take him along as a disciple. Yet Ti Noel would gladly have served Mackandal. Now we see what Mackandal represented to Ti Noel, for the "partida de Mackandal era también la partida de todo el mundo evocado por sus relatos. Con él se habían ido también Kankán Muza, Adonhueso, los reyes reales y el Arco Iris de Widah" (p. 43). Mackandal was the prophet of a Golden Age, of an epoch of freedom populated by heroic kings and of gods rooted in the primordial source of life. But one day, the old bruja Mamán Loi brings Ti Noel a message from Mackandal. He hurries to the cave where Mackandal unveils to Ti Noel the fruits of his labor since his departure. He has extracted poison from the mushrooms and stored it in clay pots. Also he has contacted trustworthy slaves from all over the Northern Plain of Haiti and entered their names in an account book that he stole from the plantation. Thus Mackandal's plan has reached maturation: the extermination of the decadent French colonial regime and the founding of a free nation of Negroes. He informs Ti Noel of his assigned task, and the youth returns to poison the cattle of Lenormand de Mezy.

The fifth chapter, "De profundis," depicts the actual implementation of Mackandal's plan and the havoc and terror that it produces among the French colonists. The poison, like a serpent risen from the bowels of the earth, "se

arrastraba por la Llanura del Norte" (p. 47). At first the cattle and livestock begin to die, covering the plain with the penetrating stench of putrefying carrion. Expert herbolarios are unable to discover the source or identify the type of poison. Although Mackandal is the human agent, the phenomenal cause of the destruction, Carpentier describes the event as produced by a vast impersonal force which hastens the dissolution of the French order. Suddenly, and causing even greater horror among the colonists, the poison enters into the houses of the masters. As the masters continue to fall, cut down by an invisible assailant, the fear of death assumes an audible ritualized form: "De misereres a de profundis proseguía, hora tras hora, la siniestra antifona de los sochantres" (p. 49). But, even as the previous attempts to discover the source of the poison prove fruitless, these ritual lamentations are ineffective in arresting "la subterránea marcha de la muerte" (p. 49), and the process of dissolution continues unabated.<sup>22</sup> Only at the end of the chapter do the colonists discover the human agent of the destructive force. A slave tortured by the colonists reveals that:

El manco Mackandal, hecho un houngán del rito Radá, investido de poderes extraordinarios por varias caídas en posesión de dioses mayores, era el Señor del Veneno. Dotado de suprema autoridad por los Mandatarios de la otra orilla, había proclamado la cruzada del exterminio, elegido, como lo estaba, para acabar con los blancos y crear un gran imperio de negros libres en Santo Domingo. (p. 50)

Here we see the messianic mission of Mackandal re-enforced

again. He is the high priest of the Voodoo rite, the one elected to lead the crusade against the white masters and to establish the kingdom of the Negroes. But now the colonists have a human figure upon which their aggression can be unleashed, and they begin their persecution of Mackandal. Mackandal's flight from persecution is described in the following chapter.

In "Las metamorfosis," he achieves his definitive break with the kingdom of this world, penetrating to the primordial source of energy in order to unite himself with a force that will give him unlimited and supernatural power. Meanwhile, the French, feeling that they are dealing with only a simple runaway slave, have recovered from their terror of the unknown. They evoke the heroic figures of their colonial past: l'Esnambuc, d'Ogeron, du Rausset, the fearless men who had carved out and founded Saint-Domingue (p. 54). But the evocations only serve to diminish their own stature by contrast with these heroic figures, and their expeditions in search of Mackandal return empty-handed. Some think that Mackandal has escaped to another part of the island, but the slaves seem to be aware of his real whereabouts. At night the slaves gather to exchange reports: one has seen him in the form of an iguana, another in the form of a bat.

This stage would correspond to breaking back through the epochs of emanations as Campbell describes it. Mackandal, through the process of metamorphosis, is breaking back

through the various stages of differentiation in order to experience the undifferentiated unity of the primordial source. Cassirer asserts that the process of metamorphosis is readily accepted by the primitive mind:

Long before man had knowledge of himself as a separate species distinguished by some specific power and singled out from nature as a whole by a specific primacy of value he knew himself to be a link in the chain of life as a whole, within which each individual creature and thing is magically connected with the whole, so that a continuous transition, a metamorphosis of one being into another, appears not only as possible but as necessary, as the "natural" form of life itself.<sup>23</sup>

And Carpentier is keenly aware of the efficacy of this process of metamorphosis: "De metamorfosis en metamorfosis, el manco estaba en todas partes, habiendo recobrado su integridad corpórea al vestir trajes de animales...Ahora, sus poderes eran ilimitados" (p. 56). All that remains is for Mackandal to return to his people with this unlimited power. The slaves wait four long years, anxious for the sound of caracoles in the mountains which will announce that "Mackandal había cerrado el ciclo de sus metamorfosis, volviendo a asentarse, nervudo y duro, con testículos como piedras, sobre sus piernas de hombre" (p. 57). The reference to testicles explicitly emphasizes the potency which the new Mackandal will possess.

Chapter seven, "El traje de hombre," deals with the return of Mackandal from his magical voyage. The scene opens with the preparations for the Christmas festivities on the plantation of Lenormand de Mezy in December of 1757. Ti

Noel assists in these preparations, but he has already decided to attend instead the celebration organized by the slaves on the plantation of Dufrené. Carpentier, while not deviating from the historical fact, clearly exploits the symbolic significance of the date when Mackandal reappeared.<sup>24</sup> He appears on the very same day that the Christian Savior arrived. Several hours into the celebration on Dufrené's plantation, the Negro Savior materializes before his people. From behind the Tambor Madre, as if he had been reborn through this instrument of the Voodoo rite, appears "El mandigo Mackandal. Mackandal Hombre. El Manco. El Restituído. El Acontecido" (p. 61). Through a series of epithets, in an ascending order of abstraction, Carpentier tells us that Mackandal has "become." What he has become is made apparent in the following description: "Algo parecía quedarle de sus sucesivas vestiduras de escamas, de cerda o de vellón" (p. 61). He is part human and part animal, he stands between two worlds, he is the human transformer of that demiurgic force which will spur his people on to freedom. In short, he is their Savior. They offer him drink, the women dance before him, and all join together in chorus chanting: "¡Oh, padre, mi padre, cuán largo es el camino! ¡Oh, padre, mi padre, cuán largo es el penar!" (p. 62). They look to Mackandal to lead them out of their slavery, as the Hebrews were delivered by Moses, or as the Christians were redeemed by Christ. But this excitement of the slaves does not go unnoticed by the whites. The whites of the

plantation of Dufrené arm themselves, surround the Negroes, and capture Mackandal. It seems that the end of Mackandal is at hand, but, from the title of the following chapter "El gran vuelo," we can expect that the end is not that simple.

The eighth and final chapter of Part I describes the execution of Mackandal by the French in Cap François, January 20, 1758. On this day occurred the miracle which Carpentier mentions in the prologue to El reino de este mundo. He states that it was the collective faith of the Haitian Negroes in Mackandal's metamorphic powers that produced the miracle (p. 13), that is, they believed that Mackandal changed into a mosquito and thus escaped execution. Without contradicting the author, we suggest that it was the archetypal significance of Mackandal's actions which was productive of the collective faith. Jung affirms that: "Experience of the archetype is not only impressive, it seizes and possesses the whole personality, and is naturally productive of faith."<sup>25</sup> Mackandal, as the hero archetype, is the mediator between two worlds, the symbolic transformer who can release into the conscious sphere energy contained in the unconscious. Such a release of psychic energy is productive of faith, and faith in turn produces the miracle.

The French colonists, wishing to make an example of Mackandal's rebelliousness, organize his execution as a great spectacle which they force the slaves to attend. However, this great display of pomp and ceremony only serves

to elevate the stature of Mackandal and reveal the impotence of the whites in dealing with a man anointed by the great Loas. They bind him to a post in the center of the public square and ceremoniously light the fire. But, as the flames reach his legs, he violently thrusts himself forward against the bonds, freeing himself and flying over the heads of the nearest spectators where he is lost in the crowd. Immediately, believing that Mackandal has escaped by changing into a mosquito, a single cry arises from the crowd: "--Mackandal sauvé!" (p. 66). Mass confusion breaks loose and the militia throw themselves on the slaves. By the time order is restored, the soldiers have already returned Mackandal to the fire where his ashes have mingled with those of the wood, leaving no visible trace of his person. Thus there is no evidence to refute the belief that Mackandal "había cumplido su promesa, permaneciendo en el reino de este mundo" (p. 66).<sup>26</sup> He has released a flow of primordial energy into this world, energy which will permeate the future struggles for freedom, producing faith and miracles among his people. As an epilogue to the "execution," Carpentier contrasts the impotent Lenormand de Mezy, verbalizing his contempt for the Negro, with the vital Ti Noel, who at the same moment "embarazó de jimaquas a una de las fámulas de cocina, trabándola, por tres veces, dentro de uno de los pesebres de la caballeriza" (p. 67). The libidinous action of Ti Noel reflects the energy which Mackandal has infused into his people, and which will carry them on to independence in



## Part II.

Part II consists of seven chapters and treats the period from the organized Negro uprisings of 1791 to the final victory over the French in 1803. The major heroic figure is Bouckman, the houngan or Voodoo priest who organized the revolt of 1791. But in contrast to Mackandal, the figure of Bouckman does not succeed in giving structural unity to Part II. The first five chapters do depict the Negro revolt of 1791, the dissolution of the colonial order, and the mass emigration of whites from Saint-Domingue. However, the final two chapters of Part II describe an external threat to the ascending Negro order. In 1802 Napoleon Bonaparte attempted to crush the rebellious Negroes and thus to extend his imperial domination to the New World. The agent of this action was Napoleon's brother-in-law, General Victor Emanuel Leclerc, but Carpentier does not focus upon Leclerc, nor upon Leclerc's main antagonist the Negro general Toussaint L'Ouverture. The major figures of these final two chapters of Part II are Pauline Bonaparte Leclerc and her Negro man-servant Solimán. Both are ambivalent figures in regard to the antagonistic forces of the work: the emanation of the Negro order and the dissolution of the colonial order. Their appearance, although corresponding chronologically to the final dissolution of colonial order, creates an interlude within the succession of heroic types which forms the basic structural pattern of the work. We suggest that this interlude is occasioned by the irruption of the

author's own psychological conflicts within the more archetypal pattern of the work.

Carpentier prefaces Part II with a quotation from the Mémoires de Madame D'Abrantès (p. 69).<sup>27</sup> Madame D'Abrantès, trying to console Pauline who is to accompany her husband Leclerc in the expedition to Saint-Domingue, tells her that there is nothing to fear and that she will be the queen of a virtual paradise in the Antilles. The ironic intent of the author becomes quite clear when we consider the disastrous end which befalls Leclerc's expedition, but we are also given greater insight into the character of Pauline. She is as naive as a child, indiscriminately fusing reality and fantasy (p. 102).<sup>28</sup> This attractive nebulous quality which surrounds her personality is accentuated by her extreme physical beauty, and together they produce a semidivine presence. In short, she personifies seductive femininity. D'Abrantès calls her "la belle Cleopâtre,"<sup>29</sup> and Carpentier compares her to Helen of Troy (p. 102). This seductive character of the feminine archetype is an ambivalent force: it can spur man to creative activity or it can dissolve his ego within the confines of the sensuous. Erich Neumann in his study of the feminine archetype observes that, although the positive and negative characteristics of the archetype are not antithetical and are rarely found in isolation, one characteristic is almost always dominant.<sup>30</sup> In El reino de este mundo, Pauline appears in her negative aspect: capriciously she involves men in her sensuous beauty, reducing

them to the role of servant and leading them to their destruction. No one exemplifies this process better than her Negro servant Solimán, who worships her as a living goddess, and whom she finally destroys in Part IV. However, Carpentier admits elsewhere the positive aspect of Pauline: "Mi encuentro con Paulina Bonaparte, ahí [Haiti], tan lejos de Córcega, fue, para mí, como un revelación...Paulina Bonaparte fue, para mí, lazarillo y gúfa..."<sup>31</sup> Here the author presents her as a spiritual guide to the realm of magic reality, as a femme inspiratrice.<sup>32</sup> The power of fascination which the figure of Pauline worked upon Solimán and upon Carpentier is analogous, only the mode of manifestation and the resulting effects are different: Solimán succumbed to her power, Carpentier was driven to creative activity by his encounter with Pauline. We suggest that Solimán is a projection of content repressed in the author's personal unconsciousness, that is, that Solimán is a "shadow" figure representing the negative effect of the feminine archetype,<sup>33</sup> and thus resolves the author's conflicting attitudes toward the ambivalent Pauline.

Returning to the first chapter of Part II, "La hija de Minos y de Pasifae," we encounter another feminine figure, Mademoiselle Floridor, the new wife of Lenormand de Mezy. The year is 1791, and the author recapitulates events in the north of Saint-Domingue since the execution of Mackandal. Cap Français has blossomed into the cultural center of the colony, complete with its own newspaper, theater, and an

excellent restaurant "La Corona." The master chef of this restaurant happens to be Henri Christophe, the future king of Haiti. The wife of Lenormand de Mezy had died some twenty years ago, and shortly thereafter Lenormand de Mezy married Floridor, an actress in the local theater. He and his new wife left for Paris but returned promptly for she, because of her lack of talent, was refused by the theaters of Paris, and he was overcome by the desire of "señorio, de negras tumbadas a la orilla de una cañada" (p. 73). Reduced in stature through comparison with the world of Paris, the colonists return to the plantation where Lenormand de Mezy delights in castigating the Negroes and violating the adolescent slaves, while his intoxicated wife subjects them to a degenerate rendition of the opera Ariane. In a drunken stupor, Floridor enacts the role of the daughter of Minos and Pasifhae, confessing her numerous and abominable crimes. In contrast to this debauchery, the slaves appear saintly, for: "ante tantas inmoralidades, los esclavos de la hacienda de Lenormand de Mezy seguían reverenciando a Mackandal" (p. 76). Ti Noel himself has sired twelve sons, to whom he has transmitted the legend of Mackandal and his own faith in the return of the Manco.

The following chapter, "El pacto mayor," describes the meeting in Bois Caiman, the night of August 14, 1791.<sup>34</sup> At that time Bouckman, a native of Jamaica, reunited Negro delegates from the plantations of the Northern Plain and incited them to rebellion against the French colonists. The

final hour of the colonial order approaches, for they will never recover from the effects of this revolt. Ti Noel, representing the slaves of Lenormand de Mezy's plantation, arrives drenched by the heavy August rains. Bouckman, in the dead of night, begins his dramatic discourse punctuated by claps of thunder. First he derides the rich landowners who have sought to oppose the liberal ideals of the French Revolution. Then, after a resounding roll of thunder, the religious overtones become apparent. The struggle for freedom has adopted the form of a religious crusade:

--El Dios de los blancos ordena el crimen. Nuestros dioses nos piden venganza. Ellos conducirán nuestros brazos y nos darán la asistencia. ¡Rompan la imagen del Dios de los blancos, que tiene sed de nuestras lágrimas; escuchemos en nosotros mismos la llamada de la libertad! (p. 79)

At this point the meeting gives way to Voodoo ritual.<sup>35</sup> They invoke their heroic ancestors in the numerous manifestations of the warrior loa Ogoun. Then, as the chanting reaches a climactic intensity, an old Negro priestess ritually slays a black pig. They all partake of the blood, thus uniting the initiates present with their heroic ancestors and ritually sealing the Great Pact between them. Then they all fall before Bouckman and swear loyalty to him as leader of the crusade against the whites. While Bouckman remains with his general staff--Jean Francois, Biassou and Jeannot--, the other Negroes like Ti Noel return to their respective plantations where they will await the call to arms, which is to occur eight days later.

Chapter three, "La llamada de los caracoles," describes the events of August 22 on the plantation of Lenormand de Mezy. The master has recently returned from a visit with Governor Blanchelande in Cap Français. The two of them, both staunch defenders of the colonial order, had lamented the idiocy of the utopic revolutionaries in Paris who clamored for the equality of men and thus promoted the spectre of civil war in the colony. Now back at the plantation, Lenormand de Mezy ventures out in the night to surprise and violate one of his adolescent slaves. But, suddenly, a strange sound deters him from his quest and fills him with terror. First there is the trumpeting of a single caracol, then others join until:

Era como si todas las porcelanas de la costa, todos los lambies indios, todos los abrojines que servían para sujetar las puertas, todos los caracoles que yacían, solitarios y petrificados, en el tope de los Moles, se hubieran puesto a cantar en coro. (pp. 84-5)

This is the same voice of the caracoles which was to announce the return of Mackandal (p. 57). Carpentier does not present it as a simple call to arms, but rather as a cry arising from every part and level to announce the end of an epoch.

Struck by terror, Lenormand de Mezy hides, and none too soon, for at that moment the doors of the Negro quarter burst open, unleashing a wave of murdering and plunder. The jubilant Negroes penetrate into every sanctuary of the previously forbidden domain of the master, defiling everything in a veritable orgy of drink and destruction. Ti Noel, like

a libidinous Negro Bacchus, satiates himself in wine and rises to violate the wife of his master, the tragicomic daughter of Minos and Pasifhae. This unleashing of primordial energy, of which Mackandal was the original agent, represents the death knell of the French colonial order. There will be further attempts to repress the Negroes, but from this day the authority of the colonial regime is destroyed, and the Negro forces will continue to increase until the actual proclamation of Independence in January of 1804.

The following chapter, "Dogon dentro del arca," reveals the source of the Negro's power at the same time that it depicts the deteriorating position of the whites. After hiding two days in the bottom of a dry well, Lenormand de Mezy raises his head, white like the mask of death, to view his domain. He is confronted by an inanimate scene of putrefying flesh and destruction. He enters the house where he finds his wife violated and "con una haz encajada en el vientre" (p. 88). Overcome by his loss, he falls by her side where he remains in a state of terror for several days. He does not stir from the house until a rider arrives with the news that the Negroes have been defeated and that "La cabeza del jamaiquino Bouckman se engusanaba ya, verdosa y boquiabierta, en el preciso lugar en que se habia hecho ceniza hedionda la carne del manco Mackandal" (p. 88). It would appear that the colonists are victorious, and Lenormand de Mezy accompanies the rider to Cap Français, where,

ironically enough, he arrives in time to save Ti Noel and twelve others of his slaves from execution. The fact is that, although Bouckman was killed as was Mackandal before him, a state of anarchy reigns throughout the colony and the slaves cannot be contained. For this reason, Governor Blanchelande has ordered the total extermination of the Negroes. Blanchelande also realizes that it was the Voodoo cult which gave an effective solidarity to the Negro revolt. Using the words of Father Labat which give this chapter its title, Blanchelande states that the Negroes, like the Philistines, continued to worship their own gods within the Christian temple. Lenormand de Mezy reflects upon the dances which the Negroes celebrated on his plantation, but with his superficial air of superiority asks himself: "¿Pero acaso una persona culta podía haberse preocupado por las salvajes creencias de gentes que adoraban una serpiente?" (p. 91). Thus, still unable to fully comprehend the forces which caused his downfall, Lenormand de Mezy wanders aimlessly about Cap Français, and finally decides to emigrate to Cuba with what remains of his possessions, a few of his slaves.

Chapter five, "Santiago de Cuba," treats the figures of Lenormand de Mezy and of Ti Noel in exile. For the master this voyage represents an expulsion from his domain in defeat; for the slave it is a journey toward self-recognition and freedom. As the ship leaves the harbor of Cap Français, the ultimate victory of the Negroes is foreseen:



Allá quedaba la ciudad, siempre amenazada por los negros, sabedores ya de una ayuda en armas ofrecida por los españoles y del calor con que ciertos jacobinos humanitarios comenzaban a defender su causa. (p. 93)

While Ti Noel suffers the rigors of confinement in the hold of the ship, the French refugees engage in a grotesquely forced merriment. Upon arriving in Cuba, Lenormand de Mezy goes directly to the Tivoli, a theater founded by the first refugees. The intent is clear. He and many others, uprooted from their prior existence and fearful of the future, have given themselves over to the pleasure of the moment: "se regodeaban en su desorden, en su vivir al día, en su ausencia de obligaciones, tratando, por el momento de hallar el placer en todo" (pp. 94-95). All the social structure which had given meaning to their prior existence has fallen, and they enter into the last throes of dissolution as a "viento de licencia, de fantasía, de desorden, soplabá en la ciudad" (p. 96). As Lenormand de Mezy approaches his final days, he begins to divide his time between gambling and prayer. He loses one slave after another in card playing, while his frequent visits to church introduce Ti Noel into the baroque splendor of Santiago's cathedral. At this point we lose sight of Lenormand de Mezy who fades into the realm of the dead, and the center of attention focuses on Ti Noel.

Ti Noel, who accompanied his master in the frequent visits to the cathedral, encounters in the service and instruments of the Catholic rite "una fuerza envolvente, un poder de seducción, por presencias, símbolos, atributos y

signos, parecidos al que se desprendía de los altares de los houmforts consagrados a Damballah, el Dios Serpiente" (p. 98). It is not unusual that Catholic and Voodoo symbolism should interpenetrate each other, for the Voodoo altar is quite syncretic, often representing the loas by Catholic icons.<sup>36</sup> Also the figures of Christ and of the serpent, as symbols of regeneration and totality, are universal in their significance.<sup>37</sup> What this seems to represent in relation to Ti Noel is an encounter with the supernatural, but of even greater import is how he relates himself to the supernatural. He continues to fuse the Catholic and Voodoo dieties, seeing the warrior loa Ogoun in the figure of Santiago:

...el mariscal de las tormentas, a cuyo conjuro se habían alzado los hombres de Bouckman. Por ello, Ti Noel, a modo de oración, le recitaba [a Santiago] a menudo un viejo canto oído a Mackandal:

Santiago, soy hijo de la guerra:  
Santiago,  
¿no ves que soy hijo de la guerra?  
(pp. 98-99)

Thus we see Ti Noel relating himself to the historical manifestations of the hero archetype Ogoun, namely Mackandal and Bouckman. Here he recognizes himself as a descendent of these heroic figures who have sacrificed themselves in order to free their people. Later he will return to Haiti and do the same.

The following two chapters comprise the interlude we spoke of above.<sup>38</sup> The first chapter opens in Santiago de Cuba in the year 1803. Ti Noel, who has gone to the dock on

an errand for his master, spies a ship that they are loading with dogs and asks where the dogs are being taken. He is told that they are being shipped to Saint-Domingue to eat Negroes. This identifies the vessel as one requested by Rochambeau. Rochambeau, who became chief of the French forces after Leclerc's death, employed such barbarous measures as importing man-eating dogs and poisonous snakes in a last ditch effort to defeat the Negroes.<sup>39</sup> Ti Noel, upon learning the destination of the dogs, runs back to the cathedral to await his master. Here some slaves recently arrived from Saint-Domingue inform Ti Noel of the situation in Cap Français.

At this point the narration goes back to December of 1801 and focuses upon the armada of Leclerc which has recently departed from France to crush the rebellious Negroes of Saint-Domingue. The center of attention is the beautiful young wife of Leclerc, Pauline. She fancies herself a queen, having familiarized herself with the role in Boyaceto and Mitridates. Living in a world of fantasy, apparently naïve and capricious, she knows herself desired by every man aboard and that at night "centenares de hombres soñaban con ella en los camarotes, castillos y sollados" (p. 103). To heighten their desire, she pretends to meditate at the bow of the ship: "dejándose despeinar por un viento que le pegaba el vestido al cuerpo, revelando la soberbia apostura de sus senos" (p. 104). As the ship penetrates further into tropical waters, she becomes even more seductive, sleeping

nude on the deck of the alcázar. This is enough to melt the heart of the stern d'Esmenard, chief of the secret police, who compares her to the Grecian Galatea. Upon arriving in Cap Français, she imagines herself in the paradise of Paul et Virginie. Through the eyes of Joseph La Vallée, author of Le nègre comme il y a peu de blancs, she envisions the rebellious Negro as natural man uncorrupted by civilization. She acquires the services of a Negro masseur, whom she delights in tormenting:

Paulina sentía un placer maligno en rozar,  
dentro del agua de la piscina, los duros  
flancos de aquel servidor a quien sabía  
eternamente atormentado por el deseo...  
(p. 107)

In her benign moods, she would allow her servant to kneel before her as a mortal worshipping a goddess and kiss her legs. But suddenly the bubble of her tropical paradise bursts. Her hairdresser, a victim of yellow fever, falls vomiting at her feet, and the fear of death destroys her world of sensuous pleasure and fantasy.

The following chapter, "San Trastorno," accentuates the terror produced by the invisible assailant. Yellow fever, like a supernatural ally of the Negroes, decimates the forces of Leclerc and causes Pauline to flee to the island of Tortuga off the northern coast of Saint-Domingue. Shortly thereafter, Leclerc himself, his body emaciated by fever, arrives on the island. At this point, the world of Pauline, nurtured in the naive fount of European Enlightenment, shatters completely. Fear of death forces her into

the realm of Solimán's cosmology, where she participates in propitiatory rituals to ward off the invisible death which assaults the island. In fact, Solimán, with his prayers to San Trastorno, becomes the "verdadero amo de la isla, único defensor posible contra el azote de la otra orilla" (p. 111). Now it is Pauline that kneels before Solimán as he conducts the Voodoo rituals which are to protect her from the yellow fever. This episode on the island corresponds chronologically to the defeat of the final French attempt to repress the Negro revolt, and it may be symbolic of that defeat. However, it does not basically alter the character of Pauline, for no sooner has she departed Saint-Domingue with the body of her deceased husband than "sus velos de luto se enredaron en las espuelas de un joven oficial, especialmente encargado de honrar y custodiar los restos del general Leclerc" (pp. 113-14).<sup>40</sup> She remains the seductive female who lures men to their ruin, and who in Part IV will destroy Solimán.

At this point we return to the beginning of the interlude when Ti Noel saw the ship of man-eating dogs depart from Santiago de Cuba. We find that these repressive measures of Rochambeau have proved ineffective, for now

los Grandes Loas favorecían las armas negras. Ganaban batallas quienes tuvieran dioses guerreros que invocar. Ogún Badagrí guiaba las cargas al arma blanca contra las últimas trincheras de la Diosa Razón. Y, como en todos los combates que realmente merecen ser recordados porque alguien detuviera el sol o derribara murallas con una trompeta, hubo, en aquellos días, hombres que cerraron con el pecho desnudo las bocas de cañones enemigos

y hombres que tuvieron poderes para apartar de su cuerpo el plomo de los fusiles. (pp. 115-16)

Here we see the final victory of the Negroes, men inspired to miracles by the supernatural, by the primordial energy unleashed by Mackandal, Bouckman, and other historical manifestations of the hero archetype Ogun. At the midpoint of the work the ascending power of the Negroes has reached the apex of the cosmogonic round, "la eterna rueda" of Carpentier. Now a Negro should step forth to establish the kingdom of their ancestors here in this world.

Part III consists of seven chapters and treats the kingdom of Henri Christophe in northern Haiti from 1811 to 1820.<sup>41</sup> It is prefaced by a quotation from Karl Ritter's Naturhistorische Reise nach...Hayti which emphasizes the material splendor of Christophe's royal court (p. 117).<sup>42</sup> Christophe is the major figure of Part III, but as we have mentioned above, the Negro forces have already reached the apex of the cosmogonic round, and we may expect a decline to follow. This, in fact, is what Carpentier is about to describe. Christophe, turning his back on the forces which have carried him to power, has elected to create a kingdom modeled not upon African but upon Catholic and European forms. Instead of a liberator, he has become a tyrant. Campbell thus describes the fate of the tyrant:

The tyrant is proud, and therein resides his doom. He is proud because he thinks of his strength as his own; thus he is in the clown role, as a mistaker of shadow for substance; it is his destiny to be tricked. The mythological hero, reappearing from the darkness that is the source of the shapes of the day,

brings a knowledge of the secret of the tyrant's doom.<sup>43</sup>

Thus, we shall see Christophe cast in the role of the tyrant and Ti Noel in the role of the hero, a role which Ti Noel will fulfill more completely in Part IV. The first two chapters describe Ti Noel's return to his homeland, but Christophe does not enter into the narration directly until the third chapter.

In the first chapter, "Los signos," Ti Noel disembarks in Saint-Marc, an old man but still quite strong.<sup>44</sup> Having gained his freedom from Lenormand de Mezy in Santiago de Cuba, he has returned to Saint-Domingue, now called Haiti. He picks up a staff and, like a venerable pilgrim, he begins the journey back to Lenormand de Mezy's plantation. As he crosses into the kingdom of Christophe, the land suddenly becomes hostile and sterile,<sup>45</sup> the men he encounters stagger along dejectedly without replying to his greetings. This would seem strange, because the proclamation of Haitian Independence in 1804 was to have abolished slavery forever in these lands. Then Ti Noel spies something which fills his heart with joy. It is a tree hung with offerings and surrounded by the cabalistic signs of Legba, the Master of the Crossroads.<sup>46</sup> Knowing that he has returned to his spiritual homeland, Ti Noel kneels before the loas and pays them homage:

Porque él sabía--y lo sabían todos los negros franceses de Santiago de Cuba--que el triunfo de Dessalines se debía a una preparación tremenda, en la que habían intervenido Loco, Petro, Ogún Ferraille, Brise-Pimba, Caplaou-

Pimba, Marinette Bois-Cheche y todas las divinidades de la pólvora y del fuego, en una serie de caídas en posesión de una violencia tan terrible que ciertos hombres habían sido lanzados al aire o golpeados contra el suelo por los conjuros. (pp. 121-22)

Ti Noel is aware of the powers which carried Dessalines to victory over the French in November, 1803, and assured Haitian Independence. It is precisely Christophe's ignorance of this fact, or his rejection of these powers, which will lead to the downfall of Haiti's first king.

In the following chapter, "Sans-Souci," Ti Noel continues his journey. After several days of walking, he begins to recognize the terrain, passing the cave where Macandal had prepared his campaign against the colonists, and finally arriving at the plantation of Lenormand de Mezy. The abandoned plantation is in a state of utter ruin. As Ti Noel sits on a cornerstone of the old house, conversing with the ants, he catches his first glance of the new order which governs northern Haiti. Several officers, dressed in uniforms which outshine the pomp and splendor of Napoleon's soldiers, speed by on horses. Fascinated by what he has seen, Ti Noel follows them in the direction of the village of Millot, where he encounters a veritable paradise of carefully worked fields and exquisite gardens. But he is taken aback when he discovers the source of labor:

"Presos", pensó Ti Noel, al ver que los guardianes eran negros, pero que los trabajadores también eran negros, lo cual contrariaba ciertas nociones que había adquirido en Santiago de Cuba... (p. 125)

The forced labor under Christophe's regime does not differ



basically from the slavery enforced by the colonists. Immediately Ti Noel is confronted with other similarities between the two regimes. In the palace and court of Sans-Souci he encounters an aristocratic grandeur which surpasses that of the colonists, and is only comparable to the imperial splendor of Napoleon. There are uniformed soldiers, musicians, actors, coachmen, Catholic priests, ministers of state, even a "Gran Copero" and "Gran Maestro de Cetrería" (p. 127). True, it is a world of Negroes, but it is modeled upon the world of European aristocracy, not the African heritage of the people. Christophe has renounced the forces which have carried him to power. Now, the ex-chef of La Corona "fundía monedas con sus iniciales, sobre la orgullosa divisa de Dios, mi causa y mi espada" (p. 128). He is proud and envisions himself as the source of his power, in short he has become the tyrant Holdfast.

Ti Noel, who has wandered into court, is beaten and dragged off to prison. He protests that he personally knew Christophe when he was the chef of La Corona, but to no avail. Later, he and other prisoners are forced to carry bricks up the Gorro del Obispo to finish the construction of the Ciudadela La Ferrière, the gigantic mountaintop fortress that Christophe is building to protect his kingdom from foreign invasion. As the old Ti Noel climbs the mountain with his bricks, he looks back on Sans-Souci, where Christophe "agarraba distraídamente una rosa blanca, recién abierta sobre los bojes que perfilaban una corona y un ave

fénix al pie de las alegorías de mármol" (p. 129). Christophe seems quite unaware of the prophetic symbolism in his own royal coat of arms. The Phoenix which rises from its ashes is not unlike the figure of Mackandal who arose to spur his people on to independence, nor does it differ basically from Damballah, the serpent which continually renews itself through the shedding of its skin.

Chapter three, "El sacrificio de los toros," describes the construction of the Ciudadela La Ferrière and Christophe's vain attempt to preserve himself in power. Carpentier begins with an extended description of the fortress itself, revealing as he describes it the signs of Christophe's pride and his impending doom. The fortress, not unlike the tombs of the Egyptian Pharaohs, is constructed by slave labor:

Centenares de hombres trabajaban en las entrañas de aquella inmensa construcción siempre espiados por el látigo y el fusil, rematando obras que sólo habían sido vistas, hasta entonces, en las arquitecturas imaginarias del Piranese. (p. 132)<sup>47</sup>

Within this fortress, which is to become the tomb of Christophe, there have been installed numerous cannon "marcados por el troquel del Rey Sol, que pregonaban insolentemente su Ultima Ratio Regum" (p. 133). These French cannon, emblazoned with the motto of Louis XIV, reveal the cause of Christophe's decline. He has rejected the force that bound his nation together in the struggle for freedom and has become the tyrant:

He [the tyrant] is no longer the mediator

between the two worlds, Man's perspective flattens to include only the human term of the equation, and the experience of the supernal power immediately fails. The upholding idea of the community is lost. Force is all that binds it. The emperor becomes the tyrant ogre (Herod-Nimrod), the usurper from whom the world is now to be saved.<sup>48</sup>

Armed might, the cannon and the fortress, are the "last argument of kings," but they will not suffice to keep Christophe in power.

Now the scene shifts to Ti Noel who continues to carry his bricks up the mountain. He finds out that this forced labor has been going on for twelve years and that all protests against it have been silenced with death. Through the mind of Ti Noel we discover the disaffection of the people toward their sovereign, for all these works

se debían a una esclavitud tan abominable como la que había conocido en la hacienda de Monsieur Lenormand de Mezy. Peor aún, puesto que había una infinita miseria en lo de verse apaleado por un negro, tan negro como uno, tan belfudo y pelicrespo, tan narizñato como uno; tan igual, tan mal nacido, tan marcado a hierro, posiblemente, como uno. (pp. 134-35)

The position of the "free" laborers is infinitely worse than their prior condition of servitude. At least their former masters were more reticent in meting out death. Finally the figure of Christophe appears. Clad in ostentatious regalia and surrounded by his officers, he enters La Ferrière, ordering the execution of workers who seem to delay too long in performing their tasks. He climbs to the highest point of the fortress to survey his domain, where he experiences a feeling of absolute power, invulnerable to any attack. To

protect the fortress against the arms of the whites he has resorted to the Voodoo practice of mixing the blood of sacrificed bulls with the mortar of the walls. The supreme irony is that the threat to his power will come from within, not from a foreign invasion. The drawbridge of the Puerta Unica, which would have shut out the invaders, will become the only possible escape from the wrath of his people. The only escape is death. Thus at the end of three chapters we find Christophe at the apogee of his power. But his power is personal and maintained by armed might; it is power detached from the will and heritage of his people. Already the signs of disaffection and decline have been noted.

The following chapter, "El emparedado," describes the event which causes the decline of Christophe. Through an act of arbitrary brutality he succeeds in bringing the life of Cap Henri--previously Cap Français--to an absolute standstill. The manner in which he executes his former confessor, Father Cornejo Breille, fills the city with the fear of death. We are approaching the final moment of Christophe's reign, for

When the Herod figure (the extreme symbol of the misgoverning, tenacious ego) has brought mankind to the nadir of spiritual abasement, the occult forces of the cycle begin of themselves to move.<sup>49</sup>

From this point Christophe's power will decline and the forces which he has tried to repress will rise. The chapter opens with Ti Noel who is the antithesis of Christophe, if not to say his antagonist. Ti Noel has left La Ferrière,

where the work is nearing completion, and returned to the plantation of Lenormand de Mezy. He passes almost a year there fashioning himself a home and recuperating from the forced labor at the fortress. Fearful of additional forced labor, he does not venture from his own "domain."

But finally, in the summer of 1820, he wanders into Cap Henri in order to supplement his meager diet. There he finds

la ciudad entera en espera de una muerte. Era como si todas las ventanas y puertas de las casas, todas las celosías, todos los ojos de buey, se hubiesen vuelto hacia la sola esquina del Arzobispado, en una expectación de tal intensidad que deformaba las fachadas en muecas humanas.  
(pp. 141-42)

The revulsion toward this act of Christophe has caused even the buildings to exude human emotion. Christophe has sealed his ex-confessor in a cement enclosure and left him to die. The screams, curses, and death throes of Breille have terrified the entire population to the point that "Nadie dormía en el Cabo. Nadie se atrevía a pasar por las calles aledañas. Dentro de las viviendas se rezaba en voz baja, en las habitaciones más retiradas" (p. 143). This is what Ti Noel encounters: an entire city under the fear of death. Meanwhile, Christophe, who has ignored the pleas of his own wife to free Breille, elects a new archbishop, Juan de Dios González. The king remains proud and unrepentant. After a week of anguish Breille dies and the city falls into an unnatural silence.

El silencio demasiado prolongado de una ciudad que ha dejado de creer en el silencio

y que sólo un recién nacido se atrevió a romper con un vagido ignorante, reencaminando la vida hacia su sonoridad habitual de pregones, abures, comadreos y canciones de tender la ropa al sol. (p. 144)

Life begins anew for the city of Cap Henri, a city which will no longer bend to the rule of the tyrant. Ti Noel, having finally gathered the goods he came to get, returns to the plantation, singing a song "en la que se decían groserías a un rey. Eso era lo importante: a un rey" (p. 145). This is the very same song that Ti Noel sang in Part I (p. 30), and its significance is also the same: disaffection and hatred toward the tyrant. Repressed forces are now arising to sweep Christophe from power.

Chapter five, "Crónica del 15 de agosto," describes the blow which reduces Christophe to impotency. Here Carpentier beautifully weaves together elements of Catholic and Voodoo rites. Christophe and his wife are attending a Mass conducted by the new Archbishop, Juan de Dios González. Christophe, aware that the people hold him responsible for the harvests lost due to forced labor on La Ferrière, feels surrounded by hostile forces:

En alguna casa retirada--lo sospechaba--habría una imagen suya hincada con alfileres o colgada de mala manera con un cuchillo encajado en el lugar del corazón. Muy lejos se alzaba, a ratos, un pálpito de tambores que no tocaban, probablemente, en rogativas por su larga vida. (p. 148)

He feels himself being overcome by the occult forces that his own people are evoking in their Voodoo rituals. Meanwhile, the Mass has reached the Offertory. At this point

the grotesque figure of the dead Cornejo Breille appears before the altar and continues the Mass, proclaiming the Dies Irae. Christophe endures until the Rex tremendae majestatis, at which time he succumbs to an invisible force greater than he, falling paralyzed to the floor. As he lies prostrate on the church floor, he imagines that the Voodoo drums continue to sound in the mountains. It would seem that the very forces which Christophe had attempted to suppress and control have risen to strike him down. His officers carry him to Sans-Souci, where they attempt to revive him. The women of the court gather in prayer, but "a veces, un ritmo caído de altas lejanías se mezclaba extrañamente con el Avemaría que las mujeres rezaban en el Salón de Honor, hallando inconfesadas resonancias en más de un pecho" (p. 152). These occult forces evoked in the Voodoo ritual not only have overcome the king, but also are regaining adherents within his court.

In chapter six, "Ultima ratio regum," the kingdom of Christophe disintegrates completely; and the king, aware of the impotence of his own power, is forced to flee through the only door open to him, suicide. It is August 20, 1820, and Christophe has not really recovered from the stroke he suffered in the church of Limonade. Solimán, the ex-masseur of Pauline and now lackey of Christophe, helps the king to the window. There has been news that the people in the city have been drinking and dancing in the streets. Now, as Christophe looks from the window, his musicians enter the courtyard beating their drums with bare hands to the Voodoo

rhythm of the manducumán. At this signal the guards break ranks, other soldiers run from their quarters, and the mass desertion begins. Christophe is alone, his the only image reflected in the mirrored halls, his the only footsteps resounding in the immense palace of Sans-Souci: "El palacio estaba desierto, entregado a la noche sin luna. Era de quien quisiera tomarlo, pues se habían llevado hasta los perros de caza" (p. 157). He pauses before the royal coat of arms with its "emblema del Fénix Coronado, con la divisa: Renazco de mis cenizas" (p. 158). So that there remains no doubt as to the powers that are rising to destroy his kingdom we hear:

los tambores radás, los tambores congós, los tambores de Bouckman, los tambores de los Grandes Pactos, los tambores todos del Vodú. Era una vasta percusión en redondo, que avanzaba sobre Sans-Souci, apretando el cerco. (pp. 159-60)

Christophe thinks of La Ferrière, his ultima ratio regum, and now realizes his folly. The great fortress, the symbol of his power, is utterly useless, not only because he lacks the soldiers to man it; but because it was designed to protect against an external attack, not against the internal forces which he had ignored:

Christophe, el reformador, había querido ignorar el vodú, formando, a fustazos, una casta de señores católicos. Ahora comprendía que los verdaderos traidores a su causa, aquella noche, eran San Pedro con su llave, los capuchinos de San Francisco y el negro San Benito... (pp. 160-61)

Thus we see Christophe's defeat as caused by his self-willed desire to impose a foreign system upon his people, and by



his rejection of the forces which have unified his people in their struggles for freedom. As the flames of destruction near the palace, he recognizes the untenability of his situation. He withdraws to his chambers and commits suicide, sending a bullet through his brain.

The final chapter of Part III, "La puerta única," describes the interment of Christophe in his mountain fortress. Upon discovering the dead king, Solimán, assisted by several royal pages, wraps him in a hammock and flees toward the mountains with the body. Their departure is none too soon, for as they lose themselves in the night the rebellious masses have already begun to plunder the palace of Sans-Souci. Near dawn the fugitives reach La Ferrière. Lowering the drawbridge which protects the "Puerta Unica," they carry the body of Christophe into his "Escorial" (p. 165). The entire fortress is covered with red mushrooms reminiscent of the poison that Mackandal unleashed against the white masters: "Totalmente vestida de hongos encarnados, llena de noche todavía, la ciudadela emerge--sangrienta arriba, herrumbrosa abajo--de las nubes grises que tanto habían hinchado los incendios de la Llanura" (p. 165).<sup>50</sup> What Christophe had envisioned as symbolic of his power becomes symbolic of his decline and his death. The garrison of the fortress, upon receiving the notice of Christophe's death, releases the prisoners, and a great cry of jubilation arises from La Ferrière. They surround and threaten the queen and her servants. The only thing that saves the royal

party is the fact that the mutinous soldiers elect to rush to Sans-Souci and join in the plundering. A strange silence falls over the fortress, and it assumes "una fúnebre solemnidad de sepultura real" (p. 167). The body of Christophe is placed upon a mound of fresh cement into which it sinks, becoming one with the stone of La Ferrière. In this manner the entire mountain of Gorro del Obispo is transformed into "el mausoleo del primer rey de Haití" (p. 168).

Thus, at the end of Part III, we see that the forces unleashed earlier by Mackandal and Bouckman have again risen to overthrow the oppressive tyrant. Christophe, having been carried to power by these forces, elected to ignore them. He imposed upon his people a regime patterned on European models and based on arbitrary personal power. He ceased to be a transformer of the demiurgic force that moved his people and instead oppressed that force. This force, with which Ti Noel is clearly aligned at the beginning of Part III, arose against Christophe and buried him in the very symbol of the tyrant's power. In Part IV Ti Noel is even more closely identified with this demiurgic force, and he is transformed into the dominant heroic figure of the fourth and final part of El reino de este mundo.

Part IV consists of four chapters and occurs during the government of the mulatto Jean Pierre Boyer, who became president of the united Haiti following Christophe's suicide in 1820. It is prefaced by a quotation from Calderón which indicates that even more macabre events are to follow. The

first series of strange incidents takes place in Rome, where the concluding episode of the interlude involving Pauline and Solimán is acted out. Solimán is finally lured to his death by the seductive figure of Pauline. The remaining three chapters center on the figure of Ti Noel. In a carefully delineated sequence of events, Ti Noel is first identified as the new leader of his people, an antagonistic power then appears to confront him, and finally he moves to a moment of enlightenment and self-sacrifice.

The first chapter, "La noche de las estatuas," describes the final episode of the interlude introduced in Part II. Solimán, who served as masseur to Pauline and lackey to Christophe, is now in Rome. After the overthrow of Christophe's regime, he fled with Christophe's wife, the ex-queen María Luisa, and her daughters to Europe. Here Solimán will again encounter the seductive figure of Pauline and be completely destroyed by her. At first he achieves a certain degree of notoriety among the common people by passing himself off as the nephew of Christophe. Then he enters into an amorous relationship with a servant of the Borghese Palace. While the masters are away,<sup>51</sup> Solimán and his newfound female companion lead a disorderly existence, drinking to the early hours of the morning and exploring the vast and sumptuous interior of the palace.

One night they enter into a large courtyard filled with marble statues of nude women. In this strange world of statues illuminated by the moon, Solimán, already intoxicated, perceives mysterious presences, as if the statues

were animate. They enter a small chamber where there is a single statue, a completely nude woman which fascinates Solimán.<sup>52</sup> The woman is strangely familiar, and he begins to remember:

ahora, las noches de miedo en la isla de Tortuga, cuando un general francés agonizaba detrás de una puerta cerrada. Recordaba a la que se hacía rascar la cabeza para dormirse. Y, de pronto, movido por una imperiosa rememoración física, Solimán comenzó a hacer los gestos del masajista... Pero, súbitamente, la frialdad del mármol, subida a sus muñecas como tenazas de muerte, lo inmovilizó en un grito. (pp. 177-78)

The seductive figure of Pauline represented in this statue of cold marble has become the symbol of Death. The agonized screams of Solimán bring the local police, and he is forced to flee the palace. Trembling and overcome by fever after his confrontation with Death, Solimán returns to the residence of María Luisa. Their attempts to revive him prove futile, and as he lies dying:

Solimán trataba de alcanzar a un Dios que se encontraba en el lejano Dahómey, en alguna umbrosa encrucijada, con el falo encarnado puesto al descanso sobre una muleta que para eso llevaba consigo... (p. 180)

Solimán first fell victim to the seductive charms of Pauline in Saint-Domingue, later he became a servant in the sumptuous court of Christophe, and finally he comes to realize in his encounter with Pauline's cold statue that these material attractions signify Death. Thus, with his last breath, he calls out to Legba, the Lord of Life.

Whether as cord or phallus, Legba-life is the link between the visible, mortal world and the invisible, immortal realms. He is the means

and avenue of communication between them, the vertical axis of the universe which stretches between the sun door and the tree root. Since he is god of the poles of the axis, of the axis itself, he is the God of the Crossroads, of the vital intersection between the two worlds.<sup>53</sup>

Legba is the Lord of Life because he is the mediator between two worlds and thus able to release primordial energy into the mortal realm. Solimán, like Christophe, had become ensnared in the material world and Death. Considered in this light, the transition between the first and second chapters does not appear so abrupt, and the plea of Solimán to Legba leads naturally to the figure of Ti Noel.<sup>54</sup>

In the second chapter, "La casa real," we return to Haiti and the figure of Ti Noel. In the first paragraph we learn that he was in the fore of the rebellious masses which overthrew Christophe and plundered the palace of Sans-Souci. This links him again with the forces which have carried his people to independence. Now he is to become the leader of his people and the transformer of the demiurgic force from which their power springs. He has occupied the abandoned ruins of Lenormand de Mezy's plantation and converted them into his "royal palace." He is described as a demented old man, but in his insanity he will achieve greater wisdom than all his predecessors. Dressed in a uniform acquired in Sans-Souci and topped by an old straw hat, he wanders about speaking to his people: "Ahora, Ti Noel hablaba constantemente. Hablaba, abriéndose de brazos, en medio de los caminos..." (pp. 182-83). Through this symbolic posturing,

he is identified as the mediator between two worlds. As he wanders, he vaguely remembers things that Mackandal had told him. He is aware that he has a mission to fulfill; but, not having yet received a sign, he cannot discern the nature of his mission. His people already revere him as a leader and savior: "Cuando las mujeres lo veían aparecer en un sendero, agitaban paños claros, en señal de reverencia, como las palmas que un domingo habían festejado a Jesús" (p. 183).

This comparison with Christ reinforces his role as a mediator between the sacred and profane worlds. Celebrations and dances are held in his "royal palace," where Ti Noel presides, seated between a bush priest and a veteran of the Wars of Independence, symbolic of the religious and military powers. During a Voodoo dance, he is "possessed" by a king of Angola and prophesies for his people. Ti Noel has ascended to a position of authority and issues edicts: "Pero eran edictos de un gobierno apacible, puesto que ninguna tiranía de blancos ni de negros parecía amenazar su libertad" (p. 184). He has become the new leader of his people, the benevolent ruler of a virtual paradise, but soon an antagonistic force is to impose itself upon his kingdom.

Chapter three, "Los agrimensores," describes the appearance of this intrusive power. One morning the surveyors arrive, and like a plague of insects they cover the Northern Plain. They are mulattoes from Boyer's government in the south. Ti Noel protests against their invasion of his domain, but they simply push him aside. The next day he

finds that "las tareas agrícolas se habían vuelto obligatorias y que el látigo estaba ahora en manos de Mulatos Republicanos, nuevos amos de la Llanura del Norte" (pp. 188-89). The slavery against which Mackandal and Bouckman had fought has again imposed itself upon the Haitian people. Now the forced labor is supervised by this "aristocracia entre dos aguas," (p. 189) the mulattoes. Ti Noel is depressed for he cannot envision a way of saving his people. After so many wars of independence, slavery arises again, and Ti Noel experiences the "inutilidad de toda rebeldía" (p. 190). The fear of forced labor causes him to recall the manner in which Mackandal escaped persecution by the French. He evokes occult powers and transforms himself into a bird, a wasp, an ant. These metamorphoses free him from the mulattoes, but he does not find happiness in these new forms of life. As an ant he is forced to slave under masters as fierce as Lenormand de Mezy, Christophe's guards, and the present mulatto rulers. He has misused the power of metamorphosis, seeking to escape rather than to transform himself to a higher plane.

In chapter four, "Agnus Dei,"<sup>55</sup> Ti Noel finally realizes his error and in a moment of enlightenment grasps his mission. At first he is still trying to escape from life. A flock of geese appears on the plantation, and Ti Noel encounters in their social organization a utopian world:

Los gansos eran gente de orden, de fundamento y sistema, cuya existencia era ajena a todo

sometimiento de individuos a individuos de la misma especie. El principio de la autoridad, personificado en el Ansar Mayor, era el meramente necesario para mantener el orden dentro del clan, procediéndose en esto a la manera del rey o capataz de los viejos cabildos africanos. (p. 194)

However, his attempt to enter the paradisiacal world of the geese is thwarted. The geese themselves reject him. He does not share their heritage for he has never been initiated into their kingdom. This rejection by the geese forces him to realize that he is not really a man either. Mackandal did not use the power of metamorphosis to escape the kingdom of Man, but to transform himself and the kingdom of Man to a higher plane. In a moment of supreme enlightenment, Ti Noel sees pass before him a succession of heroic types who have sacrificed themselves in order to transcend their existence and to transform the Kingdom of Man. At the same time he experiences a "cosmic weariness," a sense of the cosmogonic round, the process of eternal emanation and dissolution.

At this moment Ti Noel becomes more than his heroic predecessors: he has stepped outside the realm of paradox and has viewed the Whole.<sup>56</sup> What to the individual of limited experience appears to be an eternal conflict of antagonistic forces is to the source of primordial energy a harmonious process of emanation and dissolution.<sup>57</sup> Through sacrifice, voluntary or involuntary, Life flows into Death and Death flows into Life. Now Ti Noel understands that

...el hombre nunca sabe para quién padece y espera. Padece y espera y trabaja para gentes



que nunca conocerá, y que a su vez padecerán y espererán y trabajarán para otros que tampoco serán felices, pues el hombre ansia siempre una felicidad situada más allá de la porción que le es otorgada. Pero la grandeza del hombre está precisamente en querer mejorar lo que es. (p. 197)

It is the desire to transcend himself that comprises man's greatness. This greatness can only be exercised from a limited existence; that is, he can only achieve his greatness in the Kingdom of this World, where it is possible to sacrifice himself and thus transcend himself.

Ti Noel, now aware of his mission, arises and summons his people to attack the new tyrants. At that moment, "un gran viento verde, surgido del Océano, cayó sobre la Llanura del Norte...Y durante toda la noche, el mar, hecho lluvia, dejó rastros de sal en los flancos de las montañas" (p. 198). It is as if the sacrifice of Ti Noel had unleashed all the fury of a hurricane upon the Northern Plain. Ti Noel disappears in the depths of Bois Caiman, and no more is heard of him. He has transcended this existence. Only a vulture, a "cruz de plumas" (p. 198), witnessed the transformation. It is extremely significant that the final image of El reino de este mundo is the cross. It is the point of intersection between two worlds, as is the crossroads of Legba, for in the cosmology of Voodoo:

The metaphor for the mirror's depth is the cross-roads; the symbol is the cross...a figure for the intersection of the horizontal plane, the metaphysical axis, which plunges into the mirror.<sup>58</sup>

The depth of the mirror is not a vague mystical space but the realm of the loas, archetypal figures who have tran-

scended the limitations of this existence through sacrifice. They, like the archetypes of the collective unconscious, can rise again within the temporal limitations of this existence to serve as transformers of the primordial source of energy. Thus Ti Noel, the sacrificer of himself, may again enter the history of Haiti.

Reviewing the structure of El reino de este mundo, we discover that Carpentier, basing himself in the temporal realm of history, has succeeded in capturing the reality of the Haitian Wars of Independence. But simultaneously he has captured something which transcends the temporal and spatial limitations of his subject matter. The cyclic repetitions of the "eternal wheel" or the cosmogonic round form a pattern beyond the limitations of time.<sup>59</sup> He extracts this pattern from the cacaphony of history and thus gives unity to a series of events which otherwise would appear episodic and contradictory. At the beginning of the work Mackandal unleashes the primordial source of energy so that the kingdom of the Negroes could take on material form and become manifest in this world. These forces rise until the end of Part II when they reach their apex. Then, under the reign of Christophe, the kingdom of the Negroes begins to decline. It reaches its final dissolution in Part IV when the mulattoes invade the Northern Plain. Finally, at the end of Part IV, Ti Noel, in a sacrificial act similar to that of his mentor Mackandal, again unleashes the primordial source of energy which could restore the kingdom of the Negroes and

thus reactivate the cycle of the eternal wheel.

The agent of this cosmic process is the archetypal hero. He is the mediator between two worlds, the transformer of the primordial source of energy, and thus the human agent through which the supernatural forces penetrate into this world and occasion extraordinary events. Each part of El reino de este mundo focuses upon a major historical manifestation of the archetypal hero. In Part I it is Mackandal who initiates the interpenetration of the real and the supernatural. Bouckman continues this process in Part II. Then Christophe, who has been carried to power by the interpenetration initiated by his predecessors, subverts the process, closing himself off to the realm of the supernatural. The hero becomes the tyrant, and in Part III Christophe precipitates the decline of the kingdom of the Negroes. Finally Ti Noel succeeds in reuniting the real and the supernatural at the end of Part IV. The mechanism through which the interpenetration of the real and the supernatural with its subsequent release of energy is achieved is the sacrificial act. To sacrifice means to "make sacred." It also means to "slay." These two aspects of sacrifice are inextricably woven together, for to become sacred one must first die to the profane condition. First the hero separates himself from, "dies to," his profane existence and penetrates to the undifferentiated primordial source of energy, where he gains supernatural powers. Both Mackandal and Ti Noel exemplify this process in their meta-

morphosis. Then the hero returns to a profane existence, a differentiated manifestation within the limitations of time and space, where he releases the powers attained in his quest. Mackandal inspires his people to revolt; Ti Noel returns with the arcane knowledge of the cosmogonic round. Finally, the historical manifestation of the archetype must dissolve into the undifferentiated source of primordial energy, for it is the archetype which is transcendent, not the individual historical manifestation of it. The individual must sacrifice himself in order to transcend himself; it is Man who endures, not the individual.

Carpentier is keenly aware of the distinction between the archetypal and the individual, between the collective and the personal, and in his quest for a reality which transcends time has opted for the archetypal and the collective:

para mí no existe la modernidad en el sentido que se le otorga, el hombre es a veces el mismo en diferentes edades y situarlo en su pasado puede ser también situarlo en su presente... Amo los grandes temas, los grandes movimientos colectivos. Ellos dan la más alta riqueza a los personajes y a la trama.<sup>60</sup>

For Carpentier, Man is the protagonist, not the individual, and for this reason his characters appear as archetypes and not as "real" individuals. Some critics have been quick to note the impersonal quality of his protagonists,<sup>61</sup> but this "impersonality" is exactly what the author is striving for in his work. He does not attempt to describe the lives of "real" individuals, but to discover and capture what is

eternal in Mankind, the archetypal.

The archetypal patterns which give a unifying structure to El reino de este mundo are the cosmogonic round and the hero archetype. The source for these structural elements seems to be the mythology of Haitian Voodoo, specifically the figures of the serpent Damballah and the hero Ogoun. However, the work itself does not remain encapsulated within the temporally and spatially limited world of the Haitian Wars of Independence, but achieves universal and transcendent value through the incorporation of archetypal patterns.

## Footnotes

1. Fernando Alegría, "Alejo Carpentier: realismo mágico," Humanitas, Año I, num. 1 (1960), p. 348.
2. Carlos Santander T., "Lo maravilloso en la obra de Alejo Carpentier," Atenea, Año XLII, tomo CLIX, num. 409 (jul-sep 1965), pp. 100-101.
3. Claude Fell, "Rencontre avec Alejo Carpentier," Les Langues modernes, 59<sup>e</sup> année, no. 3 (mai-juin 1965), pp. 363-64.
4. Anna Elizabeth Balakian, Literary Origins of Surrealism (New York: King's Crown Press, 1947), p. 2.
5. César Leante, "Confesiones sencillas de un escritor barroco," Cuba: revista mensual, vol. 3, num. 24 (1964), p. 32.
6. Ibid.
7. Luis Harss and Barbara Dohmann, Into the Mainstream: Conversations with Latin-American Writers (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 46.
8. Alejo Carpentier, El reino de este mundo. (México, D.F.: Edición y Distribución Ibero Americana de Publicaciones, S.A., 1949), pp. 7-8.
9. Ibid., p. 16.
10. Mederic Moreau de Saint-Méry, Description topographique, physique, civile, politique et historique de la partie française de l'isle Saint-Domingue, nouvelle édition (Paris: Société de l'Histoire des colonies françaises,

- Librairie Larose, 1958), vol. II, pp. 629-31. See also: Pierre de Vaissière, Saint-Domingue (1629-1789) La société et la vie créoles sous l'ancien régime (Paris: Librairie Academique Ferrin et C<sup>ie</sup>, Libraires-Editeurs, 1909), pp. 236-48.
11. Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1949), p. 320.
  12. Ibid., p. 266.
  13. Ibid., p. 337.
  14. El reino de este mundo, p. 35.
  15. Maya Deren, Divine Horsemen, The Living Gods of Haiti. (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1953), p. 115.
  16. Ibid., p. 131.
  17. Lope de Vega, Obras publicadas por la Real Academia Española, Tomo XI Crónicas y leyendas dramáticas de España. (Madrid: Sucesores de Rivadeneyra, 1900), pp. 351-52. Cited by Carpentier in El reino de este mundo, p. 21. Note: further references to El reino de este mundo are from the 1949 edition by EDIAP, S.A. and will be indicated by page numbers in the text.
  18. Moreau de Saint-Méry, -vol. II, pp. 629-30.
  19. Carl Gustav Jung, Symbols of Transformation: An Analysis to the Prelude of a Case of Schizophrenia, trans. R.F.C. Hull. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1956), p. 239.
  20. Moreau de Saint-Méry, vol. II, p. 630.
  21. Deren, pp. 222 ff.
  22. The chapter title "De profundis," from Psalm 130, is a

prayer of penance used in funeral services, but it also re-enforces the chthonic source of the poison.

23. Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Volume II: Mythical Thought, trans. Ralph Manheim. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), p. 194.

24. Moreau, vol. II, p. 630.

25. Symbols of Transformation, p. 232.

26. Courlander has indicated that the figure of Mackandal survives in the loa Makanda: Harold Courlander, The Drum and the Hoe. (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1960), p. 327. See also Campbell's The Hero with a Thousand Faces for the influence of the historical manifestation of the archetype after his death, p. 358.

27. Laure Junot duchesse D'Abrantès, Mémoires de Madame D'Abrantès, introduction et notes de Albert Ollivier. (Paris: Hachette, 1958), p. 179.

28. Ibid., pp. 188-89.

29. Ibid., p. 189.

30. Erich Neumann, The Great Mother, an Analysis of the Archetype, trans. Ralph Manheim. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1955), p. 29.

31. Alejo Carpentier, Tientos y diferencias: ensayos. (México: Universidad Autónoma de México, 1964), p. 129.

Note: Carpentier is obviously not referring to a physical encounter with Pauline but to his discovery of the historical figure of Pauline during his trip to Haiti in 1943.

32. See Neumann's The Great Mother for the feminine spiri-



- tual guide, p. 36. See also Carl Gustav Jung, Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, trans. R.F.C. Hull. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953), for the femme inspiratrice, p. 207.
33. Neumann, p. 34. Carl Gustav Jung, Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self, trans. R.F.C. Hull. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1959), p. 266.
34. Deren, pp. 62-3. William Buehler Seabrook, The Magic Island. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1929), pp. 312-13. Both these accounts of the meeting corroborate Carpentier's description.
35. While there is general agreement on the actual details of the ceremony, there are various interpretations as to which Voodoo sub-cult they belong. See Deren, pp. 62-3 and Alfred Métraux, Voodoo in Haiti, trans. Hugo Charteris. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 86.
36. Deren, p. 56.
37. Carl Gustav Jung, Psychology and Religion: West and East, trans. R.F.C. Hull. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1958), p. 229.
38. Supra, pp. 63-65.
39. C.L.R. James, The Black Jacobins, second edition revised. (New York: Random House, 1963), p. 359.
40. This episode is documented by Walter Adolphe Roberts, The French in the West Indies (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1942), p. 221. Also see Germán Arciniegas, Caribbean Sea of the New World, trans. Harriet de Onís (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946), p. 345.

41. Although Christophe seized power in the North after Dessalines' assassination in 1806, he was not crowned king until 1811.
42. Karl Ritter, Naturhistorische Reise nach der westindischen Insel Hayti (Stuttgart: Hallberger'sche Berlagshandlung, 1836), p. 78.
43. The Hero with a Thousand Faces, p. 337.
44. The year is 1816 or later, for Ti Noel states that the construction of La Ferrière was begun twelve years ago (p. 134). Vandercook informs us that La Ferrière was started in 1804: John W. Vandercook, Black Majesty. (New York: Pocket Book, Inc., 1952), p. 96.
45. Sterility of the land was one reason for the ritual slaying of the king and thus indicates that Christophe's reign is nearing its end.. See Jung's Psychology and Religion, p. 269.
46. Ti Noel himself manifests many of the characteristics of Legba. See Deren's Divine Horsemen for the symbolism of the old vagabond carrying the staff and conversing with animals: pp. 97, 98 and 301.
47. For a description of Jean-Baptiste Piranesi see Grand dictionnaire universel du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle par M. Pierre Larousse. (Paris: Administration du Grand Dictionnaire Universel, 1873), vol. XII, p. 1061.
48. The Hero with a Thousand Faces, p. 349.
49. Ibid., p. 308.
50. See also El reino de este mundo, pp. 38, 131.
51. Pauline Bonaparte Leclerc married Prince Camille Borghèse

in 1803. See Grand dictionnaire universel du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, vol. II, p. 952.

52. The statue is the Venus Victorieuse by Antoine Canova portraying Pauline Bonaparte. See Grand dictionnaire universel du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, vol. II, p. 952, and vol. XV, p. 883.

53. Deren, p. 97.

54. For the fusion of the figures of Legba and Ti Noel, see footnote 46 above.

55. The Lamb of God, whether its source be the prayer in the Mass or the scripture John 1:29, identifies Christ as the sacrificial animal, the mediator between two worlds.

Christ, Legba, and Ti Noel all meet at that point of intersection which is the Cross, the sacrificial death which transcends this existence.

56. "The supreme hero, however, is not the one who merely continues the dynamics of the cosmogonic round, but he who reopens the eye---so that all the comings and goings, delights and agonies of the world panorama, the One Presence will be seen again. This requires a deeper wisdom than the other, and results in a pattern not of action but of significant representation." The Hero with a Thousand Faces, p. 345.

57. Ibid., p. 288.

58. Deren, p. 35.

59. Mircea Eliade, The Myth of the Eternal Return, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Pantheon Books, 1954), p. 89.

60. "Confesiones sencillas de un escritor barroco," p. 33.

61. Harss, Into the Mainstream, p. 56.

## Chapter III

LOS PASOS PERDIDOS (1953)

Four years elapsed between the publication of El reino de este mundo (1949) and the appearance of Carpentier's best known work, Los pasos perdidos (1953). However, we must return to an earlier date in order to discover the experiential source of Los pasos perdidos. In 1945, after an unsuccessful attempt to re-establish himself in Cuba, Carpentier accepted an offer from his friend Carlos Frías to organize a radio station in Venezuela. This residence in Venezuela, which extended until his return to Cuba in 1959, had a profound effect upon the author:

Conocer Venezuela completaba mi visión de América, ya que este país es como un compendio del Continente: allí están sus grandes ríos, sus llanos interminables, sus gigantes montañas, la selva. La tierra venezolana fue para mí como una toma de contacto con el suelo de América, y meterme en sus selvas conocer el cuarto día de la Creación.<sup>1</sup>

Here, Carpentier reveals certain preoccupations that permeate his life and works: the desire to discover Latin American reality in all its temporal and spatial extension and finally to root himself in this reality.

First of all, we note that his expanding vision of Latin America now achieves, on the horizontal or spatial plane, a synthesis in the topographical diversity of

Venezuela. Beginning with a description of the Cuban scene in Ecue-yamba-o, he embraces the Antillean region in El reino de este mundo, and now he perceives the Venezuelan landscape as a compendium of the entire Latin American continent. Also, he states that his residence in Venezuela represents for him a physical re-encounter with the American continent. This return to American soil becomes even more significant when we consider that it is a re-entry into the physical space in which he feels his life's work is to unfold.<sup>2</sup> The spatial aspect of the return is related to its temporal counterpart in the third part of the statement.

In the Venezuelan jungle, the author penetrates back to the fourth day of Genesis, the creation of the days and the seasons, the beginning of Time. On the personal level this corresponds to the author's childhood and on the trans-personal level to the infancy of man.<sup>3</sup> In Ecue-yamba-o, Carpentier's vertical or temporal vision of Latin America remained encapsulated within the contemporary period. It only extended to the Haitian wars of Independence in El reino de este mundo. Now this vision encompasses the entire span of Latin American history and prehistory.

The actual experiential source of Los pasos perdidos was a trip that the author made to the interior of Venezuela in 1947.<sup>4</sup>

Realicé un viaje al Alto Orinoco y allí conviví un mes con las tribus más elementales del Nuevo Mundo. Entonces surgió en mí la primera idea de Los pasos perdidos. América es el único continente donde distintas edades coexisten, donde un hombre del siglo veinte puede darse la

mano con otro del Cuaternario o con otro de poblados sin periódicos ni comunicaciones que se asemeja al de la Edad Media o existir contemporáneamente con otro de provincia más cerca del romanticismo de 1850 que de esta época. Remontar el Orinoco es como remontar el tiempo.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, the key to the inspirational source of the novel is the possibility of temporal retrogression offered by the synchronous existence of distinct chronological epochs on the American continent. It requires no definitive break with the reality of the external world to envision a journey to the primitive interior of Venezuela as a voyage backward in time. Rather, such a voyage is suggested by the increasingly more archaic cultures encountered en route. We can more fully comprehend the import of this experience for the author when we recall his desire to anchor le merveilleux within the kingdom of this world and not in some abstract sphere governed by "códigos de lo fantástico."<sup>6</sup>

Various literary antecedents and possible sources for Los pasos perdidos have been mentioned: Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's The Lost World, Jose Eustacio Rivera's La Vorágine, and others.<sup>7</sup> They describe the journey of a protagonist from a modern civilization to a more primitive environment, and Carpentier was probably acquainted with these novels. However, the majority of the critics have either disregarded or underrated a much more likely source. The author has again and again acknowledged his debt to surrealism for opening up to him the magic reality of America.<sup>8</sup> Although he later sepa-

rated himself from the movement and expressed his disenchantment with those who merely imitated the models of their predecessors without having experienced le merveilleux themselves, it should not appear strange that his collaboration with the surrealists did influence him and finds expression in his works.

The most obvious surrealist work to which we would be drawn by our investigation is André Breton's Les pas perdus (1924). No one has indicated any analogy between this work and Carpentier's Los pasos perdidos, probably because Breton's work is not a novel but a book of essays. Nevertheless, a perusal of the two books soon uncovers a similar preoccupation: the artist's desire to transcend his own actual existence. Breton simply refuses to submit to the limitations imposed upon the artist by his temporal existence: "je me garde d'adapter mon existence aux conditions derisives, ici-bas, de toute existence."<sup>9</sup> His attitude is not negative, for he only espouses an evasion of the realm of possibilities determined by logical thought so that he can pursue and experience le merveilleux that transcends all contradictions. To those who would balk at the nature of his quest he replies: "Mais rien ne m'est plus étranger que le soin pris par certains hommes de sauver ce que peut être sauve. La jeunesse est à cet égard un merveilleux talisman."<sup>10</sup> Youth is indeed a marvelous talisman: at the beginning of existence stands the possibility of the impossible. It knows no limitation; rather it is the symbol of

pure potentiality.<sup>11</sup>

Carpentier's protagonist has betrayed his own potentiality: "Entre el Yo presente y el Yo que hubiera aspirado a ser algún día se ahondaba en tinieblas el foso de los años perdidos."<sup>12</sup> Unable to relate to a value that transcends the material present, he has succumbed to the realm of the possible, prostituting his musical talent in the production of commercial advertisements. The journey undertaken by the protagonist in Los pasos perdidos is a temporal retrogression that heals the rupture between potentiality and actuality, returning him to the youthful condition and regenerating his faith in his own creative ability.

Both Breton and Carpentier express the desire to surpass the limitations of temporal existence and to enter into a transcendent or marvelous realm. The possibility of such an accomplishment is inspired by the symbol of youth. The symbolism itself, the puer aeternus, is quite universal and even archaic<sup>13</sup>; therefore, this observation is not meant to suggest anything more than a common orientation, perhaps re-enforced through Carpentier's contact with the surrealists.

A more specific example of possible surrealistic influence is found in the concept of "Los Recuerdos del Porvenir." In Los pasos perdidos, this is the name of a tavern in Puerto Anunciación. On three different occasions, the protagonist reflects upon this name: once on the first voyage up the Orinoco to the remote village of Santa Mónica



de los Venados, again back in the contemporary city as he plans his unsuccessful return to Santa Mónica, and finally as he descends the Orinoco at the end of the novel. At each point, he realizes that there is a certain reality unchanged by the passage of time and, in effect, that past and future are as one when viewed from this perspective.

Balakian has noted that Breton's use of the term le souvenir du futur, in the preface to the essay "Introduction au discours sur le peu de réalité," corresponds to a reality governed by the mystical power of hazard.<sup>14</sup> This reality is unaffected by the logical ordering of time in an irreversible succession of past, present, and future. Breton, alone in an abandoned chateau, spies a suit of armor and, communicating with its original owner, is transported to the fourteenth century.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, the protagonist of Los pasos perdidos, contemplating the artifacts of previous civilizations in the University's museum, accomplishes a voyage backward in time and communes with men of epochs long since past (pp. 38-40). Within time, but invisible to those incapable of the creative act of imagination, there are signs of a reality which itself is timeless. It is to this reality that Breton addresses himself when he refutes the irreversibility of time:

Le Dieu que nous habite n'est pas près d'observer le repos du septième jour. Nous en sommes encore à lire les toutes premières pages de la Genèse. Il ne tient peut-être qu'à nous de jeter sur les ruines de l'ancien monde les bases de notre nouveau paradis terrestre. Rien n'est encore perdu, car à des signes certains nous reconnaissons que la grande illumination

suit son cours. Le péril où nous met la raison, au sens le plus général et le plus discutable du mot, en soumettant à ses dogmes irrévocables les ouvrages de l'esprit . . . , ce péril, sans doute, est loin d'être écarté.<sup>16</sup>

These signs reveal an original illumination that flows onward, undiminished by the passage of time, a primal reality into which the artist can enter and, through his recreation of it, become contemporary with the cosmic act of Creation described in Genesis.

The protagonist of Los pasos perdidos also comes to reject the concept of irreversible time. In the contemporary city, as he plans his return to Santa Mónica, he recalls the portentous name of the tavern in Puerto Anunciación: "Los Recuerdos del Porvenir." His voyage had permitted him to re-encounter a timeless reality, and now he refuses to submit to the fragmented existence of the contemporary world, a life uprooted from the primal reality of the Beginning: "no puede ser presente esta fría geometría sin estilo, donde todo se cansa y envejece a las pocas horas de haber nacido. Sólo creo ya en el presente de lo intacto; en el futuro de lo que se crea de cara a las luminarias del Génesis" (pp. 264-65). The world of Genesis is Santa Mónica de los Venados, a recently founded "city" in the interior of Venezuela. It is populated with archetypal figures, still vitally engaged in the struggle against the formlessness prior to the Creation. Existence is a meaningful affirmation of form, and each individual fulfills a destiny.

Contrasted to Santa Mónica is the world of Apocalypse,

the contemporary city from which the protagonist flees. Here, human existence and forms have become sclerosed: empty and rigid, they no longer participate in any transpersonal value that transcends the passage of time; rather they are marked, counted, and shattered by the blows of the impersonal time-clock. Thus, the protagonist's journey represents a voyage from a world fraught with dissolution to the marvelous realm of archetypal forms.

The purpose of his journey is twofold: to recapture his lost creative potentiality and to link this potentiality to a transpersonal value. His union with Rosario marks the re-encounter with the regenerative universal matrix, the telluric life-force. The reconciliation with his destiny, the spiritual father-figure, is more complex, but the Curator and Fray Pedro are the major paternal images. The journey itself is cloaked in the symbolism of the heroic adventure. Within the novel, the author refers directly or alludes to: Sisyphus, Prometheus, Ulysses, Orpheus, and Jason. Rather than an explicit analogy to any specific heroic quest, a more universal structural significance is given to the protagonist's voyage: the monomyth.<sup>17</sup>

The novel, written in the form of a diary describing the adventure, is divided into six main chapters. The first three chapters treat the protagonist's long and arduous task of freeing himself from the contemporary world. Although his actual departure occurs at the end of the first chapter, he carries with him a malevolent anima-figure, Mouche, who

represents the false mysteries of the apocalyptic world. She presents an obstacle to his entrance into the marvelous realm, and it is only after he liberates himself from her that he can cross the threshold between the two worlds. Finally, in the fourth chapter, he crosses the threshold and suffers the trials of initiation in the threatening chaos of the jungle. Having passed these trials, he enters Santa Mónica, in the fifth chapter, and is introduced to the Laws governing the world of Genesis. However, his attachment to Rosario grows so possessive that it exhibits regressive characteristics, thwarting the fulfillment of his destiny. Fray Pedro indicates the horizons to which he should strive, but the protagonist ignores the spiritual mandate, remaining there until rescued from without. The sixth chapter describes his return to the contemporary world. It is fraught with danger, and the protagonist makes an unsuccessful attempt to get back to Santa Mónica. Finally, he is reconciled with his destiny and begins his return to the contemporary world.

Chapter One consists of three sub-chapters and introduces us into the apocalyptic world of a twentieth century cosmopolitan city, a world in which the forms and symbols of life have become emptied of meaning and are in a state of disintegration. Carpentier prefaces the chapter with a quotation from Deuteronomy that reveals the condition of contemporary man in Biblical imagery: "Y tus cielos que están sobre tu cabeza serán de metal; y la tierra que está debajo de ti, de hierro. Y palparás al mediodía, como palpa

el ciego en la oscuridad" (p. 7).<sup>18</sup> This is Jehovah's curse upon those who break with his Law. The author's choice of imagery refers directly to the condition of contemporary man, for he too is cut off from heaven and earth. Unable to relate himself to either a transpersonal spiritual mandate or even to the primitive telluric life force itself, he wanders blindly through a dark and empty existence devoid of any meaningful direction or destiny. Within this context, time becomes a purely destructive medium. The individual cannot relate to an impersonal and mechanical clock-time without beginning or end. His existence fragments in a series of empty repetitive gestures imposed from without, and the individual himself disintegrates in an irreversible succession of moments which signifies nothing more than death in time.

This is the situation in which the protagonist of Los pasos perdidos finds himself in Chapter One. He is uprooted, cut off from any transcendent value which could give meaning and direction to his existence, and, having fallen slave to the hours marked off by the impersonal Cómitre, he feels an increasingly deeper chasm opening between what he potentially could have become and what he now is. This rupture of time and being can only be healed by a return to the earlier state where his creative potential would be regenerated. This requires a journey backward in time to a point where the protagonist can rediscover the forms and symbols of life to which he can relate himself. The opportunity for

such a voyage manifests itself in Chapter One; therefore, this chapter corresponds structurally to the initial phase of the hero's adventure: the Call to Adventure.<sup>19</sup>

Sub-chapter I begins on Sunday, June 4, the first day of the protagonist's vacation. This temporary freedom from the time-clock and the demands of his occupation allows him to reflect upon his life. He enters the theater where his wife Ruth has been acting the same role for almost five years and is struck by the strange sensation that he has been transported into the past: "Como la primera noche, anduve por el soportal, oyendo la misma resonancia hueca bajo mis pasos..." (p. 9).

Essentially nothing has changed, and his wife, although five years older, repeats the same empty gestures within this "prisión de tablas de artificio" (p. 10). Ruth, fearful of not being able to achieve the dramatic career that she had so desired, has allowed herself to be reduced to a stereotyped figure in a financially successful play, and the possibility for artistic self-expression has become the "automatismo del trabajo impuesto" (p. 11). This automatism has extended to their personal lives, where the sexual act, that had originally served to unite them, now has deteriorated into an act of obligation that they comply with in the "Convivencia del Séptimo Día" (p. 12).

The protagonist himself has fallen under the power of this automatism imposed from without: "Y era por favorecer esa carrera [la de Ruth] en sus comienzos desafortunados..."

que había torcido mi destino, buscando la seguridad material en el oficio que me tenía tan preso como lo estaba ella!"

(p. 13). Both of them have "twisted their destinies."

Unable to identify with a role that transcends the present, they have fallen into the prison of the material present.

With their perspective limited and without a sense of direction, they fail to fulfill themselves in time; rather their existence is unfilled by the passage of time.

The protagonist returns home by himself. There he reflects upon the passage of years that are empty of meaning for him, upon the succession of days that can only be united under the image of Sisyphus:

Subiendo y bajando la cuesta de los días, con la misma piedra en el hombro, me sostenía por obra de un impulso adquirido a fuerza de paroxismos--impulso que cedería tarde o temprano, en una fecha que acaso figuraba en el calendario del año en curso--. Pero evadirse de esto, en el mundo que me hubiera tocado en suerte, era tan imposible como tratar de revivir, en estos tiempos, ciertas gestas de heroísmo o de santidad. (pp. 14-15)

Here he acknowledges the impossibility of escaping the limitations of his epoch, an epoch that has reduced everything to the dimensions of the immediate present. The denial of values that transcend the limitations of the present destroys the temporal structure that supports the lives of heroes and saints. Time, as an irreversible and mechanical succession without beginning or end, can no longer possess either the cyclical or the eschatological value that permits the interpenetration of the eternal and the temporal.<sup>20</sup> The No-Man of the contemporary epoch can only achieve furtive

moments of escape in the instinctual pleasures of sexual or alcoholic intoxication.

At this point, moved by an unusual inquisitive impulse, the protagonist seeks the name of the Saint honored that particular day. It is San Francisco Carraciolo.<sup>21</sup> Unaware of the Saint's significance, he opens the Vida de los santos. He cannot find anything about San Francisco Carraciolo, but he does happen upon Sanctae Rosae Limanae, Virginis. Patronae principalis totius American Latinae and a verse attributed to her:

¡Ay de mí! ¿A mi querido  
quién le suspende?  
Tarda y es mediodía,  
pero no viene. (pp. 16-17)

This fortuitous encounter with Santa Rosa evokes memories of his childhood in Latin America and is the first portentous sign of his forthcoming adventure.

He leaves the house, and in front of a bookstore feels the urge to buy a copy of the Odyssey. But then he spies a copy of Shelley's Prometheus Unbound and recalls the musical score that he had once intended to compose. He had never gotten beyond Prometheus' first cry of rebellion: "...regard this Earth--Made multitudinous with thy slaves, whom thou--requitest for knee-worship, prayer, and praise,--and toil, and hecatombs of broken heart,--with fear and self-contempt and barren hope" (p. 18).<sup>22</sup> This is another fragment of the past that comes to haunt the present. Later, all three--Santa Rosa, the Odyssey and Prometheus Unbound--will again reveal themselves during the unknown adventure



that lies before the protagonist.

Now, he continues to wander through the streets. His wife has left on a theatrical tour, and it is still too early to visit his mistress Mouche. It begins to rain, and, in retrospect, the protagonist recognizes this shower as "la advertencia primera--ininteligible para mí, entonces--del encuentro... Debemos buscar el comienzo de todo, de seguro, en la nube que reventó en lluvia aquella tarde, con tan inesperada violencia que sus truenos parecían truenos de otra latitud" (p. 19). At the end of sub-chapter I, a number of fortuitous encounters with fragments of the past culminate in this sign that points toward the future voyage that is, in effect, a journey into the past. Thus it seems that a certain degree of fluidity and flux has arisen within the irreversible and mechanical succession of past, present, and future, a certain prefiguration of an escape from the limitations of the contemporary epoch.

In Sub-chapter II the call to adventure is given. The sudden afternoon rain makes the protagonist seek shelter in a concert hall that he had not entered for three years. During the cacaphony of the orchestra as the instruments are tuned, the protagonist "sentía una aguda expectación del instante en que el tiempo dejara de acarrear sonidos incoherentes para verse encuadrado, organizado, sometido a una previa voluntad humana..." (p. 19). Music, as time subjected to human will, is no longer time as a thing-in-itself and alien to man but time related to man through a creative

act of organization. In this light, the protagonist's anticipation of the concert that is about to begin foreshadows the moment in which he will regain his creative ability and achieve a dominion of his own existence within time.

But no sooner does the orchestra begin the first notes of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony than the protagonist is thrown into a state of revulsion and flees the concert hall. The reason for this violent reaction and the images of death evoked by this symphony are only revealed much later: they derive from an utter disillusionment with European culture as espoused by the protagonist's father. The brutal and barbaric reality of World War II completely shattered the protagonist's faith in the utopic brotherhood of man promised by Schiller's "Ode to Joy." The fact that he could not identify with the ideals of the paternal figure is one important cause of the protagonist's disorientation.

Again in the street, frantically searching for a bar in order to quell his depression in an alcoholic stupor, he literally runs into the Curator. This chance meeting with the protagonist's old mentor is the "encounter" presaged by the sudden afternoon rain. The Curator serves as a paternal figure and will give the call to adventure that sends the protagonist on the quest. He announces that he has an "extraordinario regalo" (p. 21) for the protagonist and leads him home. As they enter the Curator's house, the protagonist notes that his watch has stopped. He asks for the time, but is told that the hour is not important here. This

old house, built at the turn of the century, is an anachronism in the modern city, and the protagonist's entrance into it portends an escape from the clock-time of the contemporary epoch.

After an extended wait that tries the protagonist's patience, the "gift" is finally presented. It is a recording of primitive instrumental music that imitates the song of a bird. The Curator states that this recording confirms the protagonist's theory on the origin of music. Now he recalls how after the war, unable to continue the cantata of Prometheus Unbound, he devoted the few free hours from the commercial firm to the classification of primitive instruments in the Curator's museum. There he had formulated his theory "del mimetismo-mágico-rítmico" (p. 25), proposing that music originated in an act of ritual possession whereby the hunter imitated the rhythm or song of the quarry and thus achieved a magical power over it.

The Curator asks him how his research is continuing. The protagonist, confronted by yet another unfulfilled project from his past, begins to fabricate imaginary studies, but, shortly, he drops all pretense:

Y así como el pecador vuelca ante el confesionario el saco negro de sus iniquidades y concupiscencias..., pinto a mi maestro, con los más sucios colores, con los más feos betunes, la inutilidad de mi vida, su aturdimiento durante el día, su inconsciencia durante la noche. (p. 26)

This confession before the paternal mentor represents a first step in the protagonist's recovery: a conscious con-

frontation with himself as a No-Man, as a fragmented existence of unfulfilled projects unable to transcend time.<sup>23</sup>

The Curator listens and, after the confession, makes a gesture of absolution (p. 27). He telephones the Rector of the University and informs him that they have found the right person to procure the primitive musical instruments needed for their collection. However, the protagonist, feeling incapable of accepting the responsibility they wish to thrust upon him, flees from the house and seeks refuge in a bar. The call has been offered and refused.

Sub-chapter III begins the evening of June 4 and ends the following morning. During this period the protagonist finally accepts the call to adventure. He enters Mouche's apartment, and, while awaiting the return of his mistress, he notices four newly painted astrological signs on the wall: Hydra, Argo Navis, Sagittarius, and Coma Berenices. Like so many of the motives employed by the author, their significance is not revealed immediately but only gradually and as auguries of future events.<sup>24</sup>

Now the protagonist reflects upon his relationship with Mouche, a relationship that began two years ago when he sought a source of sexual release denied him by Ruth's frequent professional absences. Only this carnal pleasure unites them, a physical escape that the protagonist considers necessary but without any spiritual significance.

She makes her living as an astrologer, living on the fear of time that pervades the lives of her contemporaries,

fabricating destinies for those without destinies. The nature of her work allows her to escape the limitations of the present into a mysterious realm of cosmological forces. But this is a pseudo-escape into an artificial world of fantasy constructed from second hand formulas, not a world personally and directly experienced. The protagonist states that she "se había formado intelectualmente en el gran barattillo surrealista" (p. 29).<sup>25</sup> Since it is precisely this conglomeration of unauthentic formulas of le merveilleux from which the author wants to free himself, Mouche comes to represent a negative and artificial force from which the protagonist must similarly be liberated.

Mouche returns to the apartment with a group of their mutual acquaintances and a surprise for the protagonist. It is a copy of a recently completed commercial film in which he had supervised the musical accompaniment. The film itself is technically perfect, but its third showing convinces the protagonist of the inconsequential value of his masterpiece. It is ironic that this celluloid reproduction of the sea, the primordial source of life, achieves no greater meaning than the promotion of a commercial sea food.

At this moment, the protagonist recalls the voice of his father quoting the Scriptures: "Lo torcido no se puede enderezar y lo falso no puede contarse" (p. 32).<sup>26</sup> This condemnation of man's transient works immediately evokes the other father-figure, the Curator:

Y amarga me sabía ahora la prosa del Eclesiastés al pensar que el Curador, por ejemplo, se

hubiera encogido de hombros ante este trabajo mío, considerando, tal vez, que podía equipararse a trazar letras con humo en el cielo, o a provocar, con un magistral dibujo la salivación meridiana de quien contemplara un anuncio de corruscantes hojaldres. (p. 32)

Thoroughly disillusioned by the product of his creative ability, he feels that he has betrayed himself and again confronts himself as a No-Man of the contemporary epoch. Yet, he cannot identify with the ideals of either paternal figure, for they represent a generation rooted in the tradition of European culture that, in the protagonist's eyes, collapsed completely with World War II.

He cuts short his own remorse and Mouche's grating compliments by telling her of his encounter with the Curator and the proposed voyage. She immediately imagines herself transported to a tropical paradise, enjoying a carefree vacation at the University's expense. She suggests a certain artist who could counterfeit the instruments so that the Curator would not suspect their ruse.

At first the protagonist cannot accept this deceit, and he rushes from her apartment. However, alone at night on the deserted city street, he becomes terrified at the spectre of three empty weeks of vacation that lie before him. He returns to Mouche, who points to the four astrological signs and declares: "Este viaje estaba escrito en la pared" (p. 38). The protagonist, although in bad faith, has decided to accept the call to adventure.

The following morning, he goes to the University, signs a contract to procure the instruments, and receives

the money for the voyage. Alone for a moment in the museum, he recalls that after the war he had sought refuge in museums, transporting himself, through pictorial and plastic images, to a remote past when life still had a sense of fullness and unity. Now, before these images, he asks himself: "...si, en épocas pasadas, los hombres añorarían las épocas pasadas, como yo, en esta mañana de estío, añoraba-- como por haberlos conocido--ciertos modos de vivir que el hombre había perdido para siempre" (p. 40). The past of fullness and unity to which the individual longs to return is, on the personal level, his infancy and, on the collective level, the genesis of mankind.<sup>27</sup> The participation mystique that characterizes this lost age has the quality of having been once known because it was known in childhood. Therefore, it is quite natural that the first stage in the protagonist's separation from the contemporary epoch should lead to a re-encounter with the world of his personal infancy.

Chapter Two describes the first stage in the protagonist's separation. It consists of four sub-chapters and is preceded by a quotation from Shelley's Prometheus Unbound: "Ha! I scent life!" (p. 41).<sup>28</sup> This is the cry of the First Fury as they approach to torture anew the chained Prometheus and discover that there is still life in the victim. Likewise, Mouche will find that there is yet life in the protagonist. Through direct contact with the world of his childhood, a spark of life is kindled within the protagonist, a

spark that grows until he is finally capable of asserting himself against the artificial world that Mouche represents and against the carnal bond that ties him to her.

Sub-chapter IV, Wednesday, June 7, describes their arrival in a Latin American capital. From the air, before their plane touches down, the protagonist becomes aware of another reality, the primal forces of Nature. Outcroppings of solid black rock rise above the buildings. Here, the artificial structures of man are still fragile and frequently fall before a more powerful presence: the massive destruction of a hurricane, or the unrelenting pressure of subterranean roots that crumble the most modern and functional architectural forms. This is not Nature as a visible and comprehensible force; rather it is the unpredictable and mysterious Worm: "Nadie había visto al Gusano. Pero el Gusano existía, entregado a sus artes de confusión, surgiendo donde menos se le esperaba, para desconcertar la más probada experiencia" (p. 45). The Worm constantly thwarts man's efforts to superimpose an artificial reality upon life, and in so doing reveals the presence of a reality that transcends the limits set by man.

Upon landing, the protagonist is overwhelmed by direct sense experiences linked to the primal source of life:

Y a la vez hay como una luz recobrada, un olor a espartillo caliente, a un agua de mar que el cielo parece calar en profundidad, llegando a lo más hondo de sus verdes. (p. 46)

All are sensations related directly to the life giving forces of Nature, but of particular importance is the fra-



grance of esparto grass. As a manifestation of the regenerative vegetation daemon,<sup>29</sup> it will be intimately associated with the anima-figures who accompany the protagonist on his return to the telluric life source. The sound of spoken Spanish is another sense experience that instills new power: "Y una fuerza me penetra lentamente por los oídos, por los poros: el idioma. He aquí, pues, el idioma que hablé en mi infancia..." (p. 46). Not only does the language evoke the healing image of his infancy, but it also gives him a certain sense of superiority over Mouche who does not understand Spanish.

They enter a shop in search of the musical instruments but are unable to find them. Mouche purchases a black hippocampus. Her evaluation of this "polvorienta y literaria cosa" (p. 47) derives solely from a vicarious literary experience and is contrasted to the protagonist's choice: a figure of Santa Rosa de Lima and a filigree rosary. These objects are immediately related, by juxtaposition, to other childhood memories when his hand brushes against a sweet basil plant:

Me detuve, removido a lo hondo, al hallar el perfume que encontraba en la piel de una niña-- María del Carmen, hija de aquel jardinero...-- cuando jugábamos a los casados... (pp. 47-48)

Here the fragrance of sweet basil, a direct sensation of the vegetation numen, evokes another of the anima figures: María del Carmen, the protagonist's first experience of the regenerative feminine nature separate from the maternal image.

Sub-chapter V occurs the following day, Thursday, June 8, and describes the outbreak of a revolution in the Latin American capital. The revolution disrupts the normal patterns of existence and produces a crisis situation that reveals the artificial nature of Mouche and the other guests in the hotel.

That morning, as Mouche continues sleeping, the protagonist reflects upon the events of the previous evening. They had attended a romantic opera, and he was favorably impressed by the performance. However, when Mouche insisted that they leave at the intermission, he became quite irritated:

Me sentí irritado, súbitamente, por una suficiencia muy habitual en mi amiga, que la ponía en posición de hostilidad apenas se veía en contacto con algo que ignorara los santos y señas de ciertos ambientes artísticos frecuentados por ella en Europa. (p. 50)

Her intellectual prejudices, representing the world from which he is trying to escape, cause her to appear as an obstacle to the realization of his adventure. This time he cedes to her whim; but, as they return to the hotel, his mistress' superficial nature becomes even more apparent. Somewhere above them in the night are the real constellations that supposedly foretold their voyage: Hydra, Argo Navis, Sagittarius, and Coma Berenices. Ironically, Mouche, the astrologer, cannot distinguish or locate the Signs from which she makes her living.

Without awakening her, he leaves the hotel in search of the musical instruments that he must obtain in order to

fulfill his mission. He fails to find the instruments, but certain sights, sounds, and aromas reveal a more authentic reality than the empty experiences of the cosmopolitan city. The fragrance of freshly baked bread produces his "reencuentro con la harina" (p. 53). He recalls the sacramental significance of bread broken with deference to the source of life that it symbolizes.<sup>30</sup> This re-encounter with a transcendent reality that links the present to a still meaningful tradition is achieved, not on an abstract metaphysical plane, but on a directly experiential level. This is real bread, for it retains "el gran sabor mediterráneo que ya llevaban pegado a la lengua los compañeros de Ulises" (p. 53).

He continues to wander about the old section of the city. While in the cemetery, the sound of gunfire and shouts interrupts his reflections. He hurries back to the hotel where he finds Mouche still asleep. Below in the lobby the guests are discussing the revolution, a revolution thoroughly incomprehensible to the protagonist:

Cada vez me veía devuelto a mi ignorancia por la relación de hechos que parecían historia de güelfos y gibelinos, por su sorprendente aspecto de rueda familiar, de querrela de hermanos enemigos, de lucha entablada entre gente ayer unida. (p. 56)<sup>31</sup>

The passions motivating this war of brother against brother are as anachronistic as the struggles of the Guelphs and Ghibellines in medieval Italy. However, one thing is constant, and that is the presence of death: "Si en estos países se moría por pasiones que me fueran incomprensibles,

no por ello era la muerte menos muerte" (p. 57). Death, made imminent by the revolution, will reduce the guests in the hotel to a radical confrontation with their own existence. That same evening, the protagonist experiences a deeper and more primitive meaning in the act of sexual union: "...nos dimos al juego de los cuerpos, hallando una voluptuosidad aguda y rara en abrazarnos, mientras otros, en torno nuestro, se entregaban a juegos de muerte" (p. 58). Sexual union, as an affirmation of life, achieves a more intense significance when threatened by its antagonist.

The following day, Friday, June 9, Sub-chapter VI, the guests attempt to defend themselves from death by frantically engaging in their normal occupations: the pianist executes a classic rondo, the troupe of dancers perform their exercises, the Austrian Kapellmeister stands before a mirror conducting with grandiose gestures an imaginary chorus in a rendition of Brahms's Requiem. The irreality and inconsequence of these efforts to maintain a sense of normality and order are soon overcome by the Worm.

The servants have fled the hotel to join the revolution, and all the machinery that supported the existence of the guests has ceased to function. The protagonist notices that a new force is invading the hotel:

Era como si una vida subterránea se hubiera manifestado, de pronto, sacando de las sombras una multitud de bestezuelas extrañas. Por las cañerías sin agua, llenas de hipos remotos, llegaban raras liendres, obleas grises que andaban... (p. 60)

This formless subterranean life, entering through the now

useless plumbing, is reflected in the disorder that grips the guests. They ignore the Kapellmeister's efforts to maintain order and rush to the wine cellars, giving themselves over to an orgy of drink.

In the midst of this confusion, the protagonist becomes fearful of the dire consequences that could befall Mouche who is extremely vulnerable to all sensual excesses. He begins running up countless flights of stairs and through endless corridors.<sup>32</sup> The rooms that he passes are all the same except for the number on the door. Suddenly he is overcome by "la sensación extraña de que no había viajado, de que siempre estaba allá, en alguno de mis tránsitos cotidianos, en alguna mansión de lo impersonal y sin estilo" (p. 63). Confused and fatigued in this labyrinth of irrelevant numbers, he comes to realize that this frenzied search for Mouche is analogous to his existence in the cosmopolitan city. There, the automatism of his work, a task to which he could not relate in a creative manner, reduced his existence to a meaningless succession of days as devoid of direction as the numbered doors in the hotel, always returning him to the same state of unfulfillment.

Mouche herself comes to represent the artificial forms imposed upon life, forms that can only be maintained through a Sisyphean effort:

El absurdo de este andar a través de lo superpuesto me recordó la Teoría del Gusano, única explicación del trabajo de Sísifo, con peña hembra cargada en el lomo, que yo estaba cumpliendo. (p. 64)

The Worm constantly threatens the existence of artificial forms and condemns the Sisyphean hero to an endless and repetitive task. This task becomes especially meaningless if the hero cannot relate himself to it. The protagonist's visualization of Mouche as a purposeless burden symbolizes his passage to a state of enlightenment and presages his future separation from her. Now he abandons his fruitless search, returns to his room, and falls asleep.

Later in the afternoon Mouche returns in the company of another woman. Her female companion is a Canadian painter who had been married to a Central American diplomat. The protagonist detects something abnormal in this woman and her relationship with his mistress. Mouche informs him that the revolution was successful but that there is still a curfew in the city. In order to avoid the restrictions of the curfew, the Canadian suggests that they spend a few days at her house in Los Altos. The protagonist passively accepts the invitation but remains apprehensive about the Canadian.

At this moment another event points toward the estrangement between the protagonist and Mouche. He spies a shop across the square from the hotel and leaves to purchase some cigarettes. No sooner does he enter the shop than the sound of gunfire erupts in the streets. The revolutionaries still have not eliminated the last elements of resistance. Temporarily trapped in this strange little shop, "La Fe en Dios," the protagonist experiences a sense of peace and well being:

La calma que dentro de esta casa reinaba, el perfume de los jazmines que crecían bajo un granado en el patio interior, la gota de agua que filtraba un tinajero antiguo, me sumieron en una suerte de modorra: un dormir sin dormir... (p. 67)

In contrast, the hotel across the way is animated by the sounds of a dance that the guests had organized in order to forget the threat of death that hangs over them.

Again the protagonist is beset by doubts regarding Mouche's conduct, but this time he decides that she is not worth the risk of crossing the street:

No sé por qué se insinuó en mi mente la idea de que este cause de la calle que cada tiro ensanchaba, ese foso, esa hondura que cada bala hacía más insalvable, era como una advertencia, como una prefiguración de acontecimientos por venir. (p. 68)

The street, dividing the peace and tranquility of "La Fe en Dios" from the confusion of the hotel, becomes symbolic of the separation that must occur between the protagonist and Mouche as they approach the radical reality of life.

Finally a patrol of soldiers arrives and safely conducts him back to the hotel. There he discovers that the Kapellmeister, the man of order, has been killed by a stray bullet, and around the corpse he sees:

caras sin rasurar, sucias, estiradas por una borrachera que había pasmado la muerte... En el edificio entero reinaba un hedor de letrina. Flacas, macilentas, las bailarinas parecían espectros...Las moscas, ahora, estaban en todas partes...Hallé a Mouche desplomada en la cama de nuestra habitación, con una crisis de nervios. (p. 69)

Unable to withstand the confrontation with death, the artificial world of the guests has collapsed completely.

The afternoon of the following day, Saturday, June 10, sub-chapter VII, they arrive at the Canadian's house in Los Altos. Here the separation between Mouche and the protagonist heightens to the point where he feels capable of asserting himself against her, and he decides to accept the call to adventure in good faith. Also he rediscovers the cause of his own youthful disorientation in the attitudes of three young artists that he meets there.

That evening, wandering alone through Los Altos, he is impressed by a series of fifteen lamplights that seem to illuminate the essence of this small provincial town. He compares them to a secular retablo depicting the most important scenes from the life of the town. At the bottom is the common tavern, next the house of prostitution, and the scenes continue in ascending order to the last light, outlining the three crosses of Calvary. This image of ascension prefigures his voyage up the mountain where he will discover Rosario.<sup>33</sup>

He returns to the Canadian's house and finds that Mouche's presence increasingly irritates him. She is incapable of directly experiencing or evaluating anything that has not been consecrated by the European literary schools. Her attachment to the Canadian, who shares her literary prejudice, has become so strong that the protagonist suspects they are involved in abnormal sexual relations.

Later that evening, three young artists--a white musician, an Indian poet and a Negro painter--arrive at the



house and gather before Mouche like the Magi in adoration of the Virgin. These Latin American artists, turning their backs on their homeland, look toward Paris as the cultural Holy Land. The protagonist attempts to bring the conversation around to American themes, but they reject these as worthless. It is as if he were confronted with his youth. He projects upon them his own experience and disenchantment with European culture:

Yo percibía esta noche, al mirarlos [a los tres jóvenes], cuánto daño me hiciera un temprano desarraigo de este medio que había sido el mío hasta la adolescencia; cuánto había contribuido a desorientarme el fácil encandilamiento de los hombres de mi generación, llevados por teorías a los mismos laberintos intelectuales, para hacerse devorar por los mismos Minotauros. (p. 77)

The seductive world of illusion and intellectual labyrinths that had uprooted the protagonist from the radical reality of life raises its head again. This malevolent force, incarnate in Mouche, is relived in the fascination that she exercises over the three young artists. However, she no longer holds sway over the protagonist, who now flees from her presence.

Leaving the house, he continues down to the tavern where a simple barefoot harpist plays music that fills him with admiration. He is tempted to drag the young composer down by the ear to listen to it. Here in the tavern, he learns that a bus departs Los Altos tomorrow for the Orinoco. He decides to take it and search for the instruments he has contracted to obtain. Thus at the end of Chapter Two, he finally accepts the call to adventure. At the same

moment he asserts himself against Mouche and the world she represents:

Por no darme el tiempo de volver sobre lo resuelto, compré al tabernero dos pasajes para el autobús de la madrugada. No me importaba lo que pensara Mouche: por primera vez me sentía capaz de imponerle mi voluntad. (p. 80)

Although this is not a definitive break with Mouche, it is, at least, a turning point from which her power over him will decline until he is finally able to liberate himself completely.

Chapter Three consists of eleven sub-chapters and describes the final stage of the protagonist's separation from the contemporary world. It is preceded by a quotation from El Libro de Chilam-Balam: "...será el tiempo en que tome camino, en que desate su rostro y hable y vomite lo que tragó y suelte su sobrecarga" (p. 81).<sup>34</sup> This prophetic passage reveals the significance of the protagonist's actions in Chapter Three: he must resolutely begin his journey to the threshold of the marvelous realm where the object of his quest is to be found, but before crossing the threshold he must first liberate himself from the bond that holds him fast to the contemporary world.

This bond, of course, is Mouche. She is the malevolent anima-figure associated with the artificial cultural forms of Europe that served to uproot him from his own context and caused his subsequent disorientation. Since she has become an obstacle hindering the fulfillment of his quest, she must be replaced by another anima-figure. This

new figure is Rosario, a synthesis of Latin American women, the incarnation of a cultural heritage still close to and rooted in the primal reality of life. She will become his new companion on the journey into the marvelous realm.

This stage of the voyage, still part of the separation, is divided into four major episodes: the Mountain, the Valley of Flames, the Land of the Horse, and the Land of the Dog. These four steps cannot be fixed within a precise time reference; rather they depict an impressionistic temporal regression that exceeds the limitations of his personal infancy. At each point he encounters a significant archetypal figure who will accompany him on the journey: first Rosario the benevolent anima-figure, then Yannes the seeker of material wealth, Fray Pedro the missionary, and the Adelantado the city founder and law-giver. Also, at each of these steps, Mouche's power over the protagonist declines perceptibly until he finally rids himself of his burden.

Sub-chapter VIII begins shortly before dawn, Monday, June 11.<sup>35</sup> The protagonist, ignoring Mouche's protests and feigned illness, puts their luggage on the bus, and they leave Los Altos. As the bus slowly climbs the mountain range separating them from the Orinoco, he reveals the import of this stage of the journey:

Hasta ahora, el tránsito de la capital a Los Altos había sido, para mí, una suerte de retroceso del tiempo a los años de mi infancia...Pero ahora empezaba un más allá de las imágenes que se propusieron a mis ojos, cuando hubiera dejado de conocer el mundo tan sólo por el tacto. (pp. 83-84)

This ascension of the "espinazo de las Indias fabulosas," (p. 85) carries him beyond the experiences of his personal childhood, into an alien world of ice and barren rock where he is to encounter the first of the archetypal figures.

Having just passed over the summit, the bus brakes to a sudden halt. Alongside the road high on the Mountain, sits a woman, motionless as if frozen. They finally succeed in reviving her, and as she regains consciousness:

Parecía regresar de muy lejos, descubriendo el mundo con sorpresa. Me miró como si mi rostro le fuese conocido, y se puso de pie, con gran esfuerzo, sin dejar de apoyarse en el contén. En aquel instante, un alud lejano retumbó sobre nuestras cabezas...La mujer pareció despertar repentinamente; dio un grito y se agarró de mí, implorando, con voz quebrada por el aire delgado, que no la dejaran morir de nuevo. (p. 86)

The protagonist's encounter, or rather re-encounter, with Rosario is cloaked in the symbolism peculiar to the awakening of the enchanted princess. Until he learns her name, he refers to her as "la rescatada" (pp. 87, 89). She is the companion that lay buried, in this case frozen, within the psyche of the hero.<sup>36</sup>

The bus now begins to descend toward the Orinoco. The protagonist is strangely fascinated by this woman for she seems to evoke the Latin American heritage that he had lost and is now attempting to recapture. A chance word of hers recalls a passage from the Quijote in his mind. The mixture of Mediterranean, Indian, and Negro blood evidenced by her features symbolizes the great synthesis of races achieved in Latin America. That evening they stop at a small inn, and

he discovers that she is completing a long pilgrimage, carrying a miraculous icon to her ailing father. Later she describes to him the curative powers of certain plants:

...como si se tratara de seres siempre despiertos en un reino cercano aunque misterioso, guardado por inquietantes dignatarios. Por su boca las plantas se ponían a hablar y pregonaban sus propios poderes. (p. 90)

Not only does she evoke the protagonist's lost heritage, but, through her familiarity with the mysterious powers of the plants and herbs, she is related to the regenerative vegetation numen symbolic of his future psychic reintegration. Throwing a handful of herbs into the open fireplace, she retires for the night, leaving him contemplating the fire.

As he sits there alone, sub-chapter IX, the protagonist hears the Ninth Symphony coming from an old radio on the kitchen table. His first reaction is to turn it off, but a certain new-found sense of well-being allows him to endure this once painful composition. The music achieves a "misterioso prestigio" (p. 91) and begins to recall experiences from his personal past.

The introductory crescendo of horns evokes his father. He was a musician educated in the conservatories of Switzerland. After the outbreak of World War I, he fled Europe and established himself in the Antilles where he married, and where the protagonist was born. The death of his wife and his failure to realize a fruitful career embittered him toward the New World and caused him to fabricate a thoroughly

unreal vision of Europe. He imparted this vision to his son, telling of the

progreso irrefrenable, de la socialización gradual, de la cultura colectiva, llegándose al tema de los obreros ilustrados que allá...pasaban sus ocios en las bibliotecas públicas y los domingos, en vez de embrutecerse en misas--pues allí el culto de la ciencia estaba sustituyendo a las supersticiones --llevaban sus familias a escuchar la Novena Sinfonía. (p. 95)

These exaggerated European ideals were soon to be deflated.

After his father's death, the protagonist returned to Europe to find his roots. But it was the eve of World War II, and, instead of finding the humanistic brotherhood of man inculcated by his father, he discovered an apocalyptic world of "mass recollectivization."<sup>37</sup>

Donde buscaba la sonrisa de Erasmo, el Discurso del Método, el espíritu humanístico, el fáustico anhelo y el alma apolínea, me topaba con el auto de fe, el tribunal de algún Santo Oficio, el proceso político que no era sino ordalía de nuevo género...Los discursos habían sustituido a los mitos; las consignas a los dogmas. (p. 97)

The cultural institutions founded in the rational ideal of human enlightenment had been devoured in a catastrophic return to Dionysian ritual, for the ancient rites invoked no longer served to advance the spirit of man as they had for the primitive in his constant struggle with Nature. The salutary function of these myths and rites was lost in the contemporary European context where Nature had been dominated for centuries. Thus stripped of their original context, they deteriorated into formulas of recollectivization that only served to debase the individual.<sup>38</sup>

The protagonist, deeply disillusioned by the chaotic reality that destroyed the vision imparted to him by his father, decided to return to America. Shortly before his departure, he witnessed a representation of the Dance of Death in Bois and associated it with the final dissolution of European cultural tradition, about to disintegrate completely in the holocaust of World War II.

Immediately contraposed to this vision of Death and the collapse of the paternal ideals is the maternal image evoked by the adagio of the symphony. The protagonist is returned to his childhood in the Antilles and his first encounter with a feminine figure other than his mother:

Llamo a María del Carmen, que juega entre las arecas en tiestos, los rosales en cazuela, los semilleros de claveles, de calas, los girasoles del traspatio de su padre el jardín. Se cuela por el boquete de la cerca de cardón y se acuesta a mi lado, en la cesta de lavandería en forma de barca que es la barca de nuestros viajes. Nos envuelve el olor a esparto... Ese olor que vuelvo a encontrar esta noche; junto al armario de las yerbas silvestres... (pp. 99-100)

Here the fragrance of plant life, symbolic of the telluric life force, is related to its human counterpart: woman. This fragrance now returns and, through the wild herbs, is associated with the new anima-figure Rosario. Also the basket-ship of his childhood adventures achieves a womb-like significance and points toward his voyage of psychic re-integration.<sup>39</sup>

Then Schiller's "Ode to Joy" begins to recall other memories. The protagonist is back in Europe, this time as

an interpreter in the victorious Allied Army marching across an apocalyptic landscape. He remembers his father, who "veía el mundo como el campo de una lucha entre la luz de la imprenta y las tinieblas de una animalidad original..." (p. 101). His father had envisioned an utopic Europe, where an advanced literate and scientific culture had eradicated man's more primitive instincts, and constantly contrasted this Europe to the New World where human development had not yet achieved such a high level of perfection. But confronted with the unprecedented horror and destruction in which the European tradition has culminated, the protagonist views the New World as a symbol of the future of mankind. The crowning irony was that the creators of the vast impersonal Concentration Camps, when taken prisoner, organized themselves in a chorus and sang Schiller's "Ode to Joy." Their Brotherhood of Man had produced machines of genocide.

Finally, having purged himself of these past experiences of death and dissolution that had destroyed the paternal ideal and disoriented his life, the protagonist turns off the radio. He returns to the symbols of life:

Abro el armario de las plantas y saco un puñado de hojas secas, que aspiro largamente. En la chimenea late aún, en negro y rojo, como algo viviente, un último rescoldo. Me asomo a una ventana...En la noche ha caído un fruto.  
(p. 103)

The plants and remains of the herbs that Rosario had thrown into the fireplace are linked to the new life lying before the protagonist, and the old memories associated with the Ninth Symphony drop by the way as an overripe fruit falls in



the night. Through the painful recollection of his disillusionment, he has freed himself from another bond to the contemporary world: the false paternal ideal.

On the following morning, Tuesday, June 12, sub-chapter X, they continue their journey by bus. The protagonist becomes more and more alienated from Mouche. In his eyes, existence begins to achieve a certain integrity that is invisible to Mouche, for she cannot experience it directly but only through the distortive prism of the present literary prejudices. This voyage to the Valley of Flames serves to heighten the alienation between the two, and in this Dantesque environment the protagonist begins to comprehend the sacramental value of the sexual act, a feeling that he will more fully experience in his future union with Rosario.<sup>40</sup>

On the bus, he notices that Mouche is reading a contemporary novel that degrades physical love, describing it in grotesque and perverted terms rather than as a purely natural act. He is revolted by this type of literature:

...no podía considerar sin repulsión una determinada literatura, muy gustada en el presente, que parecía empeñada en degradar y afear cuanto podía hacer que el hombre, en momentos de tropiezos y desalientos, hallara una compensación a sus fracasos en la más fuerte afirmación de su virilidad, sintiendo en la carne por él dividida su presencia más entera. (p. 106)

After nightfall, they approach a river port on the Orinoco. The town had sprung up around a newly discovered oil deposit, and the burning waste gases produce an infernal atmosphere. No sooner do they enter a small inn than a

troupe of prostitutes arrives. Tomorrow is the feast of the town's patron saint, and these "mujeres rojas" (p. 108) have come to participate in the festivities. They fulfill a function long lost in the world from which the protagonist is fleeing:

Yo pensaba que esas prostitutas errantes, que venían a nuestro encuentro, metiéndose en nuestro tiempo, eran primas de las ribaldas del Medioevo, de las que iban de Bremen a Hamburgo, de Amberes a Gante, en tiempos de feria, para sacar malos humores a maestros y aprendices, aliviándose de paso a algún romero de Compostela... (p. 109)

Mouche is attracted to and mingles with them. She too is a prostitute of sorts, but a very artificial one when measured against these women who are a mixture of "feriante oportuna y de Egipciaca sin olor de santidad" (p. 112). They are women who satisfy a basic need of man; she is an exotic dilettante, flitting from one sensual excess to another without fulfilling any real function.

A miner, mistaking her for a prostitute, makes advances toward Mouche. She flees to the protagonist, and a fight develops. Rosario intervenes, calming the two men, and introduces the miner as her old friend Yannes, the "Buscador de Diamantes" (p. 111). The protagonist, more irritated by Mouche's provocative behavior than by Yannes' actions, joins the Greek miner for a drink. At the table, Rosario asserts: "Cuando el hombre pelea, que sea por defender su casa" (p. 112). At this moment, the protagonist feels a bond established between himself and Rosario to the exclusion of Mouche: his mistress is an artificial and

foreign element within this primitive environment, while Rosario is deeply rooted in the primal reality that he is trying to recapture.

They leave the inn, and the four of them walk toward the river. The powerful movement of the current fills the night with a "ritmo genésico" (p. 114); and, as they stop to rest near an old sailing vessel, Rosario lets down her long flowing locks and begins to slowly comb them. The Orinoco is the waterway to the marvelous realm; the ship and Rosario's locks correspond to the astrological signs that prefigured the protagonist's journey: Argo Navis and Coma Berenices. Now, on the eve of his voyage up the Orinoco, Mouche's presence becomes a burden for him:

Creo que fue ése el momento en que su presencia comenzó a pesar sobre mí como un fardo que cada jornada cargaría de nuevos lastres.  
(p. 115)

The following morning, Wednesday, June 13, sub-chapter XI, they are about to begin their journey up river. Before embarking, the protagonist, seated alone upon a rock above the river, contemplates a lived silence, a moment of rest without anxiety, a silence pregnant with the possibility of creation. He notices that his existence is no longer governed by the impersonal and fragmenting chronology of the clock, but by his own bodily needs of food and sleep.

Once aboard the Manatí,<sup>41</sup> the protagonist experiences a tonic effect in the elemental odors surrounding him and associates them with his childhood:

Algo de esto había--reparo en ello ahora--en

el traspatio de mi infancia: también allí una negra sudorosa majaba ajíes cantando, y había reses que pastaban más lejos. Y había sobre todo--¡sobre todo!--aquella cesta de esparto, barco de mis viajes con María del Carmen, que olía como esta alfalfa en que hundo el rostro con un desasosiego casi doloroso. (pp. 117-18)

The new found freedom from chronological time, and now this re-encounter with the telluric life source fill the protagonist with new desires. He ceases to worry about Mouche, who has taken up with Yannes, and feels only a strong sexual attraction to Rosario.

They continue up river until sundown, when they reach the Land of the Horse:

En las Tierras del Caballo parecía que el hombre fuera más hombre...Renacían los juegos machos de amansar al garafón relinchante y colear y derribar al toro, la bestia solar, haciendo rodar su arrogancia en el polvo. Una misteriosa solidaridad se establecía entre el animal de testículos bien colgados, que penetraba sus hembras más hondamente que ningún otro, y el hombre... (p. 120)

The entrance into the Land of the Horse coincides with the arousal of a primal sexual passion within the protagonist; and, significantly, the libidinal potency of the Horse is related to the hero, the virile man of the past capable of great physical deeds. It is as if, by traveling up the Orinoco, the protagonist had returned to a time and place where heroic acts could again be accomplished. Here man is more man because he is more closely linked to the primitive animating force, so close, in fact, that he becomes fused with the animal realm, for this is the land where "la Cruz de Cristo hiciera su entrada a caballo, no arrastrada, sino

enhiesta, llevada en alto por hombres que fueron tomados por centauros" (p. 121).

At noon of the following day, Thursday, June 14, subchapter XII, the boat arrives at the river port of Santiago de los Aguinaldos where they meet one of these heroic figures from the Land of the Horse: Fray Pedro de Henestrosa. He is the prototype of the soldier-priest who accompanied the conquistadors in the discovery of the New World, and this is the role he will fulfill in the protagonist's quest.

Among the ruins of this once prosperous river port, the protagonist experiences a reenactment of the primal struggle between the forces of chaos and the forces of order. The rite itself, cloaked in Catholic imagery, acquires a profoundly authentic significance in Santiago de los Aguinaldos, a town threatened by an imminent return to chaos as the jungle reduces the works of man to formlessness. A group of dancers, wearing demonic masks, approaches and surrounds the church. Suddenly the church doors spring open, and there emerges an icon of Santiago mounted on a white charger. The devils flee before the image, and the faithful advance chanting:

Primus ex apostolis  
 Martir Jerosolimis  
 Jacobus egregio  
 Sacer est martirio. (p. 123)

This is the patron of the town, the hero who delivered them from the forces of darkness and chaos; and Fray Pedro, by officiating at this yearly ritual, is identified with

Santiago. He joins the voyagers and they continue up river.

The following day, Friday, June 15, sub-chapter XIII, they reach Puerto Anunciación. This is the Land of the Dog, an epoch of human existence prior to the advent of the horse where only man and his dog were allied in a common struggle against the overpowering forces of Nature. Puerto Anunciación is the "antesala de la Selva" (p. 143), the jumping-off point for the unknown world yet to be discovered and conquered. Here the protagonist meets the guide who will carry him over the threshold of adventure: the Adelantado.

First, as Mouche and the protagonist install themselves in a small inn, his growing disaffection towards her explodes in a threatening outburst. She has become bored with the adventure, and the rigors of the journey have physically reduced her beauty. She begins to disparage the primitive state of the local Indians, contrasting them to the Aztec and Incan cultures that she has only read about. He retorts:

...si bien muchísimos individuos [aquí] se contentaban con un techo de fibra, una alcarraza, un budare, una hamaca y una guitarra, pervivía en ellos un cierto animismo, una conciencia de muy viejas tradiciones, un recuerdo vivo de cierto mitos que eran, en suma, presencia de una cultura más honrada y válida, probablemente, que la que se nos había quedado allá. (p. 129)

He continues, declaring that, regardless of her desires and whims, he is going to search for the instruments that the Curator sent him to obtain. Finally, as she persists in returning to Los Altos, he shouts that "había dejado de

amarla, que su presencia me era intolerable, que hasta su cuerpo me asqueaba" (p. 131).

Leaving her at the inn, he proceeds to the local tavern: "Los Recuerdos del Porvenir." Here, Yannes introduces him to the Adelantado, a mysterious figure who, with his dog Gavilán, has explored the surrounding jungle. This is the guide the protagonist needs in order to cross the threshold, for only the Adelantado "conocía cierto paso entre dos troncos, único en cincuenta leguas, que conducía a una angosta escalinata de lajas por la que podía descenderse al vasto misterio de los grandes barroquismos telúricos" (p. 132). He also informs the protagonist that he knows where the musical instruments can be found. At this point Fray Pedro interrupts them, announcing that Rosario's father has died.

That same evening, sub-chapter XIV, the protagonist attends the velorio of Rosario's father. He associates the prayers and lamentations of these women shrouded in black with the ancient tragedy of the Mother-Hecuba vehemently protesting against Death. This real and ever present force threatening the fruit of the maternal womb is the antagonist against which life must do battle. It is as if the lamentations of these women re-enact the eternal struggle between Life and Death, evoking in the protagonist "oscuras memoranzas de ritos funerarios que hubieran observado los hombres que me precedieron en el reino de este mundo" (p. 136). These obscure recollections link him to an eter-

nal reality, and now he understands the words of Mother Earth spoken to Prometheus:

How canst thou hear  
Who knowest not the language of the dead.  
(p. 136)<sub>42</sub>

The immortal Titan Prometheus, unable to comprehend the voice of Death, could not understand the voice of Life. Analogously, but on a different plane, Death has become a non-entity for contemporary man who shuts up his dead in cold impersonal funeral parlors and only preoccupies himself with dividing the wealth of the deceased. Thus stripped of its eternal antagonist, Life too comes to lose its meaning.

At this point, Yannes prompts the protagonist to go to Rosario who is alone in the kitchen:

Vete adentro y no se turbe tu ánimo...que el hombre, si es audaz, es más afortunado en lo que emprende, aunque haya venido de otra tierra...Entrando en la sala hallarás primero a la reina, cuyo nombre es Arete y procede de los mismos que engendraron al rey Alcinoó.  
(pp. 137-38)<sub>43</sub>

These are the words of Pallas-Athena encouraging Ulysses to enter the palace of Alcinoüs and Aretè, where he finds the means of continuing his journey.

The protagonist enters and converses with Rosario until the following morning. Although he does not make any overt advances, he feels himself drawn even more strongly toward her:

Avergonzándome de mí mismo, sentí que la deseaba con un ansia olvidada desde la adolescencia. No sé si en mí se tejía el abominable juego, asuntos de tantas fábulas, que nos hace apetecer la carne viva en la vecindad de la carne que no tornará a vivir... (p. 138)



He again experiences the strengthening of the life force in the presence of death. That morning the sun is obscured by a great cloud of butterflies. These migrating insects produce a "noche diurna" (p. 139), an eclipse of the solar life source portending the protagonist's separation from the contemporary world.

That same morning, Saturday, June 16, sub-chapter XV, they inter Rosario's father. In the church, the life-like icons surrounded by ex votos reveal a divine world that is still able to penetrate into the everyday existence of its faithful, in short, a religion that is still vital and functional. The Adelantado, asserting that even the gamblers and prostitutes invoke the saints, reconciles the protagonist with this world:

Esto--que me contaba el Adelantado riendo-- me reconciliaba con el mundo divino que, con el destefimiento de las leyendas áureas en capillas de metal, con los amaneramientos plásticos del vitral reciente, había perdido toda vitalidad en las ciudades de donde yo venía. (p. 141)

Here religion has not deteriorated into the artificial and decadent forms of the contemporary world but conserves its basic function of reuniting man with a reality that transcends his own personal limitations.

Fatigued from the velorio and the burial, the protagonist returns to the inn to rest. Upon awakening in the afternoon, he finds that the eclipse has ended, and simultaneously he notices that Fouche has disappeared from the room. Temporarily freed from his "burden", he proceeds to

Rosario's home where he meets the Adelantado and Fray Pedro. They are planning an expedition into the jungle, and the protagonist decides to join them.

As they are preparing for the journey, Mouche returns accompanied by Yannes. Rosario arrives, and all six of them board the boat and start up river. Shortly, the protagonist discovers that Mouche and Yannes had spent the afternoon in a local lovers' rendezvous.<sup>44</sup> Rather than angered he feels relieved: "me sentía ligero, suelto, aliviado por la infamia sabida, como un hombre que acaba de arrojar una carga por demasiado tiempo llevada" (p. 144). Her infidelity has severed the physical bond between the protagonist and his mistress. Finally, the prophecy of the Chilam-Balam is about to be fulfilled, as he frees himself of his sobrecarga. Saying nothing to Mouche, he moves to the prow of the boat and seats himself beside Rosario, his new companion. There he discovers a sense of well-being associated with his childhood:

El regazo acunado de la barca me recordaba la cesta que, en mi infancia, hiciera las veces de barca verdadera en portentosos viajes. Del brazo de Rosario, cercano al mío, se desprendía un calor que mi brazo aceptaba con una rara y deleitosa sensación de escorzor. (p. 145)

That same evening, sub-chapter XVI, they arrive at Yannes' mining camp. Here they meet Yannes' three brothers and their one-eyed dog Polyphemus, but the most important figure in the camp is Doctor Montsalvatje. He is a multifarious character: botanist, explorer, and narrator of fantastic

tales. The author describes him as an "espíritu de la tierra, gnomo guardián de cavernas" (p. 148) and as the "Abogado de los Prodigios" (p. 150). His function in the novel is two-fold: he propagates the myth of El Dorado, inciting men into the unknown realm of the jungle; and he serves as a supernatural helper instrumental in liberating the protagonist of his burden.

In the night, as the men seat themselves around an open fire that works a strange fascination upon them, he begins his tale. He states that the myth of El Dorado is only a reflection of a reality that actually exists in the jungle. He cites numerous histories of adventures and explorers who have seen the fabulous wealth in the city of Manoa. Some, of course, have not been so fortunate; and, as if to substantiate this point, the Adelantado produces a Spanish battle axe that he had found in the jungle: "La frialdad de la segur ponía el prodigio en la yema de nuestros dedos. Y nos dejábamos envolver por lo maravilloso, anhelantes de mayores portentos" (p. 149).

Fray Pedro attempts to discredit these tales of fantastic treasures, but when Montsalvatje shows them a jar of nuggets, that gather and increase the flames of fascination arising from the fire, they all are overwhelmed: "Todos tuvimos ganas de pararnos, de echar a andar, de llegar antes del alba a la puerta de los prodigios" (p. 151). At this point, the priest's actions reveal his basic opposition to Montsalvatje's inciting tales and to Yannes as the prototype

of the seeker of material wealth: "De súbito, fray Pedro arrojó su bastón al fuego, y el bastón se hizo vara de Moisés al levantar la serpiente que acaba de matar"

(p. 151).<sup>45</sup> His opposition to Yannes is more clearly delineated in the jungle. As yet, they have not passed through the "door of prodigies."

Before crossing the threshold, the protagonist must free himself from Mouche. The final stage of this separation is prepared the following day, Sunday, June 17, subchapter XVII. As the two women are bathing in the river, Mouche, through an obscene gesture, insults Rosario. The latter attacks with tooth and claw, reducing Mouche to a completely disheveled and screaming figure. The others arrive and finally are able to subdue Rosario. They carry Mouche to Montsalvatje's hut where Fray Pedro discovers that she has malaria. Crying, she pleads to the protagonist that they return to the city. He no longer feels any attraction towards her, but

...ahora que habia sido derribada por la crisis palúdica, su regreso implicaba el mío; lo cual equivalía a renunciar a mi única obra, a volver endeudado, con las manos vacías, avergonzado ante la sola persona cuya estimación me fuera preciosa--y todo por cumplir una tonta función de escolta junto a un ser que ahora aborrecía.  
(pp. 155-56)

Here the importance of the Curator is re-enforced, for the instruments must be returned to him in order to reconcile the protagonist with the father-image.

Montsalvatje resolves the dilemma and, as a supernatural helper, brings the "providencial alivio" (p. 156) to

the protagonist. He offers to take Mouche, whom he classifies as an "Anima, vágula, blándula" (p. 156), down river to a place where she can be treated. Thus, the protagonist is freed from his malevolent anima-figure and his attachment to the false merveilleux of the contemporary world.

That evening, in Montsalvatje's hut, he unites himself with Rosario for the first time:

Un heno espeso y crujiente se nos viene encima, envolviéndonos en perfumes...Una repentina emoción deja mi resuello en suspenso: así--casi así--olía la cesta de los viajes mágicos, aquella en que yo estrechaba a María del Carmen, cuando éramos niños... (p. 157)

This union with the new anima-figure, recalling his childhood adventures with María del Carmen, signifies the beginning of a new mode of existence. It is as if he were returned to his infancy, where he could again experience directly the marvelous unity of being, and where he could recapture the possibility of self-fulfillment.

Mouche's head appears above them in the night, angry and disheveled like the serpent covered head of a Gorgon, but she soon drops back into a delirious stupor, and the two lovers return to their pleasure. As Rosario embraces him and he buries his face in her hair, the separation from Mouche is complete: "Somos dos, en un mundo distinto" (p. 158).

The following morning, Monday, June 18, sub-chapter XVIII, they put Mouche in Montsalvatje's boat and send her down river: "La barca ha desaparecido ahora en la lejanía de un estero, cerrando con su partida una etapa de mi exis-

tencia" (p. 159). Her departure liberates him from the artificial values of the contemporary world and allows him to freely unite himself with the primal reality represented by Rosario. Everyone is aware that Rosario now belongs to him. Fray Pedro asks him to formalize their relationship, but the protagonist, not wishing to reveal that he is already married to Ruth, evades the question. Later, Ruth's Hydra-like tentacles will be instrumental in drawing him back to the contemporary world, but now the protagonist goes off to speak with Yannes.

He sees the four brothers reading from the Odyssey and feels an obscure kinship between them and the ancient Greek adventurers. He asks Yannes how he came to the New World, and the Greek miner, lamenting his nation's destiny, cites from the First Book of the Odyssey: "¡Ah, miseria! Escuchad cómo los mortales enjuician a los dioses. Dicen que de nosotros vienen sus males, cuando son ellos quienes, por su tontería, agravan las desdichas que les asigna el destino" (pp. 160-61).<sup>46</sup> Zeus throws back upon men the responsibility for their own misfortune: through their foolish attachment to false and transient values, they aggravate the sufferings of life. Yannes, like the ancient Greeks, left his native shores in search of wealth that his country did not possess. When this passion for material wealth becomes an end in itself, it empties life of meaning and aligns itself with the forces of death. This negative aspect of Yannes' character is revealed in his conflict with Fray Pedro and in

his final transformation into a secretive and distrustful figure desirous only of conserving his new diamond mine.

At the noon meal, when Yannes offers the protagonist the best portion of meat, he imagines the Greek, "por un segundo, transfigurado en el porquerizo Eumeo..." (p. 161). This momentary identification of Yannes with Ulysses' swineherd Eumaeus suggests that the protagonist is Ulysses.<sup>47</sup> Although there is no direct parallel between the two adventures, this action does re-enforce the archetypal nature of the protagonist's voyage.

As the preparations are being made for the departure, he unites himself again with Rosario. The act, and even more her voice, fill him with new life:

Hoy, por primera vez, Rosario me ha llamado por mi nombre...me siento como ensalmado por la palabra que más conozco, al oírla tan nueva como si acabara de ser creada. (p. 162)

As the name spoken by Rosario seems to have been recreated, the protagonist himself will be reborn in the marvelous realm of the jungle. The moment has arrived, and they can depart for the threshold: "Nos despedimos de los caucheros, y es la partida" (p. 162). The protagonist, Rosario, and the Adelantado start up river in the lead canoe. Immediately behind them follow Yannes and Fray Pedro.

Chapter Four consists of six sub-chapters and describes the entrance into the jungle. This penetration into the telluric womb corresponds structurally to the first part of the night-sea-journey of the hero: the descent into chaos and his death to the contemporary world.<sup>48</sup> Here he

will experience the terrible devouring aspect of the Great Mother, the threat of formlessness, After having crossed the threshold between the two worlds and suffered the trials of initiation, he will secure the object of his quest--the instruments. However, the quest has a twofold meaning; and, if the procurement of the instruments reconciles him with the Curator, he must still be introduced into the realm of transpersonal realities with which he can identify. Fray Pedro will conduct him into this kingdom of eternal Forms in Chapter Five, but first they must pass through the threatening chaos of the jungle in order to re-enter the primordial time before the creation of man. The quotation from the Popol-Vuh that precedes Chapter Four refers to this beginning of time that lies on the other side of the jungle:

¿No habrá más que silencio, inmovilidad, al pie de los árboles, de los bejucos? Bueno es, pues, que haya guardianes. (p. 163)<sup>49</sup>

Sub-chapter XIX opens on the afternoon of Monday, June 18, as they proceed up stream to the entrance into the jungle. The protagonist, recalling Montsalvatje's tales, identifies himself and his companions with the original conquistadors:

...somos Conquistadores que vamos en busca del Reino de Manoa. Fray Pedro es nuestro capellán, al que pediremos confesión si quedamos malheridos en la entrada. El Adelantado bien puede ser Felipe de Utre. El griego es Micer Codro, el astrólogo. Gavilán pasa a ser Leoncico, el perro de Balboa. Y yo me otorgo, en la empresa, los cargos del trompeta Juan de San Pedro, con mujer tomada a bragas en el saqueo de un pueblo. (p. 165)

In this disparate aggregation of heroic figures, it is



significant that the protagonist assigns himself the role of musician, for this is the profession to which he must relate in a creative manner in order to recapture his own destiny.

Suddenly, spying the "Sign" on the river bank, the Adelantado cries that they have arrived. The author describes the entrance into this narrow stream overgrown with foliage in womb-like imagery. It is an "angosto túnel" (p. 166), dark and humid, permeated by the odor of "lodo eterno, de la glauca fermentación" (p. 167).<sup>50</sup> The passage itself is fraught with danger. First the protagonist is wounded: "Un madero puntiagudo cayó sobre mi hombro con la violencia de un garrotazo, sacándome sangre del cuello" (p. 166). This symbolic decapitation is followed by a state of disorientation: "se perdía la noción de la verticalidad, dentro de una suerte de desorientación, de mareo de los ojos" (p. 168), and by "un miedo indefinible, sacado de los trasmundos del instinto" (p. 168). This is the fear of death as he penetrates into the telluric womb.

The passage widens into a small pool of water, and the Adelantado, re-enforcing the imagery of Death, shows the protagonist the putrefying carcass of a cayman. Terrified by this confrontation with death and feeling himself imprisoned by the surrounding jungle, he seeks the warmth of Rosario's body, who at this point assumes a protective maternal significance in opposition to the devouring aspect of the Great Mother. Night falls, bringing an oppressive and frightening darkness filled with strange noises. The

protagonist's fear mounts almost to the point of capitulation, of reducing him to a screaming infant. Finally, he falls asleep, in the "umbrales de una morada secreta" (p. 168).

The following morning, Tuesday, June 19, sub-chapter XX, he realizes that he has passed the "Primera Prueba" (p. 170), the fear of night and the unknown. As the jungle emerges from the chaotic darkness and objects take on visible form, he experiences a primitive joy:

...el jubilo entrafiado, atávico, llevado en venas propias, de ancestros que, durante milenios, vieron en cada madrugada el término de sus espantos nocturnos, el retroceso de los rugidos, el despeje de las sombras, la confusion de los espectros, el deslinde de lo malévalo. (p. 170)

Dawn is the rebirth of form from the night of chaos. With the dawn the protagonist is reborn from his fear and able to continue the journey.

They enter another narrow stream, and he finds that the jungle itself is devoid of form: plants and animals metamorphose, one becoming the other in a struggle for life that is a continual devouring and being devoured. Here there are no constants, only a perpetual flux:

La selva era el mundo de la mentira, de la trampa y del falso semblante; allí todo era disfraz, estratagema, juego de apariencias, metamorfosis. (p. 173)<sup>51</sup>

Only two animals seem to rise above this world of illusion: the bird, through its constant plumage and its power of flight, and the ursine monkey through its indifference to the horrendous struggle for life.<sup>52</sup> Contrasted to the con-

fusion of the telluric panorama are the clouds, symbolic of a heavenly transcendent form: "Esas nubes, rara vez enlazadas entre sí, estaban detenidos en el espacio, como edificadas en el cielo, semejantes a sí mismas..." (p. 174).

Thus the jungle, with few exceptions, comes to represent for the protagonist a threatening chaos, even in the daylight hours.

They continue farther into the jungle until noon, when they stop to rest, sub-chapter XXI. Yannes, taking advantage of the stop, goes off in the search of diamonds. By late afternoon he has still not returned, and they begin calling him. Fray Pedro admonishes Yannes, sermonizing against those who allow themselves to be blinded by the lure of gold and precious stones. To this the Adelantado counters that some priests are as desirous of wealth as Yannes. Then Fray Pedro, defending the priesthood, recounts the lives of many martyrs who have sacrificed themselves in the propagation of the faith. His conviction deeply impresses the protagonist, who perceives in this faith a value that withstands the passage time:

A todo esto se refiere como si hubiese sucedido ayer; como si tuviera el poder de andarse por el tiempo al derecho y al revés. "Tal vez porque su misión se cumple en un paisaje sin fecha", me digo. (p. 175)

It is precisely the lack of such conviction that troubles the protagonist, and only through his identification with a transpersonal value will he recover his own destiny.

Yannes returns, and they continue the voyage. The

stream begins to rise, and night catches them in a swollen torrent, beset by a violent storm. Lightening rends the dark sky with an unearthly "luz de cataclismo" (p. 176). The protagonist, overcome by the fear of drowning, again searches for the warmth of Rosario's body, "no ya con gesto de amante, sino de niño que se cuelga del cuello de la madre" (p. 176). Here, she is even more clearly depicted as a protective maternal figure. Finally, after a long and terrible struggle against the elements, the storm abates, and as the boat touches shore he realizes that he has passed the "Segunda Prueba" (p. 177), the fear of annihilation in the dark and chaotic waters of the Terrible Mother.

The following day, Wednesday, June 20, sub-chapter XXII, the protagonist awakens in a small Indian village where they had spent the night. In the distance he is amazed to see a massive outcropping of black rock that rises above the jungle. There, reaching even above the clouds, is the "Capital de las Formas" (p. 179). That is the Meseta, the land of primal forms that lies beyond the jungle. First he compares it to an incredible gothic cathedral, but it is more than that, for:

...había algo tan fuera de lo real...que el ánimo, pasmado, no buscaba la menor interpretación de aquella desconcertante arquitectura telúrica, aceptando sin razonar su belleza vertical e inexorable. (p. 179)

The verticality of the Forms suggests a transcendent realm unfathomable to man's reason.

Overwhelmed by such grandeur, he lowers his eyes to

his own stature and discovers Rosario, the human counterpart of the incomprehensible Forms. She, in her gestures and mode of existence, exhibits "una vida sometida a los ritmos primordiales" (p. 180). Now he understands "por qué la que era ahora mi amante me había dado una tal impresión de raza, el día que la viera regresar de la muerte a la orilla de un alto camino" (p. 180). She is the incarnation of his cultural heritage, once lost and now regained, that preserves a way of life rooted in primordial realities, not in the existence of "oficios inútiles" (p. 180) that he knew in the city.

In the presence of these primal realities, he secures the object of his quest. Here in this primitive Indian village, he finds the musical instruments, and the act fills his previously empty existence with a sense of potentiality, the ability to accomplish significant deeds: "me pareció que entraba en un nuevo ciclo de mi existencia. La misión estaba cumplida" (p. 181). Among the instruments, he is particularly drawn to a jarra sonora used in certain propitiatory funeral rites:

El objeto [la jarra] crecía en mi propia estimación, ligado a mi destino, aboliendo, en aquel instante, la distancia que me separaba de quien me había confiado esta tarea... (p. 181)

The instrument not only offers a reconciliation with the Curator, the paternal imago who sent him on the quest, but it relates to his own destiny in a way that is only later revealed: the Threnos that he begins to compose in Santa Mónica is rooted in the same original and propitiatory func-

tion of music, the desire to overcome the forces of chaos and death.

Fray Pedro calls them to a Mass of thanksgiving for having been saved from the violent storm of the previous night. As all gather before the rude altar and the priest begins the service, the protagonist discovers the functional faith that supported the deeds of the conquistadors. He feels that time has retrogressed to the epoch of the Conquest, and the artifacts he had often contemplated in the sterile environment of museums now have become real and present:

Y he aquí que ese pasado, de súbito, se hace presente. Que lo palpo y aspiro. Que vislumbro ahora la estupefaciente posibilidad de viajar en el tiempo, como otros viajan en el espacio... (p. 185)

The possibility of traveling backward in time frees him from the irreversible and mechanical temporal succession that fragmented his existence in the city, but even more importantly it makes possible a return to the regenerative roots of time and being.

After the Mass ends, time continues to flow backward until it reaches the Paleolithic era represented by the Indian culture of the village. Here he is an intruder, a foreigner ignorant of the laws governing this primitive existence. Now, as they proceed on the journey, he will discover these primordial laws.

The following day, Thursday, June 21, sub-chapter XXIII, they continue their voyage. The protagonist becomes

more deeply aware of Rosario as an incarnation of a primal reality transcending temporal and spatial limitations:

Es mujer de tierra...se cumple un destino que más vale no andar analizando demasiado, porque es regido por "grandes cosas" cuyo mecanismo es oscuro, y que, en todo caso, rebasan la capacidad de interpretación del ser humano.  
(p. 187)

She is related to the Earth in its generative function of matrix, the fount of all life. Her destiny is linked to this eternal feminine principle, but she herself is no abstract entity; rather she is its human counterpart, a modality with which the protagonist can unite himself.<sup>53</sup> In this union she becomes "Tu mujer" (p. 187), a concrete and experiential encounter with the eternal. Their relationship immerses him within a telluric symphony, where the passage of time corresponds to the primal rhythms of life, and rejuvenates him.

By evening, they meet a group of Indians whose culture is pre-Paleolithic. Their mode of existence is so elemental that the protagonist considers them alien beings without any human traits. Then he discovers that these Indians hold captive other beings who are even more primitive. As he looks into the pit where the captives are held, he feels

una suerte de vértigo ante la posibilidad de otros escalafones de retroceso, al pensar que esas larvas humanas, de cuyas ingles cuelga un sexo erectil como el mío, no sean todavía lo último. (p. 189)

These captives, whom he describes as "fetos vivientes" (p. 189), represent a previous stage of evolution, beyond which human form would be reabsorbed in the telluric womb.

After the encounter with the captives, the protagonist spies a ceremonial clay jar that he recognizes as a reproduction of the Primordial Goddess:

Esto es Dios. Más que Dios: es la Madre de Dios. Es la Madre, primordial de todas las religiones. El principio hembra, genésico, matriz, situado en el secreto prólogo de todas las teogonías...La Madre, "solitaria, fuera del espacio y más aún del tiempo", de quien Fausto pronunciara el sólo enunciado de Madre, por dos veces, con terror.  
(pp. 189-90) 54

This is the Great Mother in her incomprehensible and thus terrible aspect: the void before time from which all forms spring, but also the void at the end into which all forms fall and dissolve.

Thoroughly impressed by the threat of formlessness, the protagonist experiences man's original attempt to overcome it. The Hechicero begins his incantation over the corpse of an Indian bitten by a poisonous serpent:

Y en la gran selva que se llena de espantos nocturnos, surge la Palabra. Una palabra que es ya más que palabra. Una palabra que imita la voz de quien dice, y también la que se atribuye al espíritu que posee el cadáver. (p. 190)

Affecting two voices--his own and that of the corpse--he establishes an agonizing dialogue between this world and the realm of the dead, endeavoring to free the spirit of the corpse from the grasp of Death. The two voices alternate in a responsory of primitive rhythms, reaching a climax of furor and imprecation as Death refuses to release its captive. This is man's primordial attempt to overcome "las potencias de aniquilamiento" (p. 191), the tragic essence of



the human drama. The protagonist discovers in this primitive threnos the origin of music:

En la boca del Hechicero, del Órfico ensalmador, estertora y cae, convulsivamente, el Treno--pues esto y no otra cosa es un treno--, dejándome deslumbrado con la revelación de que acabo de asistir al Nacimiento de la Música.  
(p. 191)

Thus he has come to experience the primal function of his profession, which like that of Orpheus is to retrieve life from the realm of the dead, to wrest form from the chaos of the void. Soon he will begin his Threnos, but now he must continue back to the Beginning of Time where his creativity will be restored.

Having passed the trials in the threatening chaos of the jungle, the protagonist climbs to the kingdom of the Primal Forms. They struggle up the tortuous slopes of the Great Meseta for two days before the protagonist resumes the narration on Saturday, June 23, sub-chapter XXIV. They have risen above the devouring landscape of the jungle and now enter a realm of "Formas de roca desnuda, reducidas a la grandiosa elementalidad de una geometría telúrica" (pp. 191-92). The land is no longer populated by the monsters of the jungle; rather the Meseta seems devoid of animal life, as if it had just emerged from the waters on the third day of Genesis. This is the end of the journey, for they have reached the Beginning of Time:

Estamos en el mundo de Génesis, al fin del Cuarto Día de la Creación. Si retrocediéramos un poco más, llegaríamos adonde comenzara la terrible soledad del Creador--la tristeza sideral de los tiempos sin incienso

y sin alabanzas, cuando la tierra era desordenada y vacía, y las tinieblas estaban sobre la haz del abismo. (p. 193)

Chapter Five consists of nine sub-chapters and is preceded by a quotation from the Old Testament:

Cánticos me fueron tus estatutos... (p. 195)<sup>55</sup>

Here, in Santa Mónica de los Venados, the protagonist is indoctrinated into the Primal Laws of life. Through his immersion in the Time of the Beginning his creative ability is reborn, and he begins to compose his Threnos.

Structurally, this chapter corresponds to the hero's initiation: after having suffered the trials, he is informed of the laws governing life and the cosmos.<sup>56</sup> It should be followed by his return to the contemporary world where he would either occupy a productive position in society, or implement radical change by overthrowing the old order. But the protagonist mistakenly decides that he can remain in the "Valle del Tiempo Detenido" (p. 185). Three factors dictate his eventual return. First, he must deliver the instruments to the Curator in order to reconcile himself with the father-figure in the contemporary world. Secondly, his marriage to Ruth, albeit in a negative manner, binds him to the other world. Finally, and most importantly, he cannot fulfill his destiny as a musician by evading his time. These factors will perturb his existence in Santa Mónica until he is providentially rescued from without by an airplane.

On Sunday, June 24, sub-chapter XXV, Yannes strikes

out on his own in search of gold, and the others continue on to Santa Mónica de los Venados, the "city" founded by the Adelantado. The protagonist is overwhelmed by the Adelantado's act:

Fundar una ciudad. Yo fundo una ciudad. El ha fundado una ciudad. Es posible conjugar semejante verbo. Se puede ser Fundador de una Ciudad. Crear y gobernar una ciudad...  
(p. 198)

Here in the world of Genesis, man is again capable of primordial acts of creation: he has created a city in the wilderness, imposing his will upon the Earth, and thus assumes the archetypal role of founder and law-giver. The city is not, by any means, a terrestrial paradise; rather it represents the fruit of man's constant struggle against the forces of chaos, "una lucha primordial que figura entre las más auténticas leyes del juego de existir" (p. 203). This is a common effort against primal realities in which each member plays a meaningful role, not an isolated and disoriented existence within the labyrinth of abstractions erected in the contemporary city.

The protagonist's creative ability will be regenerated in the world populated by archetypal figures, but there is already an indication that he will not be able to exercise his profession here, for this is the "primera ciudad. La ciudad de Henoch, edificada cuando aún no habían nacido Tubalcain el herrero, ni Jubal, el tañedor de arpa y del órgano..." (p. 198).<sup>57</sup> He will find it impossible to fulfill his artistic destiny in this epoch prior to the appearance of Jubal.

His mode of creation is not that of a collective effort, but of an individual nature.<sup>58</sup>

Upon entering Santa Mónica, the Adelantado points out with pride the plan of the city: the Main Plaza, the Government House, and across from it the site of the future Cathedral. His son Marcos, the Alcalde, officiates at the reception for the Governor and their first Bishop Fray Pedro. After the welcoming feast, they retire to the Government House where the Adelantado relates the founding of the city.

His given name is Pablo.<sup>59</sup> Unable to find employment in his native city, he had come to work in a provincial pharmacy. There, various miners had incited him to seek gold in the jungle. During one voyage he became lost in the region of the Great Meseta and, after ninety days of wandering, he stumbled into this valley. The Indians nursed him back to health.

With a little gold he had found, he returned to Puerto Anunciación. Shortly he came back to the valley bringing seeds and tools. After a few such trips and having taken an Indian woman for his wife, he realized that he had founded a city. Now, he has given up the search for gold "porque mucho más le interesa ya la tierra, y, sobre ella, el poder de legislar por cuenta propia" (p. 203). His story is quite similar to that of the early conquistadors who departed their impoverished native land for the New World and material wealth but later remained to found new cities. To com-

plete the analogy, he brings with him a priest to indoctrinate his people and to erect the first temple in his "city."

Three days after having arrived at Santa Mónica, Wednesday, June 27, sub-chapter XXVI, as the protagonist and Rosario lie nude by a pool at the foot of a waterfall, he experiences a rebirth of his virility:

Y el sol me entraba por entre las piernas, me calienta los testículos, se trepa a mi columna vertebral, ...me posee, me invade, y siento que en su ardor se endurecen mis conductos seminales y vuelvo a ser la tensión y el latido que buscan las oscuras pulsaciones de entrañas caladas a lo más hondo, sin hallar límite a un deseo de integrarme que se hace añoranza de matriz. (p. 206)

The solar rays, which penetrate and fructify the Earth, are related to and symbolically restore the protagonist's sexual potency.<sup>60</sup> Rosario, as "una hembra cabal y entera" (p. 207), provides him with a vessel into which he can creatively enter and fulfill this primal masculine function. The immediate and complete satisfaction of this desire in his union with Rosario produces a euphoric state that engulfs the protagonist. He decides not to return to the contemporary world and his previously meaningless existence. He feels that he can escape his Sisyphean destiny and prefers to "empuñar la sierra y la azada a seguir encanallando la música en menesteres de pregonero" (p. 206).

His refusal to return is re-enforced by the Lotophagi episode of the Odyssey. He picks up the copy that Yannes had left with them and happens to open it to these lines:

Tuve que traerlos a la fuerza, sollozantes...  
y encadenarlos bajo los bancos, en el fondo

de sus naves. (p. 207)<sup>61</sup>

Reflecting upon this passage, he reveals a negative attitude toward the hero, feeling that Ulysses was unjustly cruel in tearing his companions away from "la felicidad hallada" (p. 207). But, although he has found his "happiness" in this union with Rosario, he soon will discover certain factors necessitating his return.

While helping Fray Pedro construct their primitive church, he encounters the first reason. A crude bell, fashioned from a hollowed tree trunk, recalls the instruments lying in his hut:

De pronto me vi rodeado de objetos--acree-  
dores...Vine a estas selvas, solté mi fardo,  
hallé mujer, gracias al dinero que debo a  
estos instrumentos que no me pertenecen.  
Por evadirme estoy atando, desde aquí, a mi  
fiador. (p. 209)

As long as he does not deliver these instruments to the Curator, he cannot make atonement with the father-figure. Rosario proposes that he simply send them with the Adelantado when he makes his next trip to Puerto Anunciación. From there they can be forwarded down river and mailed to the Curator. Temporarily, his conscience is soothed; but, before the Adelantado leaves, the protagonist will be rescued from without.

Sub-chapter XXVII is not dated, and the protagonist continues to omit the date at the beginning of each sub-chapter until he is back in the contemporary world. This suggests that he is now freed from normal clock-time and calendars. In fact, he does satisfy his elemental desires

in accord with primordial rhythms and is liberated from impersonal and mechanistically determined time. But there is another, more important, temporal spectrum that he cannot evade with impunity. This is the time in which his destiny is to be fulfilled, and it requires the linking of his own ego to a transcendent value that will give meaning to his limited existence.

In sub-chapter XXVII, Fray Pedro leads the protagonist to a confrontation with the time spectrum of destiny. Climbing for two days, they reach the top of a mountain. This is the Land of the Bird, the realm of transcendent beings:

...el indio con perfil de ave puso sus civilizaciones bajo la advocación del ave. El dios volante, el dios pájaro, la serpiente emplumada, están en el centro de sus mitologías, y todo cuanto es bello para él se adorna de plumas. (p. 211)<sup>62</sup>

By evoking the Indian Bird-Gods and relating them to this mountain peak, the author suggests that this is the world of the immortals, a point from which the existence of man can be brought into proper perspective and his destiny understood.

Here, Fray Pedro recites the prophetic chapter of the Popol-Vuh, describing the destruction of man by the machine rebelling against its inventor.<sup>63</sup> This is the fate of contemporary man whose mechanical creations alienate him from life and thus cause his death to the transpersonal realities. Here too are the Signs of the Great Deluge, carved in the massive rock cliffs by the sole survivors of the divine

wrath unleashed upon those who broke with the Law. To reinforce these images of destruction, Fray Pedro makes the protagonist look down into a deep crater filled with prehistoric plant life:

...todo eso, allí abajo, se enrevesa, se enmaraña, se anuda, en un vasto movimiento de posesión, de acoplamiento, de incestos, a la vez monstruoso y, orgiástico, que es suprema confusión de las formas. (p. 213)

This is the formlessness and chaos prior to the Act of Creation:

Inclinado sobre el caldero demoníaco, me siento invadido por el vértigo de los abismos; sé que si me dejara fascinar por lo que aquí veo, mundo de lo prenatal, de lo que existía cuando no había ojos, acabaría por arrojarme, por hundirme, en ese tremendo espesor de hojas que desaparecerán del planeta, un día, sin haber sido nombradas, sin haber sido recreadas por la Palabra... (p. 213)<sup>64</sup>

The protagonist, as long as he refuses to return to the contemporary world, remains in an incestuous and uncreative condition similar to the plants in the crater. Until he can identify himself with a transcendent value, a spiritual principle allowing him to sacrifice this original state, his creative ability will continue immersed in the formlessness of pure potentiality without ever becoming manifest.

As they descend the mountain, Fray Pedro points to a region of the jungle below and informs the protagonist that no missionaries have ever returned from there. The protagonist offers, in jest, that one should not venture into such inhospitable country. The priest does not reply; but, as if fascinated by an invisible presence, gazes fixedly toward



the horizon:

Todavía veo el semblante arrugado del capuchino...su persona, en aquel momento, eran esas pupilas viejas...que miraban, como hechas de un esmalte empañado, a la vez dentro y fuera de sí mismas. (p. 214)

His eyes, looking both inward and outward at the same time, reveal a union of the ego with a transcendent reality. There, in that section of the jungle, he will fulfill his mission, sacrificing himself in the propagation of the faith. At this time the protagonist seems to ignore the significance of the priest's message; but later, in the contemporary city, he will reflect upon Fray Pedro and consider him as a man who has conquered the final limit of human form: Death.

In sub-chapter XXVIII, the protagonist witnesses the Adelantado creating the Law that supports and gives order to the life of his city. At present, the only punishment is a collective reprobation: during a certain period of time the other members of the group refuse to speak to the violator of the Law.<sup>65</sup> The protagonist, putting a hypothetical case before the Adelantado and his son Marcos, asks them how they would deal with a "buscador de oro, de los que manchan cualquier tierra con su fiebre" (p. 217). Their silence leads him to understand that a more severe form of punishment would have to be implemented in order to preserve the Law of Santa Mónica. The unnatural possessive desire, alien to the primitive life force and represented by the seeker of material wealth, later appears in the figure of the leper

Nicasio.

The protagonist, wishing to free himself from the implications of the conversation with the law-giver, returns to the direct and sensuous experience of Nature:

No estoy aquí para pensar. No debo pensar. Ante todo sentir y ver. Y cuando de ver se pasa a mirar, se encienden raras luces y todo cobra una voz... Llego a preguntarme a veces si las formas superiores de la emoción estética no consistirán, simplemente, en un supremo entendimiento de lo creado. Un día, los hombres descubrirán un alfabeto de los ojos de las calcedonias, en los pardos terciopelos de la falena, y entonces se sabrá con asombro que cada caracol manchado era, desde siempre, un poema. (p. 219)<sup>66</sup>

He suggests that the forms of Nature are pregnant with a mystery that transcends the visible object. Seeing is a stimulation of the visual sense that ceases with the perception of the object, but looking is a searching gaze that goes beyond the visible realm, penetrating, by means of the form, to a timeless reality. This form is the symbolic function of the object, the vehicle facilitating the interpenetration of the eternal and the temporal. The moment in which this function is realized constitutes an epiphany, accompanied by a strange illumination and a singular voice. These forms, concrete and experiential themselves, yet manifestations of a transcendent reality, are the basis of all aesthetic creation. The artist, through the Word or the particular medium of his art, recreates them in his work.

With the coming of the rainy season, sub-chapter XXIX, the protagonist begins to compose his Threnos. It has been raining for two days, and at night he feels the musical

score gestating within him:

...algo como la maduración y compactación de elementos informes, disgregados, sin sentido al estar dispersos, y que, de pronto, al ordenarse, cobran un significado preciso. Una obra se ha construido en mi espíritu; es "cosa" para mis ojos abiertos o cerrados... (p. 220)

The creative act is the ordering of elements so that they have an internal and external significance, meaningfully relating the ego and the transpersonal world. Form is the key to creation: the third and mediating term between the rigidity of conscious formulation and the chaos of the unfathomable unconscious.<sup>67</sup> The absence of this meaningful interpenetration produced the disorder of his previous existence. He admits "mi pereza de entonces, mi flaqueza ante toda incitación al placer no eran, en el fondo, sino formas del miedo a crear sin estar seguro de mí mismo..." (p. 221). The fear of abstractions, formulas removed from the primal realities, caused a lack of faith in his own creativity. Now that he has again experienced these realities and related himself to them, the faith in and power of creation are restored.

Upon awakening in the morning, he acknowledges that the form of his musical composition derives from the direct experience of the funerary rites of the pre-Paleolithic Indians:

Ante la vision de un auténtico treno, renació en mí la idea del Treno, con su enunciado de la palabra--célula, su exorcismo verbal que se transformaba en música al necesitar más de una entonación vocal, más de una nota, para alcanzar su forma--forma que era, en ese caso,

la reclamada por su función mágica, y que, por la alternación de dos voces, de dos maneras de gruñir, era, en sí, un embrión de Sonata-- . (p. 224)

The threnos, described as the origin of music, employs the Word in its primordial function of invoking the object named; and, as the ensuing dialog requires two voices--the priest and the spirit of the dead--, a primitive sonata form, with two opposing subjects, is produced. The protagonist's awareness of "la música transcurrida y de la no transcurrida" (p. 224), the original threnos and the Threnos he is about to compose, suggests a continuity of form and function rooted in a primal reality, linking the past and the future so that in the present he experiences "Recuerdos del Porvenir."

He rushes to the Adelantado in order to secure a notebook. Back in his hut with the notebook, sub-chapter XXX, he searches for a text, a libretto for his Threnos. He would prefer to have had Shelley's Prometheus Unbound or Goethe's Faust, but there are only three books in Santa Mónica: Rosario's copy of Genoveva de Brabante, Fray Pedro's Liber Usualis, and Yannes' La Odisea. He rejects the first two because their content and style are contrary to the primitive threnos. Then he debates the limited possibilities of the third work: since it is in Spanish, it would be difficult to have it performed in any "gran centro artistico" (p. 226). Finally, he decides that his composition should arise from a profound internal necessity, rather than the egotistic desire to have his work applauded.

Therefore, he will use La Odisea. Besides, it is his language, the language of "las Vidas de Santos, empastadas en terciopelo morado, que tanto me había leído mi madre: Santa Rosa de Lima, Rosario. En la coincidencia matriz veo como un signo propiciatorio" (p. 226). Here, he links two representations of the benevolent anima-figure, Santa Rosa and Rosario, with the maternal-imago, relating all three under the common bond of language, the matrix in which his creation will be engendered.

He chooses Book XI of the Odyssey, Ulysses' descent into Hades, as the most appropriate material for his Threnos: "en el episodio de la evocación de los muertos, encuentro el tono mágico, elemental, a la vez preciso y solemne..." (p. 226). As he begins to write, he notices that the music flows with a speed and spontaneity previously unknown to him. Earlier he had attempted to capture these same elementary forms, but without having experienced the context from which they had sprung. Now that he knows their significance the music emerges as "un brote de energía interior" (pp. 228-29). He has to stop at nightfall; but, already, he has completely filled the first notebook.

The following morning, sub-chapter XXXI, he encounters the first obstacle to his composition. Having filled the first notebook, he requests another from the Adelantado. He gives him one more; but says that it is the last, for the books are destined for recording the Law and other useful purposes, not for writing music. The musicians of this

epoch have no need for paper; they are "ministrales del Medievo, como los venidos en las carabelas primeras, y para nada necesitan de partituras ni saben, siquiera, de papeles pautados" (p. 229).

The protagonist runs to the church and complains to Fray Pedro, but the priest supports the Adelantado's decision. He adds that he also needs the notebooks to keep the ecclesiastic records like "el Registro de Casamientos" (p. 229). Then he admonishes the protagonist for not having formalized his relation to Rosario. The protagonist retorts that he could live quite well here without the priest's ministry, and departs the church.

Back in his own hut, the protagonist admits to himself that his anger at the priest was really only a manner of concealing his own dilemma: marriage with Rosario would require either the confession of his marriage to Ruth or lying in order to hide the fact. Both options are unacceptable. The first would preclude his union with Rosario in the eyes of Fray Pedro; the second would destroy his new-found psychic reintegration, placing his instinctual desire in opposition to his individual moral consciousness. He decides to put the question to Rosario. Her reply stuns and wounds him. She does not want to marry, for the legal bond would rob her of woman's only defense against man: the right to leave him if he does not fulfill her needs.<sup>68</sup> This puts the protagonist in the role of the one desirous of possession: "me siento humillado, en un plano de molesta

inferioridad, porque soy yo, ahora, el que quisiera obligarla a casarse..." (p. 233). At this moment, Nicasio, an old prospector who had contracted leprosy, thrusts his head through the window of the hut:

...es la lepra; la gran lepra de la antigüedad, la clásica, la olvidada por tantos pueblos, la lepra del Levítico... (p. 233)

The appearance of the leper at this point is extremely significant because it occurs precisely at the moment in which the protagonist expresses his desire to possess, to hold fast, the embodiment of the life force--Rosario. To do so is to pervert life, for the cleavage to the flesh, the temporal manifestation of life, resists the fulfillment of life that is a continual creation through sacrifice.<sup>69</sup> The protagonist's possessive desire, analogous to Nicasio's fixation on material wealth and its related leprous condition, reveals a death force that incapacitates the protagonist and fills Rosario with terror:

No sé que hacer frente a esa pesadilla, a ese cuerpo presente, a ese cadáver que gesticula tan cerca, agitando pedazos de dedos, y tiene a Rosario arrodillada en el suelo, muda de pavor. (p. 234)

This force, like the leper of Leviticus, must be extirpated from the community.<sup>70</sup> The protagonist is unable to do it; so the task falls to Marcos, the son of the law-giver, and he sends Nicasio back to the mountains.

The figure of the leper is more clearly delineated in the protagonist's second encounter with Nicasio, sub-chapter XXXI. The rains continue, and the landscape, inundated by

water, weighs heavy upon the protagonist. He has received another notebook from the Adelantado and the promise of many more after the rainy season, but now he is no longer creating, only correcting that which he had already written. Also, he questions Rosario's feelings toward himself:

No he vuelto a mentar el matrimonio a Rosario; pero su negativa de la otra tarde es algo que, por decir verdad, me escuece a lo hondo. Los días son interminables. (p. 235)

Existence has become oppressive, and creativity has come to a standstill. These are "los días del movimiento del humus, del fomento de la podre..." (p. 236). During this nadir of human existence, Nicasio reappears.

The leper attempts to violate a young Indian girl. Running through the village, screaming and bleeding, she reports the assault, and the men rise in arms. The protagonist reacts in a very personal manner:

...es como si yo, el hombre, todos los hombres, fuésemos igualmente culpables del repugnante intento, por el mero hecho de que la posesión, aun consentida, pone al varón en actitud agresiva. (p. 237)

Sexual union arises from a natural biological drive, and man's physiological makeup puts him in the role of the aggressor.<sup>71</sup> But when possession becomes an end in itself, it no longer serves the life force. Nicasio's attack upon an eight-year old girl is purely egotistic and without a creative function. Both the leper's crime and the protagonist's desire to hold Rosario pervert the life force and have no place within this city of primal realities.

Marcos puts an old rifle in the protagonist's hands,



and they depart in search of Nicasio. They find him kneeling in the middle of a clearing, and Marcos commands the protagonist to shoot.<sup>72</sup> He looks upon this living manifestation of Death who had just committed an abominable crime, but he is unable to fire:

Aquello debía ser suprimido, anulado, dejado a las aves de rapiña. Pero una fuerza, en mí, se resistía a hacerlo, como si, a partir del instante en que apretara el gatillo, algo hubiera de cambiar para siempre. Hay actos que levantan muros, cipos, deslindes, en una existencia. Y yo tenía miedo al tiempo que se iniciaría para mí a partir del segundo en que yo me hiciera Ejecutor. (p. 238)

The force within him is an individual moral consciousness distinct from the collective consciousness of this primitive epoch. Up until this point he has not been faced with a final and irreversible decision or act that would tie him to this level of existence. Were he to kill Nicasio, he would become as Marcos, capable of enforcing the Law that supports life, even when this requires the taking of life. Marcos seizes the rifle and shoots the leper; in killing he affirms the life force. This act separates the two men, indicating that the protagonist is not of this world of primal realities and must leave, and that Marcos will replace him alongside Rosario, the embodiment of the life force.<sup>73</sup>

In sub-chapter XXXII, the protagonist is rescued from without and thus ends his evasion of time.<sup>74</sup> A search plane passes through the valley, and he signals it with Rosario's shawl. The plane lands, and those on board inform him that they had thought him to be a prisoner of some Indian tribe

and that various pilots have been searching the area for over a week. The Curator, in that he directed them to this region, was instrumental in the protagonist's return. Now, faced with the decision of whether to accompany the pilots or to remain in Santa Mónica, the protagonist experiences the activation of an internal conflict: "un agitarse de otro que también soy yo" (p. 241). There is a part of him that has been rejuvenated by his residence in Santa Mónica, but another part of him is drawn to the contemporary world. These pilots have come to call him back with "una convocatoria inaplazable, que tenía que alcanzarme por fuerza, dondequiera que me encontrara" (p. 241). Their language evokes the text--Prometheus Unbound--upon which he desires to compose his Threnos. He needs books, paper, and ink in order to create. In short, he needs to fulfill his destiny:

Todos ellos [los de Santa Mónica], con sus manos, con su vocación, cumplen un destino. Caza el cazador, adoctrina el fraile, gobierna el Adelantado. Ahora soy yo quien debe tener un oficio--el legítimo--fuera de los oficios que aquí requieren el esfuerzo común. (p. 243)

He decides to return so that he can deliver the musical instruments, obtain the necessary materials for his Threnos, and get a divorce from Ruth. Also he realizes that his work needs an audience, not for the empty vanity of applause, but because:

Lo hecho no acaba de estar hecho mientras otro no lo mirara. Pero bastaba que uno solo mirara para que la cosa fuera, y se hiciera creación verdadera por la mera palabra de un Adán nombrando. (p. 244)

Artistic creation only becomes real when it is recreated. The artist, through the particular medium of his craft, calls forth forms that exist only potentially in themselves; similarly, his work must be actualized by another capable of perceiving and appreciating--recreating--his creation. The protagonist's work cannot be appreciated by the inhabitants of Santa Mónica: their existence is still closely bound to a world of transpersonal realities, whereas his task is to re-illuminate the contemporary world of overdeveloped consciousness with these very primal realities. He feels that he can overcome this obstacle by having his compositions sent out; therefore, he intends to come back to Santa Mónica to stay.

Rosario's reaction to his vacillations and his decision passes from indifference to contempt. Marcos, her future companion, puts the protagonist's luggage on the plane. As they take off, she walks away, head down, and her long black hair seems like a "velo de viuda" (p. 245). For her, the protagonist has died. The last sight before the plane ascends above the clouds re-enforces the cause of their separation: "Lejos, en el lugar donde cayó Nicasio, hay un gran revuelo de buitres" (p. 245). His failure to kill Nicasio marked the protagonist as an outsider, an individual moral consciousness; and Marcos, who had to perform the execution, will now assume the protagonist's position at the side of Rosario. However, the separation was necessary, for his attachment to Rosario had grown possessive and

ceased to be transformative.

Chapter Six consists of six sub-chapters and is preceded by a quotation from Quevedo's Los sueños:

Y lo que llamáis morir es acabar de morir,  
y lo que llamáis nacer es empezar a morir,  
y lo que llamáis vivir es morir viviendo.  
(p. 247)<sup>75</sup>

This seventeenth-century baroque conceit reveals the apparent paradox that life is death and suggests that death is the beginning of life. The protagonist must resolve this contradiction before he can creatively re-enter his existence within time. Profane existence is a death in time. Only through the sacrifice of temporal existence to a transpersonal value, a dying to profane existence, can man transcend his limitations and achieve a real life, the fulfillment of a destiny within time.

Structurally, Chapter Six corresponds to the hero's return to the contemporary world. However, the protagonist tries to go back to Santa Mónica and the chapter breaks into two parts of three sub-chapters each: his first re-entry into the life of the contemporary city and his unsuccessful attempt to get back to Santa Mónica.

Exactly six weeks after the commencement of his journey, July 18, sub-chapter XXXIV, the protagonist returns to the point of departure. The night before his arrival, when he was in the Latin American capital, he received a long distance telephone call from Ruth. Amidst tears and expressions of love, she had said that she would come to be with him. But the protagonist, realizing how difficult it would

be to get a divorce in an Hispanic country, replied that he would catch the night plane and meet her there.

As he approaches the world he had fled, he is filled with apprehension: "...yo me acerco con angustiosa aprensión a ese mundo que dejé hace mes y medio..." (p. 249). The crossing of the return threshold is a difficult undertaking fraught with danger, for it entails the incorporation of eternal values into a temporal existence.<sup>76</sup> It is particularly hazardous for the protagonist, because he has not yet identified with any bearer of the transcendent spiritual principle. Although the delivery of the instruments effects a reconciliation with the Curator, the protagonist cannot accept the canons of the European cultural tradition represented by him. He repays his debt to the Curator, but cannot identify with him. Neither can he relate to the Law of the Adelantado, for this Law is of the epoch of Genesis, before the development of individual consciousness. Finally, he has rejected the value of Fray Pedro's mission. Without any such supporting principle, the protagonist is in danger of being reduced by the "falsas maravillas" (p. 255) of the contemporary world. The most immediate threat is Ruth, who binds him to this world through the ties of matrimony.

At the airport he is received as a hero, "un mártir de la investigación científica" (p. 250); and his wife, who has given up her theatrical career, now enacts the role of Penelope welcoming home her Ulysses (p. 254). After the formal reception, she discovers that Houche, her husband's

mistress, had accompanied him on the voyage. Her Penelopean role collapses, and she becomes the embittered Medea seeking revenge. The protagonist defends himself against her by invoking the figure of Rosario:

...un arcano hecho persona, cuyos prestigios me habian marcado, luego de pruebas que debían callarse, como se callaban los secretos de una orden de caballería. (p. 257)

Through her, he has experienced the primal and authentic nature of woman. Now he can no longer accept Ruth, and he asks for a divorce. She immediately becomes Themis, reclaiming Justice, threatening a long and complicated legal battle. As a last resort, she affects the role of mother-to-be and, with this desperate attempt to reclaim her husband, she retires to her room. The protagonist, exhausted by her frightening display of theatrical talent, flees to the street.

Now his dilemma becomes that of the hero between two worlds and unable to reconcile himself with either of them.<sup>77</sup> As he wanders through the streets, sub-chapter XXXV, he re-experiences the realities of contemporary life and finds them as empty as Ruth's theatrical outburst. Here, life is governed by "un ritmo ajeno a sus voluntades orgánicas" (p. 259). Pedestrians rush by in order to reach the next corner when the traffic light turns green. There seems to be no alternative to this mechanized existence other than the motionless derelicts lying in the false alleyways between buildings.

He enters a church and is confronted by the uncon-

scicusness of his contemporaries to the mystery enacted before them. The music and language of the Mass have lost their functional significance and have become "canto que se oye y no se escucha, como se oye, sin escucharse, el muerto idioma que lo acompaña" (p. 260).<sup>78</sup> They are relics of the past whose origin has been forgotten, and now they have deteriorated into empty forms. No longer do they mediate between the sensuous and the mystery beyond, but they are reduced to a meaningless stimulation of the senses, a mechanical repetition of formulas devoid of their original symbolic function.

Back on the street again, he sees around him a "ciudad cubierta de ruinas más ruinas que las ruinas tenidas por tales" (p. 261). Here the agonizing and sick imitations of earlier architectural forms stand beside the products of a contemporary architecture that still has not been able to substitute the old order "por órdenes nuevos ni por un gran estilo" (p. 261). The very structural form of the contemporary city reveals a poverty of spiritual value and exemplifies a cultural decadence surpassing the ruins of civilizations already dead.

It is the end of the working day, and the streets are full of men and women, emaciated figures who have lived "un día más sin vivirlo, y repondrán fuerzas, ahora, para vivir mañana un día que tampoco será vivido..." (p. 261). He enters the Venusberg cafe where he used to come with Mouche in order to escape the imposed mechanical rhythm of the

time-clock in an orgy of dance and drink. The walls are covered with a profusion of grotesque sexual imagery; and, in the darkness of the dance floor, driven by primitive rhythms, figures grasp and caress each other in a vain attempt to escape from their own encapsulated existence. The dance exhibits the futility of a "movimiento colectivo que tiene algo de ritual subterráneo, de danza para apisonar la tierra--sin tierra que apisonar..." (p. 263).<sup>79</sup> Their desire to participate in a reality transcending themselves is frustrated by the layers of concrete separating them from the earth below.

Returning to the street, the protagonist reflects upon the supreme irony of this decadent culture trying to regain its instinctive energies through the performance of primitive rituals and fetishes:

Buscaban la barbarie en cosas que jamás habían sido bárbaras cuando cumplían su función ritual en el ámbito que les fuera propio... (p. 263)

These rituals originally served to defend man against the forces of chaos, to integrate him in a cosmological order. Now, they are being employed for the opposite purpose: to deliver him over to the disorder of unconscious existence.<sup>80</sup>

In this apocalyptic contemporary world, man no longer experiences transpersonal values to which he can relate in a creative manner, and mechanical time has become the Master, fragmenting the existence of the alienated individual in a succession of days without any meaningful direction. Around him, the protagonist sees men without destinies, lives that



are a living death in time. From the Adelantado he had learned that "la máxima obra propuesta al ser humano es la de forjarse un destino" (pp. 263-64). Through his encounter with primal realities, he has experienced timeless values that transcend normal chronology: "Los Recuerdos del Porvenir" (p. 264). Now he asserts:

Sólo creo ya en el presente de lo intacto; en el futuro de lo que se crea de cara a las luminarias del Génesis. No acepto ya la condición de Hombre-Avispa, de Hombre-Ninguno, ni admito que el ritmo de mi existencia sea marcado por el mazo de un cómitre. (pp. 264-65)

In sub-chapter XXXVI, October 20, the protagonist falls before the "falsas maravillas" (p. 255) of the contemporary world. Over three months have passed, and the legal battle with Ruth continues. Unable to secure employment, the protagonist is rapidly running out of funds and feels himself more and more a prisoner of this life that he cannot accept. Distracting himself by reading, he happens upon the story of Santa Rosa de Lima in the Vidas de Santos. There is the same verse that he saw before his first departure:

¡Ay de mí! ¿A mi querido  
quién le suspende?  
Tarda y es mediodía,  
pero no viene. (pp. 16-17, 267)

This augments his desire to return to Rosario, to possess the benevolent anima-figure.

He leaves his room; and, in a bookshop, he meets the malevolent anima-figure Mouche. Her appearance and seductive behavior recall the "debilidad ante la incitación" (p. 268) that he had felt in his youthful adventures with

prostitutes. He experiences an internal conflict between the spirit and the flesh, a struggle that in the past had always been won by the forces of sensuous pleasure. Tonight, he intends to resist the call of the flesh; but, after a few drinks in Mouche's apartment, he succumbs to her sexual prowess. His weakness before sensuous incitation underscores his failure to identify with a transcendent spiritual principle, and it threatens to return him to the same meaningless existence prior to the journey:

...supe del agobio y la decepción de quienes vuelven a una carne ya sin sorpresas, luego de una separación que pudo ser definitiva, cuando nada une ya al ser que esa carne envuelve. (p. 270)

The astrological signs on the wall remind him of his voyage. The Hydra is Ruth; she, along with his musical profession, bind him to the contemporary world. Coma Berenices is the virgin locks of Rosario, the embodiment of the primal feminine nature that he longs to recapture. They represent the opposite poles of his journey, and he remains somewhere between the two figures. Now, Mouche, hoping to draw his attention away from such thoughts, hands him a religious magazine containing a photograph of Fray Pedro. Upon reading the article, he discovers that Fray Pedro had penetrated into the land of the hostile Indians, the same region he had pointed out to the protagonist from the mountain (pp. 214, 271). Later, a prospector found the priest's mutilated body floating in a canoe. The protagonist is overcome by remorse and flees Mouche's apartment.

Alone at night in the streets, he imagines the cruel tortures that the priest must have suffered. His own failure before Mouche's seductiveness reveals the same lack of faith in spiritual principles that had caused him to ridicule Fray Pedro's ministry. He now perceives a profound and exemplary significance in the priest's death:

...no acabo de hallar en su terrible muerte el horror que me causaron otras muertes de hombres que no sabían por que morían...Fray Pedro de Henestrosa había tenido la suprema merced que el hombre puede otorgarse a sí mismo: la de salir al encuentro de su propia muerte, retarla y caer traspasado en lucha que sea, para el vencido, asaeteada victoria de Sebastián: confusión y derrota final de la muerte. (p. 271)

This is the victory of the martyred saint, who, through his voluntary self-sacrifice, dedicates his life to a transpersonal value and transcends the final limitation of human existence.<sup>81</sup> The protagonist has not yet identified with a transpersonal value that would allow him to enter creatively into the temporal spectrum of his own destiny.

In sub-chapter XXXVII, December 8, we encounter the protagonist in Puerto Anunciación. More than six weeks have passed, and finally he has succeeded in obtaining a divorce from Ruth. Now, he is trying to get back to Santa Mónica. Simón, a young cobbler who had abandoned Santiago de los Aguinaldos and established himself as a river-trader, offers to take him up stream past Yannes' old mining camp.<sup>82</sup> Tomorrow he intends to begin the final leg of his journey back to the land of Genesis; and, reflecting upon the portentous astrological signs, he feels that "escapé de la Hidra, tomé

el Navío Argos, y que quien ostenta de Cabellera de Berenice debe estar al pie de las Rúbricas del Diluvio... (p. 275).

Freed from the Hydra Ruth, he now envisions his reunion with the archetypal virgin Rosario.

As the embodiment of the eternal feminine principle, she represents an experiential modality of the timeless that could deliver him from dissolution in the alienating abstractions and meaningless sensuous excitations of the contemporary world. His envisioned reunion with the anima-figure is related to

...una cuestión de transcendencia mayor para mi andar por el Reino de este Mundo--la única cuestión, en fin de cuentas, que excluye todo dilema: saber si puedo disponer de mi tiempo o si otros han de disponer de él, haciéndome bogavante o espaldero de galeras... (pp. 275-76)

Again, without a meaningful relation to a transcendent value, temporal existence shatters under the blows of mechanical time. The protagonist still feels that he can find this relation in Santa Mónica. However, he is unaware that his union with Rosario had ceased to be transformative and that he could not fulfill his destiny in the land of Genesis. Therefore, this conscious attempt to recapture his experience of the primal realities exhibits regressive characteristics and must be thwarted.

The following morning, December 9, sub-chapter XXXVIII, he and Simón begin the voyage up river. As they pass Yannes' old camp, there are indications that the protagonist's return to Santa Mónica will be frustrated. Unseasonal rains have raised the river above its normal course, inundating

the "Sign" that marks the passageway into the marvelous realm. The protagonist does not yet realize that the "Sign" is hidden, and they continue.

At this point the masculine spiritual principle blocking his regressive return appears in the form of the bird:

Esta omnipresencia del ave, poniendo sobre los espantos de la selva el signo del ala, me hace pensar en la trascendencia y pluralidad de los papeles desempeñados por el Pájaro en las mitologías de este mundo. (p. 277)

The Bird-Spirit of the far north is associated with the various manifestations of the plumed serpent: Quetzalcóatl, Gucumatz, and Culcán.<sup>83</sup> These are the same avian spirits of the mountain that the protagonist ascended with Fray Pedro; and, as if to underscore this relationship between bird, mountain, and spiritual father, the author describes their grandeur as such that "hay que mirarlos desde las montañas..." (p. 277). These are the forces that work against his incestuous reunion with Rosario and that strive to guide him into the time of his destiny.<sup>84</sup>

After hours of searching, the protagonist finally realizes that the "Sign" is covered by the water. Simón, who suspected this all along, informs him that the river will not recede to its normal course until next April or May. Confronted with the long months of waiting that lie before him, he feels that Ruth has been victorious in the end:

...después de haber salido vencedor de la prueba de la tempestad, fui sometido a la prueba decisiva: la tentación de regresar. Ruth, desde otro extremo del mundo, era

quien había despachado los Mandatarios que me hubieran caído del cielo...para decirme que las cosas que me faltaban para expresarme estaban a sólo tres horas de vuelo.  
(p. 279)

Ruth, the Hydra, was instrumental in extricating him from Santa Mónica. The fact that the protagonist still views his attachment to the contemporary world in a negative fashion reveals that he has not identified with his destiny. As an artist, he must stand between the two worlds--Genesis and Apocalypse--in order to inform the latter of the primal realities experienced in the former. His world is that of Revelation; his task is to communicate the unfathomable, to create within time experiential manifestations of the timeless.

As they travel down river toward Puerto Anunciación, the protagonist verbalizes his failure:

...la marcha por los caminos excepcionales se emprende inconscientemente, sin tener la sensación de lo maravilloso en el instante de vivirlo: se llega tan lejos, más allá de lo trillado, más allá de lo repartido, que el hombre, envanecido por los privilegios de lo descubierto, se siente capaz de repetir la hazaña cuando se lo proponga--dueño del rumbo negado a los demás--. Un día comete el irreparable error de desandar lo andado, creyendo que lo excepcional pueda serlo dos veces, y al regresar encuentra los paisajes trastocados, los puntos de referencia barriados... (p. 280)

He realizes the impossibility of recapturing the marvelous through a conscious effort. It is a reality that transcends the limitations of the ego: the individual can participate in it and be illuminated by it, but it escapes any reduction to conscious formulation and manipulation. It can be experienced directly and spontaneously; however, its con-

tinual transformation resists rational conceptualization. Any such attempt of the ego to possess it would result in a form emptied of meaning.

In sub-chapter XXXIX, December 30, the protagonist tries to work on his Threnos. He has waited three weeks, here in Puerto Anunciación, for a guide who could lead him into the jungle. Time passes slowly, and he is unable to write. He does not wish to begin again, with forced memories and cold critical faculties, the composition that had flowed so freely in Santa Mónica. Every afternoon, to alleviate his growing frustration, he rests beside the rapids of the river and watches

...las esculturas de una espuma que bulle conservando su forma--forma que se hincha y adelgaza, según las intermitencias del empuje de la corriente, sin perder un dibujo, un volumen y una consistencia que transforman su mutación perenne y vertiginosa en objeto fresco y vivo... (p. 281)

This form, ever changing yet ever constant, reveals within the temporal realm a manifestation of the eternal: continually rejuvenated through its transformation, it nevertheless conserves its integrity. This is the paradox of life: only through death can the individual be reborn to an existence that transcends his temporal limitations.<sup>85</sup>

Yannes arrives in Puerto Anunciación, and the protagonist's hopes of returning to Santa Mónica are revived. Yannes, who has discovered a deposit of diamonds, seems a different person: nervous and secretive, consumed by the desire to guard his new found wealth. He relates his con-

flict with the inhabitants of Santa Mónica: "...tienen oro cerca y no sacan; yo quise trabajar: ellos dijeron matarme fusil" (p. 284). He almost suffered the same fate as Nicasio.

The protagonist asks him about Rosario; the Greek replies that she is now Marcos' woman and recently pregnant. This definitively frustrates his reunion with Rosario, but the protagonist refuses to accept the fact:

No sé lo que digo a Yannes. Lo que oigo es la voz de otro que le habla de derechos adquiridos sobre Tu mujer,...como si estuviese compareciendo ante un tribunal empeñado en destruirlo. (p. 284)

However, these protests about rights of possession are abrogated by Yannes' statement: "Ella no Penélope. Mujer joven, fuerte, hermosa, necesita marido. Ella no Penélope. Naturaleza mujer aquí necesita varón..." (p. 285). The truth is that Rosario belongs to no man: her destiny is prior to all laws. Her only need is a man to impregnate her, and her only function is to bring forth life.

He recalls that Rosario always regarded his writing with apprehension, as an act that did not correspond to any need in the world of Genesis. He was only a "Visitador" (p. 285) in Santa Mónica, for his profession was of another epoch. There existence was played out face to face with primal realities that needed no explanation because they were lived. On the other hand, the alienated existence of his world needed to be informed of these realities. As the artist, he must recreate these eternal forms for his epoch.



Finally, he realizes that he had journeyed to the realm of the eternal archetypes:

He viajado a través de las edades; pasé a través de los cuerpos y de los tiempos de los cuerpos, sin tener conciencia de que había dado con la recóndita estrechez de la más ancha puerta. Pero la convivencia con el portento, la fundación de las ciudades, la libertad hallada entre los Inventores de Oficios del suelo de Henoch fueron realidades cuya grandeza no estaba hecha, tal vez, para mi exigua persona de contrapuntista, siempre lista a aprovechar un descanso para buscar su victoria sobre la muerte en una ordenación de neumas.  
(p. 285)<sup>86</sup>

He has traveled through and beyond time and the temporal manifestation of life to reach the kingdom of the immortals. However, man must return from the archetypal world in order to fulfill his human destiny.

At the end, the protagonist will return to the contemporary world. He looks at the sign over the tavern "Recuerdos del Porvenir" and reflects upon the reality of traveling through time. He had evaded his epoch, but he admits that

...nada de esto se ha destinado a mí, porque la única raza humana que está impedida de desligarse de las fechas es la raza de quienes hacen arte, y no sólo tienen que adelantarse a un ayer inmediato, representando en testimonios tangibles, sino que se anticipan al canto y forma de otros que vendrán después, creando nuevos testimonios tangibles en plena conciencia de lo hecho hasta hoy. (p. 286)

Evasion is possible; but, as an end in itself, it ceases to be transformative. It is a means of regeneration, a relinking with the primal realities that should then allow the artist to return to his existence in time and there create tangible testimonies of the eternal. In short, the artist-

hero must be the master of two worlds: the marvelous and the real.

Now it remains to be seen whether he will be able to survive his re-entry into the contemporary world, whether he will conserve his integrity and there fulfill his destiny: "Falta saber ahora si no seré ensordido y privado de voz por los martillazos del Cómitre que en algún lugar me aguarda" (p. 286). He leaves the marvelous realm behind, as he must, but it does not cease to exist. As he begins the trip down river, the waters have already started to recede, and on a "cierto tronco escamado...empieza a verse, cuando la corriente se aclara, el Signo dibujado en la corteza, a punta de cuchillo, unos tres palmos bajo el nivel de las aguas" (p. 286). The "Sign" marking the passageway is still there, and the voyage of adventure might be accomplished again if undertaken unconsciously, without conscious and egotistic desire.

In summary, we note that Carpentier, following the pattern of the monomyth, has recreated within the contemporary context the archetypal voyage of the hero. To be sure, the protagonist of Los pasos perdidos is not identical to the heroes of epic poetry or of classical mythology. He is the first to admit that his quest involved no great physical deeds or epic actions:

Pobre es mi historia en cuanto a los peligros arrostrados--si se deja de lado la tormenta en los raudales---. Pero, en cambio, he encontrado en todas partes la solicitud inteligente, el motivo de meditación, formas de arte, de poesía, mitos, más instructivos para comprender al

hombre que cientos de libros escritos en las bibliotecas por hombres jactanciosos de conocer al Hombre. (p. 217)

He did not venture forth to slay monsters or conquer a foreign land but to rediscover the origin and the primal realities of human existence; therefore, his adventure does not reveal heroic acts of physical prowess. Nevertheless, his journey and the archetypal heroic voyage do serve a common function:

La liberación del encadenado Prometheus , que asocio mentalmente a mi fuga de allá, tiene implícito un sentido de resurrección, de regreso de entre las sombras, muy conforme a la concepción original del treno, que era canto mágico destinado a hacer volver un muerto a la vida. (p. 225)

The journey is realized between the two limits of temporal existence: Apocalypse and Genesis. These oppositional poles may be formulated in the terms of actuality and potentiality, the former being the dissolution of forms characterized by a sclerosed ego consciousness and the latter a state of becoming still close to the original participation mystique. Beyond either limit the individual ceases to exist; between the two, human existence unfolds. Although the normal passage is from birth to death, the hero, through an exceptional act, can re-enter the world of Genesis.<sup>87</sup> The protagonist of Los pasos perdidos accomplishes such an exceptional act--the recovery of the musical instruments--and his subsequent immersion in the time of the Beginning restores his creative potentiality.

Once rebirth is achieved, the path leads back to the

point of departure, for the protagonist's destiny lies between the two worlds in the realm of Revelation. The voyage is circular in that it not only allows a regenerative re-entry into origins, but it also requires a return to the contemporary world. The goal is not incestuous regression to the maternal womb, nor is the completed journey a meaningless repetition of a circular route. Its path, like the spiral, continually ascends to a higher plane. The protagonist returns transformed, illuminated by the primal realities of the Beginning and aware that his destiny must be fulfilled within time.

The mythical voyage of the hero appears today in the course of psychoanalytic treatment, and it is often associated with the individuation process described by Jung.<sup>88</sup> The constellation of the hero archetype usually occurs at two points in the development of the individual: first during youth when the ego breaks free from the maternal figure; and later, in the second half of life, when the ego re-enters the original undifferentiated state from which it had separated itself and, sacrificing its attachment to both the unconscious and the ego consciousness, relates to the transcendent function of the superordinate Self. The protagonist's journey in Los pasos perdidos corresponds to the second constellation of the archetype and could be interpreted as a description of the author's own psychological conflicts. The parallels between the protagonist's life and the author's biography are obvious: both were born in the

Antilles of European parents, were uprooted from this environment, experienced a frustrated musical career, and eventually returned to America.

However, Carpentier significantly does not reveal the protagonist's name and thereby suggests that it is not a personal voyage but the more universal adventure of Everyman. The synthetic character of his allusions strengthens this interpretation: the heroes of Greek mythology, the more recent European models of Goethe's Faust and Shelley's Prometheus, the historical figures who conquered the New World, and the mythic heroes of the indigenous cultures. Also the works cited in the novel point toward a symbiosis of various cultures: the Bible, Popul-Vuh, Chilam Balam, and European literary works.

The synthetic and universal character of Los pasos perdidos surpasses the author's previous literary achievements, although common elements can be seen throughout his production. In Ecue-yamba-o, structural unity was also maintained through the depiction of a single protagonist. However, the earlier work remained imprisoned within a very limited temporal and spatial environment: the rites of passage described in Ecue-yamba-o appear as regionalistic detail and fail to attain their universal implications, while in Los pasos perdidos the same pattern of separation, initiation, and incorporation is realized with all its archetypal significance. In El reino de este mundo, the hero archetype is visible, but its manifestations are frag-

mentary, as there is no central protagonist, and the controlling pattern is of an historical nature: the epochs of emanation and dissolution. In Los pasos perdidos, the historical cycle is suggested by the Genesisiac American continent and the Apocalyptic European culture, but the dominant element is the protagonist who undertakes the heroic voyage between the two worlds. Thus, we perceive in the latter novel a maturation and refinement of structural patterns evidenced in his earlier works.

## Footnotes

1. César Leante, "Confesiones sencillas de un escritor barroco," Cuba: revista mensual, vol. 3, no. 24 (1964), p. 33.
2. Supra, p. 46.
3. Luis Harss and Barbara Dohmann, Into the Mainstream: Conversations with Latin-American Writers (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), p. 52.
4. Klaus Müller-Bergh, La prosa narrativa de Alejo Carpentier en Los pasos perdidos, diss. (Yale, 1966), University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan, p. 62.
5. "Confesiones sencillas de un escritor barroco," p. 33.
6. Alejo Carpentier, El reino de este mundo (México, D.F.; Edición y Distribución Ibero Americana de Publicaciones, S.A., 1949), p. 9.
7. La prosa narrativa de Alejo Carpentier en Los pasos perdidos, p. 60.
8. "Confesiones sencillas de un escritor barroco," p. 32.  
See also: Alejo Carpentier, Tientos y diferencias (ensayos) (México, D.F.: Universidad Autónoma de México, 1964), p. 129; and Claude Fell, "Rencontre avec Alejo Carpentier," Les langues modernes, 59<sup>e</sup> année, no. 3 (mai-juin 1965), p. 364.
9. André Breton, Les pas perdus, 8<sup>e</sup> édition (Paris: Gallimard, 1924), p. 8.
10. Ibid., p. 11.
11. Carl Gustav Jung and C. Kerényi, Essays on a Science of

Mythology: The Myth of the Divine Child and the Mysteries of Eleusis, trans. R.F.C. Hull. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1949), p. 115.

12. Alejo Carpentier. Los pasos perdidos, 2<sup>a</sup> edición (México, D.F.: Compañía General de Ediciones, 1966), p. 27.

Note: further references to Los pasos perdidos are from the same edition, and page numbers will be included within the text.

13. Essays on a Science of Mythology, pp. 101-24: See also Carl Gustav Jung, Symbols of Transformation: An Analysis of the Prelude to a Case of Schizophrenia, trans. R.F.C. Hull, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1956), pp. 258, 340.

14. Anna Elizabeth Balakian. Literary Origins of Surrealism. (New York: King's Crown Press, 1947), p. 17.

15. André Breton. Point du jour, 2<sup>e</sup> édition. (Paris: Gallimard, 1934), pp. 7-9.

16. Ibid., pp. 29-30.

17. The term "monomyth" was originally employed by James Joyce in Finnegans Wake (New York: The Viking Press, 1939), p. 581. Joseph Campbell later studied this literary technique in A Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1944), and this work was reflected both in French and Spanish journals: Eugene Jolas, "Elucidation du Monomythe de James Joyce," Critique: revue générale des publications françaises et étrangère, 3<sup>e</sup> année (juillet 1948), tome IV, no. 26, pp. 579-95; and Joseph Campbell and Henry Morton Robinson, "Clave esquemática para Finnegans



Wake" Las armas y las letras (Bogotá) vol. II, no. 4 (junio 1949), pp. 9-20. Campbell offers a concise definition of the monomyth in The Hero with a Thousand Faces (New York: Pantheon Books, 1949), p. 30: "The standard path of the mythological adventure of the hero is a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: separation--initiation--return: which might be named the nuclear unit of the monomyth." Although we do not know if Carpentier was aware of the term employed by Joyce in Finnegans Wake, the author definitely was cognizant of its universal implications as developed by Joyce in Ulysses. See: "Confesiones sencillas de un escritor barroco," p. 33, Tientos y diferencias, p. 14; and "Rencontre avec Alejo Carpentier," p. 104. Also, Carpentier had used the same structural pattern as early as Ecue-yamba-o (1933).

18. Deuteronomy 28: 23, 29.

19. The Call to Adventure represents the first rupture of everyday reality and foreshadows the hero's separation from the contemporary world. The Hero with a Thousand Faces, pp. 49-58. Note: the author later refers to this episode as the "invitación al viaje." Pasos perdidos, p. 128.

20. Sacred time--cyclical or eschatological--is not homogeneous, as is secular duration, but is indefinitely reversible. Mircea Eliade, Myths, Dreams and Mysteries: The Encounter between Contemporary Faiths and Archaic Realities, trans. Philip Mairet (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1960), pp. 30-31.

21. Müller-Bergh has already noted that San Francisco Carraciolo was the patron of prisoners in Naples and that this reference underscores the protagonist's imprisonment within the contemporary world. La prosa narrativa de Alejo Carpentier en Los pasos perdidos, p. 169.
22. Percy Bysshe Shelley, Prometheus Unbound, ed. Lawrence John Zillman. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1959), p. 131, Act I, ll. 4-8.
23. The confessional is both an archaic method of purification and the prototype of psychoanalytic treatment. Carl Gustav Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul, trans. W.S. Dell and Cary F. Baynes. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1939), p. 35.
24. The tentacles of the Hydra come to represent Ruth and the protagonist's attachment to the contemporary epoch, Argo Navis is the hero's ship, Sagittarius the astrologer Mouche, and Coma Berenices the virgin locks of Rosario. Pasos perdidos, pp. 29, 38, 52, 270, 275.
25. A possible source for the name of the protagonist's mistress is Breton's "Introduction au discours sur le peu de réalité." Breton employs "une mouche artificielle entièrement blanche" to attract l'inconnu. Point du jour, p. 12.
26. Ecclesiastes, 1:15.
27. This is the original psychological situation before the independence of the ego and was governed by the law of participation mystique. Erich Neumann, The Origins and History of Consciousness, trans. R.F.C. Hull. (New York:

Pantheon Books, 1954), p. 266.

28. Prometheus Unbound, p. 151, Act. I, l. 338.

29. The symbolism of the vegetation daemon or numen seems to derive from the cycle of new births evidenced in Nature. The regenerative power itself is frequently associated with a feminine figure. See Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, trans. Ralph Manheim. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), vol. II, p. 189; Carl Gustav Jung, Symbols of Transformation, p. 396; and Jung's The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, trans. R.F.C. Hull. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1959), p. 222.

30. Bread, as a basic source of nourishment, has traditionally acquired, in Christianity and more primitive religions, a transformative nature that allows the interpenetration of the divine and human realms. The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, pp. 141-42; also Jung's Psychology and Religion: West and East, trans. R.F.C. Hull. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1958), p. 254; also Jung's Psychology and Alchemy, trans. R.F.C. Hull. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953), pp. 296-99.

31. Carpentier contrasts the Latin-American wars to those of Europe, emphasizing the internal nature of the former and suggesting a more primal struggle of brother against brother --Cain and Abel--in Latin America. Tientos y diferencias, p. 26.

32. Stair climbing has definite sexual implications since the protagonist is searching for his mistress. However, the

ascent also symbolizes a possible psychic reintegration, the passage to a state of enlightenment, and the freedom to abolish a limiting situation. See: Eliade's Myths, Dreams and Mysteries, pp. 116-19; and Jung's Psychology and Alchemy, pp. 53-56.

33. The fifteen lights of the secular retablo correspond numerically to the fifteen mysteries of the rosary.

34. El Libro de los Libros de Chilam Balam, traducción y textos paralelos por Alfredo Barrera Vásquez y Silvia Rendón. (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1948), pp. 170-71.

35. June 11 should be Sunday rather than Monday, for the previous sub-chapter is dated Saturday, June 10. Müller-Bergh maintains that this apparent chronological errata exemplifies Carpentier's impressionistic treatment of time. La prosa narrativa de Alejo Carpentier en Los pasos perdidos, pp. 104-06. Carlos Santander attempts to extract a symbolic meaning, affirming that the author avoids Sunday because it denotes a day of rest unattainable for the protagonist. "Lo maravilloso en la obra de Alejo Carpentier," Atenea, XLII, tomo CLIX, 409 (jul-sep 1965), pp. 105-06. Both fail to mention another possible explanation: Saturday, June 10, corresponds to the year 1950 and Monday, June 11, to 1951. Since these years are the only ones between 1947 and 1953 that correlate with the novel's chronology, we might suspect that the author composed the first two chapters in 1950 and the following chapters in 1951.

36. Jung regards the anima-figure as the "archetype of life

itself," The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, p. 32 and assigns it a feminine nature, The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, p. 59. The constellation of the anima-figure represents an unearthing of the primordial creative powers of the psyche, and frequently is expressed by the rescue of the dead or captive princess. See: Jung's The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, p. 34; and Neumann's The Origins and History of Consciousness, p. 210; also Erich Neumann, The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype, trans. Ralph Manheim. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1955), p. 32. The archetype itself is ambivalent, exhibiting both an elementary and a transformative character. The Great Mother, pp. 28-29. Rosario, as her name suggests, embodies both characteristics: the circular rosary evokes the image of the primitive telluric womb that perpetually regenerates life, and, at the same time, its religious significance denotes a transformative character. The fact that the protagonist encounters her upon the Mountain reinforces her transformative nature, for the Mountain symbolizes an ascension toward the transpersonal Self and points toward the psychic re-integration of the protagonist. The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, p. 219.

37. Neumann's term arises from the same phenomenon that Carpentier describes: the withdrawal of psychic projections and the reduction of transpersonal contents to intellectual concepts. When carried to extremes, this produces a splitting off of the ego from the unconscious, resulting in an

ego emptied of transcendent meaning and the activation of now destructive unconscious forces. The Origins and History of Consciousness, p. 389.

38. Ibid., p. 443.

39. Jung emphasizes the feminine symbolism of the basket-ship used by the hero in his night-sea-journey and asserts that this image arises from a desire to attain rebirth through a return to the womb. Symbols of Transformation, pp. 209-12. Later, upon crossing the telluric threshold in his Manati--Argo Navis, the protagonist will be reborn. A possible source for the figure of Rosario is Murillo's painting of Santa Rosa de Lima in the Lázaro collection of Madrid, as reproduced in: Gutierrez Tibón Diccionario etimológico comparado de nombres propios de persona (México, D.F.: Unión Tipográfica Editorial Hispano Americano, 1956), p. 471. She is depicted kneeling before the Christ child who rests in a wicker basket surrounded by roses. The rose possesses a feminine symbolism similar to that of the basket-ship, and both underscore the regenerative feminine function of Rosario. Symbols of Transformation, p. 398; The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, p. 81.

40. The sexual act is perhaps the only immediate means available to contemporary man through which he can participate directly in a creative act with transpersonal implications. It is a human reproduction of the cosmological act of creation, and the physical moment of orgasm produces a death to this world that allows the individual to transcend

his personal limitations. It is both a real physiological activity and a sacrament. Mircea Eliade, Birth and Rebirth: The Religious Meanings of Initiation in Human Culture, trans Willard R. Trask, (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1958), p. 25; and Eliade's Myths, Dreams and Mysteries, p. 74.

41. The name of the vessel serves to re-enforce its feminine symbolism. The manatee, a large aquatic mammal found in the Orinoco, suggests an indigenous whale-like figure with re-generative uterine capabilities. Also its etymological derivation from the Cariban manattoui--'breast, udder, milk'--denotes a definite nourishing character.

42. Prometheus Unbound, p. 140, Act I, ll. 137-38.

43. The Odyssey of Homer, trans. Alexander Pope. (New York: Frederick Warne and Co., 1904?), p. 92, Book VII.

44. At this point the Greek miner's actions reveal a possible source for his name. Jannes and Jambres appear in the Bible as two Egyptian magicians who competed with Moses before the Pharaoh in performing miracles. Exodus 7:11-12; Timothy II, 3:8. The name Jannes itself is of Aramaic, not Greek, origin and means 'he who seduces.' The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, editor Samuel Macauley Jackson. (New York: Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1910), vol. VI, p. 95. It is Yannes who seduces Mouche.

45. The priest's identification with Moses recalls the Biblical confrontation with Jannes and Jambres. These Egyptian magicians were not only Moses' antagonists but were

also idolatrous of gold. Ibid. Yannes, in his search for gold, later becomes identified with the egotistic desire for material possession that perverts the life force, whereas Fray Pedro represents the spiritual principle and serves as a paternal figure guiding the protagonist toward the fulfillment of his destiny.

46. The Odyssey of Homer, p. 2, Book I.

47. Ibid., p. 195, Book XIV.

48. Symbols of Transformation, p. 210.

49. Popul Vuh: Las antiguas historias del Quiché, trans.

Andrián Recinos, 7<sup>a</sup> edición. (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1965), p. 25.

50. Jung has found that the black stagnant waters of decay are frequently associated with the devouring character of the Terrible Mother. Symbols of Transformation, pp. 350-51.

51. Earlier the author aligned the "Falso Semblante" (Pasos perdidos, p. 122) with the demonic forces of chaos attacking the church in Santiago de los Aguinaldos. Here the jungle comes to represent the negative elementary character of the Great Mother, the form-devourer. Neumann's The Great Mother, p. 149.

52. The monkey, with its spiral-like prehensile tail, was related to the spiritual principle of Quetzalcóatl in various Indian mythologies. Fernando Ortiz, El Huracán: Su mitología y sus símbolos. (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1947), pp. 280, 421-22. For the spiritual symbolism of the bird see footnotes 62 and 83.



53. This is the basic factor distinguishing the elementary character of the Great Mother from the transformative nature of the anima: while the first tends to dissolve the ego in the unfathomable unconscious, the second fascinates without annihilating the ego, leading it forward to creative action. Neumann's The Great Mother, pp. 33-34.

54. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Faust, trans. George Madison Priest, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1941), p. 180, Second Part, Act I.

55. Psalms, 119:54

56. The Hero with a Thousand Faces, pp. 136 ff.

57. Genesis, 4:17, 21, 22.

58. Neumann's differentiation of collective and individual artistic creativity elucidates the distinction made by Carpentier. At the beginning of human development, art is a collective phenomenon, closely integrated with the life of the group and transpersonal realities, but with the growth of ego consciousness and specialization the artist assumes an antagonistic position toward society. His task is now to compensate for the separation effected by the ego and to reunite it with the original transpersonal realities. This is the protagonist's mode of creation, for he belongs to the contemporary epoch. Erich Neumann, "Art and Time" in Man and Time: Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1957), pp. 4-15; The Hero with a Thousand Faces, p. 388.

59. The Adelantado's name refers directly to his slight

physical stature--paulus 'little'--and possibly to his conversation. Earlier Carpentier described him as "un hombrecito," Pasos perdidos, p. 132. Later we find that he gave up the search for gold and devoted himself to a higher mission. Also, his name strengthens his relationship to Marcos: Saint Mark was the disciple of Saint Paul, as the Adelantado's son is the spiritual follower and deputy of his father. Gutierre Tibón, Diccionario etimológico comparado de nombres propios de persona, pp. 315, 409.

60. The phallic significance of the sun's rays is quite universal and has been described by Jung in Symbols of Transformation, pp. 100 ff.

61. The Odyssey of Homer, pp. 118-19, Book IX.

62. The bird, a transcendent masculine symbol, is opposed to the devouring elementary character of the Great Mother and is associated with the spiritual principle of the original culture hero: Quetzalcóatl in Toltec mythology. Jung's Symbols of Transformation, pp. 88, 164, 183; Neumann's The Great Mother, pp. 202, 204; Eliade's Myths, Dreams and Mysteries, pp. 105-07; Ortiz's El Huracán, p. 451. Earlier, Carpentier contrasted the masculine spiritual principle of the avian figure to the threatening chaos of the jungle. Pasos perdidos, pp. 122, 173.

63. Popul Vuh, pp. 31-32.

64. The crater with its prenatal forms represents the threat of uroboric incest, the annihilation of the ego within the maternal womb. Neumann's The Great Mother, pp. 172, 207.

That which remains in the original unconscious state can never become, for becoming requires differentiation, the separation from containment in the primal mother. This is accomplished through the spiritual principal of the spermatoc Word that, like a sword, divides and wrests form from the void. Jung's Symbols of Transformation, pp. 359, 417.

65. In the early stages of human development this type of punishment would suffice, for then the individual functioned solely as part of the group, and his separation from the group removed him from the sphere of meaningful activity. Neumann's The Origins and History of Consciousness, p. 109. This dominance of the collective group consciousness also indicates that the protagonist will not be able to exercise his profession here.

66. Fernando Ortiz cites various Latin American poets who have realized the symbolic potential of the caracole, and many others could be included. El Huracán, pp. 544-45. In addition, the spiral form of the caracole has a direct relevance to the protagonist's journey: it is the labyrinthine way of the night-sea-voyage, the circular path of transformation that returns the hero reborn to the point of departure. Neumann's The Great Mother, p. 177; Octavio Paz, Claude Lévi-Strauss o el nuevo festín de Esopo (México, D.F.: Editorial Joaquín Mortiz, S.A., 1967), p. 122.

67. Erich Neumann, Art and the Creative Unconscious, trans Ralph Manheim. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1959), p. 196.

68. Rosario's position corresponds to the original signi-

ficance of the virgin: an autonomous woman, independent of any particular earthly male. Neumann's The Great Mother, p. 267; and Art and the Creative Unconscious, p. 11. As an embodiment of the telluric life force, she should remain free from any union that does not further its reproduction.

69. Eliade's Myths, Dreams and Mysteries, pp. 184-85.

70. Leviticus 13:46.

71. Géza Róheim, The Gates of the Dream. (New York: International Universities Press, 1952), p. 391; Erich Neumann, Amor and Psyche: The Psychic Development of the Feminine, trans. Ralph Manheim. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1956), p. 63.

72. The leper's posture, upon his knees awaiting execution, reveals a possible source for the name Nicasio. Although there are no parallels between the biographies of the leper and Saint Nicasius, the latter is also depicted as kneeling before his executioners in the facade above the Saint-Sixte portal of the Reims<sup>o</sup> cathedral. Etienne Moreau-Nélaton, La Cathédrale de Reims. (Paris: Librairie Centrale des Beaux-Arts, 1916), plate 95. In addition, Nicasio derives from the Greek nike---'victory'---, and, in spite of the fact that the protagonist does not conquer the death force represented by the leper, his confrontation with Nicasio does serve to separate him from the primitive context in which he is enmeshed and foreshadows his return to the contemporary world where he can fulfill his destiny.

73. The neophyte is frequently required to kill a man during

his initiation. Eliade's Myths, Dreams and Mysteries, p. 200. The fact that the protagonist cannot perform the act proves that he stands apart from the Law. For him, killing would be an act of individual responsibility, whereas Marcos carries out the execution as a member of the superordinate group consciousness and in accordance with the Law. The protagonist's failure to comply with the Law separates him from the group and causes him to forfeit his right to Rosario.

74. The Hero with a Thousand Faces, pp. 207-16.

75. Francisco Gómez de Quevedo y Villegas, Los sueños, editor Julio Cejador y Frauca. (Madrid: Clásicos castellanos, Ediciones de La Lectura, 1916), vol. 31, p. 213.

76. The Hero with a Thousand Faces, pp. 223-24.

77. Ibid., p. 229.

78. The distinction made here between the verbs hearing and listening is analogous to that made earlier between seeing and looking. Supra, p. 176.

79. Jung associates the treading movement of the dance with pleasurable interuterine kicking. Also, the dancer's foot is invested with a phallic significance, and the dance itself is an attempt to re-enter the womb, the unconscious state. Symbols of Transformation, p. 315.

80. Neumann, The Origins and History of Consciousness, p. 443.

81. Voluntary self-sacrifice makes the ego the object of a moral act. When accomplished on behalf of a superordinate authority, the transitory character of the ego is relati-

vized, and a partial identity with the transcendent Self or God is achieved that abrogates the fear of death. Jung's Symbols of Transformation, p. 431; and Psychology and Religion, pp. 257-58; Neumann's The Origins and History of Consciousness, p. 359; The Hero with a Thousand Faces, p. 130.

82. The young man's name suggests a relationship between himself and Fray Pedro. Simon was Peter's given name before his encounter with Christ. John 1:42. Also, both were inhabitants of Santiago de los Aguinaldos. Although there is no similarity between the two in character, they both serve a single function in the novel. The priest, through his ministry and exemplary death, introduced the protagonist to the temporal spectrum of his destiny, and now Simón leads him to the obstacle that frustrates his evasion of time.

83. Quetzalcóatl, Gucumatz, and Culcán or Kukulcán correspond respectively to the Toltec, Quiche, and Mayan versions of the plumed serpent. Ortiz's El Huracán, p. 450. He is the creator of civilization, and, as a bringer of light and order, he opposes the dark, chaotic state of undifferentiation represented by the Terrible Mother. Neumann's The Great Mother, pp. 203-08; El Huracán, pp. 275-90.

84. The reunion would be incestuous in that it would lead to the dissolution of the ego; it would be regressive instead of transformative. Jung's Symbols of Transformation, p. 235.

85. Eliade, Myths, Dreams and Mysteries, pp. 223-28.

86. Carpentier's use of the phrase "the recondite narrow

passage of the widest door" to describe the entrance into the abode of the archetypal figures suggests the Symplegades motif common to myths of the hero. These two rocky islands in the Euxine Sea clashed together killing all voyagers, but Jason passed between them. Symbolically they represent the contradictions and paradoxes that bar the way to all but the hero. The Hero with a Thousand Faces, p. 89; Eliade's Birth and Rebirth, p. 65. The transcendent realm that lies beyond the barrier actually is within and has been equated with the unconscious. The Hero with a Thousand Faces, p. 259.

87. Earlier, Carpentier had experimented with temporal retrogression in the short story "Viaje a la semilla" (1944).

Employing a technique similar to running a film backward, he simply reversed normal chronological order and depicted life as passing from death to the moment of conception in the maternal womb. At the end of the story, he underscored the regenerative function of his imaginative act, indicating that normal temporal succession leads only toward death.

Alejo Carpentier, Guerra del tiempo, 2<sup>a</sup> edición. (México, D.F.: Compañía General de Ediciones, S.A., 1966), p. 107.

In Los pasos perdidos, the reversal of time is accomplished without such a definitive break with reality.

88. Individuation refers to the process of becoming a psychological individual, a separate and indivisible whole. This requires an open collaboration between ego consciousness and the unconscious under the transcendent function of the Self. The Self is a superordinate subject that tran-

scends the limitations of the ego; and, through a meaningful relation to it, the sense of individual destiny is achieved. The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, p. 275; also Jung's Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, trans. R.F.C. Hull. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1953), pp. 175, 222. The way of individuation repeats the stages of the archetypal voyage of the hero: separation, initiation, and return. Symbols of Transformation, p. 293; Jolande Jacobi, Complex/Archetype/Symbol in the Psychology of C.G. Jung, trans. Ralph Manheim. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1959), p. 186.



## Chapter IV

## EL SIGLO DE LAS LUCES

Almost ten years passed before the appearance of Carpentier's next major novel. During this period he published several works developing archetypal patterns related to the New World scenario: the nouvelle El acoso (1956) and the short stories "El camino de Santiago" and "Semejante a la noche" in the collection Guerra del tiempo (1958). None, however, achieves the scope and synthesis exhibited in El siglo de las luces (1962). Its composition parallels that of El reino de este mundo (1949). Both novels treat the beginnings of the American Wars of Independence, during the latter part of the eighteenth and first part of the nineteenth century, and both novels were preceded by an extended period of historical documentation.<sup>1</sup> The earlier novel focused solely on the Haitian Wars of Independence, whereas El siglo de las luces endeavors to trace the propagation of the revolutionary movement from Europe, through the Antilles, to continental America.

Carpentier states that he began the novel in 1956, during his residence in Venezuela:

El origen de la novela fue un viaje que hice al golfo de Santa Fe, en la costa de Venezuela, y que se describe ampliamente en el capítulo veintiséis... El otro punto de arrancada de la novela fue una escala forzada en Guadalupe durante un viaje a París. Allí supe por primera vez de Victor Hugues, ese hacedor de la Revolución Francesa en las Antillas, y al llegar a París mi temor era que algún otro escritor lo hubiera utilizado como personaje. Felizmente

descubrí que era prácticamente desconocido y le di el rango de protagonista de mi próxima novela.<sup>2</sup>

In effect, Victor Hugues is the major historical figure in El siglo de las luces, but the author's intent surpasses a simple reconstruction of personal biography.<sup>3</sup> As we have noted in his earlier works, the archetypal pattern overshadows the purely individual circumstance. Here Hugues comes to embody the Revolution as a political process. His "hypo-static action"<sup>4</sup> reflects the overthrow of the established order, the consolidation of the ascending forces, and finally the decline of the political process.

The motivating force of the Revolution is apolitical, unbounded by party, place, or epoch. It is the belief in and the desire to attain an existence more complete than that of the present. In short, it is man's eternal longing for Paradise. This nostalgia pervades Carpentier's entire literary production from Menegildo's initiation into the world of his African ancestors in Ecue-yamba-ó to the heroic attempt of the Haitian Negroes to restore their own Promised Land in El reino de este mundo, and from the protagonist's journey to Genesis in Los pasos perdidos to Esteban's quest in El siglo de las luces. The object of the quest is the Promised Land, the restoration of the original sense of unity and identity with the Cosmos.

To attain this end, the present order must be abolished. In this respect, the effect of the Revolution coincides with the apocalyptic vision of eschatological religions. There-

fore, the description of the revolutionary process might well be expressed in the symbols of the Apocalypse. Carpentier was impressed with this correlation while working on El siglo de las luces. In an article published early in 1957, he states:

Pero, para alcanzar una victoria del Bien, ese orden ideal, el hombre--según los textos apocalípticos--debe padecer una confragación universal, pasar por paroxismos de dolor y de terror que constituirán, en cierto modo, una prueba final. Purificación por el fuego. Subversión de todo lo establecido. Caídas de estrellas, ríos de sangre, cataclismos e incendios... (¿No vea Saint-Just la Guillotina como un instrumento de Apocalipsis, necesario al logro de la felicidad y la justicia entre los seres humanos?)<sup>5</sup>

Again, after the publication of the novel, he affirms the connection between Revolution and the apocalyptic vision:

Ce «Siècle des Lumières», qui se termine dans le roman, est un siècle très long, très plein; il a bouleversé le monde. Le fameux tableau du roman, l'explosion dans la cathédrale, est le symbole de cette commotion produite par la Révolution française. J'ai voulu montrer qu'au moment où l'homme, sous l'influence de Diderot, de Voltaire et de Montesquieu, se veut rationnel, la société était parcourue par des courants et des manifestations irrationnels.<sup>6</sup>

The destructive force of the Revolution, represented by the painting "Explosion in a Cathedral," coincides with the end of the eighteenth century and thus symbolizes the end of the Aeon, the Apocalypse.

To heighten the pictorial representation of the Epoch, the author prefaces certain sections of the novel with captions from Goya's Los desastres de la guerra.<sup>7</sup> He declares that his intention was to lead the reader toward "un dénouement

que je croyais goyesque. Toute la fin est une vision de Goya."<sup>8</sup> The etchings cited outline in stark black and white the violence and suffering of the period, but beneath this realistic detail pulses a metaphysical irony that soon converts the apparent reality into its opposite. A prime example is the etching entitled "El sueño de la razón produce monstruos."<sup>9</sup> Here a man sleeps at his desk and sinister creatures of the night--bats, owls, cats--surround him. It would seem that when reason sleeps contents of the unconscious arise to threaten him, but as Aldous Huxley suggests in his foreword to The Complete Etchings of Goya:

Reason may also dream without sleeping; may intoxicate itself, as it did during the French Revolution, with the day-dreams of inevitable progress, of liberty, equality and fraternity imposed by violence, of human self-sufficiency and the ending of sorrow, not by the all too arduous method which alone offers any prospect of success, but by political re-arrangements and a better technology.<sup>10</sup>

This reaction corresponds to Esteban's disillusionment with the French Revolution as he reflects upon the supreme irony that the inhuman Reign of Terror had arisen in the very center of the Enlightenment, that the dream of human reason had produced the most monstrous barbarity.<sup>11</sup>

To be sure, El siglo de las luces is not a political novel in the pejorative sense, nor is it a condemnation of the Revolution as an instrument of social reform. Carpentier presents a more transcendental question. Man exists within a given context but always longs for a more perfect existence.

As he states in El reino de este mundo, Man's greatness lies precisely in this desire for transcendence.<sup>12</sup> Yet the Terrestrial Paradise is not to be attained through reasoned formulas of social amelioration that are dissociated from deeper human truths. As Jung affirms, Man, individually and collectively, needs his myths:

...the man who thinks he can live without myth, or outside it, is an exception. He is like one uprooted, having no true link either with the past, or with the ancestral life which continues within him, or yet with contemporary human society. He does not live...like other men...but lives a life of his own, sunk in a subjective mania of his own devising, which he believes to be the newly discovered truth. This plaything of his reason never grips his vitals. It may occasionally lie heavy on his stomach, for that organ is apt to reject the products of reason as indigestible. The psyche is not of today; its ancestry goes back millions of years. Individual consciousness is only the flower and the fruit of a season, sprung from the perennial rhizome beneath the earth; and it would find itself in better accord with the truth if it took the existence of the rhizome into its calculations. For the root matter is the mother of all things.<sup>13</sup>

This necessity is evidenced in El siglo de las luces.

Those who wish to free Man of his chains, confident in the self-sufficiency of human reason, disengage themselves from these deeper human truths, converting cathedrals into Temples of Reason. The Supreme Being and the Great Architect replace the God of Man. Later, at the spiritual nadir of the resulting Apocalypse, some revolutionaries recognize the necessity of more transcendent truths. The Supreme Being, product of reason, does not suffice. Before a crucifix in Cayenne, Esteban reflects:

...la debilidad de la Revolución, que tanto atronaba el mundo con las voces de un nuevo Dies Irae, estaba en su ausencia de dioses válidos. El Ser Supremo era un dios sin historia ...No se había hecho carne ni había habitado entre nosotros. A las ceremonias celebradas en su honor faltaba la Sacralidad; faltaba la continuidad de propósitos, la inquebrantabilidad ante lo contingente e inmediato...Esteban se complacía en la compañía del crucificado, sintiéndose devuelto a un clima familiar. Aquel Dios le pertenecía por herencia y derecho; podía rechazarlo, pero formaba parte del patrimonio de los de su raza. (p. 191)

The Supreme Being is not an authentic god. It lacks history and tradition, but even more it is cut off from the perennial root of all things, the subconscious.

The disequilibrium produced by the inflation of ego-consciousness and reason is represented pictorially in the painting "Explosion in a Cathedral." Having returned from his disillusioning adventure in the Revolution, Esteban is astounded by the prophetic significance of the painting:

Si la catedral, de acuerdo con doctrinas que en otros días le habían enseñado, era la representación--arca y tabernáculo--de su propio ser, una explosión se había producido en ella, ciertamente, aunque retardada y lenta, destruyendo altares, símbolos y objetos de veneración. Si la catedral era la Epoca, una formidable explosión, en efecto, había derribado sus muros principales, enterrando bajo un alud de escombros a los mismos que acaso construyeran la máquina infernal. Si la catedral era la Iglesia Cristiana, observaba Esteban que una hilera de fuertes columnas le quedaba intacta, frente a la que, rota a pedazos, se desplomaba en el apocalíptico cuadro, como un anuncio de resistencia, perdurabilidad y reconstrucciones, después de los tiempos de estragos y de estrellas anunciadoras de abismos. (pp. 216-17)

This multiple interpretation of the painting reveals a total disintegration of Esteban's personality and of the Epoch.

The only object that remains intact is part of the Christian Church, symbolic of the deeper truths denied by reason. However, Esteban's words should not be regarded as a categorical affirmation of the Christian religion, rather they are the reflexion of an anguished man who faces the irreversible and disintegrating progression of time that threatens the total annulment of his own being, and who seeks a means of transcending this menacing situation. To defend himself from this annihilating process, man has forged a formidable instrument, the religious myth:

The religious myth is one of man's greatest and most significant achievements, giving him the security and inner strength not to be crushed by the monstrousness of the universe. Considered from the standpoint of realism, the symbol is not of course an external truth, but it is psychologically true, for it was and is the bridge to all that is best in humanity.<sup>14</sup>

The individual, limited by his own nature and by his context, can identify with a timeless archetypal pattern and thus project his own being into eternity. Also the mythic process permits an interpenetration of the divine and the purely human realms through which the transitory and contingent nature of man and his world can participate in an orderly cosmological process.

In El siglo de las luces Carpentier employs the archetypal pattern of the cosmogonic round as in El reino de este mundo.<sup>15</sup> Here, Víctor Hugues, the French revolutionary leader, appears as the hero of action, the human transformer of the demiurgic potential that carries forward the cycle of

emanation and dissolution. His political career corresponds to the historical course of the French Revolution. At first he is the bearer of the liberating ideals of the Enlightenment, but as he reaches the zenith of his political career his position reverses. He becomes the Tyrant-Holdfast and, in the end, negates the very ideals that carried him to power. Esteban, an adolescent Cuban, stands to Victor as son to father. His task is not to transform the world through heroic acts but to penetrate beyond the realm of the phenomena to the knowledge of the essential unity of the cosmos. A Christ-like figure, he follows Victor to France and to Guadalupe, bearing on his shoulders the cross of paradoxes that he experiences in the Revolution. Finally he returns alone to Cuba to discover that the object of his quest was incarnate in his cousin Sofia. Sofia, the third major figure of the novel, functions as an anima-figure in relation to both Victor and Esteban. She bears the wisdom surpassing that of human reason. Before Esteban's withdrawal from the world or before Victor's political cynicism she proclaims the same life-affirmative words: "¿Hay que hacer algo!" (pp. 280, 296).

Carpentier divides the novel into seven chapters. The first chapter occurs in Cuba during the years 1790-91 and marks the entrance of Victor into the lives of the Cuban protagonists. The following three chapters take place between 1792 and late 1799 during which time Esteban completes his initiatory journey and returns to Cuba. The final three



chapters pass from the time of Esteban's return until early 1809. They describe Sofia's voyage to join Victor in Cayenne and her eventual reunion with Esteban. The overall structure of the novel corresponds to the cyclic process of the cosmogonic round--the emanation and dissolution of the apocalyptic French Revolution--but is further subdivided into the two quest-voyages. Esteban's journey coincides with the ascendancy of the Revolution and the arrival at the zenith of its power. However, the paradoxes experienced by Esteban reveal the imminent decline of the Revolution, and he withdraws from this world. Sofia's journey commences as the Revolution has already begun to convert into its opposite, and when she reaches Victor she finds the revolutionary spirit dead. Yet, instead of withdrawing from the world, she returns to Esteban and endeavors to give a new birth to the Revolution.

Chapter One consists of eleven sub-chapters and corresponds to the "Call to Adventure."<sup>16</sup> The first three sub-chapters describe the lives of three Cuban adolescents: Carlos, his sister Sofia, and their cousin Esteban. Sub-chapter four marks the entrance of Victor Hugues, a merchant from Port-au-Prince, into their lives. The remainder of Chapter One treats their awakening to adult existence and ends with the departure of Esteban who follows Victor to France. The action coincides with the first phase of the Revolution, the overthrow of the established order.

Sub-chapter I opens in Havana during the rainy season of

1790. Carlos, returning from the family's country estate, receives news of his father's death and burial. The elder brother's role in the novel is minor. Here, as in Chapter Seven, he recalls past events, and thus he is the instrument through which the reader is informed of the deaths in this Cuban family. The father's death produces no true remorse in the son other than that the period of mourning will deprive him of playing his new flute and that he will now be condemned to administering his father's commercial establishment, a task for which he has no inclination and which will frustrate his youthful dreams of adventure.

As Carlos enters the house in Havana, we encounter the two remaining members of the family: his sister Sofía and their cousin Esteban. Carlos and Sofía go to Esteban's room near the stables where they find him suffering an asthmatic attack, hanging "...de los más altos barrotes de la ventana, espigado por el esfuerzo, crucificado de bruces, desnudo el torso, con todo el costillar marcado en relieves, sin más ropa que un chal enrollado en la cintura" (p. 19). The brother and sister lower him in a re-enactment of "un descendimiento de cruz" (p. 19). From the very beginning Esteban is depicted in the imagery of the suffering Christ. Now it is a physical ailment; later it will be of a spiritual nature. Sofía's maternal relationship to him is revealed as she rests his head in her lap and vows not to return to the convent but to remain here to care for Esteban.

Three days later, in sub-chapter II, we gain a deeper insight into Esteban's character through his attraction to a certain painting, "Explosion in a Cathedral." When asked why he prefers this apocalyptic vision, he replies: "Es para irme acostumbrando..." (p. 21). Since his illness threatens the imminent disintegration of his own existence, it is natural that he would project his feelings into this painting and be fascinated by it. However, his words have the strange ring of prophecy for they also apply to a reality outside of himself, the coming Apocalypse of the Revolution.

In a recapitulation of the family's history, we learn that Carlos and Sofia's mother had died quite early. Esteban, an orphan since childhood, had been raised with them as another son in the family. Now, all three share the same fate: "...solos en el Universo, huérfanos desamparados en una urbe indiferente y sin alma..." (p. 25).<sup>17</sup> This is doubly true for Esteban who has lost not only his personal mother and father but also his foster-parents. They fall away from contact with society and, in their world of infantile fantasies, dream of adventurous journeys to far-off lands. In the night, contemplating the heavens, they speak "de planetas habitables--y seguramente habitados--donde la vida sería acaso mejor que la de esta Tierra perennemente entregada a la acción de la muerte" (p. 25).

These dreams of Paradise materialize in sub-chapter III. The Executor of their father's estate provides them money to

satisfy their every whim, and by Christmas of 1790 the house has become a labyrinth of boxes and crates--many as yet unopened--of furniture, books, and innumerable other acquisitions. Disorder reigns throughout the house, and the three orphans give themselves over to sleeping by day and at night engaging in a "juego perpetuo" (p. 28). Within this chaotic existence, Sofia again assumes a maternal relationship toward Esteban:

...estremándose en servir de madre de Esteban--madre tan posesionada de su nuevo oficio que no vacilaba en desnudarlo y darle baños de esponja cuando era incapaz de hacerlo por sí mismo. (p. 25)

She is not only the mother but the Divine Virgin, as the suggestion of matrimony reveals:

Un "marido", traído a aquella casa, era considerado de antemano como una abominación--un atentado a la carne tenida por una propiedad sagrada, común a todos, y que debía permanecer intacta. (pp. 27-28)

At this point, the situation becomes incestuous, not physically in a sexual manner, but psychologically in that the existence of the three orphans in this chaotic interuterine relationship prohibits the development of ego-consciousness and threatens a return to the uroboric state. Without embarking upon the process of differentiation they will not be able to fulfill themselves as individuals.

In sub-chapter IV, Victor Hugues appears as the father-figure who will lead them out of this undifferentiated state. This sub-chapter is headed by the first of the captions from Goya's Los desastres de la guerra: "Siempre sucede" (p. 30).<sup>18</sup>

The etching depicts a soldier whose horse has stumbled and fallen on the battlefield. It represents that apparent chance event that changes the course of a life. Victor's arrival is such an event.

A year has passed since their father's death, and the three orphans continue enclosed within their own world, "olvidados de la ciudad, desatendidos del mundo" (p. 30). Then on the morning of Easter Saturday, 1791, Victor knocks at the main door. There is no answer, for day is night to the inhabitants of the house, and they are now asleep. Undaunted, Victor walks around the house pounding insistently at every door. Finally, Carlos arises just in time to glimpse a figure turning the near corner. That evening he finds a "cartulina, extrañamente teñida de verde por un último rayo de sol que atravesaba el verde cristal de una luceta" (p. 31). The card reads: Victor Hugues, Negociant a Port-au-Prince. From the beginning, Victor appears as a demonic figure penetrating the inner sanctum of the three youths. He is a stranger--forastero (p. 31)<sup>19</sup>--who will usurp the role of father and lead the adolescents into a confrontation with the Epoch.

About ten o'clock that same evening, Victor knocks for the second time. He enters asking to see their father on a matter of business. When they reply that their father has long since been buried, Victor does not retire but, instead, begins to overcome their initial hostility by relating his

numerous voyages through the marvelous Antillean archipelago. He succeeds in ingratiating himself with them; and, boldly inviting himself to dine with them, he assumes the "atribuciones de pater familias" (p. 35). After the meal, Victor leads them to a room of the house that they had not entered for years. In this storage room, filled with clothing and uniforms of their ancestors, they discover "una ordenación que establecía un cómico contraste si se pensaba en el desorden que reinaba abajo" (p. 36). Compared to the labyrinth that they had created below, these empty uniforms represent a world of order. They convert the main hall into a theater and, donning these remnants of their ancestors, begin to act out various roles. Although still in a world of fantasy, this marks the first step in the process of differentiation and foreshadows the roles that they will play in real life. Significantly, Victor assumes the part of legislator, of paternal authority. At dawn the theater ends, and Victor leaves for his hotel.

In sub-chapter V, the process of differentiation continues, paving the way for the adolescents' awakening to sexual existence. Victor's appearances become a regular part of their lives, and one night they invite him to remain in the house because of intemperate weather. When they awake, they find that he has unpacked the crates that constituted their labyrinth and arranged the objects throughout the house. His actions cause mixed feeling in the adolescents:

Toda una escenografía de sueños se venía abajo. Pero, poco a poco, empezaron los adolescentes a gozarse con aquella inesperada transformación, hallando más anchos los espacios, más claras las luces... (p. 38)

He has imposed a degree of order upon their previously uroboric existence, causing a certain amount of pain but pain that is necessary for the fulfillment of their individual lives.

That night, Esteban suffers another asthmatic attack; and Víctor, in order to relieve the youth's suffering, suggests that they take a ride in the carriage. This represents their first encounter with the nocturnal life of the city. Passing along the waterfront, they enter into the world of elemental sexual passion: sailors and prostitutes engaged in an orgy of drink and dance. Sofía is repulsed by this "visión infernal" (p. 40), not so much because it offends her directly but because she imagines that Carlos and Esteban are attracted by this debasing display of physical love. At this point, her protective maternal instinct is dominant over the consciousness of her own role in the sexual act.

Esteban's condition deteriorates, and when Víctor returns the following evening he finds Sofía ministering to an emaciated body that resembles "ciertos yacentes de sepulcros españoles" (p. 41). Confronted with this suffering Christ-like figure, Sofía utters her life-affirmative cry: "¡Hay que hacer algo!... ¡Hay que hacer algo...!" (p. 41). Víctor responds by summoning Doctor Ogé.

The mulatto Ogé is Victor's friend from Saint-Domingue. Both are Freemasons engaged in propagating the ideals of the French Revolution. However, there is a marked distinction between the two, and Ogé serves as a foil in the delineation of Victor's character. Whereas Victor desires to liberate man from all "superstitions" and places complete faith in the Revolution as a political instrument for reform, Ogé is aware that there are certain divine, or irrational, truths governing man's existence and that it would be better to awaken and develop these truths rather than to suppress them.

The doctor discovers the cause of Esteban's illness in certain herbs that a servant had planted in a passageway near Esteban's room. By destroying the plants Ogé succeeds in curing Esteban. But, at this point, the servant returns. Enraged by the destruction of his garden, whose herbs he sold as a cure for venereal disease, he reveals that their father had been given to bringing prostitutes into the house, and that, in fact, he had died with one of them.

The effect of Esteban's "portentosa curación" (p. 46) is twofold. First, he himself is physically able to embark upon the discovery of his own sexual existence. Second, through the servant's revelation, Sofía now has "una razón para confesarse que nunca había amado a su padre, cuyos besos... le habían sido odiosos desde los días de la pubertad" (p. 45).



This represents her conscious separation from the figure of her dead father and points forward to the transformation of her infantile maternal instinct into the realization of her own role as the sexual partner of a man.

In sub-chapter VI, Esteban achieves manhood through participation in the sexual act, while Sofia remains vacillating between her earlier maternal feelings toward her cousin and the emergence of a yet obscure attraction toward Victor. At the end of the sub-chapter, another factor is introduced: a possible forced departure from the parental home. Thus, everything points toward the differentiation of Sofia and Esteban as individuals and their embarkation upon their adventure into the world.

Sofia is ill at ease: "...sentíase ajena, sacada de sí misma, como situada en el umbral de una época de transformaciones" (p. 45). Esteban, who has regained his health, no longer fulfills the child-mother relationship that had given meaning to Sofia's existence: "La joven sentía una inquietud de madre que advierte los primeros signos de virilidad en el hijo" (p. 47). Ever more frequently he leaves the house and walks alone through the city. Finally, after a number of weeks, he selects a young prostitute and unites with her. For several weeks, he returns to her every day, not for some perverse stimulation of the senses but in order to:

...demostrarse que era capaz de hacer, sin remordimientos ni deficiencias físicas--con una creciente curiosidad por pasar su experiencia

a otros cuerpos--lo que hacían, muy naturalmente, los mozos de su edad. (pp. 47-48)

For Esteban, the sexual act is a mysterious possibility of communication, a possibility opened to himself now that he has achieved manhood.

One day he proposes a formal dinner to celebrate the Re-establishment of Normal Eating Hours. They all dress for the occasion, selecting their attire from the old storage room. Carlos comments that they represent "la Nobleza, la Iglesia, la Armada y la Magistratura" (p. 49). The costumes reflect their respective roles in the novel. Sofia, Queen of Heaven and Mother of Christ, is the Nobility. Esteban, the Christ-like Protomartyr, represents the Church. Carlos, remaining with his father's commercial establishment, is linked with the navy. Victor, the paternal authority, is the Magistrate. They send for Oge to function as the Diplomat, but the servant returns with the news that Oge is wanted by the police and cannot be found. Upon hearing this, Victor immediately rushes out in search of his friend.

A little after seven o'clock that evening, in subchapter VII, Victor returns. Although he was unable to discover Oge's whereabouts, he does bear other news. A hurricane is imminent and will strike Havana that night.<sup>20</sup> He puts everyone to work preparing the house against the impending storm. The hurricane arrives shortly after midnight; and, as water begins to cover the lower floor, he orders Sofia upstairs to her room and Carlos and Esteban into

the warehouse to protect the merchandise.

Later he enters the room where Sofia lies sleeping and tries to embrace her. In the ensuing struggle, Sofia is finally able to free herself, but:

...vefase Sofia arrastrada hacia un peligro tal vez mayor; el de sentirse aludida por la voz que desde las sombras le hablaba--a veces con intolerable dulzura--abriéndole las puertas de un mundo ignorado. Aquella noche habían terminado los juegos de la adolescencia. (pp. 53-54)

Temporarily at least, the danger has past. Now the door opens, and "pintóse, sobre las luces de un verdoso amanecer, una forma humana que se alejaba lentamente..." (p. 54).

Significantly, Victor's attempt to seduce Sofia coincides with the hurricane's assault upon the parental house. Both represent an attack upon a previously sacred enclosure, yet without this aggression the adolescent female would never come to realize herself as a woman. Sofia now becomes aware of this necessity and that it is Victor, the figure painted in libidinous green, who calls her through the doors to womanhood.<sup>21</sup>

Later that day, in sub-chapter VIII, everyone is engaged in cleaning and repairing the house. Victor purposely avoids a confrontation with Sofia, and she herself does not wish to reveal the incident of last night. However, as she goes about her work, she comes to verbalize to herself the significance of her experience:

En pocas horas iba saliendo de la adolescencia, con la sensación de que su carne había madurado en la proximidad de una apetencia de hombre... Soy una Mujer. (p. 56)

She is confused and uncertain she can fulfill the role that has been thrust upon her. Meanwhile, Victor is preoccupied with other things. He has discovered some irregularities in the account books from the warehouse and requests to stay overnight to examine them.

The following day, Victor attacks and vanquishes their "segundo padre" (p. 58), the Executor of the estate. The nature of the contest is not physical combat but verbal. He accuses the Executor of squandering the assets of the estate and giving falsified statements to the orphans. The battle is quite unequal for Victor evidences substantial proof of his charge. The Executor's sole reply is an attempt at defamation of character: Victor is a Freemason, worshipper of the Anti-Christ, and conspirator against the established order. However, this accusation has a negative effect, for Sofia finds this revolutionary character infinitely more appealing than that of the merchant. Completely won over by Victor, she cries:

Estoy cansada de Dios; cansada de las monjas;  
cansada de tutores y albaceas...estoy cansada  
de cosas, como ésta, que no quiero seguir  
viendo. (p. 60)

She tears down the portrait of her late father and grinds it under her heels.

Sofia's rejection of the father-figure, symbol of the established order, and her allegiance to Victor clearly indicate that she is about to become the consort of the revolutionary hero. At this point, Oge appears announcing that the colonial police are about to arrest all Freemasons

and foreigners on the island. Victor decides that it would be better to leave the city, and Sofia replies: "Para eso tenemos una finca..." (p. 61). Preparations are made for the departure. Thus, not only does Sofia align herself with the new order but she and Esteban both are about to embark upon an adventurous voyage away from the paternal home.

That same day, in sub-chapter IX, they begin the journey to their country estate. Two factors dominate this sub-chapter: the mystery of Victor's real activities and Sofia's anticipation of her entrance into womanhood. During the trip Victor sings from the Blondel aria of André Gretry's Richard Coeur de Lion: "Oh! Richard! Oh!, mon Roi!" (p. 62). These lines of the minstrel Blondel addressed to the imprisoned monarch reveal again Victor's respect for and identification with the figure of authority. Yet, there remains unanswered

...la gran cuestión--el gran enigma--de las actividades reales de Victor y Ogé...nadie había abordado el tema, y acaso se cantaba tanto, en el camino, para esperar un momento propicio al despeje de los misterios. (p. 62)

Night has fallen when they arrive at the estate. Then, after dining, Victor relates his reasons for being in Cuba. First of all, he came to organize contraband trade in French silk. Secondly, he had been sent by the Freemasons in Saint-Domingue to establish relations with lodges in Cuba. Now, the conversation turns to the topic of the Revolution, a theme that absorbs Esteban:

Los términos de libertad, felicidad, igualdad, dignidad humana, regresaban continuamente en aquella atropellada exposición, justificando la inminencia de un Gran Incendio que Esteban, esta noche, aceptaba como una purificación necesaria; como un Apocalipsis que estaba anhelante de presenciar cuanto antes, para iniciar su vida de hombre en un mundo nuevo. (p. 64)

Only recently initiated into the sexual sphere of manhood, Esteban is now anxious to embark upon the quest of the Promised Land, and in order to accomplish this he concedes the necessity of destroying the established order.

As the discussion continues, we notice some difference of opinion regarding the method of accomplishing their goal. Esteban, infected by Víctor's zeal in abolishing all superstition, suggests that Catholicism be suppressed. The mulatto disagrees:

Ogé opinaba de modo distinto; como el hombre había manifestado siempre una aspiración tenaz hacia algo que podía llamarse "imitación de Cristo", ese sentimiento debía transformarse en un anhelo de superación, por el cual trataría el hombre de parecerse a Cristo, erigiéndose en una suerte de Arquetipo de Perfección Humana. (p. 65)

Ogé's assertion of this profound human truth that surpasses the rationally conceived projects of social and political reform espoused by the others falls on deaf ears. Later, however, Esteban will recognize the necessity of the religious myth and come to identify with the Christ-figure, the mediator between the divine and human realms.

On the third day after their arrival at the country estate, Carlos brings word of the persecution of Freemasons and foreigners on the island. Orders have been issued for

the arrest of Víctor and Ogeé, and they are to be "expulsados de los Reinos" (p. 66). The two fugitives, accompanied by Sofía and Esteban, depart for a small port on the southern coast, where they hope to gain passage on a friendly ship. There Sofía's anticipation of womanhood is reflected in a plague of mosquitoes that torment her body as she tries to sleep. Finally, they succeed in contacting the captain of a North American merchant ship who is also a Freemason.

In sub-chapter X, they are already at sea. Here, the narrative focuses upon the transformation taking place in Sofía. She spends hours with a small net pulling "maravillas del agua" (p. 68).<sup>22</sup> The variety and multitude of living organisms in the sea astonishes her:

Sofía, observando la multitud de esas criaturas efímeras, se asombraba ante la continua destrucción de lo creado que equivalía a un perpetuo lujo de creación: lujo de multiplicar para suprimir en mayor escala; lujo de tanto engendrar en las matrices más elementales como en las torneadoras de hombres--dioses, para entregar el fruto a un mundo en estado de perpetua devoración. (p. 70)

She experiences the elemental character of the Feminine Archetype, the Great Round from which all life arises and into which it falls and is devoured.<sup>23</sup> Both the positive generative function and the negative devouring function are evidenced by the sea. In this respect, it symbolizes Woman as the container of life, and Sofía seems to identify with it as she experiences "una voluptuosidad del cuerpo entero" (p. 70). However, if she is to emerge from this state of pure potentiality, she must enter into a union with the masculine principle.

That union is facilitated, and her fears resulting from early religious education are abrogated, by the words of Ogé, who states that:

...el Pecado Original, en vez de perpetuarse en el acoplamiento, era lavado por él cada vez. Empleando eufemismos, afirmaba que la Pareja realizaba un regreso a la Inocencia Primera, cuando de la total y edénica desnudez del abrazo surgía un aplacamiento de los sentidos; un jubiloso y tierno sosiego que era figuración, eternamente repetida, de la pureza del Hombre y de la Mujer antes de la Culpa... (p. 71)

Although the concept is formulated here in terms of Gnostic dogma regarding the liberation from the sensual world,<sup>24</sup> it also reflects the state of participation mystique attributed to the sexual act by Carpentier in Los pasos perdidos.<sup>25</sup>

It becomes evident that Sofía has elected Víctor as her consort as she envisions him as a "Unicornio de Mar" (p. 72). The sea unicorn, or narwhal, is a member of the whale family, and the male has a long spiral tusk extending from its upper jaw. The phallic significance of the tusk corresponds to Víctor, who will bring Sofía into womanhood. The actual union takes place as the ship's crew is engaged in battling a school of sharks--the negative devouring aspect of the sea. He enters her room as she is changing her clothes; and, closing the door behind him, he simply says: "Soy yo" (p. 73).

In the eleventh and final sub-chapter of Chapter One, Sofía and Esteban both having been initiated into the sexual sphere of adult existence, come to a parting of the ways: she remains behind while he continues on into the course of



the French Revolution with Victor. The sub-chapter is pre-faced by the second of the captions from Goya's Los desastres de la guerra: "¿Qué alboroto es éste?" (p. 73).<sup>26</sup> It refers to the forces of rebellion that are ravishing Saint-Domingue and that destroy Victor's business establishment in Port-au-Prince.

On September 11, 1791, the ship puts in at Santiago de Cuba. Here they learn that a Negro revolt had broken out in northern Saint-Domingue three weeks earlier. This would be the uprising led by Bouckman, August 22, 1791, as described by Carpentier in La música en Cuba<sup>27</sup> and in Part II of El reino de este mundo. The North American captain decides to by-pass Port-au-Prince so the passengers are forced to find another ship. To protect Sofia from the dangers of the revolt, the three men secure lodgings for her in Santiago de Cuba, and they themselves depart in a Cuban vessel bound for Saint-Domingue.

In Port-au-Prince, Victor finds his establishment burnt to the ground, as is most of the city. After an initial period of bewilderment and anger, he finds himself overcome by a strange "sentimiento libertador de no poseer nada...Su vida estaba...suspendida entre el destruido pasado y el mañana inimaginable" (p. 78). Ogé discovers that a second attack of rebellious Negroes is imminent and warns them to flee the island. Only one ship remains in the harbor. Victor and Esteban board it and find that it is departing for France. Although somewhat unnerved by this rapid and unexpected

change in their plans, Esteban feels:

...feliz ante la increíble novedad que le salía al paso, se sentía más sólido, más hecho, más levantado en estatura masculina, junto a Víctor Hugues. (p. 80)

On board, there is talk of Luis XVI having been arrested in Varennes, June 21, 1791. The Revolution is overthrowing the Established Order, and the Promised Land appears upon the horizon:

Hacia el Oriente se erguía, enhiesta y magnífica, vislumbrada por los ojos del entendimiento, la Columna de Fuego que guía las marchas hacia toda Tierra Prometida. (p. 80)

Victor, now liberated from his commercial interests, will enter into history and become identified with the political course of the Revolution. Esteban follows him in the quest for the Promised Land.

The following three chapters narrate Esteban's adventure into the apocalyptic world of the French Revolution. They correspond respectively to the three phases of the archetypal hero's voyage: separation, initiation, and return. Although the journey is a failure in regard to significant heroic acts, he does return bearing a profound knowledge of the forces governing human existence. Chapter Two describes the first part of Esteban's voyage and coincides with Victor's rise to power in the Revolution. The chapter is preceded by the third caption from Goya's Los desastres de la guerra: "Sanos y enfermos" (p. 81).<sup>28</sup> The etching depicts a group of men, women, and children, some standing and some lying upon the ground, but all revealing an equally miserable

existence. The sane and the infirm represent the world of paradoxes and contradictions into which Esteban is now to enter.

Sub-chapter XII opens in the fall of 1792. They have already been in Paris for some time; and Esteban, who finds this new environment exotic in comparison with Cuba, experiences what he believes to be the Revolution:

...parecía que se estuviera en una gigantesca alegoría de la revolución; en una metáfora de revolución; revolución hecha en otra parte, centrada sobre polos ocultos, elaborada en soterrados concilios, invisibles para los ansiosos de saberlo todo. (p. 84)

Ignorant of the real Revolution, and left to his own devices by Víctor who is busy establishing himself with the major political figures, Esteban wanders into various meetings proclaiming with youthful zeal the propagation of the Revolution to Spain and the Americas. He joins the Freemasons, and in the initiation ceremony he experiences the significance of his journey to France:

...semejante a la de Perceval en busca de sí mismo--hacia la Ciudad Futura que, por una vez, no se había situado en América, como la de Tomás Moro o la de Campanella, sino en la propia cuna de la Filosofía... (p. 88)

He relates the nature of his quest to that of the innumerable pilgrims who had journeyed along the Camino de Santiago toward their spiritual regeneration.

However, Víctor arrives to turn Esteban from this path, declaring: "La masonería es contrarrevolucionaria... no hay mas moral que la moral jacobina" (p. 89). According to Víctor, the real Revolution has nothing to do with the

mysteries of spiritual development espoused by the Freemasons but is governed by "un ideal de subversión política" (p. 92). He invites Esteban to join the Revolution under the sign of Robespierre, the personification of political power and fanaticism.

The following day, in sub-chapter XIII, Esteban is given his assignment. He is to proceed to the Spanish border and there to prepare propaganda destined for Spain. Before departing, he reveals to Victor his attraction to the ideals of the Freemasons. Victor repeats that they are counter-revolutionaries, their spiritual practices betoken reactionary values, and they should be considered as enemies of the Revolution. Noting Victor's emulation of the Arch-Jacobin Robespierre, Esteban remarks in jest: "Veo que es algo así como un Don Juan para machos" (p. 93). Although Victor reacts with an obscene gesture, the statement foreshadows the reality to come: Robespierre's figure will become an object of veneration for Victor.

After a long journey, Esteban arrives in San Juan de Luz, a city near Bayonne in southwestern France. War breaks out between France and Spain in early 1793, but there is little military action along the border. Esteban's illusions of carrying the Revolution into Spain are shattered. Distant from the center of activity, the Revolution appears as "una política en constante mutación, contradictoria, paroxística, devoradora de sí misma..." (p. 95). Confused and disillusioned, he experiences a nostalgia for Cuba and for:

...el firme regazo de Sofia, donde tantas veces descansara la frente, en busca de la fuerza sosegadora, maternal, que como de madre verdadera le manara de las entrañas vírgenes... (p. 97)

Again the relationship between Esteban and Sofia appears as that of child to Virgin Mother, re-enforcing the Christ-like role of Esteban.

In sub-chapter XIV a new threat to Esteban's existence manifests itself. It is early 1794, and a strong current of xenophobia is sweeping across the nation. Foreigners are being persecuted and condemned in every part. Upon learning that an expedition destined for the Antilles is being prepared and that Victor Hugues is among the leaders of it, Esteban writes to his friend requesting permission to join him. He is offered the position of clerk in the expedition.

When he arrives in Rochefort, Esteban finds that Víctor has changed. He is no longer the benevolent pater familias who presided over their house in Cuba, but he has become a "Conductor de Hombres" (p. 102). He receives Esteban coldly and, intentionally using the usted rather than the tú form of the command, sends him to the Intendant's office to await orders. Victor now assumes the role of the Terrible Father, the distant and awesome figure of authority.<sup>29</sup> As the enforcer of Jacobin morality, he represents the new order imposed upon the world. Since Esteban's role is to break through the paradoxes of the world and attain the knowledge of transcendent values, he will necessarily find himself in opposition to Victor. Thus, although the two of them are reunited at this point in time and space, they are psycho-

logically separated. At this point, Esteban, removed from the maternal-figure of Sofia, will experience his separation from the father-image of Victor.

Sub-chapter XV is prefaced by the fourth of the captions from Goya's Los desastres de la guerra: "Fuerte cosa es" (p. 102).<sup>30</sup> The etching depicts a sinister-looking soldier replacing his sword in its scabbard; to the left three mutilated bodies hang from a tree. This represents the terrible aspect of Victor and the violence occasioned by the Revolution. The expedition, bound for Guadalupe to defend the island from British attack, departs Île de Aix, April 24, 1794. As they draw away from the convulsions and persecutions that are shaking Europe, the crew feels a certain sense of relief:

...menos irreligioso sería el inmediato porvenir, pensaba el vasco embarcado con sus escapularios; menos antimasónico, pensaba el añorante de las Logias; más igualitario, más comunitario, lo presentía quien soñaba con la barrida final de embozados que acabaría con los últimos privilegios. (p. 103)

But these hopes are short-lived, for Victor is here to impose Jacobin morality. His rigorous disciplinary measures evoke a profound fear in the crew. One day he leaves the Pique to consult with the commander of another vessel in the small fleet. During his brief absence, the long suppressed need for laughter and song erupts, in which even the officers of the Pique join, because "El Investido de Poderes era temido. Acaso se gozaba en saberse temido" (p. 106).

One evening later in the voyage, sub-chapter XVI, Victor

invites Esteban to his cabin. As he enters, the first thing Esteban notices is a large portrait of Robespierre, below which burns "una lámpara como luz votiva" (p. 107). Victor explains that their mission is to reaffirm the Republic's authority in the colonies. He equates the cause of liberty with the Jacobins. Esteban rejoins, pointing out the degeneracy of certain Jacobins such as Collot d'Herbois and the many excesses of the Revolution. Victor dismisses these facts as insignificant in view of the enormous dimensions of the reforms effected by the Revolution.

Their discussion is interrupted by the noise of men on deck erecting the Guillotine toward the bow of the ship. Esteban expresses his feelings of repulsion for this instrument of the Reign of Terror. Victor replies that the guillotine, along with the printing press, are the two most necessary instruments on board. With the press he will publish and proclaim the decree abolishing slavery in the colonies; the guillotine will be his symbol of authority and power through which he will enforce the decree. Esteban, disturbed both by these contradicting symbols of liberty and death and by the importance of a political office that seems to have absorbed the Victor he had known in Cuba, withdraws. As he leaves, he is struck by the similarity of Victor and the portrait of Robespierre:

El vislumbre de ese rasgo de debilidad, de ese afán de parecerse físicamente a quien admiraba por encima de todos los demás seres, fue como una leve victoria compensadora para Esteban...

Por vez primera, la soberbia de Víctor Hugues se doblegaba--acaso inconscientemente--ante una Dimensión Mayor. (p. 110)

This confrontation reveals the growing alienation between Víctor and Esteban and the instruments that will carry Víctor to the zenith of his political power: the ideal of liberty and the terror of the guillotine.

In sub-chapter XVII, Esteban reflects upon the significance of his adventure:

Fallida en acción, aunque no en experiencia cobrada, su primera salida al Gran Ruedo del Mundo equivalía a una iniciación precursora de futuras empresas. (p. 111)

Although he has accomplished no significant acts, he has acquired a knowledge of the paradoxes governing the phenomenal world. Not only is he torn apart by the contradictions in the exterior world, but even more destructive, in regard to his psychic self, is the fact that he has interiorized these conflicts and is unable to resolve them: "Soy un discutidor...Pero discutidor conmigo mismo, que es peor" (p. 112). He feels both attraction and repulsion for Víctor, both hatred and compassion. However, he does express the fault that will bring about Víctor's downfall: "El Traje se te ha subido a la cabeza---pensaba Esteban--. Cuidado con la borrachera del Traje: es la peor de todas" (p. 113). It is precisely Víctor's over evaluation of material and political power that will prove his undoing.

In early June, 1794, the expedition finally arrives off Guadalupe, but they soon discover that the British have occupied the island. Víctor prevails against the naval commanders and officers who insist upon retreating to Saint-



Domingue, declaring that in a Republic the military does not argue but obeys. They were ordered to Guadalupe, and there they will go. At this point he uncovers the guillotine:

Luciendo todos los distintivos de su Autoridad, inmóvil, pétreo, con la mano derecha apoyada en los montantes de la Máquina, Víctor Hugues se había transformado, repentinamente, en una Alegoría. Con la Libertad, llegaba la primera guillotina al Nuevo Mundo. (p. 114)

Sub-chapter XVIII is prefaced by the fifth of the captions from Goya's Los desastres de la guerra: "Estragos de la guerra" (p. 115),<sup>31</sup> and exhibits the violence and suffering occasioned by the overthrow of the old order, in this case the French colonists and their British allies. Esteban remains on board ship for four days, awaiting news of the army that Víctor has led ashore. A messenger arrives with the order to proceed to Pointe-a-Pitre where the Republican Army has been victorious. There is a general rejoicing, but within a few days re-enforcements landed by the British fleet commence a systematic bombardment of the city, and the spectre of death raises its head. All of the major French commanders, except Víctor, are either killed or succumb to the fever. Among the Republican troops there is a "reaparición de Crucifijos y Santos Oleos" (p. 118). Esteban's friend, the printer Leouillet, takes to reading from the Apocalypse, and the "baterías de Jarvis [sic] se le identificaban, en aquellos momentos, con las iras ejemplares de los Viejos Grandes Dioses" (p. 119).

After four weeks of bombardment, sub-chapter XIX, the British guns are finally silenced. Two nights before, Victor had led a surprise attack against the British positions and had driven them back to the lower part of Guadalupe, Basse-Terre. Since the new French military commanders are dependent upon Victor for their rank, he becomes the sole ruler of Grande-Terre. That evening a banquet is given to celebrate the Republican victory.

The following morning, with great pomp and ceremony, Victor calls together the population of Pointe-a-Pitre. In an eloquent discourse, he praises their courage during the bombardment and, embarking on a recapitulation of Antillean history, compares his coming with that of Columbus. The first had brought Christianity and slavery. Now Victor will tear down the church and bring liberty. Esteban notes that the content of the discourse seems to escape the people, for "la Palabra no acababa de armonizarse con el espíritu de gentes acudidas a aquel lugar como quien viene a una fiesta, entretenidas en jugar, en rozarse los varones con las hembras..." (p. 123). At this moment, ideals of political reform have little meaning to a people given to more elemental forms of affirming life. Nevertheless, the city now enters into "una Epifanía del árbol tras de tantos Oficios de Tinieblas" (p. 124). They rejoice in a peace that follows on the heels of so much horror and death.

At the head of sub-chapter XX is the sixth of the captions from Goya's Los desastres de la guerra: "Extraña

devoción" (p. 124).<sup>32</sup> The etching depicts a group of men and women kneeling before a donkey upon whose back rests a transparent coffin with a corpse inside. This scene refers to Victor's adoration of Robespierre, the personification of revolutionary fanaticism. A relative peace reigns in Pointe-a-Pitre as Victor awaits re-enforcements before smashing the last elements of resistance on the island.

At this time a ship arrives from France, bearing a few troops and the news that the first fête of the Supreme Being has been celebrated in Paris. Atheism has now become a counterrevolutionary sin, and those who espoused its doctrines are considered enemies of the Republic. Esteban, sensing the irony of the ideological reversals evidenced by the new decree, is amazed again at Victor's devotion to Robespierre:

...se sentía desconcertado ante la increíble servidumbre de una mente vigorosa y enérgica, pero tan absolutamente politizada que rehusaba el examen crítico de los hechos, negándose a ver las más flagrantes contradicciones; fiel hasta el fanaticismo--que eso sí podía calificarse de fanaticismo--a los dictámenes del hombre que lo hubiese investido de poderes.  
(p. 126)

Even before they have finished demolishing the church in Pointe-a-Pitre, Victor is willing to honor this decree establishing the cult of the Supreme Being.

He turns to attacking the British in Basse-Terre. By October 6, 1794, General Graham capitulates, and the English troops withdraw to their ships. Left behind are a large number of French colonists who fought for the monarchy.

Victor considers them traitors to the Republic, and orders the guillotine brought to Basse-Terre. The executioner does his best, but the magnitude of the execution exceeds the capabilities of the guillotine. Only thirty are beheaded before Victor decides to have the remainder shot. Esteban finds the massacre thoroughly inconceivable, for "ochocientos sesenta y cinco rostros eran demasiados rostros para dibujar la imagen de uno solo" (p. 129).

By December, sub-chapter XXI, all major resistance on Guadalupe has ended, and Victor is in control of the entire island. At this point, the Guillotine makes its first official appearance in Pointe-a-Pitre. Two monarchist chaplains are led to the scaffold. The population crowds into the square, as if in expectation of a tragic spectacle; but the end is too abrupt, too mechanical in its impersonal precision to effect a catharsis. The crowd remains there, stupified for a while. Then, in order to affirm life in the presence of death, they give themselves over to a collective orgy of dance and merriment that lasts into the night. That day, the "Gran Terror" (p. 131) commenced on the island. Next, Victor decrees obligatory work for Negroes, and any that are accused of laziness or disobedience are condemned to death. Thus, although technically free and citizens of the Republic, the Negroes are reduced to a position similar to their previous servitude.

Now at the pinnacle of success in his political career, Victor receives news of the Thermidor reaction in France.

Robespierre has been overthrown and executed. There is speculation about a restoration of the monarchy. Although deeply shaken by this news, Victor asserts:

No la acepto. Sigo sin conocer más moral que la moral jacobina...Y si la Revolución ha de perderse en Francia, seguirá en América. (p. 136)

His desire to emulate his political superior will be realized here, and he will be known as the Robespierre of the Americas.

In sub-chapter XXII, Esteban begins translating into Spanish the propaganda--French Constitution and other political documents--that will carry the ideals of the Revolution into the American continent:

Acaso los americanos tratarían, ahora, de aplicar unos principios que el Terror había atropellado en su casi totalidad, para tener que violarlos a su vez, urgidos por las contingencias políticas del momento. (p. 137)

He does his work without any revolutionary zeal, indifferent to the content of the documents, only encountering a certain esthetic pleasure in translating well. His search for something beyond this world of contradictions now begins in earnest.

He embarks upon numerous rides through the countryside where he discovers in the island vegetation, similar to that of Cuba, a different world. One day he undertakes the adventure of climbing a tree:

Tregar a un árbol es una empresa personal que acaso no vuelva a repetirse nunca. Quien se abraza a los altos pechos de un tronco, realiza una suerte de acto nupcial, desflorando un mundo secreto, jamás visto por los hombres... Los grandes signos del "Tau", del Aspa de San

Andrés, de la Serpiente de Bronce, del Ancora y de la Escala estaban implícitos a todo Arbol, anticipándose lo Creado a lo Edificado, dándose normas al Edificador de futuras Arcas... (p. 140)

The tree is predominantly a feminine symbol. This is evident from Carpentier's description above and from his reference to the ceiba--"madre to todos los árboles" (p. 140)-- that is sacred to certain Afro-Cuban religions. The analogy that associates Mother, Tree, and Cross becomes quite clear if we consider that "the experience of union with God was understood in antiquity as a more or less concrete coitus."<sup>33</sup> Here, on the maternal wood of the Tree, as Christ on his cross, Esteban enters into a mystical union with the eternal reality, a participation mystique in which the world of paradoxes is overcome.

Returning to Pointe-a-Pitre after this experience, Esteban "se sentía ajeno a la época; forastero en un mundo sanguinario y remoto, donde todo resultaba absurdo" (p. 142). Cognizant of a more transcendent reality, he no longer feels a part of the world governed by political contingencies.

In sub-chapter XXIII, the way is prepared for Esteban's separation from the island of Guadalupe and the Reign of Terror imposed by Víctor. The political changes in Paris present an ominous threat to Víctor's career. Jean Dalbarade, naval minister and protector of Víctor Hugues, has passed over to the Thermidor band. Some of Víctor's subordinates on the island are secretly hoping for his re-

call to France. Nevertheless, he continues to fulfill his office with unabated energy and zeal, using the guillotine and legislation to strengthen his position.

One day he calls Esteban into his headquarters and reveals to him an enterprise that he is about to undertake. He has fitted out numerous light sailing vessels to become French privateers. They are to operate against all English and Spanish shipping in the Antilles. The enterprise has been planned with the cunning of a politician, wishing to ingratiate himself with the powers in France through the acquisition of money for the National Treasury, and with the order and precision of a merchant: "...le quedaba algo del antiguo comerciante y panadero de Port-au-Prince" (p. 146). Esteban is given the position of clerk on one of the privateers.

Chapter Three consists of five sub-chapters and treats Esteban's initiation into the timeless mysteries of the sea. This part of the journey coincides with the decline of Victor's political power. At the end of the chapter, Victor will be faced with a recall to France to answer charges made against his administration of Guadalupe. This overthrow of Victor's regime will prepare the way for Esteban's return to Cuba.

Sub-chapter XXIV is prefaced by the seventh of the captions from Goya's Los desastres de la guerra: "Se aprovechan" (p. 149).<sup>34</sup> This etching, depicting a group of irregulars stripping the corpses of soldiers, refers to the

activities of the privateers. Esteban departs in a small squadron of three ships. Many dangers lie ahead of them, such as a possible encounter with the powerful British fleet; but, as they leave behind the "Robespierre de las Islas" (p. 149) and embark upon the open sea, they feel as if they had been liberated from "una temporalidad desafiada para inscribirse en lo inmutable y eterno" (p. 150). Since a number of days pass without even sighting another ship, the voyage becomes for Esteban a journey of discovery rather than heroic action.

The sea of the Antilles reveals an abundance of life in every quarter. It is the presence of the imponderable feminine mystery of eternal creation and destruction, the Lost Paradise denied to masculine ego-consciousness. The first exceptional creature that Esteban sees here is a whale: "...metáfora inmediata de un animal de otros siglos" (p. 150), "patriarca abisal" (p. 154), "Leviatán" (p. 154). Later in Chapter Three, Víctor is identified with this primordial monster, in the form of "Behemot" (p. 176). This is the Terrible Father, who rising from the depths, erupts into the field of consciousness: History. His appearance evokes fear, but, in relation to the sea, his existence is ephemeral. Soon, he falls back again into the depths from which he came.

It is the sea that is eternal. Esteban's experience of this archetypal feminine nature produces a "Dicha total, sin ubicación ni época. Tedéum..." (p. 155). The archetype



itself is an unfathomable mystery and cannot be known through consciousness alone. Yet:

El caracol era el Mediador entre lo evanescente, lo escurrido, la fluidez sin ley ni medida, y la tierra de las cristalizaciones, estructuras y alternancias, donde todo era asible y ponderable. De la Mar sometida a ciclos lunares, tornadiza, abierta o furiosa, ovillada o destejada, por siempre ajena al módulo, el teorema y la ecuación, surgían esos sorprendentes carapachos, símbolos en cifras y proporciones de lo que precisamente faltaba a la Madre. (p. 155)

The symbol, in this case the Spiral, possesses the form that is lacking in the world of the archetypes. Without form, consciousness would be unable to experience the archetype. The symbol, a product of the maternal unconscious, mediates between the two realms and effects a reunion of the two, a participation mystique.<sup>35</sup> Thus, Esteban addresses his Te Deum to the caracole: "Mirar un caracol. Uno solo. Te Deum" (p. 155).

In sub-chapter XXV, Esteban's journey through this "Mediterráneo Caribe" (p. 157) continues. They take a Portuguese ship laden with wine. The aroma of the wine evokes memories of the house in Havana, to which Esteban longs to return. But he cannot, for he is condemned to journey by "islas semejantes a la única donde no pudiera arribar" (p. 158). Since Víctor had entered his life "su existir, su devenir, estaban regidos por la Voluntad Ajena..." (p. 158). Esteban's desire to liberate himself from Víctor and the Revolution heightens: he awaits only the opportunity to escape.

Next, as they are obtaining food and water on a small island, a Spanish slave vessel appears. The Negroes had mutinied, captured the ship, and now put themselves under the protection of the French. The French crew discovers that there are Negro women on board, and they satiate their sexual desire that night. The following morning the captain sails for the Dutch colonies to sell the Negroes as slaves. Esteban protests but is informed that these are Victor Hugues' written orders.

Within several months, sub-chapter XXVI, French privateering in the Caribbean has become a lucrative business. Confirmed in his post by the French Directoire, Victor assumes more and more of the personal characteristics of Robespierre:

Como Robespierre, en otros días, hubiese hablado de su gobierno, de su ejército, de su escuadra, Víctor Hugues hablaba ahora de su gobierno, de su ejército, de su escuadra. (p. 163)

Victor refuses to accept the peace signed between Spain and France in 1795 and thereby eliminates Esteban's opportunity opportunity of returning to Cuba. Esteban continues:

...desempeñando su oficio en la escuadra de Barthelemy, viendo alejarse la oportunidad de salirse de un mundo que la vida marítima, intemporal y regida por la sola Ley de los Vientos, le hacía cada vez más ajena. (p. 164)

His alienation from Victor's world becomes increasingly greater. Then one day, after having suffered "la prueba de afrontar una tempestad" (p. 166), Esteban and the privateers sail into the Gulf of Santa Fe off the coast of Venezuela.<sup>36</sup>

It is as if they had penetrated to the Antillean cosmogony, for Esteban considers that this "Golfo Prodigioso era algo así como un estado previo de las Antillas--un anteproyecto que reuniera, en miniatura, todo lo que, en escala mayor, pudiera verse en el Archipiélago" (p. 167). Here he experiences the joy of the Protanthropos, calling things into being by "inventándoles nombres" (p. 167). Now that Esteban has entered into the time of Origins and assumed the role of the new Adam, he should begin the return to his homeland.

In sub-chapter XXVII, the ships put in at Guadalupe for refitting. Esteban finds that, with the wealth obtained through privateering, Pointe-a-Pitre has become the richest city in America. However, Victor's political authority is being undermined. The more powerful captains have formed a club called Palais Royal and have barred admittance to Victor. Also they have established a Lodge of Freemasons, complete with all the traditional rituals. Esteban interprets the latter as a nostalgia for the religious myths condemned by the Revolution: "No se puede ser torero ni corsario sin tener un Templo donde dar gracias a Alguien por llevar todavía la vida a costas" (p. 171). The fact that these organizations are allowed to exist proves that Victor's authority is waning. Esteban even imagines that "la Máquina, ahora menos activa, quedando enfundada a veces durante semanas, aguardaba al Investido de Poderes. Otros casos se habían visto" (p. 171). This had been the fate of Robespierre

who succumbed to the instrument of his own power.

Sub-chapter XXVIII depicts the last stages of Victor's career on Guadalupe. The United States, outraged by French privateering, has declared war on French forces in the Americas, July 7, 1798. Also, Victor knows that his administration is being discredited in Paris. Some factions on the island are openly blaming him for the war with the United States, and there are rumors of an imminent invasion of Guadalupe.

One day Victor calls Esteban. He has received news from Paris that General Desfourneaux has been sent to replace him. He offers Esteban safe conduct in return for a favor. Esteban will take a sum of money to Billaud-Varenes, Victor's friend exiled in Cayenne. From there, he can cross over into Dutch Guiana and arrange passage back to Cuba. He also gives Esteban a letter for Sofia. Then he sends Esteban on his way:

Terminó para ti la gran aventura. Ahora regresarás a tu casa...La revolución se desmorona. No tengo ya de qué agarrarme. No creo en nada.  
(p. 177)

Although Victor will clear himself of the charges laid against him in Paris and receive a new political appointment, this marks the end of his career as a revolutionary figure.

Chapter Four consists of six sub-chapters. This part of the journey corresponds to Esteban's return to Cuba and leads him through the living death of French Guiana, the colonial prison for French political exiles. The major

historical figure in this chapter is Victor's friend Jean Nicolas Billaud-Vareennes, who, as a supporter of Robespierre, was found responsible for crimes committed during the Reign of Terror and, in April, 1795, was deported to Cayenne. He represents another aspect of the Terrible Father. At this point, the ideals of the French Revolution have reached their nadir, the Revolution itself enters into the process of dissolution, and the sole concern is political power.

The eighth of the captions from Goya's Los desastres de la guerra heads sub-chapter XXIX: "Las camas de la muerte" (p. 181).<sup>37</sup> The rows of corpses depicted in the etching reflect the dominant element in French Guiana: Death. Upon arriving in the capital, Esteban notices that the city is devoid of life: "...era un mundo triste, agobiado, donde todo parecía diluirse en sombras de agua-fuerte" (p. 182). The tropical vegetation that he had found so inviting on Guadalupe assumes an aggressive and devouring nature here. An innkeeper informs him that the prison camps of the colony--Sinnamary, Kurú, Conanama, and Iracubo--are synonymous with "the slow death" (p. 183). There in the jungle, a strange mixture of political assassins, intellectuals, priests, and former administrators of the Republic suffer the same terrible fate. Esteban discovers that Billaud is being held in Sinnamary, but for the time being the regime of Jeannet, agent of the French Directoire, prohibits communication with the prison camps.

In sub-chapter XXX, the innkeeper suggests to Esteban a possible means of contacting Billaud. During a grave illness, the Mother Superior of the nuns in Saint-Paul-de-Chartres had attended Billaud. Now she is his most trusted friend in the capital. The following day, Esteban goes to speak with her at the Hospital. Waiting to see her, he spies a large crucifix hung opposite a window that opens onto the sea. Here, he experiences a confrontation with Christ:

Cuanto podía decirse del Hombre y de su Mundo, cuanto cupiera entre Luces, Engendros y Tinieblas, estaba dicho--por siempre dicho--en lo que iba de una escueta geometría de madera negra a la inmensidad fluida y Una de la placenta universal, con aquel Cuerpo Interpuesto, en trance de agonía y renacer...la Cruz era un Ancora y era un Arbol, y era necesario que el Hijo de Dios padeciera su agonía sobre la forma que simbolizaba a la vez la Tierra y el Agua--la madera y el mar... (pp. 190-91)

Christ, as the archetype of the Self, represents the psychological process of individuation. The goal of the process is the realization of transcendent being surpassing the limits of ego-consciousness. It necessitates suffering, the open conflict between consciousness and unconscious, between the temporal and the timeless, and is only consummated by the sacrifice of the ego to the transcendent Self.<sup>38</sup> The Cross represents the contradictions to be overcome. Thus Carpentier states that the Cross symbolizes both Earth and Water, the manifest realm of ego-consciousness and the unfathomable depths of the unconscious. However, the Cross, the instrument of sacrifice, also represents the means of

overcoming the contradictions: a dying to profane existence and rebirth to transcendent life.

Esteban now identifies himself with this archetypal figure, intercalating episodes from his life with those of Christ as he recalls:

...tantas cosas que se sabían ambos. Ni palabras hacían faltar para hablar de cierta huida al Egipto y de la noche famosa en el estable, con tantos reyes y pastores (y me acuerdo ahora de la caja de música con su pastora, traída a mi cuarto por aquellos Reyes en una Epifanía que me fuera particularmente dolorosa a causa de la enfermedad) y de los mercaderes que vendían baratijas en los portales del templo y de los pescadores del lago (semejantes los veía yo a unos, andrajosos y barbudos, que pregonaban calamares frescos en mi ciudad) y de tempestades aplacadas y de los verdes ramos de un Domingo (Sofía me traía los que le daban las clarisas...), y también del máximo pleito, y de la sentencia de la enclavación... (pp. 190-91)

The correlation of these episodes does not denote, of course, a reconstruction of Christ's biography. Rather, it suggests an archetypal pattern common to all men who have existed in this world: the crucifixion between contradictions and the resolution of the conflict through sacrifice.

After this moment of insight, the Mother Superior comes into the room. Esteban explains that he wishes to contact Billaud. She decides to send him to Sinnamary as her emissary. There he will ask for the Abbé Brottier who will introduce him to Billaud.

In sub-chapter XXXI, Esteban arrives in Sinnamary. Since Brottier is off performing the last rites for some of the prisoners, he has to wait. Sieger, a Swiss planter, also

waits. Throughout the camp, Esteban notes the futile attempts made by the prisoners to cling to their former lives:

Esta exhibición de orgullos, inquinas y despechos, en medio de la maleza tropical, se hacía una nueva Danza Macabra, donde cada cual, ostentando Grados y Dignidades, estaba ya emplazado por el hambre, la enfermedad y la muerte. (p. 193)

Death is everywhere. Not only are they threatened by the jungle, but the free Negroes enter the camp at night, leaving strange charms that bode no good. At nightfall, Sieger suggests that they proceed to Billaud's dwelling where Brottier is probably visiting.

Sub-chapter XXXII is preceded by the ninth of the captions from Goya's Los desastres de la guerra: "Fiero monstruo" (p. 196).<sup>39</sup> In the etching a gigantic tapir-like monster devours nude corpses. It refers to Billaud, the supporter of Robespierre during the Reign of Terror. His position in the colony has recently been greatly enhanced by the news that his friend Burnel has been sent by the French Directoire to replace Jeannet. Soon he will return to political power. He regrets nothing that he had done in the past, except working for the abolition of slavery. Brottier retorts that the French Republic did not free the slaves out of humanitarian motives:

En Haití, lo hicieron por quitarse a los españoles de encima; en la Guadalupe, para arrojar más seguramente a los ingleses; aquí, por acoger a los ricos propietarios y a los viejos acadienses... ¡Mera política colonial! (p. 197)



Sieger adds that, even in proclaiming the abolition of slavery, the Revolution brought nothing new to America, and he proceeds to recount the numerous Negro revolts prior to the Revolution.

Esteban is indifferent to this discussion of the Revolution. He retires for the night with a novel by Ann Radcliffe. Leafing through the book, he feels "intimamente aludido por una frase encontrada al azar: Alas! I have no longer a home:...I am a miserable wanderer on a distant shore!" (p. 201). His interest no longer lies in the course of the Revolution but only in withdrawing from its grasp and returning to his home.

It is not until November, 1799, sub-chapter XXXIII, that the opportunity for continuing his voyage appears. At this time Burnel arrives and replaces Jeannet. Together with Billaud, Burnel plans to send secret agents into neighboring Dutch Guiana. Their mission is to promote a general uprising of the slaves by distributing the decree abolishing slavery. The goal is purely political: to annex the Dutch colony.

Esteban obtains permission to cross over to Paramaribo with propaganda. His first impression of the Dutch capital is quite pleasant. In contrast to the misery of Cayenne, here he finds material abundance and cultural refinement. Even more important, the presence of synagogues, Catholic and Protestant churches side by side becomes for him symbolic

of "una tolerancia que el hombre, en ciertas partes del mundo se había empeñado en conquistar y defender, sin flaquear ante inquisiciones religiosas o políticas..." (p. 204).

He decides not to distribute the propaganda; but, just as he is about to depart the city, he discovers another face of Paramaribo. He sees a group of fugitive slaves being led to the hospital. In order to carry out their punishment hygienically and scientifically, they are to have their left leg amputated by a competent surgeon. This mutilation performed coldly and rationally shocks Esteban more than the violence unleashed upon the Negroes in the French and Spanish colonies. Already aboard a North American ship bound for Cuba, he throws the revolutionary leaflets to a group of Negro fishermen, exhorting them to read and distribute the propaganda.

Sub-chapter XXXIV describes the last leg of Esteban's return voyage. Off the coast of Venezuela, he sees large tree trunks being swept out to sea by the current of the Orinoco. The floating trunks recall a Great Migration, centuries before, by South American Indians toward a rumored Terrestrial Paradise in the north. In the Caribbean they encountered another people also voyaging toward a Promised Land--Columbus and the Spanish. In the subsequent combat, the Europeans were victorious. All that remains of the Indian migration are some scattered petroglyphs narrating the beginnings of "una epopeya nunca escrita..." (p. 209).

The mythic nature of the quest for the Promised Land and its relation to Esteban's journey is explicitly stated:

Según el color de los siglos, cambiaba el mito de carácter, respondiendo a siempre renovadas apetencias, pero era siempre el mismo: había, debía haber, era necesario que hubiese en el tiempo presente--cualquier tiempo presente--un Mundo Mejor...Y a un Mundo Mejor había marchado Esteban, no hacía tanto tiempo, encandilado por la gran Columna de Fuego que parecía alzarse en el Oriente. Y regresaba ahora de lo inalcanzado con un cansancio enorme... (p. 211)

The quest for Paradise, be it an interior or exterior voyage, has its roots in what Carpentier calls this "querer mejorar lo que es."<sup>40</sup> It is man's desire to transcend the limiting conditions of the present. Esteban embarked upon such a quest, and now he returns, unsuccessful and world-weary. He has accomplished no significant acts of heroism, but he does bear certain arcane knowledge. This knowledge, however, causes him to withdraw from the world. He expresses his reaction to the apocalyptic desintegration of the Aeon occasioned by the Revolution in his greeting to Sofía: "Vengo de vivir entre los bárbaros..." (p. 212).

Chapter Five is prefaced by the tenth of the captions from Goya's Los desastres de la guerra: "Con razón o sin ella" (p. 213).<sup>41</sup> In the etching, two irregulars, armed only with a pike and a dagger, charge a line of uniformed soldiers equipped with rifles and bayonets. This unreasoned assault against suicidal odds expresses pictorially the life-transformative nature incarnate in Sofía.<sup>42</sup> Her cry--"¡Hay que hacer algo!" (p. 296)--exceeds the bounds of reason.

Even when the forces opposing transformation appear insurmountable and threaten death to the individual, the desire for transcendence must be realized. Esteban, shattered by the inhuman violence and political contingencies evidenced by a Revolution now in the process of dissolution, returns from his voyage with only the desire to recapture the world of his infancy. This desire is regressive and, as such, alien to Sofia's transformative nature. Therefore, his return is unsuccessful, and his reunion with Sofia is precluded. Consequently, she departs upon her own journey into the world, hoping to join Víctor whom she still believes to incarnate the ideals of the Revolution.

In sub-chapter XXXV, Esteban's return to the parental home has the nature of a resurrection, a return from the dead. His room by the stables is locked, and Esteban recalls that "en estas viejas casas criollas era costumbre dejar cerradas con llave, para siempre, las habitaciones de los muertos" (p. 215). However, this rebirth loses its significance when Esteban discovers that a reunion with Sofia on the infantile level is no longer possible:

Era pavoroso pensar que un segundo cerebro, situado en la matriz, emitía ahora sus ideas por boca de Sofía--aquella, cuyo nombre definía a la mujer que lo llevara como poseedora de "sonriente sabiduría", de gay saber. Siempre se había pintado el nombre de Sofía, en la imaginación de Esteban, como sombreado por la gran cúpula de Bizancio; algo envuelto en ramas de Arbol de la Vida y circundado de Arcontes, en el gran misterio de la Mujer Intacta...la Hermana Mayor, la Madre Joven, la limpia enteleguía femenina... (p. 218)

She is no longer the Virgin Mother but the consort of the Aeon.

For a year she has been married to Jorge, a prosperous young merchant of Irish origin. The marriage reveals her new role, but Jorge is only an impotent substitute for the real figure that called her into the world of Womanhood: Victor Hugues. Esteban delivers to her the letter from Victor; and, although we learn nothing of its content at this moment, it functions as the call to depart the parental home. From this point, Sofia and Esteban are at odds: she longing to join Victor and he endeavoring to recapture the world of his infancy.

That evening, Esteban begins to narrate his "Odisea" (p. 221), sub-chapter XXXVI. The sub-chapter is preceded by the eleventh of the captions from Goya's Los desastres de la guerra: "No hay que dar voces" (p. 221).<sup>43</sup> It refers to the violent difference of opinion that erupts between Esteban and Sofia in regard to the Revolution. In his opinion, the Revolution has failed:

Esta Revolución había respondido, ciertamente, a un oscuro impulso milenario, desembocando en la aventura más ambiciosa del ser humano. Pero Esteban se aterraba ante el costo de la empresa:... "Esta vez la revolución ha fracasado. Acaso la próxima sea la buena. Pero, para agarrarme cuando estalle, tendrán que buscarme con linternas a mediodía. Cuidémonos de las palabras demasiado hermosas; de los Mundos Mejores creados por las palabras. Nuestra época sucumbe por un exceso de palabras. No hay más Tierra Prometida que la que el hombre puede encontrarse en sí mismo. (p. 223)

The high-sounding ideals of the Revolution have not been realized; they have only unleashed a barbaric violence governed by new political alignments. Esteban asserts that the Promised Land is within, and he attempts to withdraw from the world.

Soffia does not agree. She admits to the deplorable excesses of the Revolution but maintains that suffering is necessary in order to transform the world. She, Carlos, and Jorge have formed a Freemason Lodge, and are circulating the fundamental texts that inspired the Revolution. Esteban recognizes, within this propaganda, documents that he himself had translated into Spanish. Overcome by the re-appearance of these ideals that had once inspired him but in which he no longer believes, he leaves the room.

In late December, 1799, sub-chapter XXXVI, Esteban and Soffia have another confrontation. This time the conflict is not on the level of political ideals but focuses on their sexual roles. They are waiting for Carlos and Jorge to join them on the country estate. Esteban, thinking to himself, reveals the nature of his relationship to Soffia:

Fue ella, la primera mujer conocida, madre estrechada por ti en vez de la que nunca llegaste a conocer. Es ella la hembra que te reveló las esplendorosas ternuras de la hembra en el insomnio velado, la compasion de tus padecimientos y la apaciguadora caricia dada en el alba. Es ella la hermana que conoció las sucesivas formas de tu cuerpo como sólo una amante inimaginable, crecida contigo, hubiera podido conocerlas. (p. 230)

She is predominantly a compassionate maternal figure to him. He rests his head on her shoulder and breaks into tears, feeling that after his long and disheartening voyage he has finally returned home.

Sofia comforts him; but, when he attempts to kiss her in a passionate manner, she reproaches him: "Lo has roto todo; lo has destrozado todo" (p. 231). The mother-child relationship now exhibits its incestuous characteristics, and Sofia rejects them. Esteban clings to her in an attempt to withdraw from the world, but Sofia desires transformation, not regression. In effect, he has destroyed the previous relationship between them, and a new relationship seems impossible.

A servant arrives at the country estate with the news that Jorge is suffering from a fever. In sub-chapter XXXVIII, we find that his condition is deteriorating. Sofia dutifully attends her husband. Her maternal affection toward Jorge aggravates even more Esteban's nostalgia for his "Paraíso Perdido" (p. 233). Then, late in January, 1800, Caleb Dexter appears with the news that will precipitate Sofia's departure from Cuba. Dexter is the North American captain who had offered them passage on his ship in sub-chapter IX. Now he informs them that Victor Hugues has not only cleared himself of the charges made against his administration of Guadalupe, but that the French Directoire has entrusted him with governing Cayenne. Esteban derides

Víctor, calling him a "mero instrumento político que se ajusta a los mandatos del día" (p. 236). Sofía only replies that he is a "personaje extraordinario, a pesar de todo" (p. 236). Even before her husband dies, she makes plans to join Víctor.

In sub-chapter XXXIX, Jorge continues to struggle against the fever, but the doctors have given up all hope of saving him. The precursors of death begin to enter the house: the priest and the black clothes of mourning. Three days later Jorge dies. During the wake, Esteban looks upon the body as an intruder into the parental home:

Quien yacía allí era un intruso. Un intruso a quien se llevarían mañana, en hombros, sin que él Esteban hubiera cometido, siquiera, el íntimo delito de desear su eliminación física-- como llamaban pedantemente los filósofos del Siglo Rebasado la ejecución de un ente nefasto. (p. 239)

Now that the family is again reduced to its original form-- Sofía, Esteban, and Carlos--he entertains hopes of recapturing his previous relationship with Sofía.

In sub-chapter XL, Esteban's hopes are again shattered. This sub-chapter is headed by the twelfth of the captions from Goya's Los desastres de la guerra: "Amarga presencia" (p. 241).<sup>44</sup> It refers to Víctor Hugues: "...la Poderosa Presencia que, de tan lejos, seguía pesando sobre la casa" (p. 246). Here, Sofía finally answers the call to adventure, leaving Esteban behind and going to join Víctor in Cayenne.

The first indication of her plans to embark upon the adventure is discovered by Esteban in late February, 1800.



Alone in the house one night during a storm, he enters Sofia's room to close the windows. The rain has already soaked some chests of clothing. Opening them, he finds to his consternation elegant gowns and fashionable dresses instead of the expected black mourning clothes. Two days later, the mystery of these strange clothes is resolved.

Dexter, whose ship is again in Havana, informs Esteban and Carlos that Sofia has booked passage on his vessel and is bound for Cayenne. Esteban goes to the harbor to bring her back. However, she remains on the ship, while below on the dock:

Esteban, abrazado a la quilla del buque, seguía hablando sin ser escuchado. Aquel enorme cuerpo de madera...le era suave, casi femenino...Arriba un mascarón de proa, con semblante de mujer...se había substituido al de quien partiría en el amanecer... (p. 247)

The ship and Sofia fuse in a single maternal-imago that Esteban, clinging to desperately, tries to retain.

His supplications are in vain, for Sofia has decided to answer the call to adventure:

Iba hacia quien le había dado una conciencia de sí misma y que, en una carta traída por aquel gimiente que abajo quedaba, le hubiese hablado de su soledad en medio de los triunfos... Iba hacia la simiente extraña con el surco que la hendía; copa y arca sería, como la mujer del Génesis que, al allegarse con el varón tuviese el sino de abandonar el hogar de sus padres... (pp. 247-48)

The role of Virgen Mother no longer suffices. She goes forth to encounter the male capable of releasing within her the mysteries of womanhood. Container and vessel of

creation, she longs to serve as consort to the hero capable of transforming the world, the founder of Terrestrial Paradise.

In sub-chapter XLI, Esteban is forced to renounce his infantile attachment to Sofía. The colonial police have uncovered the revolutionary activities of Sofía and Carlos. Esteban finds the authorities searching the house and inquiring into Sofía's whereabouts. Rather than see her imprisoned, he decides to facilitate her departure. Therefore, in order to draw their attention to himself, he confesses to so many subversive crimes that he leaves the police dumbfounded, unable to understand "cómo un hombre, en vez de defenderse, se entregaba a una confesión tan completa de delitos que bien podrían significar, para él, la muerte en garrote vil" (p. 251).

This represents Esteban's most heroic act. He willfully forfeits his own life in order to liberate Sofía, but it is even more important that he sacrifices his regressive attachment to her as a mother-figure. After the ship bearing Sofía has departed from Havana, he declares his confession to be false. Still, the police threaten to send him to the African prison of Ceuta. He willingly accepts his fate, and looking upon the painting "Explosion in a Cathedral," exclaims: "Hasta las piedras que iré a romper ahora estaban ya presentes en esta pintura" (p. 252).

The disintegration of the Epoch and of Esteban's own existence, as foreshadowed by this painting, is now complete. His

ego-consciousness has been completely shattered, crucified upon the contradictions of the world. Free of his last attachment to the world, he leaves for Ceuta, while Sofia embarks upon her adventure into the Revolution.

Chapter Six consists of six sub-chapters and narrates Sofia's initiation into the world. The first three sub-chapters describe her voyage to and union with Victor, but almost immediately there are indications that he is no longer the revolutionary hero capable of transforming the world. Rather, he has become a political automaton, executing orders from his superiors, indifferent to their content, solely for the purpose of maintaining himself in power. The Revolution is dead. Instead of liberating man, the French are re-establishing slavery. Victor, as the incarnation of the Revolution's political course, reverses into the opposing role: yesterday's hero becomes the tyrant of today.<sup>45</sup> Sofia's awareness of this enantiodromian process causes her to separate herself from Victor, as one would from a corpse, and she then returns to Esteban.

In sub-chapter XLII, we encounter Sofia already at sea. The adventure, begun in Chapter One but truncated by Victor's departure to France, now resumes:

Conocía nuevamente el gozo de hallarse en el punto de partida; en los umbrales de sí misma, como cuando se hubiese iniciado, en este nave, una nueva etapa de su existencia. (p. 257)

She feels that the adventure will lead to her own fructification as a Woman, alongside the hero of the Revolution

who "estaba penetrando, con sus Constituciones traducidas al español, con sus Carmañolas Americanas, en esta Tierra Firme de América, llevando a ella, como antes, las luces que en el Viejo Mundo se apagaban" (p. 259). Since Víctor is envisioned both as the male who will unleash the feminine creative potential in Sofia and as the bearer of ideals --spermatic Word<sup>46</sup>--that will effect the creation of the Promised Land in the New World, the destiny of Sofia is identified with that of America.

When she stops in Barbados to change ships, this sense of an encounter with destiny heightens. There, in Saint John's churchyard, she finds the tomb of Ferdinand Paleologus. The inscription on the stone reads: he was the descendent of the last Christian emperors in Greece (p. 261).<sup>47</sup> On his first visit to Havana, Víctor had mentioned this tomb. Now, in her own mind, Sofia associates Víctor with Paleologus--the legitimate owner of the Saint Sophia basilica--and regards this correlation as a sign presaging the transcendental significance of her coming union with Víctor: "Era una casualidad demasiado extraordinaria para no tomarse como un anuncio, un aviso, una premonición. La esperaba un prodigioso destino" (pp. 261-62).

Finally, in sub-chapter XLIII, she arrives in Cayenne. By this time Napoleon has established the Consulate in France, and Víctor's authority now depends upon his allegiance to the future Emperor. Materially, the colony of French Guiana is prospering under Víctor's administration; but, even from

the beginning, the encounter between Sofia and Victor is marred. As he arrives at the rendezvous where she is waiting, a herd of black pigs charge into the house, soiling Sofia's clothing. The boar frequently appears as a theriomorphic symbol for the negative masculine principle.<sup>48</sup> In this respect, Victor, as the Tyrant Holdfast who clings to the values of the present and prevents transformations, represents the Terrible Father.

Sofia retires to her room to change her soiled clothing, and "se sintió tan miserable que se echó a llorar, pensando en lo que se había vuelto, de pronto, el Gran Encuentro soñado durante los días de la travesía" (p. 264). Nevertheless, after an "aseo forzoso" (p. 264), she does return to Victor and enters into the long anticipated union with him.

For a while, sub-chapter XLIV, Sofia is content with these sensuous pleasures that reveal to her the mysteries of Womanhood:

Había oído decir que ciertas sectas orientales consideraban el contento de la carne como un paso necesario para la elevación hacia la Transcendencia, y llegaba a creerlo al observar que en ella se iba afianzando una insospechada capacidad de Entendimiento... Suyos eran los arcanos de la Lanza y del Cáliz que había visto, hasta ahora, como oscuros símbolos. (pp. 267-68)

The sexual symbolism of the Lance and the Chalice, liagam-yoni in Hindu religion, is quite well documented in numerous mystery rites.<sup>49</sup> The union of opposites, male and female, not only reproduces the archetypal generative act but, through participating in the act, each individual transcends his own existence, effecting a participation mystique or

union with the Godhead.<sup>50</sup> This constitutes Sofia's initiation into the mysteries of Womanhood.

However, these pleasures do not divert her from a sense of world-transforming destiny:

Era cierto que dejaba transcurrir los días, las semanas, en función del presente, enteramente feliz, sin pensar en el mañana. Pero no por ello dejaba de soñar con realizar grandes cosas, un día, junto al hombre a quien se había atado.  
(p. 268)

Then in September, 1801, she sees Victor bend indifferently before the reactionary decrees of his superiors. Napoleon has signed the Concordat with Pius VII, and the clergy begins arriving in Cayenne. Now, the priests who had sworn allegiance to the French Constitution are persecuted. Sofia, finding this turn of events "bastante grotesco" (p. 270), requests that Victor protect the juramentados who had remained loyal to the Republic. Victor, indicating that he can do nothing for them, merely shrugs his shoulders.

In November, 1802, sub-chapter XLV, there occurs a more serious confrontation between Sofia and Victor. Napoleon has re-established slavery in the French colonies, and Victor proceeds to enforce the order. Sofia, feeling deceived by her dreams of world transformation, admits that the Revolution is in the process of dissolution:

Después de la Reconstrucción de los Templos volvíase al Encierro de los Encadenados. Y quienes tenían el poder de impedirlo, en un continente donde aún podía salvarse lo que del otro lado del Océano se perdía, nada hacían por ser consecuentes de sus propios destinos.  
(p. 274)

When Sofia accuses Victor of renouncing the Revolution, he replies: "Lo siento. Pero soy un político. Y si restablecer la esclavitud es una necesidad política, debo inclinarme ante esa necesidad" (p. 275). In order to preserve his position of authority, Victor concedes indifferently to all political contingencies. He has become the Tyrant Holdfast, clinging to the source of his political power and suppressing all transformation. To re-enforce the fact that the revolutionary spirit has died in him, we find that in his office a portrait of Napoleon has replaced that of Robespierre.

At this point, Sofia begins to separate herself from Victor. In sub-chapter XLVI she escapes from this environment of dissolution through reading books of voyages: "Sofia se desatendía de la realidad para viajar, imaginariamente, a bordo de las naves del Capitán Cook, de La Perouse..." (p. 277). Then, in late summer, 1803, a Negro revolt brings Victor to his nadir and prepares the way for her real escape from this paralyzing situation.

A large number of slaves flee to the jungle where they organize themselves in accordance with their African origins. Victor prepares a punitive expedition against the runaway slaves and leads his soldiers into the jungle. Six weeks later they return, defeated by the Negroes and the jungle. Victor, gravely ill with a strange fever that has reached epidemic proportions among the troops, is taken to Cayenne. Sofia feels that her liberation is imminent: "Sofia, gozosa por el fracaso de la expedición, recogió sus ropas...Tenía

el presentimiento de que no regresaría ya a aquella casa" (p. 281).

In sub-chapter XLVII, the epidemic sweeps through the capital. The spectre of Death raises its head in Victor's domain, and existence in Cayenne reaches its spiritual nadir:

Dos religiosas grises, poseídas por el Demonio, se prostituyeron en las muelles, mientras el anciano acadiense...clamaba, en las plazas, en las esquinas, que bien llegado era el tiempo de comparecer ante el Tribunal de Dios. (p. 282)

Victor himself is forced to experience a Final Judgment by his confrontation with death. Blinded and shaken by the fever, he confesses:

He vestido tantos trajes que ya no sé cual me corresponde...Pero hay uno que prefiero a todos los demás: éste. Me lo dio el único hombre a quien, alguna vez, puse por encima de mí. Cuando lo derribaron, dejé de entenderme a mí mismo. Desde entonces no trato de explicarme nada. (p. 283)

The uniform he refers to is, of course, that given to him by Robespierre. Indeed, his administration of Guadalupe constituted his finest hour; but the real fault was not the choice of this or that political figure, but his fanatic attachment to political power itself, excluding any higher values. We recall Victor's denial of the transcendent human values espoused by Océ (pp. 64-65) and Esteban's warning against "la borrachera del Traje" (p. 113). Victor rode to the zenith of his power on the collective movement proclaiming Liberty for all men, and now he is struck down in the act of suppressing this Liberty.



Soffa, in a final manifestation of loyalty, cares for him until he has recovered from the fever; but once he is cured "habían terminado, para ella, los tiempos de la piedad" (p. 284). She expresses her decision to leave, declaring:

Estoy cansada de vivir entre muertos. Poco me importa que la peste haya salido de la ciudad. Desde antes llevaban ustedes las huellas de la muerte en las caras...Quiero volver al mundo de los vivos; de los que creen en algo. Nada espero de quienes nada esperan. (p. 285)

Long ago, with the death of Robespierre, the Revolution had died in Víctor. Now, Soffa will search out a place where men still desire to transcend the limitations of the present, where they still believe in a Promised Land. Before she departs to join Esteban, she frees herself from the bond that had tied her to the now "impotent" Víctor, by uniting herself with a young officer: "Volvía a ser dueña de su propio cuerpo cerrando, con un acto a su voluntad debida, el ciclo de una larga enajenación" (p. 286). Thus, she liberates herself from the limiting situation, assuming once again her role as Virgen, bound to no particular male.<sup>51</sup>

Chapter Seven does not consist of numbered sub-chapters as did the previous six chapters. There are only two relatively short unnumbered sections, and they do not narrate directly the actions of Soffa or Esteban. Although, in this respect, it may be considered an epilogue rather than an integral chapter of the novel, it does contain elements

that are essential to the novel's overall structure. It is necessary because it reveals the final part of Sofia's journey: the return.

We recall that Esteban's return was unsuccessful. Yet, unlike Victor, the revolutionary ideals did not die within Esteban. His ego-consciousness was crucified upon the contradictions of the world, and consequently he turned inward, proclaiming that the Promised Land was within man (p. 223). Nevertheless, this withdrawal from the world exhibited regressive tendencies, as evidenced in his relationship to Sofia, a relationship that became increasingly incestuous until he was finally forced to sacrifice it, and himself, in order to secure Sofia's liberation.

Sofia, incarnation of the feminine world transformative principle, returns from her encounter with Victor to resurrect her son-lover Esteban, in whom the ideals of the Revolution still exist. This reunion, hieros gamos of the Christ-figure and Divine Mother, occurs in Madrid and foreshadows the rebirth of the revolutionary spirit. It corresponds to the marriage of the Lamb and his mother-bride that precedes the establishment of the Heavenly Kingdom at the end of the Apocalypse.<sup>52</sup>

Significantly, the union takes place in Madrid where, in 1808, the Tyrant Napoleon is confronted and defeated for the first time. The French Revolution has run its political course and, now, symbolizes the Tyrant Holdfast. The collective uprising, May 2, 1808, represents a resurgence of

the liberating forces of transformation against the paralyzing oppression that the Emperor now imposes upon the world.

In addition, there is a striking parallel between this uprising and the one that Carpentier experienced personally, shedding some light on his choice of Madrid as the final scenario.

In 1937, during the Fascist bombardment of Madrid, Carpentier wrote an article for El Nacional entitled "Los defensores de la cultura," in which he describes the Republican defense of the city. The article depicts the collective Spanish people as both the defenders of their cultural heritage and as the unrelenting enemies of tyranny. Their heroic resistance was accompanied by the same life-affirmative cry so often uttered by Sofia in El siglo de las luces: "¡Hay que hacer algo!" (p. 296).<sup>53</sup> Among a people of the same stature, a century earlier, the lives of Sofia and Esteban end, and the novel closes.

The final chapter is preceded by a quotation from Job: "Y he aquí un gran viento que hirió las cuatro esquinas de la casa, y cayó sobre los mozos y murieron; y solamente escapé yo para traerte las nuevas" (p. 287).<sup>54</sup> These are the words of Job's servant who bears the news of death. Here Carlos functions as the servant-messenger, through whom we are informed of Sofia's and Esteban's death. On January 1, 1809, section one of Chapter Seven, Carlos arrives in Madrid at the house where Sofia and Esteban had been living. The

fact that it is the "día de los Manueles" (p. 289) re-enforces Esteban's relationship to Sofia. The figure Immanuel-Christ-Esteban denotes the divine son born of the Virgen Mother.<sup>55</sup> Although this relationship had been previously evidenced, it now appears on a higher spiritual level.

At first, Carlos is unable to discover anything about their life in Madrid; but, in section two of Chapter Seven, bits of information soon begin to reveal their activities. This final section is headed by the thirteenth caption from Goya's Los desastres de la guerra: "Así sucedió" (p. 292).<sup>56</sup> The etching depicts a priest kneeling and doubled over the railing in a church while soldiers flee with a cross and religious icons. It refers to the Napoleonic invasion of Spain that threatened not only to deprive them of liberty but to destroy their cultural and religious heritage. Rebellious against this invasion, Sofia and Esteban gave their lives.

Carlos learns that Sofia had come to Madrid in order to secure Esteban's release from prison in Ceuta. Having effected his resurrection, she brings him to this house where they lived "como hermanos" (p. 295). It is significant that this union takes place on a spiritual rather than a carnal level, for the kingdom to be established following the Apocalypse transcends the opposites experienced in the preceding destruction.<sup>57</sup> The new "Revolution," into which Sofia and Esteban enter on May 2, 1808, reveals no conflict between the political ideal of liberty and the spiritual values of

man's cultural heritage. It is not precipitated by figures desirous of political power: it is a collective upheaval arising from man's eternal desire to transcend the limiting conditions of the present.

Having collected the information that he wanted, Carlos leaves the house:

Cuando quedó cerrada la última puerta, el cuadro de la Explosión en una catedral, olvidado en su lugar--acaso voluntariamente olvidado en su lugar--dejó de tener asunto, borrándose, haciéndose mera sombra sobre el encarnado oscuro del brocado que vestía las paredes del salón y parecía sangrar donde alguna humedad le hubiese manchado el tejido. (p. 297)

The Apocalypse presaged by this ominous painting has come to pass. Esteban's own existence has been shattered, crucified upon the contradictions of the world. The Epoch has disintegrated beneath a wave of violence and with it the Revolution, the instrument of the Apocalypse. However, from this dissolution there arises a new Esteban and a new Revolution. Sofia, the incarnation of the feminine transformative principle, is the only figure that does not falter. She always affirms life, and, in effect, it is through her that rebirth is achieved.

Perhaps the ray of optimism that appears in Chapter Seven was added to the novel after Carpentier's return to Cuba in 1959. He himself admits that some changes were made:

El triunfo de la Revolución Cubana me hizo pensar que había estado ausente de mi país demasiado tiempo...regresé definitivamente en julio del 59, para asistir al primer 26 de Julio. Traía en la maleta una nueva novela, El siglo de las luces,

que había comenzado a escribir en Caracas en 1956 y terminado en la isla de Barbados dos años más tarde, pero necesitaba retoques y el cambio que se observaba en la vida y en la sociedad cubanas me resultó demasiado apasionante para que pudiera pensar en otra cosa. Por eso no se publicó hasta 1962.<sup>58</sup>

Yet, it would seem that these changes were minor—"retoques." Aside from the author's statement, we should recall that the hieros gamos of Chapter Seven is an integral part of, in fact, the fructification of the apocalyptic vision that permeates the entire novel.

The major structural elements of El siglo de las luces are the cosmogonic round and the archetypal voyage of the hero. Tracing Victor's career, we find that it corresponds to the course of the Revolution. From Chapter One to the end of Chapter Three, his political star is in the ascendancy under the sign of Robespierre. At this point, having received word of his imminent recall to France, he declares: "La revolución se desmorona. No tengo ya de qué agarrarme. No creo en nada" (p. 177). When we again hear of him in Chapter Five, he is the Agent of the French Directoire in Cayenne where he will enforce the Napoleonic decrees (p. 235). This reversal occurs exactly at the midpoint of the novel and coincides with the political course of the French Revolution: revolutionary fanaticism during the period of emanation, and reactionary tyranny in the period of dissolution. Thus at the end, the cosmogonic round has completed its cycle. Now, a new Revolution appears to move the

process forward. Victor, who incarnated the course of the French Revolution, has died.

His emergence in Chapter One initiates two consecutive quest-voyages that rend apart the adolescent world of two Cubans: Esteban and Sofia. From Chapter Two through Chapter Four, Esteban completes the same three phases of the archetypal journey--separation, initiation, and return--that Sofia accomplishes in Chapter Five through Chapter Seven. Then in Chapter Seven, the pair that was separated in Chapter One is reunited. Thus, although El siglo de las luces is by far Carpentier's most ambitious novel in scope of action, it reveals an equal level of synthesis in its closely-knit structure.

## Footnotes

1. Some of the historical sources cited by Carpentier in the bibliography of his La música en Cuba are relevant to El siglo de las luces. Other documents mentioned in the epilogue to El siglo de las luces are either inedited studies or archives unavailable to the writer. However, the historical data can be verified in supplementary sources that will be cited when they are pertinent.
  2. César Leante, "Confesiones sencillas de un escritor barroco," Cuba: revista mensual, vol. 3, no. 24, 1964, p. 33.
  3. Carpentier emphasizes his intention to capture the archetypal and collective rather than the "psychological" and individual phenomena: "En cuanto a la novela, yo creo que se asiste a la quiebra integral de la novela psicológica, de los conflictos personales, y que hemos entrado en la época de la novela épica. Si usted observa lo que he tratado de hacer en El siglo de las luces, verá que ésa es una novela de la vida colectiva..." Luis Suárez, "Con Alejo Carpentier un grande de las letras," Siempre, num. 543 (noviembre 20, 1963), p. 44.
  4. Alejo Carpentier, El siglo de las luces, second edition (México: Compañía General de Ediciones, 1965), p. 300.
- Note: further references to the novel will be from this edition and incorporated within the text.



5. Alejo Carpentier, "En torno al Apocalipsis," Repertorio Americano, vol. XLIX, no. 15 (jun-jul 1957), p. 229.
6. Claude Fell, "Rencontre avec Alejo Carpentier," Les langues modernes, 59<sup>e</sup> année (mai-juin 1965), no. 3, p. 106.
7. Although Carpentier states that the captions are from Goya's Los caprichos, Ibid., they are actually from Los desastres de la guerra.
8. Ibid.
9. Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes, The Complete Etchings of Goya, foreword by Aldous Huxley (New York: Crown Publishers, 1943), plate 43.
10. Ibid., p. 11.
11. Returning from his encounter with the French Revolution, Esteban exclaims: "Vengo de vivir entre los bárbaros," Siglo de las luces, p. 212.
12. Alejo Carpentier, El reino de este mundo (México; D.F.: Edición y Distribución Ibero Americana de Publicaciones, 1949), p. 197.
13. Carl Gustav Jung, Symbols of Transformation: An Analysis of the Prelude to a Case of Schizophrenia, trans. R.F.C. Hull (New York: Pantheon Books, 1956), p. xxiv.
14. Ibid., p. 231.
15. Supra, p. 50.
16. Supra, p. 207, footnote 19.
17. The child-abandonment motif is common to the birth of the hero. Mythologically, it represents the separation from the human parents, for the hero is the child of supernatural

- parents. Psychologically, it marks the liberation from the paternal-imagos which is necessary for the development of ego-consciousness. Cf.: Otto Rank, The Myth of the Birth of the Hero and Other Writings, ed. Philip Freund (New York: Vintage Books, Inc., 1959), pp. 14-64, 67-68; and Erich Neumann, The Origins and History of Consciousness, trans. R.F.C. Hull (New York: Pantheon Books, 1954), pp. 131-33.
18. The Complete Etchings of Goya, plate 8.
19. Not only is Victor's calling card tinged with green, but later Esteban recalls that Victor carried a "paraguas verde" (p. 158). This libidinous green marks him as the bearer of demonic powers. Also, he is explicitly identified as a "stranger," another figure endowed with supernatural powers. See: Arnold van Gennep, The Rites of Passage, trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp. 26ff.
20. This would be the hurricane that struck Havana on the night of June 21, 1791. It is described in two of the sources cited in the bibliography of Carpentier's La música en Cuba: Jacobo de Pezuela y Lobo, Ensayo histórico de la isla de Cuba (New York: Imprenta de R. Rafael, 1842), p. 327; and Pedro José Guiteras, Historia de la isla de Cuba, introducción por Fernando Ortiz (Havana: Cultural, 1928), vol. 3, p. 213.
21. Vernon A. Chamberlin presents a well-documented study of this symbolic use of green in Hispanic literature.
- "Symbolic Green: A Time-Honored Characterizing Device in

Spanish Literature," Hispania, vol. LI, no. 1 (March 1968), pp. 29-37.

22. Jung asserts that fishing represents an intuitive attempt to grasp unconscious contents when the individual is upon the threshold of transformation. See: Aion, Researches into the Phenomenology of the Self, trans. R.F.C. Hull (New York: Pantheon Books, 1959), p. 152. In this case, Sofia is about to experience the Feminine Archetype.

23. Erich Neumann, The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype, trans. Ralph Manheim (New York: Pantheon Books, 1955), p. 25.

24. Hans Jonas, The Gnostic Religion: The Message of the Alien God and the Beginnings of Christianity, 2nd edition revised (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963), pp. 273ff.

25. Supra, p. 212, footnote 40.

26. The Complete Etchings of Goya, plate 57.

27. Alejo Carpentier, La música en Cuba (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1946), pp. 100ff.

28. The Complete Etchings of Goya, plate 57.

29. Neumann, The Origins and History of Consciousness, pp. 170-91.

30. The Complete Etchings of Goya, plate 31.

31. Ibid., plate 30.

32. Ibid., plate 66.

33. Symbols of Transformation, pp. 228-29.

34. The Complete Etchings of Goya, plate 16.

35. Carpentier treats the same symbolic function in Los pasos perdidos. Supra, p. 176.
36. This is the episode mentioned by Carpentier as the inspirational source of the novel. Supra, p. 223.
37. The Complete Etchings of Goya, plate 62.
38. Carl Gustav Jung, The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, trans R.F.C. Hull (New York: Pantheon Books, 1959), p. 288; and Aion, p. 70.
39. The Complete Etchings of Goya, plate 81.
40. El reino de este mundo, p. 197.
41. The Complete Etchings of Goya, plate 2.
42. Sophia, the Divine Mother and Heavenly Bride, is the highest manifestation of the anima. She incarnates the feminine powers of the unconscious, experienced as Divine Wisdom, and her life transformative nature surpasses the bounds of ego-consciousness. See Neumann, The Great Mother, pp. 325-36.
43. The Complete Etchings of Goya, plate 58.
44. Ibid., plate 13.
45. Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces (New York: Pantheon Books, 1949), pp. 337, 353.
46. Victor represents the masculine principle that unleashes the creative potential within the feminine vessel, and as the bearer of the revolutionary ideals into the New World he is identified with the parallel spermatoc function of the Word. See: Jung, Symbols of Transformation, p. 359.

Carpentier refers to this function of the Word in the quotation prefacing the novel: "Las palabras no caen en el vacío" (El siglo de las luces, p. 9). Although Víctor himself comes to oppose these very ideals, they are imparted to Sofía and will fructify within her, as they did in the Spanish colonies.

47. Sir Alan Cuthbert Burns, History of the British West Indies (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1954), p. 753.

48. Newmann, The Origins and History of Consciousness, p. 179; and The Great Mother, p. 168.

49. Jessie L. Weston, From Ritual to Romance (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1957), pp. 75, 80, 158-59; and Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God: Creative Mythology (New York: Viking Press, 1968), pp. 457-59.

50. This repeats on the feminine level the mystical experience realized by Esteban. Supra, pp. 259-260.

51. A similar concept of virginity is exhibited by the anima-figure in Los pasos perdidos, Supra, p. 180 and pp217-18, footnote 68.

52. Revelation, 19:7.

53. Alejo Carpentier, "Los defensores de la cultura," Repertorio Americano, vol. XXXIII, no. 21 (5 jun, 1937), p. 334.

54. Job, 1:19.

55. Isaiah, 7:14; and Matthew, 1:23.

56. The Complete Etchings of Goya, plate 47.
57. Carl Gustav Jung, Psychology and Religion: West and East, trans. R.F.C. Hull (New York: Pantheon Books, 1958), p. 458.
58. Leante, "Confesiones sencillas de un escritor barroco," p. 33.

## CONCLUSION

In Carpentier's novelistic production, we discover an evolution from the purely temporal and particular toward a reality that is increasingly more timeless and universal. Yet, this evolution is not accompanied by debilitating abstraction dissociated from man's historical and social context. His attention to realistic detail produces a style that is "una prosa barroca, forzosamente barroca, como toda prosa que ciñe el detalle, lo menudea, lo colorea, lo destaca, para darle relieve y definirlo."<sup>1</sup> The author devotes long descriptive passages to the objective reality of man's environment. In Ecue-yamba-ó, the narrative frequently assumes the characteristics of an anthropologist's observation of Afro-Cuban ceremonial rituals, complete with photographs and glossary. Even in El siglo de las luces, the customs, language, and such detail as the names of ships are the result of thorough historical documentation.<sup>2</sup>

In dynamic tension with this descriptive prose that emphasizes the objective reality of man's temporal and particular existence, we discover structural patterns that reveal the archetypal nature of man. Carpentier has affirmed this timeless and universal aspect: "Je pense que l'homme a un comportement éternel et unique au milieu de circonstances changeantes."<sup>3</sup> Man's eternal and unique

behavior is that of homo religiosus: the desire to transcend the limitations of his present condition. This desire manifests itself in the patterns of initiation peculiar to the religious experience, even if the patterns themselves have been desacralized:

...man becomes himself only after having solved a series of desperately difficult and even dangerous situations: that is, after having undergone "tortures" and "death," followed by an awakening to another life, qualitatively different because regenerated. If we look closely, we see that every human life is made up of a series of ordeals, of "deaths," and of "ressurections." It is true that in the case of modern man, since there is no longer any religious experience fully and consciously assumed, initiation no longer performs an ontological function; it no longer includes a radical change in the initiand's mode of being, or his salvation. The initiatory scenarios function only on the vital and psychological planes. Nevertheless, they continue to function, and that is why I have said that the process of initiation seems to be co-existent with any and every human condition.<sup>4</sup>

These initiatory patterns constitute the major structural elements of the magical or transcendent reality contained within Carpentier's novels.

His first novel, Ecue-yamba-ó, consists of three parts: "I.--Infancia," "II.--Adolescencia," and "III.--La ciudad." Each part contains a chapter entitled respectively: "Iniciación (a)," "Iniciación (b)," and "Iniciación (c)." Thus it appears that the fundamental structural element of the novel is in the rite of initiation. The subdivisions employed by Van Gennep, in The Rites of Passage, coincide with and elucidate the three parts of Carpentier's novel: séparation, marge, and agrégation. Part One of



Ecue-yamba-ó depicts the birth and childhood of the protagonist, ending with his separation from childhood as an asexual state. Part Two treats the transitory stage between childhood and adult life and terminates with his departure for the city. Part Three deals with his incorporation into the ñáñigo sect, his achievement of a full adult existence and his death. The linear development of the life crises in the existence of a single protagonist establishes the basic plot line. However, since each crisis reveals a dying to the previous condition and a rebirth to a new level of existence, a cyclic pattern, transcending the limits of temporal existence, is revealed. This pattern is re-enforced by the birth of the dead protagonist's son, who will begin anew the voyage of initiation.

El reino de este mundo has its roots in the temporal realm of history: the Haitian Wars of Independence. Carpentier divides the novel into four major parts and describes a significant heroic figure in each part, respectively: Mackandal, Bouckman, Christophe, and Ti Noel. The fundamental structural elements are the archetypal adventure of the hero and the cyclic process of the cosmogonic round. Each heroic figure experiences a pattern similar to that of the initiation rite: departure from his immediate surroundings, penetration to and linking with the primordial source of life, and finally the return to contemporary life where he unleashes the power discovered in the primordial source. Also, each figure participates in the over-

all course of the Revolution, a process of emanation and dissolution. The cosmogonic round is activated in Part One by Mackandal and, through the action of Bouckman, continues on to its zenith at the end of Part Two. In Part Three, the midpoint of the novel, Christophe precipitates the decline of the Negro forces. This continues on to the end of Part Four, when Ti Noel liberates the forces that will reactivate the process. Thus, the linear series of heroic figures is related to the cyclic pattern of the cosmogonic round, and Carpentier's description of the historical Wars of Independence achieves both structural unity and archetypal significance.

In Los pasos perdidos, Carpentier returns to a narrative centered upon a single protagonist. The controlling pattern is the monomyth--the archetypal voyage of the hero. Like the rites de passage, the nucleus of the monomyth consists of three phases: separation, initiation, and return. The novel, written in the form of a diary describing the adventure, is divided into six chapters. The first three chapters treat the protagonist's long and arduous task of freeing himself from the contemporary world. Finally, in Chapter Four, he crosses the threshold of the marvelous world and suffers the trials of initiation. Then, in Chapter Five, he is initiated into the Laws governing the marvelous world of Genesis. In Chapter Six, the return to the contemporary world is accomplished. The elements of the cosmogonic round are suggested by the Genesisic American continent and

the Apocalyptic European culture, but the dominant element is the protagonist who undertakes the heroic voyage between the two worlds. His re-entry into the time of origins has a regenerative effect, allowing him to return, illuminated and transformed, to fulfill his destiny within time. The protagonist is anonymous, and his journey is that of Everyman. It evidences certain parallels with the initiation of Menegildo in Ecue-yamba-6, but the journey in Los pasos perdidos achieves a more universal and archetypal significance.

El siglo de las luces arises from the same historical situation treated in El reino de este mundo: the beginnings of the American Wars of Independence. However, El siglo de las luces surpasses the earlier novel both in scope of action and structural unity. Divided into seven chapters, it treats the course of the French Revolution and its effects upon the New World colonies. The fundamental structural elements are the cosmogonic round and the hero archetype. The political career of Victor Hugues coincides with the course of the Revolution. From Chapter One through Chapter Three, he embodies the revolutionary fanaticism of Robespierre and rises to the zenith of his power in Guadalupe; but, by Chapter Five, he joins the reactionary forces, and finally succumbs, imposing Napoleonic decrees in Cayenne. This reversal of roles, occurring at the midpoint of the novel, corresponds to the cyclic pattern of the cosmogonic round. Woven into this dominant structural element are two successive quest-voyages realized by the Cuban adolescents Esteban

and Sofia. In Chapter One, Victor Hugues issues the call to adventure. Then Esteban departs upon his journey --separation, initiation, and return--: Chapters Two, Three, and Four, respectively. Finally, Sofia completes her voyage: Chapters Five, Six, and Seven. In the last chapter, the two Cubans are reunited, and a new Revolution against the now reactionary forces of the French Revolution commences. This fusion of the cyclic and the linear patterns produces a greater structural unity than that evidenced in El reino de este mundo.

Magical realism in the novels of Alejo Carpentier arises from the interpenetration of objective external reality and a transcendent reality of an archetypal nature. Both, of course, are made manifest through language: descriptive in the former and symbolic in the latter case. In addition, the structuring of the narrative into chapters and sub-chapters reveals certain patterns peculiar to the mytho-religious experience. The fundamental structural elements exhibited in Carpentier's novels are the archetypal adventure of the hero and the cyclic process of the cosmogonic round. Thus, the magical or transcendent reality is evoked not only through the symbolic use of language but also through structural patterns that are an integral part of that reality.

## Footnotes

1. Alejo Carpentier, Tientos y Diferencias: ensayos. (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1964), p. 41.
2. Although the documents cited by Carpentier in the epilogue to El siglo de las luces were not available to the writer, the names of these ships were verified in: René Jouan, Histoire de la marine française (Paris: Payot, 1932), vol. II; William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy (London: Sampson, Low and Co., 1966), vol. IV; and Dudley W. Knox, Naval Documents related to the Quasi-War between the United States and France (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1935), 7 vols.
3. Claude Fell, "Rencontre avec Alejo Carpentier," Les langues modernes, 59<sup>e</sup> année, no. 3 (mai-juin, 1965), p. 106.
4. Mircea Eliade, Birth and Rebirth: the Religious Meanings of Initiation in Human Culture, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1958), p. 128.

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The following selected bibliography consists of three sections: works and articles by Alejo Carpentier, those treating his literary production, and general works cited in this study. Rather than duplicate the extensive bibliography compiled by Müller-Bergh, the reader is referred to the dissertation listed below: La prosa narrativa de Alejo Carpentier en Los pasos perdidos. We shall only list works cited in this study and works supplementing the above mentioned dissertation.

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