

THE POETRY OF JOSÉ HIERRO

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## Introduction

The poetry of José Hierro, one of the major poets to emerge in Spain after the Civil War,<sup>1</sup> reflects the decreasing rigidity in the boundaries between the novel and poetry.<sup>2</sup> This is especially evident in the narrative style of much of the poetry of this epoch, often characterized by free verse, long, rambling lines and an anecdotal plot. One also sees a preference for a first-person speaker who both observes and participates in the world he describes. Frank K. Stanzel's comments about the manipulation of speaker and perspective with respect to the novel are also helpful to the critic of post-Civil War poetry: "Presence of the author means that the narrator and the narrative process take on a definite shape in the reader's imagination in addition to the narrated events. In this case report-like narration usually predominates . . . [R]eport-like narration is well suited to gradual change, development, and certain processes which only become truly meaningful when they are illuminated by the imagination of the author or when explained and interpreted by him."<sup>3</sup> The speaker in post-war poetry is often a kind of novelistic character, based, of course, on the poet's nature and experience, but transformed so as to transcend the limitations of time and individual personality.

Most poets of Hierro's generation write about the physical and psychological effects of the Civil War on Spain and her people. Like Dámaso Alonso, in Hijos de la ira (1944), they express the despair and pessimism of their times through an individual speaker. Such poets as Gabriel Celaya (Las cosas como son, 1949; Las cartas boca arriba, 1951), Blas de Otero (Redoble de conciencia, 1951; Pido la paz y la palabra, 1955) and Eugenio de Nora (España, pasión de vida, 1954) focus on the need for change in Spain from a subjective point of view. Blas de Otero and Celaya are especially insistent about exposing the social and political injustices of the times.

Hierro calls the poetry of his generation testimonial, and defines testimonial poets as "los que dan testimonio de su tiempo desde el 'yo' o desde el 'nosotros.'" (p. 15). He further explains this classification by saying, "Estoy refiriéndome implícitamente a un tipo de poesía que desdeña la belleza abstracta, el poema como hermoso objeto fabricado, la evasión de la realidad circundante, y prefiere arraigar en la vida concreta. Una poesía testimonial . . . Los poetas de la posguerra teníamos que ser, fatalmente, testimoniales." (p. 12).

As testimonial poetry -- that is to say, poetry of his time -- Hierro's reflects thematic and stylistic qualities similar to Antonio Machado, Dámaso Alonso, Juan Ramón Jiménez, Jorge Guillén and Blas de Otero. Such critics as José María Castellet, Guillermo de Torre, José Batlló and José Luis Cano include Hierro in the second group of post-Civil War poets.<sup>4</sup> These critics generally agree that the poetry immediately following the Civil War, between 1939 and 1944, had little innovative or lasting value. This first post-Civil War generation is often referred to as la del garcilasismo. Emilio Alarcos Llorach

characterizes its poetry in the following manner: "Era natural que la primera etapa poética después de las hostilidades, como reacción ante una realidad hosca, buscara la tranquilidad de ánimo, el silencio que adormeciera pasiones o rencores. Para ello, nada mejor que el cultivo de una poesía con primacía de lo musical externo, uso de melodías en que lo de menos era la carne de la palabra y lo más el canturreo que pudiera dar sopor. . . ."5

In reaction to the Garcilasist poetry one finds a second generation of young writers who want their poetry to express the anguish and chaos of their times. Castellet characterizes this generation's poetry as "una frenética búsqueda de ordenación y de ancla." (p. 79). They are attracted to Antonio Machado both because of his poetry's content and form. One sees a similar use of a first-person speaker in Machado and poets like Dámaso Alonso and José Hierro. Ricardo Gullón comments on Machado's yo speaker: ". . . el 'yo' . . . no es tanto el Antonio Machado de carne y hueso con quien los lectores tal vez se encontraron en el café o en la calle, como la sustancia lírica extraída de esa materia transeúnte, que en el poema expresa más de lo que la biografía del poeta pudiera revelar."6

In 1944 Dámaso Alonso published Hijos de la ira, which is considered the first major book of the second post-Civil War generation.<sup>7</sup> In it the speaker-protagonist is the lens through which the reader sees the book's world. Andrew P. Debicki discusses the intellectual atmosphere of this epoch and Dámaso Alonso's relation to it: "El mismo Dámaso Alonso ha escrito, a propósito del libro Hijos de la ira: 'Yo busco una expresión para mover el corazón y la inteligencia de los hombres,

y no últimas sensibilidades de exquisitas minorías.' Este impulso corresponde perfectamente al clima intelectual que se desarrollará en España en la época inmediatamente posterior a Hijos de la ira, y explica muy bien por qué el libro llega a ser principio y guía de una nueva tradición poética fundada en un lenguaje directo, en temas que arrancan de los problemas circundantes, y en la tendencia a enfocar la situación particular de la época."<sup>8</sup> One finds a similar focus on themes relevant to the post-Civil War period in Hierro's poetry, as well as a corresponding use of a particular speaker and point of view.

The immense popularity of Hierro's first two books -- Tierra sin nosotros and Alegría -- is in part a direct result of the first-person speaker's relative closeness to the poems' world. These poems reflect the anguish, frustration and confusion of post-war Spain. The psychological characterization of the speaker which is presented metaphorically (and therefore indirectly) transcends the immediate personality of José Hierro. By frequently using a nosotros speaker he universalizes the poems' perspectives. In this sense Hierro's poetry might be seen as "socially oriented." Mercedes López-Baralt has suggested that one of the most notable similarities between Hierro and Machado is an analogous view of poetry as a reflection of their respective times: "El aspecto que más claramente vincula a Hierro con Antonio Machado es su concepción de la poesía como testimonio de su tiempo . . . El 'yo' del poeta es el 'nosotros' de la España de posguerra . . . José Hierro es prueba clara de que la poesía social no se reduce a la expresión directa de la realidad externa, aquella que es más obvia. La manera indirecta en que su tiempo irrumpe en su poesía plantea al lector el problema de

aproximarse a la realidad española de las décadas de posguerra, ya que a José Hierro no se le puede leer en abstracto."<sup>9</sup> Hierro himself discusses the subject of social poetry in his essay "Poesía pura, poesía práctica:" "Vivimos la era de la poesía práctica. La pura manipulaba quintaesencias. La práctica prefiere materias vivas, el hombre entero con sus sueños, sus ideas, sus sentimientos, sus problemas. No se trata de una actitud revolucionaria, sino, por el contrario, más próxima a la tradicional."<sup>10</sup> I do not consider Hierro's poetry political, although some critics do.<sup>11</sup> His thematic concern, even in the early books, is the humanist's concern for his fellow man. In this respect he differs from some of his contemporaries, notably Blas de Otero and Gabriel Celaya, whose political views pervade their poetry and whose avowed purpose is to educate the masses.<sup>12</sup> While one might see certain social references in Hierro's poetry, they are not its predominant element; rather, they are a reflection of his times. Neither is perspective or point of view per se the dominant element of Hierro's poetry, but rather the stylized voice through which the poet speaks.<sup>13</sup> In order to understand Hierro's poetry it is necessary to look at the language through which themes and perspective create the total experience of his poetry. It is the way in which Hierro combines theme, perspective, metaphorical language and rhythm that makes his poetry transcend the limitations of time and place.

While Hierro's poetry exhibits certain similarities to the Generation of '98 in themes and his experimentation with speaker and perspective (especially to Machado in poetry and Unamuno in prose fiction), one is also struck by the correspondence in use of metaphorical language between

Hierro and such poets as Rubén Darío, Juan Ramón Jiménez and Jorge Guillén. In spite of his disagreement with the pursuit of "art for art's sake," best exemplified in the early Darío, Hierro admires the latter's innovative use of language and rhythm. In his 1967 article about Darío, Hierro comments, "Es el Rubén grave, aquél en que la melodía interior se impone a la exterior, el que dejará su impronta en la poesía de posguerra."<sup>14</sup> Like Darío, Hierro experiments with meter and interior rhythm, convinced that the form of a poem is a subtle support or source of contrast to the thematic matter.<sup>15</sup> Hierro is also in agreement with Darío's attempts to integrate music into poetry, not only in terms of rhythm and sound patterns, but also as a thematic element.<sup>16</sup>

Music, like poetry, is a temporal art. Hierro notes this coincidence when he says (as cited by Francisco López Estrada), "La historia de la poesía es, en cierto modo, la historia de sus aproximaciones a la música, al ritmo musical."<sup>17</sup> Victor Zuckerkandl explains this relationship among time, music and poetry from the musicologist's point of view: "The principal manifestation of time in music is rhythm . . . [M]usical rhythm in general is of the nature of poetic rhythm: free rhythm, in the sense that it is not constrained to keep time."<sup>18</sup> López Estrada also discusses Hierro's views about the relationship between rhythm and the poem: "José Hierro, que siente el ritmo como la vida o el amor o la muerte, entiende que es fundamentalmente interior en su génesis, y que, intuído primero por el poeta, sale difícilmente fuera por medio de los recursos rítmicos de la expresión." (p. 38). As with Hierro's experimentation with narrative perspective, the consideration of musical elements in his poetry reflects a concern with the total poetic experience.

In this regard he agrees with the critic Emil Staiger, who says, "Ni la música de las palabras por sí sola ni tampoco su significación, sino ambas cosas en una, hacen el milagro de la lírica."<sup>19</sup>

One sees a resemblance between Hierro's insistence on the importance of the creative, lyrical expression of themes and that of Gerardo Diego, Juan Ramón Jiménez and Jorge Guillén. His experimentation with metaphor at times approaches the symbolists' use of images to capture chaotic inner states of mind. Even in his prose Hierro explains his theories through metaphors. Like Guillén, Hierro uses images to transcend the anecdotal level of his poems. In Hierro's first three books the most dramatic events occur outside the poem's setting. The poems synthesize the speaker's contemplation of these anecdotal events. The effect is to decrease any excessive sentimentality without voiding the poems of emotion. This is one way in which Hierro creates a subtle sense of distance, while in his later books he usually relies more on a distance between speaker and the world of the poem. Like Machado and Guillén, Hierro often personifies the world of nature to objectify his sentiments. Sometimes he extends an image through personification, at the same time that he introduces the possibility of an allegorical meaning behind the image. Hierro's use of contrast and balance of images within a poem not only creates a complex metaphorical experience, but it also makes it impossible for the reader to reduce a poem to a simple positive or negative statement. At times he develops a disemic symbol to suggest a level of meaning beyond the literal. This technique is also favored by Machado.<sup>20</sup>

Like Machado (who called poetry "la palabra en el tiempo"), José Hierro views poetry as a temporal art. In the Prologue to his 1962 Poesías completas he says, "Si la poesía es arte del tiempo, no del espacio, este orden temporal ha de ser cuidadosamente regido." (p. 17). The temporal structure of a poem combines with the metaphorical expression of theme to create a complementary relationship between form and content.<sup>21</sup>

Hierro generally develops his ideas about time indirectly through metaphors. His poems suggest a similar conception of time to that of the French philosopher, Gaston Bachelard. José Olivio Jiménez discusses the latter's views as they relate to Hierro's poetry: "El tiempo, visto descontinuamente, se nos aparece como suma espaciada de instantes de plenitud separados por zonas intermedias más o menos de vacío. El hombre tiende siempre hacia aquel instante en el que cree percibir la intensidad absoluta del vivir. Mas para que esta vivencia de la plenitud llegue a realizarse, resulta indispensable la experiencia del vacío . . . El ser humano, en consecuencia, y para no disolverse en su nada, busca llenarla de algún modo, o sea, quiere hacer de ella, siquiera ilusoriamente una realidad preñada de sustancia."<sup>22</sup> Bachelard calls a poem a "beautiful temporal object."<sup>23</sup> In the Prologue cited above Hierro expresses his ideas about time and poetry through a metaphor: "Más de una vez he dicho que los poetas actuales somos autores de obras completas. Tal vez porque no consideramos el poema como un todo que empieza y concluye en sí mismo, sino como una parte, una instantánea de nuestra vida. Un poema nuestro es un fotograma. Sólo relacionado con el anterior y el posterior adquiere movimiento. Las obras completas son

entonces algo así como una película que se proyecta. La poesía se hace dinámica . . . La poesía, como el cine, es evidentemente un gran invento." (Cuanto sé de mí, p. 11).

For Hierro, a poem is a metaphorical creation of the imagination in time which transcends the immediate anecdotal reality of the poet. As Bachelard says, "Poetry is that zone of language in which originality is impregnated with potential universality." (p. xx). Colette Gaudin notes that "For Bachelard, imagination must infuse a second life into familiar images, it must create 'metaphors of metaphors.'" (p. xviii). When such poets as Dámaso Alonso, Blas de Otero and José Hierro purport to use everyday language, the reader must recognize how that language is employed. Certainly in Hierro's poetry there are few examples of overly erudite vocabulary; instead one finds a preponderance of metaphors that are at once traditionally based and startlingly unique. For example, to develop contrasting ideas or points of view the speaker uses images of nature -- the seasons, the sea or the desert -- in such a way as to fuse his individual perspective with the abstract themes like time, death and love which concern him.

Often it is the relationship between speaker and metaphorical world which subtly delineates a poem's themes. Throughout Hierro's poetry the mechanical time boundaries of the exterior world are usually rejected in favor of the more subjective psychological time of the mind. A series of images with no apparent logical link may be unified by the emotional reaction of the speaker to what he sees. There may be a constant shifting from past to present, or from fact to fantasy, especially in the alucinación. Perspective -- or point of view -- is

one of the dominant elements of Hierro's poetry. One must relate the questions "Who is speaking?", "What is he saying?" and "How is he saying it" to each other in order to appreciate the complex experience of the poem. The distinct presence of the speaker and the metaphorical language and rhythmic patterns he favors are quite as important as the themes he develops.

As a result of the emphasis on the speaker by Twentieth-Century poets like Antonio Machado, Gerardo Diego, Dámaso Alonso and José Hierro, the reader of their poetry must borrow certain critical techniques from the study of the novel. For example, it is useful to study the variable distance between the speaker and his world, as well as between the speaker and the reader. Ricardo Gullón devotes an entire chapter to the subject of distance in Machado's poetry. He defines it as follows: "Distancia es la separación entre dos puntos u objetos situados en el espacio o en el tiempo; la palabra sirve también para indicar la actitud con que nos enfrentamos a lo que está fuera de nosotros -- personas, objetos, fenómenos . . . El poetizar, como el pensar o el soñar, implica un ajuste mental a lo expresado, que entra en la expresión con forma e intensidad dependientes de su relación con el poeta y con el ámbito en que éste lo contempla." (p. 183).

With respect to Hierro's poetry it is helpful to study narrative distance and perspective in individual poems, as well as the speaker's evolving point of view in the complete works. Hierro uses a variety of speakers, but his favorite, especially in the first three books, is the yo or the nosotros speaker. The attitudes and ways of expressing himself evolve in Hierro's poetic production in much the same way as a

first-person narrator-protagonist does in a novel. Norman Friedman demonstrates this kind of evolution in James Joyce's A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man. "The personality of the artist, at first a cry or a cadence or a mood [lyric] and then a fluid and lambent narrative [epic], finally refines itself out of existence [drama], impersonalizes itself, so to speak."<sup>24</sup> One sees a similar development in Hierro's speaker. In his first three books -- Tierra sin nosotros (1947), Alegría (1947) and Con las piedras, con el viento (1950) -- the dominant qualities of the speaker are his mood, its lyrical expression and the relationship of his changing perspective to certain universal themes, such as life, death, time and love. For example, the speaker's nostalgic yearning for the past, evident in the early poems of Tierra sin nosotros, is countered later by an angry resentment about his imprisonment. In Con las piedras, the speaker's evolution in perspective goes from an enthusiastic idealization of a lost love, to anger about it, to a resigned acceptance of the past. In Tierra sin nosotros and Alegría there is little separation of the speaker from his world, whereas in Con las piedras there is an increase in distance between the two. In the latter the first-person speaker alternates between an experiencing-speaker and a reflecting-speaker, a technique which Franz K. Stanzel explains:

No matter whether the first-person narrator plays a central or a peripheral role in the action; whether he actively or passively participates as the main figure; or whether he is a secondary figure, an observing, registering witness and commentator of the action -- in every case two strands of experience are always united in his person as long as the narrative act is incorporated into the presentation. As a central figure in the action or even as a simple participant he belongs to a world of deeds, adventures, tension and crises. Experiences of this kind are usually assigned to the younger

period of the narrator, the experiencing self . . . , Cut off from its earlier experiences, the narrating self yields completely to retrospective reflection. The time of crises and tempests is now past.  
(p. 65)

In his later books -- Quinta del '42 (1953), Cuanto sé de mí (1957) and Libro de las alucinaciones (1964) -- one finds the speaker more removed from his world than in the first three books. He develops a wider range of subject matter, and more frequently uses allegory, irony and dramatic techniques such as dialogue to create the experience of the poem. In all of Hierro's books the speaker's attitude towards and distance from his world is an important stylistic element of the work. This spatial relationship qualifies the concepts of irony and emotional distance which Gullón defines in Machado's poetry: "Ironía y pasión actúan en direcciones diferentes respecto al tamaño de figuras y cosas, obviamente relacionado con la distancia desde la cual se las contempla. La ironía, que aleja, empequeñece; la pasión, que acerca, magnifica lo contemplado." (p. 196).

Regardless of speaker-distance, Hierro almost always develops the world of the poem as a concrete physical setting. The speaker describes the scene through images which ultimately point to a universal level beyond the immediate experience of the poem. These images often have the startling effect of the surrealists' in their simultaneous embodiment of the speaker's imagination, his emotions and his physical sensations. E. Inman Fox cites these characteristics as elements of the symbolist tradition in its "unificación de impulsos contrarios." He continues, "Tal poesía pone el acento en el poeta como creador; y, en su creación, es su imaginación la que da al poema su calidad poética, no algún valor

intrínseco, como la Verdad o la Belleza." (p. 33). In Hierro's poetry the alucinación most resembles surrealist poetry, although his objectives and views of art are quite different from theirs.

The alucinación is perhaps Hierro's most innovative and lasting contribution to contemporary Spanish poetry. This unique form of expression first appears in Hierro's second book (Alegría, 1947).<sup>25</sup> It does not reach the peak of its development until Libro de las alucinaciones (1964). This last book is the culmination of Hierro's experimentation with point of view, distance and the creative use of language and rhythm to express theme. One sees a relationship to Bachelard's reverie or to Machado's soñar despierto in the interweaving of imagination, dreams and facts. The apparent lack of structure, the illogical and seemingly unconnected images and the temporal jigsaw puzzles mask the complex structure of the book, creating a sense of chaos at times. Speaking of Libro de las alucinaciones, José Olivio Jiménez says,

Aquí está, en suma, la hondura verdadera de la alucinación. Porque el poeta alucinado adquiere al cabo la posesión del sentido unitario de su existencia, aún de la no vivida, de la que un día le arrebataron y que tan tenazmente ha alimentado su angustia de hombre histórico. Y con esa posesión le viene otra de signo más universal y trascendente: la de todas aquellas vidas que en la suya se asumen; con lo que va a repetir aquí, si bien de distinto modo, el pensamiento que, todavía teóricamente, reiteraba frecuentemente en sus libros iniciales y el cual le hacía ver su vivir humano como síntesis de otras vidas y otras muertes.  
(p. 139)

In this book the increasing importance of narrative distance and irony, as well as the intermingling of fact and fantasy, suggest a freedom that is based on an acceptance of man's limitations and an awareness of his generally untapped potential.

The speaker of Hierro's poetic work is therefore like a protagonist in a novel, telling his life's history. One follows him from his beginning adulthood far into maturity, and sees the emergence not only of a deepening understanding of life, but also the increasing ability of this man to express himself creatively and to transcend the limitations of personality and time. Hierro creates a unique poetic experience through experimentation with narrative perspective and the development of metaphorical language and rhythmic patterns to express his intense preoccupation with such universal themes as life, time, death and love. He produces an intimate, introspective poetry in which he skillfully integrates form and content, avoiding excessive sentimentality while pointing to universal human concerns.

In the chapters which follow I will first present a more detailed study of Hierro's poetics; then I will study his major books of poetry in chronological order. I will focus my study on those elements of his poetry which best point to his unique contribution to contemporary Spanish poetry, namely his experimentation with narrative perspective and his use of rhythm, sound patterns and metaphor to create a poetic experience which is both a reflection of his time and a more universal reflection of life.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> José Hierro was born on April 3, 1922, in Madrid. He published his first two books — Tierra sin nosotros and Alegría -- in 1947, and continued to publish poetry until 1964, when Libro de las alucinaciones appeared. To date he is credited with twelve books of poetry, including anthologies, all of which are listed in the bibliography under "Works by José Hierro." All subsequent references to his 1962 Prologue and all poems will be to the edition of his complete works released in 1974, under the title Cuanto sé de mí (not to be confused with the 1957 volume of poetry with the same title). I will indicate quotes from this 1974 edition in the text, by putting the pages in parentheses at the end of the cited material.

<sup>2</sup> E. Inman Fox, in his article "La poesía 'social' y la tradición simbolista," suggests an alternative appraisal: ". . . el desarrollo de la novela y la forma y alcance del trabajo periodístico ha eliminado hasta cierto punto la necesidad de una poesía narrativa o épica." La Torre, XVII, No. 64 (April-June 1969), 51.

<sup>3</sup> Franz K. Stanzel, Narrative Situations in the Novel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971), pp. 22, 23.

<sup>4</sup> For an historical introduction to the poets of this generation see the following works: José María Castellet, Veinte años de poesía española (1939-1959), 3rd ed. (Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1964); Guillermo de Torre, "Contemporary Spanish Poetry," Texas Quarterly, IV, No. 1 (Spring

1961), 55-78; José Battló, Antología de la nueva poesía (Madrid: Ciencia Nueva, 1968); and José Luis Cano, Poesía española contemporánea de las generaciones de la posguerra (Madrid: Guadarrama, 1974). While the above critics do not always agree on interpretative points, they all offer a good introduction to post-Civil War poets.

<sup>5</sup>Emilio Alarcos Llorach, La poesía de Blas de Otero (Salamanca: Anaya, 1966), p. 19.

<sup>6</sup>Ricardo Gullón, Una poética para Antonio Machado (Madrid: Gredos, 1970), p. 199.

<sup>7</sup>Dámaso Alonso, Hijos de la ira (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1946).

<sup>8</sup>Andrew P. Debicki, Dámaso Alonso (Madrid: Cátedra, 1974), pp. 63-64.

<sup>9</sup>Mercedes López-Baralt, "Vigencia de Antonio Machado: La temporalidad en la poesía de José Hierro," Revista de Estudios Hispánicos (Puerto Rico), Nos. 1-4 (1972), p. 149.

<sup>10</sup>José Hierro, "Poesía pura, poesía práctica," Insula, No. 132 (November 1957), p. 4.

<sup>11</sup>On this point I disagree with the views expressed by Guillermo de Torre when he says, "Today, therefore, when I read José Hierro's words, 'Perhaps poetry should be epic,' I agree on principle but quarrel with the final objectives that he, and others, seem to propose. We can only hope that where they dream of digging themselves out to new horizons of

light and liberty they are not burrowing deeper into entrapment, into the gloomy dungeons of Marxist doctrine." ("Contemporary Spanish Poetry," 76-77).

<sup>12</sup>See their respective statements in the Antología consultada de la joven poesía española (Valencia: Mares, 1952).

<sup>13</sup>See T. S. Eliot, The Three Voices of Poetry (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1954), pp. 6-7, for a description of his system of classifying speaker in poetry.

<sup>14</sup>José Hierro, "La huella de Rubén en los poetas de la posguerra española," Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos, No. 212-213 (August-September 1967), p. 359.

<sup>15</sup>See Douglass Rogers' study of meter, especially in Hierro's earlier books, in Chapter VI of his dissertation, "A Study of the Poetry of José Hierro as a Representative Fusion of Major Trends of Contemporary Spanish Poetry" (University of Wisconsin, 1964).

<sup>16</sup>For an interesting study of Dario's use of music in poetry see Erika Lorenz's article, "Rubén Darío, el gran sinfónico del verbo; interpretación del poema 'Sinfonía en gris mayor,'" in Estudios sobre Rubén Darío, ed. Ernesto Mejía Sánchez (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1968), pp. 522-535.

<sup>17</sup>Francisco López Estrada, Métrica española del siglo XX (Madrid: Gredos, 1969), p. 33.

<sup>18</sup>Victor Zuckerkandl, Sound and Symbol: Music and the External World, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1956), pp. 157, 159.

<sup>19</sup>Emil Staiger, Conceptos fundamentales de poética, trans. Jaime Ferreiro Alemparte (Madrid: Rialp, 1966), p. 33.

<sup>20</sup>Carlos Bousoño uses the Machado image of agua muerta to illustrate the term disemic symbol, which he says refers simultaneously to the speaker's state of mind and the vision of the pool. For a further discussion of this term see Bousoño's book, Teoría de la expresión poética, 5th ed. (Madrid: Gredos, 1970), Chapter 10.

<sup>21</sup>With respect to the thematic element of Hierro's poetry, see the following detailed studies: José Olivio Jiménez, Cinco poetas del tiempo, 2nd ed. (Madrid: Insula, 1972); Diez años de poesía española: 1960-1970 (Madrid: Insula, 1972); and Douglass Marcel Rogers, "El tiempo en la poesía de José Hierro," Archivum, XI (1961), 201-230.

<sup>22</sup>José Olivio Jiménez, Diez años de poesía española: 1960-1970, p. 124.

<sup>23</sup>Gaston Bachelard, On Poetic Imagination and Reverie: Selections from the Works of Gaston Bachelard, trans. & ed. by Colette Gaudin (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1971), p. 25.

<sup>24</sup>Norman Friedman, "Point of View in Fiction: The Development of a Critical Concept," PMLA, LXX, No. 5 (December 1955), 1162-63. The parenthetical additions are Friedman's.

<sup>25</sup>In Diez años de poesía española Jiménez traces the evolution of the alucinación. See page 128.

## Chapter One

Hierro's interest in poetic theory has been apparent since the early fifties when he began to write articles about poetry. He has continued to do so, even after he stopped publishing poems. Certain ideas reappear throughout his prose, and are at times expressed in his poetry. If one were to classify his main concerns, they would fall into three main areas: the nature of poetry, the definition of testimonial poetry and the alucinación. While I will comment briefly on the testimonial poem and alucinación in this chapter, my main object will be to present Hierro's ideas on the nature of poetry in general. It is important to see how Hierro views the genre, as well as how he defines the two terms with which he classifies his poems, before beginning a detailed study of the poems themselves.

In one of his earliest essays about poetry, titled "Poesía y poética" Hierro refers to a definition of poetry given by San Juan de la Cruz: "No olvidemos que [San Juan de la Cruz] respondió a quién le preguntaba si sus poesías se las dictaba Dios que: 'unas (palabras) me las daba Dios. Las otras las buscaba yo.'"<sup>1</sup> Hierro elaborates on this idea in other essays as he tries to verbalize the subtle link between inspiration

and the ability to transform that inspiration into a poem. In the Antología consultada de la joven poesía española Hierro states the same idea in his own words: ". . . el poeta está formado por dos seres distintos: el poeta y el hombre . . . el iluminado y el lógico . . . El iluminado es quien recibe de Dios unas palabras. El lógico, quien busca las demás."<sup>2</sup> In an early poem from Alegría Hierro tries to capture this intangible feeling of inspiration:

Se me fueron haciendo  
las palabras difíciles.  
Se rompía la música  
en ritmos imposibles.  
¿Adónde habrán huído  
los tenues velos grises,  
la fina niebla vaga  
que borraba los límites?<sup>3</sup>

In one of the few poems in which Hierro discusses poetry directly he does not define its nature, but rather suggests it implicitly through a metaphorical comparison of poetry to wind, fire and the sea:

La poesía es como el viento,  
o como el fuego, o como el mar.  
Hace vibrar árboles, ropas,  
abrsa espigas, hojas secas,  
acuña en su oleaje los objetos  
que duermen en la playa.  
La poesía es como el viento,  
o como el fuego, o como el mar:  
da apariencia de vida  
a lo inmóvil, a lo paralizado.  
Y el leño que arde,  
las conchas que las olas traen o llevan,  
el papel que arrebató el viento,  
destellan una vida momentánea  
entre dos inmovilidades.  
(p. 395, ll. 14-28)

Hierro often uses extended metaphors to express in concrete images ideas which would otherwise be extremely abstract. This technique is one which will appear throughout his poetry, and which gives both his

poetry and his prose a lyric fluidity. He explains this use of what William Wimsatt calls the concrete universal in the following manner:<sup>4</sup>

"El proceso es éste: de una verdad difusa nace la poesía. De la poesía la teoría. Toda teoría es verdadera si fue alta toda poesía. Y el que no es alto poeta se queda llorando con la razón de su sinrazón en la mano." ("Poesía y poética," p. 36). By focusing on the particular elements of time, place and character in his poems, Hierro is able to suggest more abstract, universal observations about such ideas as time, life and love metaphorically through concrete universals. In a later essay he explains his attraction to this manner of expression: "Confieso mi incapacidad para comprender una definición, por evidente que sea, si no viene apoyado en un ejemplo. Los ejemplos son a la definición lo que el delito a la ley."<sup>5</sup> In one of the last poems in Libro de las alucinaciones he discusses the same subject in a somewhat different way.

Dicen: 'Este señor  
habla tan sólo de sí mismo.  
Pasa -- dicen -- cegado,  
sin ver lo que sucede alrededor.  
. . . . .  
Ese señor que hablaba de su vida  
y nada más . . . Ese señor . . .', han dicho.  
(p. 461, ll. 1-4, 9-10)

Hierro's poetry is often introspective, and tends to focus on the individual. However, this focus on the individual does not limit the scope of the poem, as the fictitious critics in "Historia para muchachos" suggest, but rather it opens the door to a more universal understanding of human nature. Even in the most intimate of his poetry there is a central truth which allows the reader to participate in the poem's

experience. In "Poesía y poética" Hierro explains this technique: "Por el hilo del verso inicial (verso inicial cronológicamente, acaso no sea después el que principiará el poema) el poeta saca el hilo de su pensamiento lógico . . . El primer verso, poéticamente, es una verdad." (p. 28).

In a 1974 interview Hierro described the process of writing a poem as moving "del caos para conseguir el orden."<sup>6</sup> Throughout his prose one finds references to the need for logical structure, even in the apparently illogical alucinaciones: "Todo poema, aunque esta autopsia signifique su muerte, ha de resistir la explicación lógica, la prosificación, el filo de las razones de toda índole, como todo cuadro ha de resistir la fotografía. Naturalmente, en análisis o en fotografía, poema y cuadro pierden en nuestras manos la poesía, el color. Pero aún sin poesía, sin color, revelan oscuramente lo que son en la realidad." ("Poesía y poética," p. 31).

In the chapters which follow it will become clear that Hierro's poems do withstand the test of detailed analysis. Hierro himself, in these essays, gives the reader many suggestions about the structure, content and language of his poems. He likes to make an analogy between a poem and the human body: "Un poema es un esqueleto bien construído, con músculos armoniosos bajo la fina piel. Todos los órganos tienen un fin. Es un cuerpo al que nada le puede ser extirpado y que no debe ser vestido." ("Poesía y poética," p. 29).

One of Hierro's greatest concerns is the relationship between form and content in poetry. Perhaps his clearest comments on that subject appear in the Prologue to his Poesías completas: "La forma modela,

contiene exactamente el fondo . . . No se identifique 'fondo' con 'tema.' Fondo es, para mí, un tema concebido por una personalidad singular . . . El tema, valiéndonos de un símil geométrico, es como una recta horizontal. El poeta es un punto situado fuera de la línea. El poema perfecto es la recta que une perpendicularmente, el punto-poeta con la horizontal-tema . . . Lo importante es siempre esa línea del poema que baje, sin desviaciones, siguiendo el camino más corto." (Cuanto sé de mí, pp. 15-16). Hierro is suggesting that there are only a limited number of universal themes about which one may write poetry, but that there are innumerable ways in which to approach any such theme. The manner in which a poet presents these themes is determined to a large extent by his immediate circumstances, his view of the world and his relationship to his cultural heritage. In an article called "La huella de Rubén en los poetas de la posguerra española," he discusses this subject: "Conviene recordar aquella frase de Juan Ramón Jiménez: 'En la poesía se da primero el tono; la letra, después.' Es el tono, por tanto, el que indica la dependencia de un poeta respecto de otro: más que las metáforas, más que todo lo que está en la superficie de la poesía."<sup>7</sup>

Hierro's deep interest in poetic form is evident throughout his prose and poetry. He points out the subtle role of form as it unobtrusively underscores and develops the ideas of a poem: "Y el esqueleto de la expresión poética es su estructura métrica y rítmica . . . Pero quienes miden los contactos por las semejanzas más exteriores no suelen darse cuenta de esto. Dos copas idénticas, llenas de dos licores de distinto color, no suelen parecer iguales." ("La huella de Rubén," p. 365). In his discussions of poetic form Hierro frequently relates

poetry and music, both of which he sees as temporal arts, as I mentioned in the Introduction:

El poeta, como el músico, trabaja simultáneamente en varios grados del pentagrama. Cuando coloca una palabra, no es una nota lo que ha dejado sobre el papel, sino un acorde. Una nota sería la palabra elegida desde su eficacia definidora. Pero un poeta ha de mirar, en primer lugar, que la palabra, por vías lógicas o ilógicas . . . hable . . . a la razón . . . [H]a de tener en cuenta la relación rítmica con las palabras que la anteceden y con las que habrán de seguirla. Ha de tener en cuenta, también, sus 'armónicos,' los sonidos casi inaudibles, superiores, que la palabra arrastra, de siglos, a la conciencia del lector. Ha de tener en cuenta, también, los puros valores fónicos -- timbre, intensidad, altura, etc.<sup>8</sup>

Reading Hierro's detailed comments about the nature of poetry and the elements which must be present in a good poem dispels any doubt about the artistry of Hierro's poetry, and contradicts those critics who suggest that he is careless of form.

Hierro pursues his analysis of the word in even greater detail in the Antología consultada, where he first introduces the image of the word as a crystal vessel. He refers to this image and variations of it in other essays and in a few poems. "En el poema, la palabra es letra y música a la vez . . . La música exige de la palabra color (que lo dan los vocales), ritmo (la sucesión de acentos), timbre (los consonantes) y cadencias o puntos de reposo (las asonancias y consonancias y aún ciertas pausas en el verso libre). Es un soporte armónico para una melodía rezada, que es la letra . . . La palabra es [u]na vasija de finísimo cristal a cuyo través se ve el licor de significado. La vasija no ha de verse. Es un simple recipiente que impide que la idea se derrame." ("Algo sobre poesía," p. 101).

One of the poems where he incorporates a similar image is "Unos versos pedidos" in Quinta del '42:

Hace tiempo . . . (Era yo  
poeta. Tiempo divino  
de cantar y de soñar  
lo esperado y lo perdido.  
Cristal de viejos reflejos  
tornasolado prodigio  
(p. 306, ll. 1-6)

In this poem the crystal seems more like the Machado windows than a "Vasija de finísimo cristal." In another case Hierro says that every poet strives to have a hand of clear crystal in which to capture his thoughts ("Poesía y poética," p. 32). All of these images underscore one of Hierro's principal ideas about poetry -- that language is not the end, but only the means to develop ideas and their accompanying emotional or psychological auras. The poem in all its parts creates an indivisible experience. In the same essay he continues, "vemos la palabra no por sí misma, sino por sus efectos." (p. 32).

In his essays Hierro devotes considerable space to his explanation of how words work to transform ideas, which could be expressed in prose, into a poetic experience. In the 1962 Prologue he says, "No existen, a efectos poéticos, palabras bellas y feas, sino palabras oportunas y otras que no lo son dentro del poema." (p. 15). As I noted in the Introduction, Hierro's concern with meter and rhythm are one indication of his view that form and content are equally important in the total experience of a poem. Even when there is no consistent meter or rhyme scheme, there are interior patterns of rhythm and sounds which underline the speaker's perspective and the ideas he expresses. The major elements of a poem which enhance the word's meaning and create the poetic experience are meter, rhythm, enjambment, repetition of sounds, silence and stanzaic form -- all of which combine to make an individual poem. In the Prologue

he says, "No creo en los versos de belleza aislada. Supedito todo al efecto general del poema." (p. 17).

Hierro devotes a great deal of attention to the subject of rhythm in his essays. It is rhythm which brings out the musical quality of the poem. In "Palabras antes de un poema" he says, "El poeta sabe que ciertos ritmos -- como agudamente indica el maestro de todos nosotros, Gerardo Diego -- exigen un tempo determinado." (p. 91). In a more personal vein he then explains his frequent use of a certain rhythmic pattern: "Una poesía, ésta mía, escrita en un tempo lento para que las partes fuertes se alején entre sí y el compás se diluya en un metro aparentemente libre . . ." (p. 94). He further clarifies his view of rhythm's relationship to the poem by indicating, as elsewhere, that a poem's rhythm exists in the poet's mind before the poem is ever written: "En principio, claro está, estoy de acuerdo con lo de las sílabas átonas y tónicas. Pero niego que el ritmo sea una consecuencia de la ordenación de unas palabras determinadas . . . El poema, al crear, lo que hace es recordar un poema perdido. Un poema del cual no le queda más que la tonalidad y el ritmo." (p. 87). Not only does he suggest that rhythm can be independent of meter, he also indicates that by playing one against the other, the poet can create subtle, non-verbal tensions within the poem: "Es frecuente que los versos aparezcan encabalgados en mis poesías . . . Creo que este juego de concepto frío y ordenado y de verso y ritmo encrespado crean una especie de conflicto interior que el lector puede percibir. Un conflicto dramático entre orden mental y turbulencias de sentimiento." (p. 17).

Hierro's use of enjambment is frequent and varied. For example, he

may divide a single word between two lines, in order to create a sense of surprise or subtle tension. The conflicting rhythms which result can underscore the tension within a metaphor or the speaker, thus intensifying the overall effect of the poem. This interaction between meaning and structure exemplifies Hierro's theory that the total poetic expression should transcend its parts. He further explains enjambment in "Palabras antes de un poema:" "Para mí el encabalgamiento . . . [o]pone a un ritmo mental, conceptual, un ritmo sentimental. El encabalgamiento es una forma de ironía, es desmentir un ritmo por medio de otro, es guiñar el ojo al lector . . . El encabalgamiento, ya lo he dicho, es la colisión de una métrica con una rítmica. Pues ambos son procedimientos para intensificar, cuando es necesario, aquello que el poeta quiere decirnos." (p. 91).

Another stylistic technique which Hierro relates to rhythm as an element of the total poetic experience is silence: "Yo creo que uno de los descubrimientos de arte moderno, sobre todo de las artes del tiempo, no del espacio, es la importancia del silencio, del silencio como efecto expresivo activo, no solamente como algo pasivo . . . Me refiero a los silencios interiores, a esos que permiten, más que respirar, suspirar." ("Palabras," p. 91). Silence, rhythm and enjambment offer the poet the means to transform statements into verse.<sup>9</sup> Their musical effects combine with words to create an inventive, artistic composition -- a verbal sonata. In the chapters which follow I will show how Hierro's theories about poetry and his poems are complementary reflections of one another.

One can see that Hierro believes in the careful organization of form and content to create a unified, indivisible, complex poetic experience. It is not surprising, therefore, that he should organize a book of poems just as carefully. He expresses this view in his Prologue to Con las piedras, con el viento: ". . . concibo los libros como un todo orgánico, no como colección de poemas. Estos deben apoyarse unos en otros, aclarándose entre sí, aspirando a ser todos juntos un solo poema." (Cuanto sé de mí, p. 198). Only one of his poems discusses this idea -- "El libro" in Quinta del '42:

Irás naciendo poco  
a poco, día a día.  
Como todas las cosas  
que hablan hondo, será  
tu palabra sencilla.

A veces no sabrán  
qué dices. No te pidan  
luz. Mejor en la sombra  
amor se comunica.  
(p. 229)

In addition to commenting on the nature of poetry in general, Hierro also develops a detailed classification of his own poetry into two distinct categories, the testimonial poem (or reportaje) and the alucinación (or fábula): ". . . mi poesía sigue dos caminos. A un lado, lo que podemos calificar de 'reportajes,' al otro, las 'alucinaciones.' En el primer caso trato, de una manera directa, narrativa, un tema. Si el resultado se salva de la prosa ha de ser, principalmente, gracias al ritmo, oculto y sostenido, que pone emoción en unas palabras fríamente objetivas." (Cuanto sé de mí, pp. 16-17). He further classifies and briefly defines four kinds of poets: ". . . yo encasillo a los poetas en estetos (el hombre a solas con la Belleza), testimoniales (los que

dan testimonio de su tiempo desde el 'yo' o desde el 'nosotros'), políticos (los que al testimonio añaden soluciones concretas desde el punto de vista de una doctrina política) y religiosos (el hombre frente a Dios)." (Cuanto sé de mí, pp. 14-15). Needless to say, he indicates that one poet could write each of these kinds of poetry, or any combination thereof. Thus, he is not interested in establishing rigid categories into one of which all poets must fit. Rather, he is trying to suggest certain patterns or predilections in theme and perspective which reflect both the time and the circumstances in which a poem is written. He suggests this attitude as early as 1952 in his comments in the Antología consultada: "Quien no vibra con su tiempo, renuncie a crear. Será un anacronismo viviente, un hombre incompleto. Y sin hombre total no hay poesía . . . Uno puede ser o no ser español de 1952, pero no podrá -- aunque conozca todos los ingredientes que lo componen -- hacerse español de 1952." (pp. 103-104). Even as recently as 1974 he asserts that the poet reflects his time: "Mis poemas, como cualquier texto, están llenos de connotaciones de la realidad . . . Y el lector encontraba un testimonio de lo real, pero desde mí. Cualquier poesía, por subjetiva y escapista que sea, da testimonio de su tiempo, aunque no quiera. Es el lector el que traduce, el que relaciona todas las connotaciones, todas las referencias que encierra el texto. (Pereda, "Conversación," n.p.). The testimonial poem is the synthesis of many different influences.<sup>10</sup> The role of the speaker and the world which he describes often bring to Hierro's poems a kind of epic or narrative quality which he himself notes in "Algo sobre poesía:" "Quizá la poesía de hoy debería ser épica . . . El periódico cuenta todos los hechos. La novela extracta los más significativos. La poesía registra la huella que en el corazón del poeta

dejan unos hechos, los que concretan su tiempo." (p. 107). In a later essay he says, "Para mí la poesía de hoy ha de ser épica, semejante a la novela . . . La novela revela almas a través de unas historias. La poesía deja ver historias, hechos a través de un alma." ("Poesía y poética," p. 35). The testimonial poem often tells a story, many times using dialogue or interaction between characters to create dramatic tension and an ironic denouement. There is a relaxed use of meter and rhyme which also suggests prose at times. The reader is invited to participate in the world of the poem, if only as the synthesizer of perspectives. Nevertheless, the testimonial poem is not prose. Hierro's careful use of language, rhythm, repetition of sounds and metaphors clearly distinguishes it from the novel or the essay, as his own articles on poetics point out.

While Hierro makes repeated references to the testimonial poem, he does not clearly define the alucinación, nor does he discuss it as frequently. However, as early as 1953 he introduces the term: "Aunque no fuera más que porque se necesita poner orden en la alucinación, en el chorro del sentimiento, es preciso dejar vigilando al lógico." ("Poesía y poética," p. 35). The alucinación is to the emotional or internal world of the poet what the reportaje is to the physical and logically explicable external world. In the alucinación "todo aparece como envuelto en niebla. Se habla vagamente de emociones, y el lector se ve arrojado a un ámbito incomprensible en el que le es imposible distinguir los hechos que provocan esas emociones." (p. 17).

Before Libro de las alucinaciones there is only one poem specifically titled "Alucinación" (Alegría, p. 95); however, throughout his

books the reader encounters poems which seem to be alucinaciones. These poems sometimes seem to describe fantasy worlds, and are often allegorical in nature.<sup>11</sup> Many are called fabúlas instead of alucinaciones. (I will analyze several of these poems in later chapters and compare them to his testimonial poems.) Hierro rarely discusses the alucinación per se in his poems, but he does refer to it indirectly at times, such as in the second poem of the "Otoño" group in Con las piedras, con el viento.

Unas veces el hombre canta cosas,  
por engañarse, en las que no creía,  
y su cantar es una fantasía  
en la que alternan fuegos, oros, rosas.  
(p. 219, ll. 1-4)

In Libro de las alucinaciones the distinctions between the testimonial poem and the alucinación decrease. As Hierro says, "Pero sobre todo, y más claramente en los últimos poemas, la experiencia funciona como un eco de algo, quizá olvidado, casi siempre olvidado ya. Quedan impresiones, sentimientos muy inconcretos, que permanecen siempre." (Pereda, "Conversación," n.p.). In this last book the poems often have a speaker and subject matter reminiscent of the testimonial poems, but they are usually presented as a kind of fantasy or dream whose elements have no apparent logical unity. As Hierro says, "El mío es, de hecho, un surrealismo al revés, dirigido hacia la comprensión lógica de lo que se me presenta, de primeras, como irracional . . . Parto muchas veces de frases no lógicas, que me surgen de repente en el papel o en la cabeza. Y se trata entonces de explicármelas, de comprenderlas y comprenderme, de buscar los caminos y las relaciones. Por otro lado, utilizo a veces fórmulas no asequibles a la razón, pero que son líricamente activas, que favorecen otro tipo de comprensión poética. En cualquier caso, siempre

parto del caos para conseguir el orden." (Pereda, "Conversación," n.p.).

By studying what Hierro has written about the ars poetica and about his own techniques one can approach his poetry with certain tools which will enable him to delve deeper than the surface level of the poems. By analyzing the speaker's perspective toward his world and the way in which that speaker presents the world (through images, patterns and rhythmic suggestions) one can better appreciate not only the artistry of Hierro's poetry but also its universality.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> José Hierro, "Poesía y poética," Arbor, XXIV, No. 85 (January 1953), 27.

<sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, "Algo sobre poesía, poética y poetas," Antología consultada de la joven poesía española (Valencia: Mares, 1952), p. 101.

<sup>3</sup> Cuanto sé de mí, p. 125, ll. 1-8. All references to Hierro's poems and prologues will be to the edition of his complete works released in 1974, under the title Cuanto sé de mí. I will indicate quotes from this edition in the text, by putting the pages in parentheses at the end of the cited material.

<sup>4</sup> William K. Wimsatt, Jr., The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1967). See Chapter Two, pp. 69-84, for a detailed discussion of the concrete universal.

<sup>5</sup> José Hierro, "Poesía pura, poesía práctica," Insula, 132 (November 1957), p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Rosa María Pereda, "Conversación con José Hierro; Cuanto sé de mí y el realismo desentrañado," Informaciones, 26 December 1974, n.p.

<sup>7</sup> José Hierro, "La huella de Rubén en los poetas de la posguerra española," Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos, No. 212-213 (August-September 1967), p. 358.

8 \_\_\_\_\_, "Palabras antes de un poema," Elementos formales de la lírica actual (Santander: Editorial de la Universidad Internacional Menéndez Peñayo, 1967), p. 88.

<sup>9</sup>For further discussion of the use of silence in Hierro's poetry see Sally Kubow, "La voz del silencio en la poesía de José Hierro," Revista de Estudios Hispánicos, VII, No. 1 (January 1973), 79-90.

<sup>10</sup>As I have already suggested in the Introduction, Hierro is strongly impressed by the Modernists' and the Generation of '27's interest in language and poetic form. The post-Civil War social and political environment also exerts a noticeable influence on him.

<sup>11</sup>For the purposes of my dissertation I will define allegory as a fundamental process of encoding speech, by which one may say one thing in order to mean something beyond that one thing, usually by means of an extended metaphor, an extended personification of an inanimate object or imaginary creature or an extended pattery. This definition is based on the Introduction to Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1964) by Angus Fletcher.

## Chapter Two

Tierra sin nosotros and Alegría are Hierro's first two books of poetry; both were published in 1947. Hierro reissued them in a single volume, called Poesía del momento, in 1957.<sup>1</sup> These introspective poems reflect the intense melancholy and frustration which Hierro and many of his contemporaries felt at the close of the Civil War. Hierro was overwhelmed by the feeling that he had wasted the best years of his life in jail. José Luis Cano describes these early poems as expressions of such feelings: "La primera impresión que nos daba la poesía de Hierro era que sus versos estaban escritos, vividos por un alma rica en latidos y sueños, que acababa de superar una dolorosa experiencia. Se veía en seguida que aquellos versos no eran juego o esfuerzo de la mente, sino que por ellos, en ellos sangraba una herida."<sup>2</sup> Many of the poems in these two books are cathartic; they express Hierro's sense of lost youth at the same time that they are the means by which he steps outside of the limitations of his individual time and space.

In both Tierra sin nosotros and Alegría the poems are an attempt to integrate the subjective and objective elements of Hierro's past and present harmoniously. One sees the evolution of the poet's perspective

towards time, life and death through the eyes of the first-person speaker whose role is similar to that of a first-person narrator in the novel.

The title of the first book -- Tierra sin nosotros -- immediately draws the reader's attention to the speaker's point of view. It is an inversion of the expected perspective, through which the speaker uses the image of his homeland as an extended metaphor for the life which passes him by while he is in jail -- for his lost youth. José Olivio Jiménez offers a very plausible explication of this inversion: "Esa proposición excluyente, sin, que en el título del libro establece la relación entre sus dos términos, al negar el segundo hace que el primero, la tierra, quede elevado a la jerarquía de realidad única sustentadora . . . Mas parecería a su vez paradójico, pues no es la grandeza de la tierra, sino el dolor y la conciencia del nosotros, los que dan a Hierro la razón última y definitiva de su canto."<sup>3</sup>

In "Mañana primera" the speaker alludes to the meaning of the title:

¡Qué sola, tierra, sin nosotros!  
Es posible que sea el alma,  
vagabunda por tu ladera  
lo que se siente solitaria.<sup>4</sup>

By merely suggesting a possible meaning for the phrase "tierra sin nosotros" the speaker reveals his tremendous sense of isolation and melancholy without becoming overly sentimental. This technique gives the speaker greater narrative distance.

In Tierra sin nosotros there is a circular structure through which the passage of time and the development of perspective are presented. There are three subjective, temporal divisions within the book (although Hierro has divided the book into five sections). The first is the hour of departure from his beloved homeland as he looks back nostalgically on

his childhood. This corresponds to the book's first section, "Enfrente." The second temporal division deals with his time in jail where he feels that life is passing him by, and includes the second, third and fourth sections, "Recuerdo," "Nosotros" and "Oraciones." The third division contains poems which refer to his return to life and his homeland of Santander, and parallels the last section, called "Tierra sin nosotros." Gradual changes in the speaker's perspective give these temporal divisions a sense of unified progression. Each of the stages is related to the last, and the Epilogue marks a resolution of the tension which characterizes the rest of the book. The speaker describes his increasing peace of mind metaphorically:

Ya se han roto las ataduras.  
Sólo la noche me rodea,  
me va robando la memoria,  
me acuña para que me duerma.  
(p. 83, ll. 1-4)

One can see the circular structure of the book by analyzing changes in the speaker's perspective and speech. In "Despedida del mar" (a poem from the first section), the speaker delivers a pensive monologue to the sea in which he contemplates his imminent departure:

Por más que intente al despedirme  
guardarme entero en mi recinto  
de soledad, por más que quiera  
beber tus ojos infinitos,  
tus largas tardes plateadas,  
tu vasto gesto, gris y frío,  
sé que al volver a tus orillas  
nos sentiremos muy distintos.  
Nunca jamás volveré a verte  
con estos ojos que hoy te miro.  
(p. 28, ll. 1-10)

This poem suggests the temporal progression in perspective which defines the unity of the book. The changes in perspective which are implied in

lines 9 and 10 parallel the work's temporal progression and create a dejá-vù effect.

Hierro dedicates the first section ("Enfrente") to the "Musa del Septentrión, melancolía." In the poems of this section there is a yearning evocation of the past -- of the speaker's "youth-gone-by" -- as well as a strong commitment to the brotherhood of man. The poems are lyric descriptions of nature which reflect the idyllic happiness and idealism of his youth, as some of their titles suggest: "Gaviota," "Primavera," "Luna," and "Vino." One perceives the speaker's nostalgic interpretation of the past in the poem "Entonces:"

Cuando tenía cada instante  
un ritmo nuevo y diferente,  
cada estación sus ubres llenas,  
rebotantes de blanca leche.  
(p. 23, ll. 43-46)

The image of "ubres llenas, rebotantes de blanca leche" suggests a bucolic, peaceful scene which contrasts sharply to the unrest and sadness of the later poems.

In addition to the strong sense of love for his homeland the speaker also expresses an abiding love and concern for the brotherhood of man, not in political terms, but in a humanitarian way. This love for mankind and the speaker's need to understand man's spiritual nature will be evident throughout Hierro's poetry. In this first section the speaker introduces the subject of man's need for peace of mind through nature imagery, as seen in "Distancia."

Mediodía de oro crujiente,  
iluminado pan que el alma  
hambrienta come, renaciéndose.  
(p. 29, ll. 5-7)

There is a mixture of the divine and the commonplace in this image which suggests the communion of man with nature. This poem, like the others in the first section, is free of the anguish and anger which characterize the poems in the second, third and fourth sections.

In the poems which focus on Hierro's imprisonment the speaker's attitude toward the past and present becomes more strained than in the first section. In the three sections titled "Recuerdo," "Nosotros" and "Oraciones" the speaker's tone is often angry, indicating his alienation from the present and the grief he feels for his dead countrymen.

In the poem "Falsos semidioses" the speaker vivifies the past: "(Llega el pasado a nuestro lado. Ladra furioso, como un perro.)" (p. 47, ll. 29-30). The auditory image creates a sensation of annoying persistence. Likewise, his references to the present are cold and caustic, as seen in "Llanura:"

Este llano de muerte, esta tierra maldita,  
este otero desnudo de costados resecos,  
este páramo triste, donde el hombre que grita  
no encuentra un solo monte que devuelva sus ecos.  
(p. 37, ll. 1-4)

By using a third-person description the speaker creates some distance between himself and his world, but the intensity of the language is overpowering, especially because of the cumulative effect of the noun-adjective phrases ("llano de muerte," "tierra maldita," "otero desnudo," "costados resecos," "páramo triste."). The land is a reflection of the speaker's inner anguish. In the context of the whole book, the contrast between this description of the plains and his coastal homeland is again an extended metaphorical expression of the speaker's difference in perspective. Using nature imagery to reflect his psychological state is

a technique which Hierro will use frequently, especially in Con las piedras, con el viento.

One of the main sources of the melancholic tone in Tierra sin nosotros is the unresolved tension within the speaker between past and present. In "Pasado" the speaker says,

Parece que ando por la tierra  
asistiendo a mi propio entierro,  
que estoy colgado en el presente  
igual que un ojo gigantesco,  
contemplando toda mi vida,  
que hace el nido en mi propio cuerpo.  
(p. 57, ll. 7-12)

These striking lines create a surrealist visual image reminiscent of Dali's melting-clock paintings. In the first two lines there is a subtle sound and meaning play on the words "tierra" and "entierro" which accentuates the speaker's turmoil: life being above ground, death, below. The next four lines move from the life/death contrast to one of time: the present is a gigantic eye looking inward or under the surface of itself. This image suggests a tension between objective and subjective time. Objectively he is living in the present; yet his focus remains subjectively on the past, on his youth gone by. In conjunction with the first two lines, his image of himself walking on the earth comes to suggest life in the present, while the image of him attending his own burial suggests death, past and memories. Thus, the two images flow together to suggest the same subjective perspective of anguish. Despite the simplicity of the language, the concepts, suggested almost entirely through imagery, are serious, age-old questions. By communicating in images the speaker integrates his subjective perspective with the universal problems. There is no resolution of the tension in the poem; past and present are at war within the speaker, both in this poem and in the

majority of poems in the three center sections which form the second division. The creation of unresolved dramatic tension is a technique which Hierro continues to use throughout his poetry, with an increasing sense of irony in later books when the speaker has more distance from his subject matter.

In "Pasado" the speaker tries to capture the tension which arises from his emotional involvement in the past. In another poem from the prison sections, "Recuerdo del mar," the speaker creates a melancholic tone through a contrast between his present and his memories of childhood: "Cómo te agitas bajo nubes grises/ lámina fina de metal de infancia!" (p. 36, ll. 1-2).

Even in the poems which directly refer to the Civil War and Hierro's imprisonment the focus is on the individual loss, pain and suffering, rather than the political issues which prompt them. This is clearly seen in one of Hierro's most famous poems, "Canción de cuna para dormir a un preso," in which the speaker strives to comfort a fellow-prisoner (or maybe even himself) by imitating a child's bedtime song:

Eres un niño que está serio.  
Perdió la risa y no la encuentra.  
Será que habrá caído al mar,  
la habrá comido una ballena.  
(p. 44, ll. 25-28)

As in the later fables and alucinaciones, the speaker intermingles fantasy and fact. The prisoner's unhappiness is likened to a child's, suggesting the transitory nature of all feelings and of life itself. The fantasy gently softens the harshness of the exterior world. Hierro's concern in this book and elsewhere is about man's inner reality, his soul: "El alma es aire y humo y seda." (p. 44, l. 34). This line points

out the fragile intangibility of man's spirit. By contrast the horrors of war are all the more accentuated. Hierro is a master of understatement and allusion, even in these early poems.

As the speaker begins to look back on his jail experience in "Oraciones" he feels no emotional or intellectual distance from the bitter memories of the war, his dead friends or his lost youth. The transition into his final acceptance of the past is characterized by feelings of anger and frustration, as the poem "A un lugar donde viví mucho tiempo" reveals:

Días de ayer, nos molestasteis  
crudamente y a vuestro modo.  
Días de ayer, ¡Dios os perdone  
lo que habéis hecho de nosotros!  
(p. 58, ll. 31-34)

In these verses the speaker personifies time. Instead of speaking directly to the men who caused his suffering, he removes himself one step, addressing the intangible "days of yesteryear." Not only does this give the speaker more emotional distance, but it also elevates the subject from the personal to the universal level. It is not just one man speaking out against another, but rather the voice of all those who suffered during the Civil War. The poems in this book are clearly what Hierro calls testimonial poems. The first-person speaker is the voice of many, the chronicler of his time.

An increasing feeling of anger, frustration and alienation characterizes the second, third and fourth sections of Tierra sin nosotros, replacing the nostalgic yearning for the past and the idealistic desire to understand man's spiritual nature which dominate the first section. Hierro's distress over his friends' death during the war is apparent

throughout the second group of poems in the book. It is one subject through which he develops contrasts between life and death, as well as his evolving perspective towards these abstractions. In the third group of poems which begins with the "Tierra sin nosotros" section the speaker returns to his homeland and begins to resolve the tensions stimulated by the war and his imprisonment. It is a synthesis of the first two groups of poems, in as much as the speaker incorporates elements of both his youth and his imprisonment into a new perspective which reflects a growing maturity and understanding of life. There is a more noticeable ironic tone which accompanies the speaker's gradual movement away from the past.

In "Mili de Castro" the speaker creates an extended metaphor through which the same imagery refers both to the living and the dead, in which an undercurrent of tension and an ironic tone are evident:

Aunque seas raíz de vida,  
 aunque las hojas centelleen  
 y yo pise la yerba fina,  
 mientras pisas tú sola la muerte;  
 aunque me abrace el sol y, en cambio,  
 tú te pudras entre laureles;  
 (p. 75, ll. 6-11)

The dead woman becomes the root of life on which the speaker treads. The repetition of words and parallel structures aid the contrast between the living speaker and his dead friend, as does the contrast of the sun's light to the laurel's shade. This contrast is continued in lines 16-25:

Agua de vida, por sus cauces  
 derribando diques y puentes.  
 Agua estancada y subterránea  
 debajo de flores silvestres.  
 Tú tienes sábanas de tierra,  
 yo tapices de yerba verde.  
 Y mis ojos roban las palmas,

y tus pobres ojos no pueden  
bajo su carga ver los cielos  
anaranjados del poniente.

This contrast between the living and the dead is achieved through the jumping from above to below and back: the living speaker above ground, the dead friend below; the grass above ground, its roots below; water flowing over the earth, stagnant, underground pools; the speaker lying on top of the green (i.e. living) grass, his friend covered in death by layers of earth. The tension of the poem is created by this motion back and forth, up and down. The speaker does not resolve the tension, indicating that he has not yet resolved in his mind the more universal question of the cyclic harmony of life and death. The imagery indicates his awareness of the cycle, but his perspective (as seen through words like "mis ojos roban . . . ," "tus pobres ojos . . . ") has not yet broadened into acceptance. Nevertheless, the subdued emotional stance and the ironic tone differentiate this poem from the earlier ones in the second section.

Near the end of the last section ("Tierra sin nosotros") there are three poems which indicate the conclusion of the book's cycle, and the resolution of earlier tensions: "Vuelta," "Canción" and "Llegada al mar." In "Llegada al mar" the image of the sea indicates the speaker's return to life and the final stage in the evolution of his perspective.

Cuando salí de ti, a mí mismo  
me prometí que volvería.  
Y he vuelto. Quiebro con mis piernas  
tu serena cristalería.  
(p. 67, ll. 1-4)

The last sentence is a double image: the speaker literally breaks the calm surface of the sea by running into the water; figuratively the speaker is returning to life, making his intangible memories a reality once again.

The sea's "serena cristalería" is similar to an earlier mirror image in the poem "Vuelta"

Mirar igual que en un espejo  
 empañado de gracia fría,  
 a ver si todo es aún del viejo  
 mineral de la fantasía.  
 (p. 66, ll. 5-8)

In both poems the central image represents the speaker's memory of the past, the world of his mind's eye brought into focus by his return. In the third poem, "Canción," the speaker reiterates his earlier contention that time changes both the perspective of the speaker and his world: "No están ya los mismos dedos/ pulsando las mismas cuerdas." (p. 67, ll. 7-8). While the speaker of "Despedida del mar" made only a conjecture, here he confirms it.

Hierro's preoccupation with time is one of the constants of his poetry, as José Olivio Jiménez points out in Cinco poetas del tiempo: ". . . entre la vida y la muerte, marcando su tensión y a la vez su solución, lo único que hay es el tiempo." (p. 220).

The cyclic structure of Tierra sin nosotros -- beginning with the speaker's initial departure from his homeland, ending with his return -- allows for the evolution of his perspective in time. The poems themselves are a cathartic expression. By the end of the book one feels that this evolution has brought a new understanding with it. As the speaker says in the Epilogue, "Noche final:"

Sentir, por fin, llegar el alba,  
 su melodía limpia y fresca,  
 y barreremos las sombras turbias  
 que oscurecen nuestras cabezas,  
 y beber las lejanas brisas  
 que nos alejan de la tierra  
 maniatados y adormecidos,  
 sin saber a dónde nos llevan. . .  
 (p. 85, ll. 69-76)

The first poem of Alegría flows smoothly from this last line, "sin saber a dónde nos llevan . . .:"

Llegué por el dolor a la alegría,  
 Supe por el dolor que el alma existe,  
 Por el dolor, allá en mi reino triste,  
 un misterioso sol amanecía.  
 (p. 91, ll. 1-4)

The melancholy which characterizes most of Tierra sin nosotros seems to be balanced by the speaker's evolving understanding and new-found joy in Alegría. Both books focus on Hierro's Civil War and post-Civil War adjustments. In both the frustration and sadness are a product of the poet's deep sense of loss, but out of these negative experiences grow an inner strength and maturity. A broadening understanding of life, and of the poet's own life in particular, is the source of the bitter-sweet joy in the second book. This is the central focus and paradox of Alegría -- that joy can grow out of sorrow; that both can exist simultaneously. Hierro presents this paradox metaphorically in "Ese gesto de muerte:"

Te lleva el que te ignora  
 Te pierde el que te mira.

Fueras siempre en nosotros  
 caudal de maravilla,  
 luna que nos traspasa  
 con su luz, si nos mira,  
 materia que se esconde  
 en nuestra carne viva.  
 (p. 150, ll. 11-18)

In Alegría, as in Tierra sin nosotros, there is an evolution of perspective which unifies the book. In Cinco poetas del tiempo Jiménez comments on this subject: "Sí, Alegría significa un ahondamiento en la experiencia humana de la vida, un querer vivir más ambicioso: aquél que ya no se conforma con la posesión precaria de la pobre realidad

circundante, sometida al tiempo sino que aspira a describir y dominar también su hondura invisible y maravillosa liberada de toda forma humillante de limitación." (pp. 231-232). One can see this progression in perspective by comparing two poems titled "Serenidad." The first is from Tierra sin nosotros, the second from Alegría. In the former the speaker says,

Serenidad, tú para el muerto,  
que yo estoy vivo y pido lucha.  
Otros habrá que te deseen:  
ésos no saben lo que buscan.  
(p. 60, ll. 1-4)

Frustration and anger over wasted youth and needless death contribute to an aggressive, authoritarian tone. The rhythm and language work together to reveal the speaker's perspective. For example, in the first and second lines the use of a double and triple stress in "Serenidad, tú . . ." and "yo estoy vivo" gives them an emphatic, brusque tone. The noun "serenidad" is balanced by "lucha" to suggest a difference between death and life.

In the Alegría poem, "Serenidad (Cielo gris)," the speaker's perspective is quite different, his tone more mellow.

Cielo gris, amigo, .  
cielo gris.  
  
Serenito latido  
de la tarde, amigo,  
cielo gris.  
. . . . .  
Extasis divino.  
Cielo gris, amigo,  
cielo gris.  
(p. 94, ll. 1-5, 15-17)

In this poem the alternating six and four-syllable lines, combined with repeated words and an i-o assonant rhyme scheme, create a sensation of

soft, gentle harmony. Serenity is equated to a gray sky, which in turn is called "éxtasis divino." While the change in speaker perspective is dramatic between these two poems (and their respective books), there is already a consistency of style which will continue throughout Hierro's work. The intimate relationship between the words' meanings and their sounds and rhythms is always important in Hierro's poetry. These two poems clearly delineate the differences of perspective in Tierra sin nosotros and Alegría at the same time that they offer the reader indications of the poet's emerging style.

As in the "Serenidad" poems, Hierro often expresses his states of mind through metaphors. He repeats some of these metaphorical equivalents throughout his poetry, and they take on symbolic overtones within the context of his work. One example, which has traditional roots but is nonetheless unique in Hierro's work, is the contrast of light and dark. Sometimes this contrast takes the form of sun and shadow, as in the poem "Interior:"

Entraba la luz, nos llegaba la luz.  
 Pero nadie sabía qué hacer, qué palabra  
 decir. Cada uno miraba sus manos,  
 cada uno tenía sus manos mojadas de sombra.  
 (p. 98, ll. 3-6)

In this poem light suggests understanding, while darkness indicates the inability to actualize this understanding. One cannot say that light and dark always represent the same thing in Hierro's poetry. They are not symbols in the strict sense of the word; rather, they are emotive or psychological signs of suggestion which have a similar root.<sup>5</sup> In "El muerto" night and death are the metaphorical sources of understanding, a paradoxical twist which, coupled with the subjective exaggeration of time, give the poem an aura of fantasy.

Yo lo veo muy claro en mi noche completa.  
 Me costó muchos siglos de muerte poder comprenderlo,  
 muchos siglos de olvido y de sombra constante,  
 muchos siglos de darle mi cuerpo extinguido  
 a la yerba que encima de mí balancea su fresca verdura.  
 (p. 96, ll. 3-7)

This transformation of reality to reflect subjective states of mind is the seed of the later alucinaciones.

Hierro also uses the seasons throughout his poetry to represent both subjective and objective temporal changes. In these early poems references to autumn are common. For example, in "Otoño" autumn is personified:

Otoño de manos de oro;  
 con el canto del mar retumbado en tu pecho infinito,  
 sin espigas ni espinas que puedan herir la mañana,  
 con el alba que moja su cielo en las flores del vino,  
 para dar alegría al que sabe que vive  
 de nuevo has venido.  
 Con el humo y el viento y el canto y la ola temblando  
 en tu gran corazón encendido.  
 (p. 94, ll. 5-12)

Autumn is related to dawn by the warm colors they share. By personifying the season ("manos de oro," "tu gran corazón encendido") the speaker makes the soothing intangible effects of time on man's spirit more tangible.

In the last poem of Alegría, "Fe de vida," the speaker uses winter as a point of contrast to his state of mind. About winter he says,

Sé que el invierno está aquí,  
 detrás de esa puerta. Sé  
 que si ahora saliese fuera  
 lo hallaría todo muerto,  
 luchando por renacer.  
 . . . . .  
 Pero toco la alegría,  
 porque aunque todo esté muerto  
 yo aún estoy vivo y lo sé.  
 (p. 152, ll. 1-5, 19-21)

In this poem winter might also represent Spain at the end of the war, when everything was at its lowest point, "luchando por renacer," There is never any direct tie made, but within the context of the book the comparison seems plausible. By allusion the speaker incorporates his concern for Spain into his perspective.

The book ends on an upsurge of optimism, as does Tierra sin nosotros. The speaker seems to reach a tenuous accord with life, part resignation, part faith. In both volumes the speaker's perspective evolves as he resolves questions about himself and his world. The poems seem to have a cathartic effect; by putting his anger, frustration, sadness and joy into words the tensions are eased, as the artistic act of expression takes precedence.

In these early books Hierro experiments with meter, rhythm and metaphor. His metaphors are sometimes startling renovations of more traditional images. In the best of these he combines visual, auditory and tactile suggestions in imaginative, at times surrealistic ways to express subtle states of mind. He especially likes to compare and contrast the natural elements to allude to the intangible realm of thoughts and feelings which attracts him. For example, in "Gaviotas" the speaker describes the seagull as "Paloma marinera, lenta y viva,/ que en el pico, en lugar de verde oliva/ lleva octubres de música remota." (p. 24, ll. 6-8). In "La ilusión," referring to the soul, he says "El mismo rayo de sol/ que precisa, la deshace [al alma]./ Es un paisaje de invierno/ que comienza a deshelarse." (p. 136, ll. 13-16). In his dissertation Douglass Rogers comments on Hierro's use of metaphorical language: "The clean craftsmanship, the painterly eye, the crisp, sprightly enumerations and images

which stand out from time to time in Tierra sin nosotros and Alegría suggest an affinity with Diego, if not also with Guillén,"<sup>6</sup>

While the most obvious feature of Tierra sin nosotros is the thematic development, in Alegría there is a greater experimentation with style. Making a comparison between the two works Rogers says, "In Alegría key similarities in form with Tierra sin nosotros are still to be found, it being a product which emerges from the earlier volume. But the reader who approaches such a book as Alegría with traditional concepts of line length, of rhyme, of strophe, and of accentuation patterns in mind will find the variety and conscious experimentation in form dazzling. All the stops are pulled out." (p. 271).

The thematic concerns in both books are similar -- time, death and a man's need to understand these abstractions. In both Hierro frequently uses the nosotros form of the verb to emphasize the testimonial quality of what he says. In these poems, more than in any of the later ones, there is a constant intermingling of the individual and the social as the speaker's perspective evolves. His struggle to return to life and to find joy once again in his life is the struggle of all post-war Spain. For that reason perspective plays such an important role. The evolution of perspective is a technique which will also be an important factor in the unity and development of Con las piedras, con el viento, where the speaker will again be faced with the need to understand an abstraction and to integrate it harmoniously into his life. In his later books instead of presenting the evolution of one speaker's perspective as he does in these two, Hierro will experiment with different ways of establishing point of view through such techniques as dialogue, variable

narrative distance, irony and temporal fragmentation in order to present a more complex and sophisticated vision of his world.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> José Hierro, Poesía del momento (Madrid: Afrodísio Aguado, 1957).

<sup>2</sup> José Luis Cano, Poesía española contemporánea (Madrid: Guadarrama, 1974), p. 94.

<sup>3</sup> José Olivio Jiménez, Cinco poetas del tiempo, 2nd ed. (Madrid: Insula, 1972), p. 20.

<sup>4</sup> Cuanto sé de mí, p. 65, ll. 1-4. All subsequent quotes come from this volume. The pages of the cited material are indicated at the foot of the quotation.

<sup>5</sup> A symbol is usually a concrete, tangible equivalent for an abstraction or intangible spiritual quality. (For a detailed discussion of the term see p. 153 of Estudios sobre poesía contemporánea (Madrid: Gredos, 1968) by Andrew P. Debicki.) Signs of suggestion are those elements which suggest an entire level of meaning which goes beyond the apparent description. (Carlos Bousoño defines this term in Note 11 on p. 220 of Teoría de la expresión poética, 5th ed. (Madrid: Gredos, 1970): "Los 'signos de sugestión' podrían ser definidos como aquel conjunto de palabras que contribuyen a un mismo clima emocional dentro del poema.")

<sup>6</sup> Douglass Marcel Rogers, "A Study of the Poetry of José Hierro as a Representative Fusion of Major Trends of Contemporary Spanish Poetry," Diss. University of Wisconsin, 1964, p. 260.

### Chapter Three

Con las piedras, con el viento is José Hierro's third volume of poetry. It is a dramatic commentary on the limitations of time and the fallibility of human perception. These two abstract motifs are brought to life as Hierro focuses on the inexact and imperfect communication between people, even in the closest of relationships. By manipulating perspective and repeating certain images whose presence creates a backdrop for the development of perspective, Hierro produces a harmonious blend of personal and universal experiences which revolve around the themes of time and love.

As in Tierra sin nosotros and Alegría, time is the central theme in Hierro's third book. Likewise, it is the individual's relation to subjective time which provides a unifying structure to the poems. One finds a strong confirmation of Hierro's poetic theories woven into these poems. His belief in the contemporary relevancy of the testimonial poem is coupled with his equally insistent emphasis on the need for the artistic correlation of form and content. This is especially evident in the way in which Hierro integrates speaker, reader and world into the total experience of the work.

To develop his ideas Hierro uses two distinctive poetic styles -- the testimonial reportaje and the allegory. The testimonial poems, as in his earlier books, usually have a first-person speaker. In Con las piedras, con el viento he is both the experiencing and the reflecting speaker, a technique which Franz K. Stanzel explains with respect to the novel: "The reader's initial center of orientation lies in the now-and-here of the narrating self . . . The reader then identifies with the experiencing self at the moment of its experience . . . The shift of the center of orientation in the first-person novel is facilitated by the fact that the narrating self and the experiencing self are only different aspects of the same personality."<sup>1</sup> The progression from the immediacy and emotional intensity of the experiencing speaker to the psychological distance which time affords the reflecting speaker provides a structure for the book's evolution in perspective. The reader is drawn into the speaker's experience as an observer who integrates the sometimes discordant elements of the narrative. It is also the reader who finally resolves the dramatic tension of the poems by synthesizing the differences in the testimonial and allegorical poems.

While the testimonial and allegorical poems have a corresponding thematic nature, their speakers are quite distinguishable. The first-person experiencing and reflecting speaker expresses himself through long, discursive narratives which are highly charged with emotion. In contrast, the speaker in the allegorical poems is impersonal and emotionally detached, a stance which brings a sense of objectivity to these poems and which balances the subjective intensity of the testimonial poems.

In the allegories the speaker usually personifies an abstraction,

metaphorically extending it until the concrete elements come to represent an abstract scheme which far exceeds the limits of the original image. These poems are enigmatic puzzles whose pieces are only assembled with perseverance. They are at times misleading because the metaphorical and abstract planes can exist almost independently; consequently, at first glance a reader might accept the metaphorical level of the poem as the only one. Yet, in each allegory there is at least one clue to the second level of meaning. In the first fable the line "el humilde de Asís habla a la Hermana Grúa."<sup>2</sup> (Cuanto sé de mí, p. 165, l. 12) suggests the possibility of allegory. In "El enanito" the only hint to the allegorical significance of the central image is the sentence "Intentamos matarle, dándole/ el vago nombre de recuerdo." (p. 183, ll. 27-28). In the last set of fables it is the title of the section which gives us the first key to the allegorical meaning: "Otoño" -- the season of the harvest, of maturity, decline and death.

An analysis of Hierro's stylistic devices, such as the imagery, tone, narrative distance, rhythm and meter patterns and motifs found in three representative fables will show how perspective and language create the unique allegories of this book.

#### Primera fábula

(Juego para una noche de luna)

Gritos parapetados en las nubes. Banderas.  
Se cargan amarguras, Se descargan luceros.  
La noche, enloquecida, desborda sus fronteras  
ahogándose en los ojos de los carabineros.

Luna incendia la noche, Parece que las casas  
vibran, viven, helada su mole de cemento.  
Las hojas son más hojas. Los ojos llevan brasas  
y es dulce caminar, perdidos en el viento.

Sirenas. Letanía por una estrella muerta.  
 Rojo, entre sombras verdes, un farol se insinúa.  
 Y en un barco con luna -- alerta, alerta, alerta -- 10  
 el humilde de Asís habla a la Hermana Grúa.  
 (p. 165)

"Juego para una noche de luna" is the first poem in the section "Fábulas para tiempos felices." In it the speaker creates an allegorical world which represents the dual nature of time, seen not in the abstract, but rather in its relation to man. For man time has two distinct sides -- the mechanical and objective time of the clock, and the subjective time which corresponds to man's state of mind. On the one hand, man is confronted with the inevitability of his own temporality and death; on the other, he occasionally experiences a momentary flash in which he forgets his fight against time, eternalizing a moment in much the same way as one takes a photograph. In this poem the allegorical structure and metaphorical language create a fantasy which revolves around the mysteries of time, illusion and reality.

The speaker bombards the reader with numerous auditory and visual stimuli which create strong, irrational, subjective visions. In the first stanza he uses several terms which suggest a battle: "parapetados," "se cargan," "se descargan," "los carabineros." The verbs suggest the loading and discharging of firearms by riflemen. "Parapetados" hints at the parapet along which castle guards once walked. Yet the rest of the stanza does not contain similar language. The personification of night as a crazed force engulfing the riflemen's eyes indicates not only the coming of exterior darkness, but inner darkness as well. This image of darkness represents the speaker's state of mind, just as the battle imagery implies a lack of harmony or understanding. Instead of bullets,

"Se cargan amarguras. Se descargan luceros." It is a surrealist scene in which the characters ("los carabineros") fall under the influence of darkness, which flows in through their eyes. The overall effect of the stanza is unexplained tension.

The only light in the first stanza is that of exploding stars. This is a momentary flash of brilliant light. In the second stanza the light becomes steadier and brighter. The moon, whose reflected light symbolically changes the appearance of all it touches, simultaneously freezes and enlivens the scene, causing perceptions to be exaggerated and reality to be idealized. The words "incendia" and "helada" create an emphatic contrast. The atmosphere is inflamed by the moonlight, while stationary objects remain frozen. As the night is affected, so too are the eyes from the first stanza ("los ojo llevan brasas"). Just as the moonlight enhances the speaker's perceptions, so also is the tone of the stanza intensified. He strengthens the link between his exterior and interior worlds through the two images of "hojas" and "ojos." In line 7 the first hemistich has alternating a's and o's (a-o-a-o-a-o) which create a flowing, rhythmic motion. In the second hemistich a series of o's is balanced by a series of a's, the two being joined by a solitary e (o-o-e-a-a-a). The speaker suggests a subtle link between "hojas" and "ojos" which is both visual and auditory. The stress pattern of u/u u/u u/u is identical in both hemistiches, as well as in the hemistich in line 4, in which the image of the eyes first appears.

Until now the poem has developed startling images whose irrational and subjective visions point to a filtering narrative perspective. In

line 8 the first clear indication of a speaker's presence in this scene is seen: "y es dulce caminar, perdidos en el viento." The word "dulce" indicates a specific subjective outlook of pleasure; "perdidos" indicates an anonymous plurality. While entering directly into the experience of his poem this speaker nevertheless maintains the impersonal distance which distinguishes these allegories from the more personal first-person testimonial poems.

The words "caminar" and "viento" suggest the harmonious movement of the speaker and the atmosphere around him. In Hierro's poetry the wind symbolizes time, just as the path represents life. The speaker and the wind move in harmony here. There is a relationship between the idealized vision of the world reflected in the moonlight and the perspective of the speaker towards time. At this moment he flows with time, instead of fighting against it. The visual imagery of the stanza paints a picture which complements the speaker's momentary understanding of time. In contrast, returning to the references to a battle in the first stanza, one sees a metaphorical indication of man's irrational psychological struggle against the passage of time and the transitory nature of all things.

The third stanza is a synthesis of the two previous ones. The speaker returns abruptly to auditory images after focusing almost entirely on visual perceptions in the second stanza. By beginning the stanza with one unmodified noun ("Sirenas."), he emphasizes this sudden change in tone from line 8 to line 9. This image transforms a normally irritating sound of modern city life into a litany being sung for the shooting star from the first stanza, now dead. The reference

to the death of the shooting star indicates a return to the bitterness and hostility of the first stanza. Structurally this line is an inversion of the poem's opening line. Tonally the line emphasizes the speaker's detachment by creating an ironic equation between the sound of sirens and that of a religious supplication. It prepares the reader for the poem's surprising conclusion.

Until now the poem has been a contrast in black and white: black night, white moonlight; darkened eyes, burning coals. By developing images independently of time the speaker has created a sense of timelessness. All the verbs are in the present. The gradual change from darkness in the first stanza to moonlight in the second is presented through visions whose startling natures draw the reader's attention away from this progression.<sup>3</sup> In line 10 there is a sudden burst of vibrant colors which contrast to the starkness of the previous black and white picture. The image of a lantern replaces that of the moon as the light source. The force of its red and green light suggests the intensity of life and death.

In the first hemistich of line 11 the visual image of a boat lit by the moon is sharply contrasted to the short, brusque bursts of sound which follow it. The amphibrach u/u u/u u/u of "--alerta, alerta, alerta--" is an onomatopoeic expansion of the repetitive pattern of a siren's sound. It is an aggressive sound, like the "sirenas" and the "gritos parapetados," which pierces the calm of the moonlit night. These sounds create a tension which is not resolved within the poem.

As I suggested earlier, the last line of the poem is the key to its allegorical framework. "El humilde de Asís" refers to St. Francis of

Assisi, known for his allegorical tales whose characters are animals. However, in this Twentieth-Century poem, St. Francis speaks not to animals, but to one of the mechanical wonders of our age, a crane. He personifies the machine by calling it "Sister Crane." This line jolts the reader out of whatever "reality" the poem has heretofore implied, ironically reinforcing the speaker's detachment from it. It forces us to reread the poem, looking for some logical link between it and the rest of the poem. Things are not what they seem. The moonlight has transformed reality; for instance, one sees that the 'barco' of line 11 might really be a church outlined in the moonlight. If there is a moral to the poem, as there is traditionally in an allegory, it is that human perception of time is subjective and fragmented. The speaker brings the abstract theme of time to life by means of the irrational metaphors which embody his two-sided vision of time, while creating a vivid sensorial experience.

In retrospect one sees that the poem is carefully structured. The speaker contrasts sight and sound; he uses rhythm and vowel patterns to enhance the meaning of the words. Each stanza builds on the earlier ones, while the last line returns the reader in circular fashion to the subtitle. In this first fable several techniques which will reappear in later fables are introduced. The speaker maintains an impersonal, slightly ironic tone throughout the poem; his participation is minimal. The setting of the poem is highly stylized, not by the exotic language favored by the Modernists, but rather by visions which force the reader to abandon everyday perceptions and expectations. The overall effect of the poem is one of suspended time, in contrast to the testimonial poems

where time is both a thematic a stylistic element frequently found. In this allegory all the verbs are in the present tense, and there is no direct mention of time per se. Nevertheless, time is the abstract concept which unifies the poem, explaining the imagery and the speaker's dual perspective. The tension which results from these two conflicting visions of time is left unresolved. It ties the allegory to the testimonial poems which follow it by establishing the dual mood of the section and of the first-person speaker in particular.

In "Juego para una noche de luna" Hierro explores the subjective and illusory qualities of time through an allegorical fantasy. In another of his best allegories Hierro pursues this motif from another angle. "El enanito" personifies a memory or its illusion to illustrate how such a negative feeling as jealousy can spoil all attempts to realize unqualified joy in the present. The dwarf becomes an extended metaphor for the speaker's feelings. Although there is less distance between the speaker and his world than in the first fable, the stylized nature of the dwarf and the diligent concentration on a harmonious balance of form and content contribute to the success of the allegory.

The speaker chooses the unusual image of a dwarf to personify the overwhelming intensity of his emotion. By reducing in physical stature the image which personifies his feelings, the speaker gives an ironic twist to the poem which is furthered by using a diminutive form of "enano." This ironic undertone gives the speaker more distance than he would otherwise have.

Le llamamos el enanito  
y ninguno lo conocemos.

Es tan pequeño que se esconde en las ramas de los almendros, en las gotas de agua, en los labios calientes que nos ofrecemos.	5
Aparece cuando ninguno le esperamos. Viene en el viento y en la calma. Salpica el día de yo no sé qué turbios ecos.	10
Le apuñalamos con caricias, le azotamos con nuestros besos, le pedimos que no nos siga, que salga de nuestro universo.	
No es escuchar su voz, hundirse, impotente, bajo su peso. Es pensar que tal vez en ella suena a glorioso encendimiento.	15
Es pensar que tal vez la llene de flores de oro y verdes tiernos, mientras a mí me colma de hojas marchitas y flores de muerto.	20
Intentamos matarle, dándole el vago nombre de recuerdo. Pero el recuerdo es agua loca que cruza el puente y muere lejos,	25
y el enanito no abandona: señorea nuestro momento. La melodía que cantamos la entristece con sus arpegios.	30
Luchamos juntos por vencerle y acaso nunca lo logremos. (p. 183)	

The first two lines of the poem initiate the personification and establish a narrative stance of uncertainty toward the dwarf. There is more than one person involved in the narrative, though characteristically the speaker gives no personal data about himself or his companion. This lack of anecdotal detail allows the reader easier access to the poem, and makes the universal implications more evident.

Beginning with line 3 the speaker deliberately creates a false impression by dwelling on the dwarf's size. "Pequeño" and "se esconde" refer to its physical nature and movement. However, the images of his hiding places which follow progressively remove him from the physical world. A dwarf is usually a fairytale creature, so the reader expects his actions to be somewhat bizarre, and they are bizarre indeed. We can visualize him hiding in the almond trees, but hiding in water drops is physically inconceivable. The poem moves from physical to metaphorical reality in this image. The last hiding place carries this progression to the central thematic concern of the poem. "Labios calientes" suggest the passionate expression of love; as a hiding place it implies that the dwarf may personify feelings of jealousy or uncertainty which taint this love. Each of these images is the focal point of its line. The reader can stop to absorb it before moving on to the next. The progression of the images is not logical or rational, yet it flows smoothly. It is not a single vision, but what I would call a visionary progression.<sup>4</sup> There is no direct equivalent stated; the reader must search for a meaningful relationship among the images.

The third and fourth stanzas focus on the dwarf's action or motion, as the verbs "aparece," "viene," "salpica," "hace sonar" and "derrama" indicate. The rhythm is at times choppy, adding to the sense of distress created by the dwarf's omnipresence. The best example of this occurs in line 10 ("de yo no sé qué turbios ecos."). The first five monosyllables create an auditory complement to "salpica" because they are short bursts of sound, rapidly read; the last four syllables are slower and smoother, allowing the line to fade out just as echoes do. Once again the speaker

effectively integrates form and meaning in a subtle but provocative manner.

The fourth stanza presents a careful alternation of visual and auditory images. Black dominates the visual field. It leads one from external to internal realities, as it integrates sight and sound in subject and verb ("tintineo" and "ennegrece"), pointing out the psychological effects of the dwarf's presence on the speaker. The adverb "quizá" is another key to his state of mind. It implies that this dwarf is only a figment of his imagination. The allegorical nature of the poem is underlined as it becomes increasingly evident that all of the dwarf's action and characterization stems from the speaker's mental state. The irrational progression of images which comprise the poem's extended metaphor is really a subtle characterization of the speaker. The speaker cleverly hides the key to the allegorical meaning of the poem in a fantastic, surrealist invention whose very irrationality and persistent aggressiveness reflect the intensity of the speaker's frustration, anger and hostility at the same time that they point to the destructive narrowness of his perspective.

While the first four stanzas have focused on the characterization of the dwarf, the next four present the speaker's reaction to this allegorical creature. In the fifth stanza the speaker employs contrast to create tension, frustration and a sense of violent struggle. In lines 15 and 16 the verbs are in friction with their modifying adverbial phrases. While the verbs "apuñalamos" and "azotamos" express physical violence, the adverbial phrases "con caricias" and "con nuestros besos" denote physical love. These physical images implicitly describe the

emotional turmoil raging in the speaker's mind. There is also the implication that the lovers try to block out any emotional distress in favor of physical passion.

In form, stanza six is a balance of contrasts: lines 19 and 20 being contrasted to lines 21 and 22. Each sentence begins with an impersonal phrase: "No es escuchar..."; "Es pensar que..." The speaker is weighing his reactions, defining them by elimination. The sound imagery continues in his voice. The voice of the dwarf, representing his lover's past, is the stimulus of the contrast, both in form and content. The possibility of his lover's enjoying her memories of the past torments the speaker as much as his own unhappiness at knowing her past, as one can see in lines 21 and 22: "Es pensar que en ella/ suena a glorioso encendimiento."

The seventh stanza repeats the same concern, but in flower images instead of sounds: "flores de oro," "flores de muerto;" "verdes tiempos," "hojas marchitas." The speaker continues to balance both views of the past, but the tone emphasizes his point of view. His position becomes clear as the poem progresses. He presents his reaction to his lover's past and his hypothesis of what her reaction might be. He reminds us repeatedly of the limitations of his perspective through words like "quizá" and "tal vez," without resolving the psychological tension of the poem.

In lines 27 and 28 the speaker alludes to the allegorical meaning of the "enanito:" "Intentamos matarle, dándole/ el vago nombre de recuerdo." He has presented this poem in the reverse order of what one might expect by developing the allegorical meaning first and applying a

name only at the last, as he attempts to purge himself of this torment. Immediately thereafter he suggests another symbolic meaning for this memory, calling it "agua loca/ que cruza el puente y muere lejos" (ll. 29-30). The effect of this second image is the suggestion that "recuerdo" is not really the exact abstraction represented by the dwarf metaphor. Memory fades, but this won't. In line 32 the verb "señorea" creates a vivid image of a controlling, governing force. Many of the verbs have indicated a violent power struggle: "apuñalamos," "azotamos," "intentamos matarle" and "luchamos . . . por vencerle." "Señorea" implies that the dwarf is the winner of that strife. The poem ends on a note of defeat.

The final tone of pessimism underscores both the title of the second section ("Desaliento") in which this poem appears and the titular description of the fables in its section ("Dos fábulas para tiempos sombríos"). The other fable in this section complements this perspective, as do the testimonial poems of the section.

The verses in "El enanito" are uniformly nine-syllable, a form which Hierro frequently uses and about which he says, "Queda, entre las formas métricas estróficas que Rubén elevó a paradigma, un metro que ha tenido singular fortuna en la poesía de posguerra: me refiero al eneasílabo . . . Panero, Nora, Bousóño, García Nieto, Hidalgo, Valverde . . . lo aceptarán como una posibilidad nueva, apta para narrar, con tono reflexivo, levemente melancólico, la peripecia interior. Un verso de tempo más lento que el octosílabo, de ritmo más desviado y acñador."<sup>5</sup> There is an even-line assonant rhyme scheme of "e-o" throughout. The discreet repetition of these vowels adds to the flowing motion of the

poem. By only rhyming the even lines, he creates an auditory sensation of longer lines against which the occasional choppy rhythm such as one finds in line 10 stands out dramatically. Similarly, his sentences are often two lines long, thus coordinating rhythm and content. (Lines 1-2, 13-14, 19-20, 21-22, 27-28, 33-34 and 35-36 are examples of this.) At other times he begins a sentence in mid-verse, letting it flow into the next line, or even into the next stanza, as he does in lines 29 through 32.

The first and last couplets border the eight four-line stanzas. The first couplet introduces the dwarf image, while the final one indicates the improbability of a satisfactory resolution of the poem's tension, a technique characteristic of the contemporary "open-ended" novel. It encourages the reader's participation in the experience by building up tension and then leaving the reader to draw his own conclusions as to the denouement.

Dramatic presentation is characteristic of both the allegorical and the testimonial poems. Throughout his work it is a stylistic device which allows Hierro to step outside of his immediate anecdotal reality. In "El enanito" he encourages the reader to universalize the situation by emphasizing the abstract nature of jealousy more than one man's inability to overcome it. In this sense the poem points to a more comprehensive view of man's psychological nature. It is in this way that Hierro's poetry has social implications. There is no oppressive social or political message, but rather an insightful, artistically-polished poem which exists equally well on both its personal and universal planes.

As in the first fable, the allegorical meaning in "El enanito" is

not suggested until late in the poem. The speaker creates a sensation of eternal present or suspended time which contrasts to the constant preoccupation with time in the testimonial poems and emphasizes his subjective interpretation of time. The speaker's participation in the poem's experience is more evident than in "Juego para una noche de luna," but he still maintains a greater emotional distance than in the testimonial poems. He achieves this detachment by using the nosotros person rather than the yo. This plural gives him more distance, since he gives no anecdotal information about either himself or the other person. In addition, he uses the impersonal phrases mentioned earlier instead of the more personal conjugated verb forms, a technique which both adds to the impersonality of the narrative and reinforces the sensation of timelessness. Furthermore, the inverse proportion which the speaker establishes between the image of the dwarf and the enormity of his distress lends the poem a feeling of ironic exaggeration which excludes any possibility of excessive sentimentality.

The speaker uses both auditory and visual images to characterize the dwarf. The intermingling of different kinds of sensory perception points to the complexity and the vividness of the speaker's experience. The sounds associated with the dwarf, such as his voice and bells, are stimuli which encourage the speaker's frustration and despair, while the visual images reflect the interaction between speaker and dwarf. He repeats the same images, changing the modifiers to suggest differences of perspective. Images such as the bells, his voice and the flowers form the metaphorical background of the poem, through which the speaker moves. In contrast to the testimonial poems, however, these images are

not metaphorical expressions of time. This feeling of timelessness underscores the unresolved tension in the last line ("y acaso nunca lo logremos."), subjectively magnifying its proportions.

The book's last section of allegorical poems carries the subtitle of "Otoño." The first of these fables is a sonnet. In its first two quatrains the speaker states the premise of the poem. He personifies time as destructive, through the nouns and adjectives, as well as the aggressive verbs he chooses.

Cazador, leñador, quemas las hojas  
y hundes el hacha de oro en la madera.  
Hieres a la ligera primavera  
entre los arcos de las copas rojas.

Suenas tu trompa. Silba el hacha. Mojas  
con sangre el cielo, el bosque, la ladera,  
Encendido licor, trágica hoguera  
a la que el cuerpo deshojado arrojas.

5

Das al olvido el sueño que destruyes,  
tras la jauría de tus vientos huyes  
y en el confín del Universo cantas

10

que todo se repite y todo torna,  
que la guirnalda seca que te adorna  
ha de ser rosas en nuestras gargantas.  
(p. 219)

The initial images of the "cazador" and the "leñador" blend in easily with the title of autumn. Autumn reds and golds now replace the greens and golds of earlier testimonial poems: "el hacha de oro," "las copas rojas," "sangre," "encendido licor," "trágica hoguera." The speaker continues to use color imagery to suggest the cyclic nature of the seasons and of time, embodying them with different nuances. The nouns and adjectives complement the aggressive verbs such as "quemas," "hundes," "hieres," "suenas," "silba," "mojas con sangre," and "arrojas," to create an atmosphere of violence and destruction.

This characterization of time as the aggressive destructor continues into the first two lines of the first tercet. Beginning with line 11, however, the speaker introduces the ironic twist with which he ends the sonnet: life is cyclic; what dies is reborn. The last two lines suggest a growing maturity in the speaker's perspective. He now understands and accepts the beauty of autumn and the cyclic nature of the universe. This evolution of perspective also suggests to the reader that the unresolved tensions of the earlier fables have also been resolved.

The speaker's emotional distance adds to the final tercet's tone of resignation. He finally relaxes, steps back and views life stoically. The unified structure of the allegorical poems becomes apparent. The tensions left unresolved in the first two fables studied continue to build up in the first ten lines of this poem, as witnessed by the aggressive language of the early verses. In line 11 the tone abruptly changes: "y en el confín del Universo cantas. . ." The impersonal tone reflects an understanding that even the bitterness of one's most painful memories fade with the passage of time, leaving only their essence.

The allegories which are interspersed among the testimonial poems in Con las piedras, con el viento are the innovative forerunners of the alucinación. They stylize the subject matter to create dramatic tension and narrative distance. They work with the testimonial poems to universalize the presentation of the thematic motifs of time and love, as well as the speaker's evolving perspective toward them.

In the allegorical poems Hierro brings out his preoccupation with time without mentioning it directly or using time changes as a stylistic device. In the testimonial poems the opposite is true. In the latter

the reader is aware of the speaker's past, present and future because these are the central element of his characterization.

To appreciate the overall narrative development which is one of the dominant characteristics of Hierro's poetry, one must study the specific perspectives presented in the testimonial poetry. In some poems, such as "Corazón que te hieren . . . ," there is a temporal progression in which the speaker's perspective changes as time passes, from that of the experiencing speaker to that of the reflecting speaker.

Corazón que te hieren  
con una rama verde.

Llegó a mi lado. Era  
el momento más fuerte  
que el recuerdo. Es hoy todo 5  
inolvidable. El verde  
de los álamos es  
vida. Los cielos tienen  
azul de amor sereno  
que aún ignora la muerte. 10

Llega a mi lado. Trae  
una rama. (Parece  
la verde primavera  
que entre sus manos duerme.)  
Oh, qué felicidad. 15  
Las brisas, cómo mecen.  
Ella saca a las flores  
de su encanto silvestre.  
Ella toca de gracia  
el áspero presente. 20

Llega a mi lado. Trae  
una rama. (Se mueve  
irreal: su elemento  
es la música. Viene  
quebrando los silencios  
maravillosamente.) 25

Entre sus manos es  
la rama una serpiente  
de luz, un río frágil,  
bandera transparente 30

que pone en este ensueño  
 su alegría evidente.  
 (Por la rama comprendo  
 que pasa y no nos mueve.)  
 Es un látigo frágil,  
 una llama en que beben  
 nuestros ojos.

35

¿Por qué  
 la ceñiste a mis sienas  
 como si fuera el único  
 dios a quien perteneces?  
 ¡Por qué te he preguntado  
 si ceñiste otras sienas!

40

Corazón, te han herido  
 con una rama verde.  
 (p. 189)

45

In this poem the first-person speaker both experiences a love affair and reflects upon it later. He addresses both himself (his heart) and his loved-one directly. He begins and ends the poem with a refrain which presents the central image of the poem -- the "rama verde." There is a change in the verb tense of the refrain from the present to the present perfect which indicates the temporal distance between the experiencing and the reflecting perspective in the poem. These two voices belong to the same speaker, and are the stylistic device through which Hierro indicates the passage of time and the evolution of perspective.

The speaker changes verb tenses five times in the poem, creating a choppy, disordered, chaotic intermingling of experience and reflection.

<u>Section</u>	<u>Lines</u>	<u>Verb Tense</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
I	1-2	Present	Experiencing
II	3-6	Past	Reflecting
III	7-37	Present	Experiencing
IV	38-43	Past	Reflecting
V	44-45	Present Perfect	Reflecting

The reflecting speaker begins the body of the poem in the preterit in line 3. The subject of the sentence is not identified. The initial

thesis of the poem appears in line 3 through 5: "Era/ el momento más fuerte/ que el recuerdo." By the end of the poem the antithesis takes precedence; memory overcomes the moment and destroys it. It is the reflecting speaker, looking back into the past, who establishes the thematic base of the poem, and so synthesizes the poem's evolving perspective.

The experiencing speaker develops the "moment" referred to in line 4 in the present tense. He paints a sensorial, metaphorical picture, using colors in their traditional sense: "El verde/ de los álamos es/ vida." (ll. 6-8). Green is symbolic of sensual life, while blue suggests serene, eternal love: "Los cielos tienen/ azul de amor sereno/ que aún ignora la muerte." (ll. 8-10). There is some tension implied in the last verse by the verb "ignora," because it hints at eventual disillusion and death.

The next reference to color comes in line 13. The branch now takes on the more universal and abstract characteristics of spring and new life. This symbol expands throughout the narrative of the experiencing speaker. The branch is the symbolic key to the understanding of the parenthetical lines 12-14, 22-26 and 33-34. These asides seem to be the fantasies with which the second speaker responds simultaneously to his descriptions of the lovers' meetings. The language is ethereal and the content somewhat enigmatic. Words like "duerme," "irreal," and "maravillosamente" suggest that the speaker does realize that the situation is unreal and dream-like, and that even though he wishes it were not so, nevertheless, time does pass and love does die.

Besides being the central image of the refrain, the branch appears in the third, fourth and fifth stanzas. In the third and fourth it is the stimulus which activates his parenthetical fantasies. The experiencing speaker associates the branch with his lover. It may suggest the sexual and emotional attraction of this woman. In the fifth stanza the experiencing speaker extends this symbol through a series of direct comparisons:

1. rama - serpiente de luz
2. rama - río frágil
3. rama - bandera transparente
4. rama - látigo frágil
5. rama - una llama que beben nuestros ojos

Each of these nouns is modified by an adjective or phrase which does not rationally fit it, thereby creating a sense of tension. He repeats "frágil" twice, thus implying a certain delicacy and insecurity in the relationship. (The last image reminds one of the "eyes like live coals" image of the first fable.) Both this image and the "serpiente" suggest temptation. There is a sexual aura around the branch image, although it is implied rather than stated directly. Similarly, the disparity between modifiers and nouns implies tension, rather than directly stating it.

It is not until the sixth stanza that we learn the source of this implied tension. Two questions are addressed directly to the lover, one in the preterit and one in the present perfect and preterit. By putting "pertenece" in the present tense in line 41, the speaker insinuates that the relationship is still current, while his use of the present tense in the second stanza is more removed in time and emotional distance.

The relationship between the time and love themes now becomes more evident. If the speaker had been able to live only in the present, without prying into his lover's past, their relationship might have remained beautiful. The "rama verde" which symbolizes the sensual and emotional intensity of their relationship also includes his lover's past. Thus, the tension of the images in the fifth stanza bursts into full view, as his jealousy becomes clear. The speaker has created a symbol which embodies not only his joy but his sorrow as well. It is fitting that he use the present perfect tense in the last refrain to indicate that the wounding began in the past and has continued up to the present. He cannot forget the past; as he says in lines 5 through 6, "Es hoy tan inolvidable."

Throughout the poem the feeling of tension has gradually increased. This is due partially to the language, but it is also augmented by the seven-syllable line, which is short and choppy, and the frequent enjambement which creates a tension between the meter and the rhythm.<sup>6</sup> These stylistic, non-verbal ways of indicating strain complement the development of the "rama verde" as a symbol. They also characterize the speaker, just as the jumping back and forth between his experiencing and reflecting perspectives is evidence of his unsettled feelings. In comparison to the allegories already analyzed this testimonial poem is much more centered around the first-person speaker's temporal and psychological evolution.

By means of these techniques Hierro creates a time capsule in which space and time are reduced to a photographic moment. Time itself is not the main focal point; rather, it is the device which allows the speaker

to review the past. Love and jealousy are the subject matter which occupy the speaker's attention. By dividing the speaker's perspective into its experiencing and reflecting segments, Hierro broadens the scope of the poem. He invites the reader's participation as the synthesizer of the fragmented narrative. Like the allegories, this testimonial poem contains some stylistic elements of the later alucinación. These include the experimentation with speaker and the subjective fragmentation of perspective which hides the poem's unified structure and forces the reader to abandon objective, rational systems of perception for the more subjective ones of man's inner world.

In the untitled poem which follows the reader finds yet another twist of perspective that develops the same motifs of time, love and jealousy seen thus far.

Qué claridad para mirar sin pena  
me da la distancia.  
Desde la oscuridad total, dirijo  
a ti la mirada.

Así es mejor: tenerte, hablarte, oírte  
sin melancolía. 5  
Llevar yo sola todos tus dolores  
doliendo en mi vida.

Vuelve a encenderse el fuego verde y oro  
de la primavera. 10  
Oh, corazón, qué prodigio sus dones  
con las manos llenas.

Te llamaré en mi soledad un día  
el indiferente  
cuando, sobre tu llama, nieve el tiempo  
que todo lo puede. 15

Saber que no habrá nada que te hiera  
con espada aguda.  
Saber que se cerraron ya tus puertas  
para la amargura. 20

Yo no podría herirte más, llenarte  
de noche tus soles.  
Yo para tí quería los caminos  
cubiertos de flores.

3 Así es mejor. De lejos todo tiene  
una luz más clara. 25

Se desnudan tus horas que vestía  
la desesperanza.

Te llamaré en mi soledad un día  
el indiferente, 30  
cuando el olvido ciña con guirnaldas  
de rosas tus sienas.

Y qué alegre ha de ser saber que nunca  
declina tu estrella.  
Saber que has de cantar feliz, que vives 35  
aunque yo me muera.

Me preguntabas y te respondían  
mi boca y mis ojos.  
Oh, si los ojos y si las palabras  
lo dijesen todo. 40

Así es mejor: se cerrará tu herida.  
Irás por los campos  
sin saber que la música del viento  
soy yo que te canto.

Mi corazón entierro, porque tenga 45  
tu camino flores.  
Cantes y vivas tú, aunque yo me muera.  
Y Dios me perdone.  
(p. 214)

The most startling element of the poem is its female speaker ("Llevar yo sola todos tus dolores. . .").<sup>7</sup> By introducing a new speaker Hierro involves the reader in the poem by letting him compare two different points of view toward the central subject of the book. By suggesting the differences between these two perspectives he suggests the fallibility of human perception. In this poem the female speaker looks back, reflecting on the limitations of human communication: "Oh, si los ojos y si las palabras/ lo dijesen todo." (ll.39-40). This suggestion causes the

reader to return to an earlier testimonial poem in which the experiencing speaker allows his emotions and his pride to block his understanding:

Y, de pronto, el pasado  
con su mano de fiebre.

He aquí que desgrana  
todo tu ayer. Parece  
que al corazón le invade  
una súbita muerte.  
Que algo en nosotros se hunde  
definitivamente.  
(p. 168, ll. 11-18)

The female speaker serve an analogous purpose to that of the reflecting speaker in "Corazón, que te hieren . . ." She broadens the reader's understanding of the book's anecdotal situation, and to some extent foreshadows the evolution of the male speaker's perspective. The female speaker jumps from past to future in much the same way as Hierro's other testimonial speakers. She also repeats certain images which characterize and unify both the testimonial and the allegorical poems. One such image is the wind, about which she says, "Irás por los campos/ sin saber que la música del viento/ soy yo que te canto." (11.43-44). The male speaker, after rejecting his lover, turns to nature, and especially to the wind, for comfort. At the same time, his lover, being rejected by him, suffers a symbolic death and reappears as the wind, giving solace to her former lover. The reader's participation in the book is necessary to integrate these two perspectives, which ironically point to the imperfections of human understanding. Since the wind is a symbol of time in this book, the reader can add a further dimension to it in relation to this poem. The passage of time brings solace and understanding to the wounded heart.

The female speaker incorporates another frequent image into her poem. The flame has represented youthful passion in relation to the experiencing speaker. In lines 13 through 16 she suggests that the passage of time changes youthful ardour to indifference, an idea which the reflecting speaker reiterates in the final poems, thereby creating a dejá vu effect. In the poem "Reflexiones amargas, no . . ." the male speaker says, "Reflexiones amargas, no./ Ya he desterrado la amargura. Ahora siento el alma madura/ . . . Me siento alegre. Sé de fijo/ que ya se ha acabado la lucha." (p. 221, ll. 1-2, 53, 57-58). He confirms the female speaker's characterization of him as resigned or indifferent.

Stylistically, as well as thematically, "Qué claridad para mirar sin pena." blends harmoniously with the other testimonial poems in Con las piedras, con el viento. The interior monologue of the twelve quatrains moves in a tempo lento which is achieved by alternating ten and six-syllable verses, connecting them in groups of two by enjambment, almost without exception. The ten-syllable line moves easily into the six-syllable verse, which, because of its shortness, gives the reader time to pause. Hierro explains one effect of this pie quebrado in his essay on Rubén Darío: "El pie quebrado suele dar a la estrofa gravedad -- pensemos en Manrique --; parece prolongarse en un silencio psicológicamente equivalente a las sílabas de diferencia entre el verso corto y el largo." (p. 363).

By approaching the subject matter from a slightly different point of view in this poem Hierro encourages to reader into an awareness of the progressive change which takes place in the experiencing speaker's views as he steps back and reflects. This is very similar to the

progression in perspective which occurs in Tierra sin nosotros and Alegría. It is the speaker's development as a character which unifies the allegorical and testimonial poems of Con las piedras, con el viento. The resignation or indifference predicted by the female speaker is confirmed in the final poems, as the passage of time lets the reflecting speaker see the past through more objective eyes than before:

Ahora pueden mirar mis ojos  
 lo que antes no podían . . .  
 . . . . .  
 Yo no podía comprenderlo  
 y hoy, que sencillo me resulta  
 ir bajo el sol, por los caminos  
 que ellos andaban con la luna.  
 (p. 222, ll. 33-34, 41-44)

In this passage, as in earlier testimonial poems, there is the constant shifting from present to past, created by the use of adverbs like "ahora," "antes" and "hoy," as well as the frequent verbs in the present, preterit and imperfect tenses. In his book Hierro is always balancing what is with what was. At first the experiencing speaker is a passionate young lover, desiring only to hold onto the present moment forever; later he is a disillusioned lover whose emotional immaturity about his lover's past blinds him to their present love and causes him to reject it; finally he becomes the "older-but-wiser" reflecting speaker who ruefully recognizes the impermanence of his former perspectives. By switching perspectives and alternating speakers Hierro creates a vivid experience whose tensions and their resolution provide the framework of the book.

In Con las piedras, con el viento Hierro is always conscious of the total experience of each poem, and of the book as a whole. It is the embodiment of Hierro's theoretical views about the relationship between form and content. Time and the speaker's changing perspective unify the

poems, as does the dilemma caused by man's inability to accept and express love because of his limited understanding of its nature and of his own. It is with the passage of time that the speaker unlocks the doors to deeper understanding.

In both the allegorical and the testimonial poems Hierro uses everyday language to create multiple levels of meaning. He contrasts and balances not only the ideas but also the words' tones, sounds and rhythmic relationships. In this way he creates the book's narrative tension and its resolution implicitly. Hierro expresses his ideas and perspectives through imagery in both the allegorical and the testimonial poems. Certain images, such as the wind, flames, flowers and stars, are traditional images which appear throughout the book. These familiar images are tinted by the interpretative nuances of the speaker's perspective. As it changes, so does the way in which he describes these natural phenomena. Just as time is a unifying element of the book, so the continual presence of these images is its constant scenario. They embody the transcendent universality of the abstract ideas which characterize Hierro's poetry.

It is a difference in narrative perspective, tone and structure which most noticeably separates the allegorical and the testimonial poems. The latter are characterized by a first-person speaker moving through time; the tone is emotionally intense; the structure is based on temporal movement, subjectively and at times chaotically arranged. The speaker, even in his reflective periods, does not have much distance from his subject matter. In contrast, the speaker in the allegorical poems is usually an impersonal observer whose observations are tinged with irony. The poems develop one image or setting whose concrete elements stand for

parts of an abstract concept or scheme. These two methods of developing perspective represent separate but complementary ways in which Hierro converts ideas and events into a universally approachable poetic experience. In Con las piedras, con el viento the techniques described are used to create two different kinds of experience. In Libro de las alucinaciones Hierro will intermingle elements of each to further expand the sensorial and conceptual horizons of his poems.

While his first three books have been intimate and introspective in nature, the books that follow -- Quinta del '42, Cuanto sé de mí and Libro de las alucinaciones -- will begin to integrate external subjects, such as music, historical figures and contemporary Spanish life, into the gradually evolving picture which Hierro paints of his world. He will continue to experiment with speaker and perspective to better portray the complexity of this vision.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Franz K. Stanzel, Narrative Situations in the Novel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1971), p. 69.

<sup>2</sup>Cuanto sé de mí, p. 165, l. 12. All subsequent references to poems will be to this 1974 edition. The pages will be indicated in parentheses at the end of the cited passage.

<sup>3</sup>Carlos Bousoño, Teoría de la expresión poética, 5th ed. (Madrid: Gredos, 1970). See Chapter IX, "La visión," p. 178, for a description of the term "visión."

<sup>4</sup>The term "visionary progression" is an extension of Bousoño's term "visión," cited above.

<sup>5</sup>José Hierro, "La huella de Rubén en los poetas de la posguerra española," Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos, No. 212-213 (August-September 1967), p. 364.

<sup>6</sup>With respect to the use of enjambment by contemporary Spanish poets Bousoño makes the following observation: "El generalizado encabalgamiento de la poesía de la posguerra, omnipresente entre, digamos 1948 y . . . 1962, cuyo resulta es . . . semejante, pero sólo semejante, al que tuvo parcialmente en Quevedo la expresión de una angustia, que en este caso es, más o menos, de matiz o aproximación existencialista." Op. cit., p. 379.

<sup>7</sup>In a conversation with the author, Hierro confirmed the accuracy of this line, saying that he used a female speaker to develop a new point of view toward the subject matter of the book.

## Chapter Four

After publishing Con las piedras, con el viento in 1950, Hierro issues two other major books in the fifties -- Quinta del '42 (1953) and Cuanto sé de mí (1958). Instead of unifying these last two books around a single incident in the past, as he does in Con las piedras, he broadens his subject base to include friends from the past, the Civil War, people and places captured in portrait detail. Through observations about his own experiences and feelings he extends the books' scope to include broader social concerns.

In Quinta del '42 and Cuanto sé de mí Hierro focuses more on social and historical phenomena, such as unknown people, artists from the past and contemporary events than in his first three books. In his later poetry he often uses a reflecting speaker who rarely interjects himself into the world of poem, but rather maintains a relatively-detached, unemotional perspective. He is like a verbal photographer capturing scenes and people in time. Often he develops an extended metaphor whose abstract meaning is implied through an association with archetypal and visionary images. Not only does he expand the subject matter of these books, but he also continues to experiment with the language and format of the poems. He develops his themes -- time, death and the relationship

of the external world to thoughts and ideals -- in well-defined settings. Unlike the world of nature which is often the backdrop in his first three books, in these two the world is that of his contemporary social environment. The poet focuses on the relationship of this world to the personal values expressed in his earlier books, as José Olivio Jiménez suggests: ". . . Quinta del '42 es un libro que parece incorporar nuevos asuntos: España, sus ciudades, ciertas experiencias de música, algunos concretos recuerdos, la definición de la poética del autor, etc. Sin embargo, . . . es posible notar que todo el conjunto, varío en su contenido, se identifica en su esencia por aquella común actitud que desde el fondo le presta estrecha unidad . . . Ese común denominador puede expresarse así: voluntad de dirigir la aventura poética hacia regiones más ensimismadas, más profundas, por ello menos racionalmente abordables, con la intención de que ellas también digan su verdad."<sup>1</sup>

In Quinta del '42 Hierro continues to write two distinct kinds of poems -- allegorical and testimonial -- and he interchanges various speaker-voices within these two kinds of poems. By doing so he captures the experience of his inner and outer worlds from different perspectives. He draws the reader into the two books as the synthesizer of these experiences.

Quinta del '42 has four sections, in addition to the two introductory poems. In the first two sections ("Los hombres y las horas" and "Una vasta mirada") Hierro develops the themes of time, man's situation and the Spanish world. Poems such as "Reportaje" (p. 239) and "Canto a España" (p. 255) reveal the poet's concern with his homeland and his compatriots, but are not overshadowed artistically by this concern. The

poems in this section are testimonial, for the most part, written from different points of view, and thereby expanding the overall perspective of the book. The third and fourth sections ("Esfinge interior" and "La mujer de espaldas") are more introspective, and contain a larger number of allegorical poems, such as "Vino el ángel de las sombras . . ." (p. 275), and "Poema para una Nochebuena" (p. 282). The unifying element of the book seems to be the speaker, who uses both the allegory and the testimonial poem to give the reader a close-up and long-range picture of his world.

"Vino el ángel de las sombras . . ." is one of the best examples in Quinta del '42 of an allegorical poem. The speaker personifies an abstraction into an angel. The allegory is heavily dependent on Biblical references to Jacob and the Angel and the Temptation of Jesus for its archetypal nature. This background ironically deflates the emotional intensity of the speaker.

Vino el ángel de las sombras;  
me tentó tres veces.  
Yo, erguido, tallado en piedra  
firme, resistiéndole.  
Me torturaba con lágrimas, 5  
látigos y nieves,  
con soledades. Me puso  
la frente candente.

Toda la noche me estuvo 10  
llenando de muerte.  
Separaba con un mar  
las orillas verdes.  
Entre una y otra orilla  
no dejaba puentes.

Se pasó la noche entera 15  
llamándome, hiriéndome.  
Diciendo que yo era el rey  
del trigo y la nieve  
el rey de las horas negras  
y el de las celestes. 20

Vino el ángel de las sombras.  
 Yo en pie, resistiéndole  
 Esperando que, al cantar  
 los gallos, huyese.

Alucinado, queriendo  
 vencerle, venciéndome.<sup>2</sup>

25

The speaker both experiences and reflects upon his struggle in this poem. He appears to be directly involved in a melodramatic conflict with this allegorical angel, and therefore plays an active part, rather than functioning solely as an observer. It is the use of the past tense, which by creating a sensation of looking back, indicates the reflecting-observer role. The speaker constructs a time framework of one night: "Toda la noche . . .", "Se pasó la noche entera" (ll. 9, 15). By limiting the time, and by referring to it repeatedly, he intensifies the poem's atmosphere.

The short and partial sentences of the poem create an unsettled tone. For instance, the speaker uses no complete verb when describing himself in lines 3, 4 and 22 through 26. Not only does he use gerunds to suggest movement or fluidity when describing his own behavior, but also when relating the angel's (ll. 9-10, 15-17).

The speaker jumps back and forth from his own actions to those of the angel, but the two are always intertwined. All of the angel's actions are directed to the speaker. For example, in lines 5 through 7 the speaker uses two realistic nouns, followed by two metaphorical nouns to exemplify the interaction between the two. The angel's behavior and expressions are described in images which are internally balanced; the image of the sea between two green banks, the speaker as king of wheat and snow, of dark and celestial hours. Through these images the reader

must draw his conclusions about the abstract nature of this allegorical figure. The angel is "de las sombras," giving one the impression that he is somehow tainted, and perhaps even dangerous. He represents some kind of temptation to the speaker, although the exact nature of this temptation is not clarified.

By jumping back and forth from the speaker's direct speech to his description of the angel's behavior, the poem embodies a sensation of struggle. This reaches a climax in the last two lines: "Alucinado, queriendo/ vencerle, venciéndome." (ll. 25-26). The four verb forms in these two lines are highly charged with emotion and psychological tension. "Alucinado" suggests an altered mental state. "Queriendo/vencerle" indicates the speaker's desire to overcome the temptation he feels. "Venciéndome" is the word which indicates the enigmatic resolution of the struggle -- enigmatic because the reader does not know how the struggle is resolved. There are two ways of interpreting the word. Either the speaker realizes that the temptation is something within himself and overcomes it; or he overcomes his reservations about the temptation and gives in to it.

As in his earlier allegorical poem, "El enanito," Hierro is dealing with an abstract psychological conflict. In neither poem is there any firm resolution of tension. Hierro relates directly to the world of the poem as both a reflecting witness and an experiencing speaker. In both poems he leaves it to the reader to resolve the tension, thereby involving him in the psychological drama of the poem, and forcing him to universalize the allegorical abstraction by relating it to the Biblical references and to human nature in general. In keeping with the overall

focus of Quinta del '42 "Vino del ángel de las sombras" points to universal human concerns in a stylized way to minimize the anecdotal, personal background of the poem.

"Poniente" is a short allegorical poem in the third section of Quinta del '42. The title of the section ("Esfinge interior") suggests its contemplative, introspective tone. Hierro's preoccupation with time throughout his poetry makes the philosophical implications of "Poniente" clear. Jiménez summarizes Hierro's ideas about time as follows, "En la poesía de Hierro se va a recoger muy claramente esta tensión entre la concepción del tiempo como continuidad y la opuesta intuición de la existencia como suma alternada de momentos, en cada uno de los cuales se ha realizado el milagro de la eternidad y de lapsos intermedios de disolución." (p. 222).

Quién pudiera robar la llave  
de tu corazón amarillo:  
la llave de plata y de fuego.

Quién pudiera romper tu cárcel,  
volar a tu centro encendido  
a desnudar tu gran misterio.

5

Llave de plata y fuego. Llave  
de tu corazón amarillo  
donde teje su tela el sueño.  
(p. 286)

In "Poniente" the speaker's perspective is not the central focus, as it is in many of the testimonial poems of the book. The poem is compact and pared down to its essential images. Ostensibly the poem is a verbal picture of a sunset, and it can stand on that level. However, the speaker's preoccupation with time is subtly developed by the repeated and interrelated images he chooses, and by the rhythm of his verses.

The speaker of the poem gives no direct anecdotal information about himself. He addresses the sunset, using the familiar verb form, tú. He personifies a natural phenomenon which is repeated every day, and which allegorically suggests the passage of time. His anonymity increases the accessibility of the allegory.

The three tercets have a repeated assonant rhyme scheme of a-e, i-o, and e-o; all nine verses are of nine-syllables and there is no fixed rhythmic pattern. The first two stanzas have a questioning or longing tone. The third stanza contains two incomplete sentences which repeat the images of the first two, but in a more affirmative way, resolving the uncertainty of the first two stanzas. Lines 2, 3, 7 and 8 contain the central images of the poem -- the "corazón amarillo" and the "llave de plata y fuego."

Lines 5 and 6 contain infinitives which suggest the potential for motion and activity: "volar" and "desnudar." In those lines the noun phrases indicate the allegorical abstraction behind the poem. Both "de plata y fuego" and "encendido" hint at the mystery associated with the passage of time -- the paradox of its removed, cold nature and its intense immediacy.

"Poniente" is almost timeless and motionless. Most of the words are nouns, several of which are repeated two or three times. The nouns are interrelated on visual and metaphorical planes; key and jail; heart and center; dream and mystery; jail and heart; key and mystery. The only two active verbs in the poem ("pudiera" and "teje") suggest the speaker's perspective of awe toward the mysterious complexity of the passage of time. Two of the infinitives embody potentially aggressive and negative



Pero el árbol ya es otro.  
 Otros vientos lo mueven.  
 Otras brisas quisieran  
 Orearle la frente. 20

Pero el árbol es otro  
 irremediablemente.

El no lo sabe. Ignora  
 el rostro de la muerte.  
 Sobre el inmóvil tronco 25  
 donde el tiempo se duerme,  
 su juventud le canta  
 armoniosa, le mece,  
 tañe, para él, las cuerdas  
 de oro en las ramas verdes. 30

Pero el árbol es otro  
 irremediablemente.  
 (p. 295)

"El árbol" appears in the second section of "Esfinge interior." It is a "romancillo;" that is to say, it is a poem with seven-syllable lines, an even-line assonant rhyme scheme of e-e and stanzas of eight verses.<sup>3</sup> The only exceptions to the octave are the third stanza, which is a quartet, and the repeated couplet "Pero el árbol es otro/ irremediablemente." (ll. 21-22, 31-32). By changing from the octave to the quartet the speaker draws the reader's attention to the latter. The couplet is also of a more reflexive nature whose last line points to the philosophical meaning of the extended metaphor -- the paradoxical relationship between man and time.

In the first two octaves the speaker develops the tree image without any direct indication of what it might represent. The first two stanzas incorporate the passage of time as a natural phenomenon. The first describes the young tree, while the second pictures a more mature one. In the second stanza seasonal images indicate the passage of time: "le desnudan la copa/ el otoño y la nieve;/ la feliz primavera/ se la

viste de verde." (ll. 13-16). In contrast, after the quartet, the reference to time is explicit, rather than implicit as before.

Besides the time imagery there are two other interrelated images which unify the poem -- the wind and music. These are images which appear often in Con las piedras, con el viento. In this poem the wind is what stimulates the tree's musical motion. In the first stanza lines 3 through 8 develop the effect of the wind on the young tree. The visual and auditory effects are striking: "tiembla de las raíces/ hasta las hojas débiles;/ vibra como una cuerda/ de la lira celeste." The music image reappears in the fifth stanza, where the abstraction "youth" replaces the wind: "la juventud le canta/ armoniosa, le mece,/ tañe, para él, las cuerdas/ de oro en las ramas verdes." (ll. 27-30). Time and the wind are intertwined in the poem, as they were in Con las piedras, con el viento. The image of the tree embodies the paradoxical relativity of perspective which is one of the outstanding characteristics of Hierro's poetry. Time passes; people age and eventually die; yet the cyclic nature of the universe is the constant source of its rejuvenation.

The poem moves from image to abstraction. The images of the tree, the wind and music are the unifying elements which allow the speaker to present his perspective of the universe. There is no need for the presence of a more subjective speaker whose limited perspective would have to be taken into account when weighing the thoughts expressed. The third-person speaker, by his impersonality, creates the sensation of objectivity and omniscience, thereby implying the universality of what he says.

This impersonal and uninvolved speaker is one sign of Hierro's evolving style. In Quinta del '42 Hierro is developing new ways to approach subject matter, and he frequently uses this third-person witness to give him greater liberty to present a comprehensive statement which both relates to the individual and to the world as a whole.

In "Retrato de un desconocido," a testimonial poem from the first section of Quinta del '42, the speaker describes an old man. As in "El árbol," the third-person speaker stands back from the picture he paints.

Tuvo unas barbas húmedas, marinas,  
y pálida y desnuda era la frente.  
Adorador del fuego del poniente  
entre las piedras de las propias ruinas . . .

Viajero en alas de las golondrinas 5  
se desnudó a la luz resplandeciente.  
Desnudo -- nuevamente adolescente --  
con el dolor jugó a las cuatro esquinas.

La carne está en su ocaso. Queda el gesto. 10  
Es la luz su mejor libro de texto  
y reza, rosa a rosa, su rosario.

Ama las horas porque borran huellas  
en la serenidad, y en las estrellas  
estudia su futuro itinerario.  
(p. 235)

The poem is a sonnet, whose unusual consonant rhyme scheme is one used by Unamuno in the last half of Rosario de sonetos (ABBA/ABBA/CCD/EED).<sup>4</sup> The two quartets are in the past tense, describing the stranger's youth; the tercets are in the present, as the focus moves from the past to this man's present. The last line leads the reader into this stranger's unknown future ("estudia su futuro itinerario"). There is a measured equilibrium in the last line which reflects the nature of the man.

By using more nouns and adjectives than verbs the speaker focuses

the attention of the reader on the stranger's nature, rather than on his actions. The first stanza captures the man's youth through a description of his face, as well as through the phrase "Adorador del fuego del poniente." (1. 4). Not only does that phrase suggest a closeness to nature, but also the passion of youth. This youthful passion mellows by the end of the poem when he states, "Ama las horas porque borran huellas/ en la serenidad . . ." (11.12-13).

Light imagery appears in each stanza. In the first it is "El fuego del poniente;" in the second, "la luz resplandeciente;" in the third, "su ocaso" and "la luz"; and in the fourth, "las estrellas." In the quartets the light reflects his youth; in the tercets it indicates his aging. In line 10 light is an expression of enlightenment, and it suggests that his learning is more passive and reflective than in the quartets. For instance, in line 3 the man is looking at the "fiery" sunset; in line 9 the sunset image describes his aging flesh.

The only other repeated words are the "Desnuda," "se desnudó," "desnudo" series. These all appear in the quartets, and imply the man's youthful openness to learning from experience.

The poem incorporates time as an element of both the subject's perspective and the speaker's poetic technique in order to indicate how the passage of time affects both physical and mental states. The imagery and verb progressions mark the passage of time. The speaker leaves the poem open, inviting the reader to carry the stranger's life on in his own mind. He subtly dramatizes the life of this stranger, while avoiding all anecdotal references which would detract from his archetypal characterization.



Qué tristes he visto a tus hombres.  
 Los veo pasar a mi lado, tu pecho la leche, 20  
 comer de tus manos el pan, y sentarse después a  
 soñar bajo un álamo,  
 dorar con el fuego que abraza sus vidas, tu dura  
 corteza.

Les pides que pongan sus almas de fiesta.  
 No sabes que visten de duelo, que llevan a cuestras  
 el peso de tu acabamiento,  
 que ven impasibles llegar a la muerte tocando sus  
 graves guitarras. 25

Oh España, qué triste pareces.  
 Quisiera asistir a tu muerte total, a tu sueño  
 completo,  
 saber que te hundías de pronto en las aguas, igual  
 que un navío maldito.

Y sobre la noche marina, borrada tu estela,  
 España, ni en tí pensaría. Ni en mí. Ya extranjero 30  
 de tierras y días.  
 Ya libre y feliz, como viento que no halla ni rosa,  
 ni mar, ni molino.  
 Sin memoria, ni historia, ni edad, ni recuerdos,  
 ni pena . . .  
 . . . en vez de mirarte, oh España, clavel encendido  
 de sueños de llama,  
 cofre de dura corteza que guarda en su entraña caliente  
 la vieja moneda de plata, cubierta de olvido, de  
 polvo y cansancio . . . 35

(p. 255)

The speaker characterizes Spain as the intangible, subconscious interrelationship of its land, its people and its history. In this way he points to broad social concerns while still reflecting the interest in the individual shown in his first three books. He uses verbs such as "veo" and "he visto" to suggest a reflecting role, but in the line "Quisiera . . . mirarte sin pena" he indicates a subjective involvement in the experience of the poem. He speaks directly to Spain, focusing on the world of the poem rather than addressing himself directly to the reader.

The decline of his homeland and the effect of this decline on her people overwhelm this speaker. In the final line of the poem he calls Spain "la vieja moneda de plata, cubierta de olvido, de polvo y cansancio . . ." The three nouns and the final ellipsis give the poem a tone of resignation, and imply that there may be no resolution to the tension developed therein.

The speaker creates the central, unresolved tension of the poem by always making a distinction between Spain and her people. In the second stanza the series of rhetorical questions introduces the three main elements of Spain's nature. Each question contains one element of the speaker's view of the "meaning of Spain." In the first question the river image embodies both life's rhythmic flow and pulse, and that part of Spain's essence which is lifeless and fleeting. In the second, the speaker focuses on the physical geography of the country, creating a visual image which expresses his nostalgic love for his homeland. In the third, he introduces the tension between Spain as a collective whole and her people: "¿En tus gentes errantes que pudren sus vidas por darles dulzor a tus frutos?". The people are ruined by their preoccupation with past glories and by the inexorable demands the land itself makes for their survival. The present-day Spain of the speaker is in part the Spain of a glorious past which hovers over both him and his compatriots. The image which most suggests this is the dream:

Clavel encendido de sueños de fuego  
 Quisiera . . . dormir con tu sueño . . .  
 Quisiera asistir a tu sueño completo.  
 . . . y sentarse después a soñar bajo un álamo . . .  
 Quisiera asistir a tu muerte total, a tu sueño completo . . .  
 . . . en vez de mirarte, oh España, clavel encendido de sueños  
 de llama.

(11. 3, 13, 16, 21, 27, 33)

The fire imagery suggests the intensity of this idealized characterization of the past. The speaker yearns to see this idealized dream come true, but realizes that it is impossible.

The use of contrasting images to create tension between this illusory dream and the world of his compatriots is a technique which will become more and more evident in Hierro's last three books. In "Canto a España" the speaker compares the flame image to water, as he does light to dark: "He visto brillar tus estrellas, quebrarse tu luna en las aguas, andar a tus hombres descalzos, hiriendo sus pies con tus piedras ardientes." (ll. 4-5). This description of what he "saw" is totally metaphorical. He does not state ideas; rather, he uses archetypal images and contrasts to imply his meaning. The nouns "estrellas" and "luna" are images of light, as well as possible images of ideals. The verbs indicate the transformation of this light: "brillar," "quebrarse en las aguas." In this series of images, as elsewhere in the poem the clash between ideals and everyday reality indicates the speaker's perspective. The people of Spain pay dearly for this vision of their homeland which they accept unquestioningly: "No sabes que visten de duelo, que llevan a costas el peso de tu acabamiento,/ que ven impasibles llegar a la muerte tocando sus graves guitarras." (ll. 24-25). By describing the guitars as "graves," he transfers the characteristic somber stoicism of many Spanish people to one of their favorite musical instruments.

In the last three stanzas the speaker incorporates the tension he has built into his own perspective. The three stanzas are one extended sentence, although it is broken up into phrases punctuated by periods. In these lines the speaker transfers the central tension of the poem from

the people in general to himself. He uses the image of a sinking ship to clarify his desire to escape from Spain's omnipresence. Rid of this overwhelming source of tension the speaker would be outside of time and place, "libre y feliz." The nine repetitions of "ni" create a sensation of the speaker shaking off all the handicaps of his perspective, first in images, then in abstractions. In the final stanza the speaker returns abruptly to his present limitations. He repeats and extends the image introduced in the first stanza. The only conjugated verb ("guarda") implies the timeless preservation of the speaker's original state of mind. By returning to the earlier image ("clavel encendido de sueños") the speaker creates a circular structure which seems to capture him in the very time and space he has tried to escape. The tension which has built up during the poem is left unresolved.

Although this poem has obvious social implications, Hierro tries to capture and psychological and social influences on his people, and avoids political or sociological questions. He creates perceptive and provocative images and experiences out of everyday language and universalizes concrete psychological and physical elements of his culture, while presenting them from his own individual perspective.

The social awareness he demonstrates in Quinta del '42 is a continuation of the humanitarian concern he expressed in Tierra sin nosotros and Alegría. By expanding the focus of his later testimonial poems, such as "Canto a España," he reinforces his role as the chronicler of his times. Stylistically the poem is much more sophisticated than the testimonial poetry of his earlier books. He builds the emotional intensity to a climax in the last three stanzas, and leaves the tension between

an idealized Spain and its harsh reality unresolved. The contrast between ideals and reality is one which will appear throughout Libro de las alucinaciones.

In Cuanto sé de mí one finds many of the same thematic considerations as in Quinta del '42. Hierro is looking to the world of people and places for subject matter. The allegorical and testimonial poems are less clearly distinguishable than in his earlier books, although they are not yet as intertwined as in Libro de las alucinaciones. José Olivio Jiménez makes the following observations about the book: "Cuanto sé de mí es un libro que, dentro de la producción de Hierro, tiene un carácter resumidor y extremado. Resumidor (lo cual no quiere significar, ni mucho menos, ecléctico), porque en él se manifiestan en un perfecto equilibrio las dos líneas de su poesía . . . Y extremado porque ambas, a su vez, van a culminar en poemas que podrían presentarse como ejemplos apurados de una y otra." (p. 294).

The main differences between Quinta del '42 and Cuanto sé de mí are stylistic, rather than thematic. Hierro begins to write much more intricate and complex poems in which the sequence of events is fragmented and the speaker's perspective and narrative distance are varied. Through metaphorical contrasts the poet creates dramatic tension to express the conflict between his ideal and "real" worlds. Dramatic tension and its resulting irony are two of the elements of the alucinaciones which will become more important in Libro de las alucinaciones, but which are very apparent in Cuanto sé de mí. Douglass Rogers calls Hierro's experimenta-

tion with style in Cuanto sé de mí "a new expression of liberty in the unrhymed forms; a new sign of adherence to disciplined concentration in the sonnets . . . a paradoxical joining of opposites."<sup>5</sup>

Cuanto sé de mí is divided into three sections; "Lo que vi," "Torre de sueños" and "Por lo que sé." In the first section the poet relates his inner world to the world he sees around him, as exemplified in "Mambo" (p. 341) and "Requiem" (p. 347). In the second section he includes more enigmatic, visionary poems which reflect his inner world, such as "Entonces era el mundo" (p. 359) and "Sinfonietta para un hombre llamado Beethoven" (p. 360). "Por lo que sé" blends together elements of both testimonial and allegorical poetry. The section contains a large number of sonnets, many of which have an allegorical tendency. They develop an image or a metaphor throughout the poem whose abstract base gives it a deeper meaning than the extended metaphor alone would allow. Such sonnets as "Niño" (p. 377) and "Abrir y cerrar los ojos" (p. 398) exemplify this technique.

"Requiem" is a testimonial poem in the first section. There are two narrative voices in the poem -- a third-person, historical speaker and a first-person reflecting witness. In stanzas one, two, three, seven and eight one finds the third-person speaker; in four, five, six and nine the first-person speaker narrates. The last stanza makes it clear that the first-person witness is the predominant voice of the poem.

Manuel del Río, natural  
de España, ha fallecido el sábado  
11 de mayo, a consecuencia  
de un accidente. Su cadáver  
está tendido en D'Agostino  
Funeral Home. Haskell. New Jersey.  
Se dirá una misa cantada  
a las 9, 30, en St. Francis.

Es una historia que comienza  
 con sol y piedra, y que termina 10  
 sobre una mesa, en D'Agostino,  
 Es una historia que comienza  
 en una orilla del Atlántico.  
 Continúa en un camarote 15  
 de tercera, sobre las olas  
 -- sobre las nubes -- de las tierras  
 sumergidas ante Platón.  
 Halla en América su término  
 con una grúa y una clínica, 20  
 con una esquila y una misa  
 cantada, en la iglesia St. Francis.

Al fin y al cabo, cualquier sitio  
 da lo mismo para morir;  
 el que se aroma de romero, 25  
 el tallado en piedra o en nieve,  
 el empapado de petróleo.  
 Da lo mismo que un cuerpo se haga  
 Piedra, petróleo, nieve, aroma.  
 Lo doloroso no es morir 30  
 acá o allá . . .

Requiem aeternam,  
 Manuel del Rfo. Sobre el mármol  
 en D'Agostino, pastan toros 35  
 de España, Manuel, y las flores  
 (funeral de segunda, caja  
 que huele a abetos del invierno),  
 cuarenta dólares. Y han puesto  
 unas flores artificiales  
 entre las otras que arrancaron 40  
 al jardín . . . Libera me Domine  
de morte aeterna . . . Cuando mueran  
 James o Jacob verán las flores  
 que pagaron Giulio o Manuel . . .

Ahora descienden a tus cumbres 45  
 garras de águila. Dies irae.  
 Lo doloroso no es morir  
Dies illa acá o allá;  
 sino sin gloria . . .

Tus abuelos 50  
 fecundaron la tierra toda,  
 la empapaban de la aventura.  
 Cuando caía un español  
 se mutilaba el universo.  
 Los velaban no en D'Agostino 55  
 Funeral Home, sino entre hogueras,  
 entre caballos y armas. Héroes  
 para siempre. Estatuas de rostro

borrado, Vestidos aún  
 sus colores de papagayo, 60  
 de poder y de fantasía.  
 El no ha caído así. No ha muerto  
 por ninguna locura hermosa.  
 (Hace mucho que el español  
 muere de anónimo y cordura, 65  
 o en locuras desgarradoras  
 entre hermanos: cuando acuchilla  
 pellejos de vino derrama  
 sangre fraterna.) Vino un día  
 porque su tierra es pobre. El mundo 70  
Libera me Domine es patria.  
 Y ha muerto. No fundó ciudades.  
 No dio su nombre a un mar. No hizo  
 más que morir por diecisiete  
 dólares (él los pensaría 75  
 en pesetas) Requiem aeternam.  
 Y en D'Agostino lo visitan  
 los polacos, los irlandeses,  
 los españoles, los que mueren  
 en el week-end. 80

Requiem aeternam.

Definitivamente todo  
 ha terminado. Su cadáver  
 está tendido en D'Agostino  
 Funeral Home, Haskell. New Jersey. 85  
 Se dirá una misa cantada  
 por su alma.

Me he limitado

a reflejar aquí una esquila  
 de un periódico de New York. 90  
 Objetivamente. Sin vuelo  
 en el verso. Objetivamente.  
 Un español como millones  
 de españoles. No he dicho a nadie  
 que estuve a punto de llorar. 95  
 (p. 347)

On the anecdotal level "Requiem" is about a Spaniard who emigrates  
 to the United States, where he dies in an accident. The poem is an out-  
 standing example of how Hierro expresses a concern for his fellowman  
 without becoming dogmatic or moralizing. The first and eighth stanzas  
 have the tone of a newspaper obituary. The language is cold and imper-  
 sonal: "Ha fallecido," "cadáver," "está tendido," and "se dirá." The

two are filled with objective minutiae, but empty of any human reaction to the man's death. Nevertheless, lines 6 and 85 ("Funeral Home. Haskell. New Jersey.") are short, choppy bursts of English which jar the reader into thinking about the isolation of this dead man from his family and homeland.

In the second stanza the narration is still in the third-person, but the speaker's tone softens, as he begins to fill in the historical background of Manuel del Río. Through a series of contrasting images the speaker establishes the conflicting elements of a Spaniard's life in America. Sun and stone are compared to flowers and electric candles. Natural elements such as the sky, clouds and the submerged lands of ancient Atlantis describe the homeland, while a crane, a clinic, a newspaper obituary and a mass characterize America. The verbs in the stanza indicate movement from Spain to America. Although he makes the parallel to Manuel's life clear, the speaker still uses impersonal language, which creates a more historical than anecdotal perspective. Manuel's experience becomes archetypal for that of Spanish emigrants, and more generally for any person isolated from home, family and friends. The speaker suggests certain social and philosophical attitudes without having to state them directly.

In the third stanza the third-person speaker steps back from the scene, and assumes a philosophical attitude about death. The twice-repeated phrase "Da lo mismo . . ." is the interpretive link which equalizes the images in lines 25 through 29. The stanza ends elliptically, letting the reader ease into the change in narrative voice which occurs in the fourth stanza.

The transition from third to first-person narration is also made easier by dividing the prevalent nine-syllable line into a four-syllable verse, which ends the third stanza, and a five-syllable line, which begins the fourth. The fourth introduces several new narrative techniques, and the change from one voice to another becomes more frequent than before. The first of these changes is the interjection of lines in Latin from the Catholic mass in lines 32, 41, 42, 46, 48, 71, 76 and 81. These phrases are always in italics, and create both a sensation of the mass mentioned in the first stanza and the emotional reaction to death glimpsed at the end of the third stanza.

The second narrative innovation introduced in the fourth stanza is the speaker's direct address to the subject of the poem. By addressing the dead man directly, the speaker reaches out to him, establishing a bond between the two which is based on their common heritage. He continues to contrast Spain to America through images, but he underlines the comparison with a third innovation -- the parenthetical phrase whose coldness recalls the obituary tone of the first stanza: "(funeral de segunda, caja/ que huele a abetos del invierno)" (ll. 36-37). This coldness and cynicism underscore the image of artificial flowers and flowers "yanked" from the garden with which the speaker characterizes Manuel's funeral. The final lines suggest that immigrants in the United States (those with foreign names like Giulio or Manuel) are treated like second-class citizens, and consequently get second-class funerals, even though they pay for first. More generally, I think that Hierro is concerned about the loneliness and ignominy of death for the Twentieth-Century man.

This poem, like "Canto a España" reflects Hierro's strong humanitarian concern for his fellowman. In these poems he develops subjects which are outside of his immediate, introspective world, but which nonetheless are part of his testimonial portrayal of Twentieth-Century Spain. In poems like "Requiem" Hierro creates an intricate interrelationship of form, mood and perspective which reflects the complexity of the subject matter. The criticism he makes of Spain and the United States has their exploitation of the individual in common -- not in political terms, but in humanitarian ways. He characterizes the United States as materialistic and impersonal.

In contrast to Manuel's ignominious death and the general state of moral decline the speaker uses a flashback in the sixth stanza to dramatize the glory of old Spain. Through this flashback he compares Manuel to his ancestors in terms of the kind of funeral each receives. The first-person speaker in the fifth and sixth stanzas is extremely nostalgic and nationalistic, and his emotional involvement limits his perspective.

In the seventh stanza the third-person speaker returns, dwelling on the ordinariness and negativity of Manuel's death. The criticism seems to be directed as much to present-day Spanish mediocrity as it is to American materialism and impersonality. In this stanza the speaker uses both anecdotal and historical details to suggest his social commentary. The focus is on the individual and how he relates to society. The speaker's sympathies lie with the individual, as the bitter tone in this stanza indicates. Nevertheless, he does not make direct statements which would destroy the delicate balance he always seeks between form and content.

By alternating between the historical and reflecting voices, Hierro creates a wider perspective toward the subject matter than just one voice could achieve. He develops the dramatic qualities of Spain's past in contrast to the pitiable plight of a lonely emigrant who dies alone and far away from home. He uses his characterization of Manuel as an archetype, pointing to more general observations about the world around him. As in so many of his poems, Hierro uses the contrast of images and verbs, as well as repeated words and interjected phrases to create a cumulative effect which reaches a climax in the last lines. By ending "Requiem" in the perspective of the first-person witness Hierro elicits a strong reaction from the reader to the speaker as a person. The reader experiences the grief and frustration which stimulated the poet to write. He speaks directly to the reader, thus opening the world of the poem to him, as well as universalizing the themes of man's isolation and his relation to time and death. These themes are developed as much in the narrative perspective as they are in the subject matter. By alternating "objective" and "subjective" viewpoints Hierro facilitates deeper involvement in the poem. Jiménez says about "Requiem:" "El autor no abandona jamás a su protagonista de modo que lo que tenemos siempre delante es el cadáver de Manuel del Río y la historia que su muerte resume. Pero esa historia es también la de un pueblo, y aquí está una de las excelencias del poema: saltar a lo universal a través de muy personales o individuales instancias." (p. 303).

The third-person speaker in Quinta del '42 and Cuanto sé de mí is more "objective" and less emotionally involved than the first-person speaker. In both books this speaker tends to be more concerned with

poetic form than the latter. The verses are more regular than the first-person testimonial poems and the use of a rhyme scheme more frequent. The objective quality of the poems causes the reader to learn more about the speaker's perspective from his language and structural techniques than through any direct revelation of his personality.

"Mambo" appears in "Lo que vi," and is a first-person testimonial poem. As the title of the section implies, most of its poems are observations of the speaker's conflicting external and internal worlds. As Jiménez says, "el poema se ha hecho de un todo indiviso de anécdota y sentido, de realidad circunstancial y razón trascendente." (p. 298). In "Mambo" the first-person speaker participates in the world of the poem, and also reflects on this scene as a flashback.

Desde el pie hacia la cintura,  
la música alza sus pámpanos  
envolventes. Oleadas  
de sombra ascienden, girando,  
hasta los astros azules,  
naranjas, verdes, dorados. 5

Una nebulosa quema  
la sombra. Alcohólicos pájaros  
cruzan palmeras de tela,  
van a morir a mis brazos. 10

Y un humo que no es de hoguera . . .  
Luciérnagas que ha inventado  
el polvo . . .

¿Qué hago yo aquí?  
Estoy, por dentro, llorando. 15  
Como si, ante mí, pasaran,  
mudos, los desenterrados.  
Como si solicitaran  
todos los muertos mi llanto.

En un instante, se limpia 20  
mi corazón del encanto.  
Brazos de mujer, espaldas  
bajo los pálidos astros  
eléctricos, bocas rojas  
de carmines falsos. 25

Amo la vida. Algún día,  
 cuando esté dormido, bajo  
 sabanas frescas de tierra,  
 o en la mar, iré evocando  
 y evocando, repitiendo  
 y repitiendo, instantáneos  
 destellos que eran mi vida;  
 se derramarán los granos  
 diminutos de las horas  
 en mis manos de enterrado.

30

35

Ni un instante ha de perderse  
 siempre que surja sellado  
 por el triple sello (nada  
 es mínimo, ocurre en vano):  
 autenticidad, consciencia,  
 arrepentimiento . . .

40

¿Qué hago  
 yo aquí? Evoco campos de oro  
 del estío, soles trágicos;  
 veredas que van hundiéndose  
 en el olvido; relámpagos,  
 arpegios de vida, sobre  
 los que sonaba mi canto.

45

Pero en todo estaba yo.  
 Mundo fugaz, desplomado  
 ahora en un instante, hundido  
 en el licor de mi vaso.  
 (Pasan, giran las muchachas,  
 fumando o bailando.)

50

El vino recuerdo fue  
 mosto de instante, pisado  
 (autenticidad, etcétera . . .)  
 por los pies iluminados  
 de la verdad. Pues no hay nada  
 mínimo, o que ocurra en vano,  
 sin una razón . . .

55

60

Muchachas,  
 fumando o bailando,  
 giran en alas de músicas  
 podridas. ¿Quién ha inventado,  
 para vosotras, instantes  
 sin futuro y gloria?

65

Falso  
 metal rey, enamorados  
 de nadie, muertas errando  
 por la danza, hijas, amadas

70

por nadie, os estoy soñando  
niñas de trenzas, con lágrimas  
o con risas, ojos claros  
para la ilusión, el cuerpo 75  
para la primaveral  
muerte, el repentino tránsito  
de los elegidos.

Quiénes  
sois, no quiénes parecéis, 80  
las que ante mí vais llorando  
o riendo, no las que  
pasáis ante mí bailando  
y fumando (Mambo) . . .

Qué hago, 85  
de qué noche paternal  
y dolorosa (fumando,  
Mambo), de qué sencillez  
arranca mi mano un látigo,  
empuña una antorcha, corre 90  
tras de vosotras, buscándoos  
en quienes sois, y os arropa  
los delgados cuerpos pálidos,  
os aconseja, os recuerda  
que el tiempo pasa volando 95  
(dicen los viejos, las madres) . . .  
Muchachas, fumando, Mambo.

Autenticidad, etcétera.  
Debo de estar muy borracho  
esta madrugada. O debo 100  
de estar aún poco borracho.  
Renuncio a lo que quisiera  
para vosotras (fumando,  
bailando, Mambo).

(No era 105  
así: Lavabais -- los brazos  
duros al sol -- en un río  
imaginado, o acaso  
verdadero . . .) Pero aquello  
que queráis, venga sellado 110  
por el triple sello autenti-  
cidad, etcétera . . .

Acato  
la vida. Quiero creer  
que nada sucede en vano. 115  
Y persigo una razón  
que os expliqué (fumando,  
bailando, Mambo), razón  
que me dé el descanso.

<p>Cerré los ojos. La música  encadenada al piano.  Negabais vuestro destino  después de cantar el gallo.  Y así noche a noche. Así:  fumando y bailando. Mambo,<sup>3</sup>  Noche a noche así, Dios mío,  recitando vuestro falso  papel, hijas mías, lluvia  de juventud, de verano.  Bailando. Mambo. Riendo.  Mambo. Cantando. Bailando.  Sin un sueño roto que  Valga la pena llorarlo.  (p. 341)</p>	<p>115  120  125  130</p>
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In "Mambo" the speaker is a filter through which the reader sees both the speaker's past and his philosophy of life, as well as the present-day "reality" in which he finds himself. Characteristically Hierro carefully defines the temporal and spatial limits of the poem. In this case it is a nightclub. This nightclub and the women in it become an extended metaphor, representing the negation of his deepest values. Hierro employs contrast in order to bring out the thematic motifs which preoccupy him, and to point to the tension which exists between his ideals and reality. He develops the shallowness of the nightclub girls' lives in comparison to his earlier idealistic visions of life and love, as he compares the frivolity of nightclub life to the sobriety of his past. This use of contrast and two voices in the poem to present the interior and exterior worlds of the speaker fragments the sequence of events. The first voice is that of the reflecting speaker as he looks back at the nightclub experience and writes the poem; the second is that of the experiencing speaker presenting the world of the nightclub. These two voices obviously belong to the same person; they

are merely a technique by which Hierro integrates different temporal moments into the complex experience of the poem.

In Quinta del '42 and Cuanto sé de mí Hierro experiments with more frequent and complicated temporal divisions. He fragments the normal sequence of events and uses flashbacks to compare past and present. There is a more noticeable use of metaphorical and structural contrasts to suggest tension and shifts in the speaker's tone and perspective. In stanzas five, six, fourteen and sixteen of "Mambo" the speaker is writing the poem. He steps back, synthesizing what he feels with what he has seen in the past. In the fifth stanza the speaker projects himself into death in order to create the sensation of objectively looking back and measuring the events of his life. He refers to no specific anecdote, but rather to the "instantáneos/ destellos que eran mi vida" and to the "granos/ diminutos de las horas." Hierro continues to manifest the same preoccupation about time as in his earlier books. Death is an extension of life. By repeating gerunds the speaker creates a sense of flowing motion (" . . . evocando/ y evocando, repitiendo/ y repitiendo . . .").

In stanzas six and seven the speaker continues his philosophical speculation. He goes to the nightclub to erase his distressing recollections of the past. This contemplative speaker realizes the temporary nature of such an escape, in the same way that he realizes that only death will give him peace of mind. The statement "Quiero creer/ que nada sucede en vano." indicates the speaker's desire to understand the order of the universe, and to accept the painful memories as easily as he accepts the joyful ones.

The reflecting speaker defines his perspective and anecdotal limitations in stanza fourteen, where he says, "Debo de estar muy borracho/ esta madrugada. O debo/ de estar aún poco borracho." (ll. 98-100). These lines set the stage for the narrative flashback which occurs in other sections of the poem. The lack of chronological order gives the poem a stream-of-consciousness effect. The reader jumps from past to present, from memories to sights to thoughts.

In stanzas eight, nine, fifteen and seventeen the reflecting speaker gives certain anecdotal details about the evening, whereas earlier he presented only his thoughts and fantasies. In this flashback he slides into a sort of timeless scene, created by using gerunds without their auxiliaries. The effect is to capture the essential qualities of the action or motion without placing any temporal limitations on the action. By doing so he suggests that time, and this scene stretch out in endless repetition. The complex system of flashbacks emphasizes the amorphous mixture of past and present in the speaker's mind.

The phrase "Fumando, bailando, Mambo" is repeated in various forms throughout the poem. It immediately evokes the nightclub's atmosphere, both through the meaning of the words, and the catchy rhythm of the phrase. The speaker uses the phrase to link the flashback reflections of stanzas one, two, three, four, seven, ten, eleven and twelve. This is another way in which the stream-of-consciousness narration is unified. The music and the dancers characterize the nightclub and serve as a catalyst for the speaker's introspective and social commentary.

Most of the anecdotal and social commentary about the "reality" of the poem appears in the experiencing-speaker stanzas (one, four, seven,

ten, eleven, twelve and thirteen). There is little direct narrative intrusion in the first stanza, although the images certainly characterize the speaker. For example, the speaker who describes artificial lights as stars, possibly identifies more closely with nature than with the artificial atmosphere of the nightclub. The language in the second and fourth stanzas underscores this impression. Several images contain natural phenomena which are removed from their normal setting, and are thus warped: "alcohólicos pájaros," "humo que no es de hoguera" and "luciérnagas que ha inventado/ el polvo . . ." They describe the smoky, dimly-lit dance floor in such a way as to point out its artificiality.

The experiencing speaker's participation in this scene becomes apparent in line 10: "van a morir a mis brazos." In the rest of the third stanza the speaker tries to drown his sorrowful memories in the atmosphere of the nightclub. The fourth stanza's tone breaks the nostalgic spell of the third, as the speaker returns to the artificial atmosphere of the nightclub. The phrases "astros eléctricos" and "bocas rojas de carmines falsos" indicate a more critical attitude than in the first stanza when the speaker referred to "astros azules."

The repetition of the question "¿Qué hago/ yo aquí," in the third and seventh stanzas signals a transition from the exterior world of the nightclub to the speaker's intimate thoughts. The rest of each stanza is a nostalgic, idealist's vision which jars with what he faces in the nightclub.

In stanzas ten through fourteen the speaker focuses on the women at the club, whom he has characterized throughout the poem by the phrase, "Muchachas, fumando, bailando." Now he begins to address the girls

directly, and to describe them through contrasts. In lines 67 through 71 he calls them "enamoradas de nadie," "muertas," "amadas por nadie." In contrast, lines 71 through 77 reflect the speaker's fantasies about the girls as "niñas de trenzas" with "ojos claros para la ilusión." In "Mambo" the girls symbolize the degeneracy and shallowness of the world in which the speaker presently participates. The word "authenticity" is repeated several times. It is the focal point of the contrast developed in these stanzas. He seems to be asking himself what is real -- the nightclub's artificial atmosphere or the hidden fantasies and sorrows which comprise his inner world. The shallowness of the nightclub life both attracts him, as an escape from his painful memories, and repels him as a totally worthless, meaningless world. The speaker's experiencing and reflecting moments intertwine to create an extended metaphor which embodies the contradictions which Hierro feels within himself. Once again he suggests no resolution to the conflicting elements of his inner and outer worlds. By focusing on the characterization of the girls, and questioning the authenticity of the nightclub atmosphere, he universalizes his own situation and encourages the reader to relate Hierro's perspective and situation to his own.

The first-person experiencing and reflecting speaker in poems like "Mambo" relates directly to his world, presenting it in such a way as to create tensions which he leaves unresolved. The reader is drawn into the world of the poem as he tries to understand the conflicting elements of the speaker's perspective and relate them to his own. In Libro de las alucinaciones one finds a similar manipulation of structure and

perspective to create a complex vision of conflicting values in such poems as "Yepes Cocktail" (p. 426).

The relationship between subject, form and perspective seen in "Mambo" is evidence of Hierro's increasing dominance of poetic experience and expression. His experimentation with all the stylistic elements of a poem gives him the means to explore the intangible and mysterious relationship of thoughts and experience.

"Sinfonieta a un hombre llamado Beethoven" (p. 360) is one of Hierro's most complex and innovative poems in terms of narrative perspective and form. It focuses on music (and poetry by implication) from the angles of musical form, content and composer or artist. Throughout Hierro's poetry music has been a frequent image. Its influence is also seen in the rhythmic verses whose cadence creates a melodic impression. Hierro's view of poetry and music as temporal arts is shared by a well-known German musicologist, Victor Zuckerkandl, as I pointed out in Chapter One. Both see poetry and music as temporal arts. In "Sinfonieta" Hierro combines the philosophical and technical qualities which music and poetry share to develop the essential nature of a great innovative composer.

Structurally the poem is divided into five sections whose titles are those of symphonic movements: "Allegro," "Adagio," "Largo," "Scherzo" and "Allegro final." These sections do not directly correspond to any of Beethoven's symphonies. It does not seem so important to equate the structure of this poem to one of his symphonies as it is to understand the symphonic structure of the poem itself. Nevertheless, there are thematic and stylistic similarities to several of his symphonies --

most notably the "Eroica" and the Ninth Symphonies. In each of the sections there is a different narrative voice and different verse forms which Hierro adapts to the characteristics of that musical movement. For example, the first section, "Allegro," is predominantly of nine-syllable lines. The five stanzas vary both in number of lines and in verse length. The longer verses, such as those of eleven, fifteen or twenty-one syllables, often contain rhythmic groups of three to create a flowing, waltz-like cadence. The visually unordered lines have an intrinsically rhythmic order; "en todas aquellas esfinges que estaban barriendo de sobre la tierra/ Dios sabe qué vientos, qué siglos, qué rayos maléficos." (11. 15-16).

The first section presents Beethoven as "melancólico, solitario,/ enamorado, soñador" (11. 2-3). The contemporaries who influenced him, such as Schiller, Goethe and Bonaparte, are woven into his characterization. The first stanza presents him as an old man, while subsequent stanzas return him to his youth. The speaker mentions Schiller in the third and last stanzas of the section in which he indicates a temporal lapse,

Cuando la boca de amapolas,  
cuando la mano primavera  
lo besaba, lo acariciaba,  
Schiller, hermoso y juvenil,  
.....  
le iluminaba el corazón.  
.....  
..... (Schiller  
había muerto hacia tiempo.)  
(11. 17-35)

The last two lines return the reader in circular fashion to the first stanza where Beethoven is an old man. The third-person speaker uses an historical tone which is in keeping with the overview he presents of

Beethoven's life.

The second section ("Adagio") is entirely composed of nine-syllable, polyrhythmic verses, most of which have the same omniscient, third-person speaker as the first section. This speaker repeats the images of silence and music in several places, suggesting the dichotomy of Beethoven's deafness and the music he creates.

Los rayos negros acarician  
la calavera de la música.  
Desde el silencio el hombre asciende  
hasta su trono . . .  
(11. 5-8)

The last three stanzas of the section contain direct comments to Beethoven, while maintaining their omniscient tone:

Por lo negro fuiste olvidando  
las flautas de la primavera,  
y te volvías Uno y Todo,  
sonora gruta del enigma  
cetro de mágicos destellos.  
(11. 31-35)

The speaker appears to be eulogizing a Hero, as Beethoven does in the second movement of the "Eroica:" "Dueño y señor, ya reinas, Hombre/ en el centro del Universo . . ." (11. 40-41). At the same time he suggests the finality and tragedy of his death in the last lines: "Héroe en la noche, derribado/ sobre lo helado de un escudo." (11. 52-53).

The third section ("Largo") consists of six stanzas of fourteen-syllable lines. The first line is a variation of the last two lines of the "Adagio" section: "Muerto en la noche sobre lo helado del escudo." (1. 1). The fourteen-syllable lines give the section a slow, dignified, measured pace which is in keeping with the section's title. The speaker reiterates his characterization of Beethoven by relating the man to the music he created. The theme of time is more apparent than before: "La luz que avideciste para ceñir la frente/ de los hombres, no pudo

atravesar el muro que separa lo eterno del tiempo; . . . Música que era suma del tiempo." (ll. 45-46; 51-52). Through these metaphorical descriptions of time and music the speaker creates the impression that while the man Beethoven could not overcome time's limitations, his music does: ". . . grave música inalcanzable, en manos/ de Dios, que estaba libre del círculo del tiempo." (ll. 52-53).

The "Scherzo" section is a series of nine tercets of five and eleven-syllable lines with an assonant rhyme scheme of aba; cdc; efe, etc. The alternation of five and eleven-syllable lines, all of which have a first-syllable stress, gives the section a faster pace than the previous ones. It is an extended metaphor, addressed directly to the subject of melancholy, which has often appeared in the first three sections, and develops it along a different line. In this section the speaker presents Beethoven thinking to himself about one of the overwhelming elements of his life.

The last section ("Allegro final") returns to the predominant nine-syllable line, with some variation in the last three stanzas. The speaker in this section is the experiencing speaker, addressing the "sombras transidas de nostalgia," which are probably the contemporaries of Beethoven mentioned in the first section -- Goethe, Schiller, Bonaparte and Weimar. The final section gives the anecdotal background of the poem, by suggesting that statues of these men in Viena stimulated his thoughts about Beethoven: "Estabais aquí, y achechabais detrás del silencio, / ardientes ajenos, cubiertos los rostros de máscaras" (ll. 63-64). By returning to the subject of the first section from a different perspective the poet creates a circular effect, at the same time that he

dramatizes the limitations of individual points of view. By using different voices in the various sections he creates a complex vision of Beethoven and the interrelationship of poetry and music. The poet is the governing, omniscient force outside of the world of the poem who organizes its sections. He uses contrasting form, mood and perspective in much the same way that a composer does in a symphony. In the first section he is a third-person witness who directs himself to the reader; in the second he is a third-person witness who speaks directly to Beethoven in a eulogistic tone; in the third section he is a witness who focuses on the relationship between Beethoven and his music; in the fourth he lets Beethoven himself develop the already-introduced theme of melancholy; in the final section the experiencing speaker establishes the present-day anecdotal reality of the poem. The poem reaches a climax in the fourth section. In the fifth the speaker steps back from the scene and puts it into the present, suggesting a link between Beethoven and Hierro.

It is natural that Hierro would feel kinship to Beethoven, the romantic composer who was able to incorporate a wide range of themes and complexity of structure into the neoclassic forms from which his work evolved. Hierro's preoccupation with concise, precise expression, inherited from the generation of '27, is intertwined with his intense feelings about time, death and the need to create something which will transcend the limitations of time and death. This poem reflects Hierro's movement toward the alucinación in which the intermingling of subject and form finds its best expression.

Both Quinta del '42 and Cuanto sé de mí have a more complex structure and a wider variety of subject matter than Con las piedras, con el viento. Hierro seems to combine his earlier introspective world with broader social concerns. While the earlier books deal with universal themes such as love, time and death, there is usually a direct connection between the speaker and the themes. In Quinta del '42 Hierro begins to look at subjects outside of his immediate world, as witnessed in "Canto a España" and "Retrato de un desconocido." In Cuanto sé de mí there is an increasing tendency to relate the external world to Hierro's thoughts, feelings and memories. The conflict which has always been evident between these two worlds finds its expression in the dramatic tension which conflicting perspectives and events create. There is also a greater interest in the perfection of form, to which the large number of sonnets and the experimentation with fragmented perspective and sequence of events testify. Throughout both books Hierro continues to write both testimonial and allegorical poems. These two categories seem to include nearly all of his poems both in the books already analyzed and in the final book, Libro de las alucinaciones, where the two become incorporated into the alucinación.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> José Olivio Jiménez, Cinco poetas del tiempo, 2nd ed. (Madrid: Insula, 1972), pp. 258-59.

<sup>2</sup> Cuanto sé de mí, p. 275. All subsequent references to poems will be from this 1974 edition. The pages will be indicated in parentheses at the end of the cited material.

<sup>3</sup> Tomás Navarro Tomás, Métrica española, 3rd ed. (Madrid: Guadarrama, 1972), p. 538.

<sup>4</sup> Miguel de Unamuno, Rosario de los sonetos (Madrid: Imprenta española, n.d.). See sonnets CXIII and CXX.

<sup>5</sup> Douglass Marcel Rogers, "A Study of the Poetry of José Hierro as a Representative Fusion of Major Trends of Contemporary Spanish Poetry," Diss. University of Wisconsin, 1964, pp. 283-84.

## Chapter Five

Hierro published Libro de las alucinaciones in 1964. José Olivio Jiménez calls this book a precursor of the experimental poetry of the next decade: "Libro de las alucinaciones venía a significar, de muy rotunda y oportuna manera, una apertura de la estructuración poemática y de la materia verbal a los valores y posibilidades líricas del irracionalismo en una dirección hacia donde muy pronto . . . habría de encauzarse la actividad poética más dinámica de la década."<sup>1</sup> The book is an innovative expansion of both the subject matter and its expression found in his earlier works. He combines the introspective focus of Tierra sin nosotros, Alegría and Con las piedras, con el viento with the historical and social awareness found in Quinta del '42 and Cuanto sé de mí to express more completely his complex vision of life. In Libro de las alucinaciones one senses the unresolved tension of a man at odds with his surroundings and himself. The poems frequently embody a dramatic tension which arises out of the jarring contrast between the speaker's inner and outer worlds. Nevertheless, the speaker maintains greater emotional detachment than in his earlier books, and his ironic tone suggests that he sees no resolution to the conflict he feels between his ideals and reality.

In the alucinaciones Hierro maintains a delicate balance between form, ideas and perspective. He expresses his despair about Twentieth-Century life through dramatic tension, paradox and irony, which he creates by means of intricate metaphorical contrasts, shifts in perspective and the fragmentation of sequences of events. He continues to integrate the form of the poem with the ideas he expressed through such stylistic elements as meter, rhyme, rhythm, sound patterns and enjambment. He freely mixes qualities from his earlier testimonial and allegorical poems, so that these two categories in fact are incorporated into the alucinación. For example, the first-person speaker of the earlier testimonial poems, who is directly involved in the world of the poems, here uses dialogue, allegory and parody to suggest the abstract themes indirectly. Libro de las alucinaciones goes beyond any of Hierro's earlier books in its vision and expression. The alucinación which has sporadically appeared before is refined, and its focus is more expansive than in any of his earlier books. The speaker creates a complex world through temporal fragmentation, visionary language and the juxtaposition of conflicting ideas.

The book is divided into three sections: "La noche," "Atalaya" and "Un es cansado." In "La noche" the poems are predominantly allegorical. There is little realistic anecdote, but one does find a narrative quality which is similar to earlier testimonial poems. "Atalaya" is filled with poems about great artists or other figures whose work has endured the passage of time. There are also some poems about contemporary Spanish life. They tell a complex story or create a kind of dramatic exchange through the use of dialogue. In this section the speaker juxtaposes and integrates conflicting ideas and images to develop paradoxical and ironic

overviews. These poems are neither exclusively testimonial nor as allegorical as those of the first section. In "Un es cansado" the testimonial qualities are much more evident than in the first two sections. The poems have an intimate, introspective focus reminiscent of Hierro's early testimonial verse, but the speaker is more worldly than before, and maintains a greater emotional distance from his subject matter. There is more realistic anecdote and a more accesible, logical storyline than in the first two sections, but the innovative use of language, the experimentation with structure and the ironic speaker are characteristic of the poems of all three sections.

"Acelerando" is a poem from "Un es cansado" which has a first-person speaker. It has a noticeable testimonial quality, not only in the speaker, but also in the explicit, intimate subject matter. The title, a single gerund, creates an anticipatory sensation of increasing motion. The speaker is replaying his life at an accelerated speed, focusing only on single moments, creating a time-capsule effect.

Aquí, en este momento, termina todo,  
 se detiene la vida. Han florecido luces amarillas  
 a nuestros pies, no sé si estrellas. Silenciosa  
 cae la lluvia sobre el amor, sobre el remordimiento. 5  
 Nos besamos en carne viva. Bendita lluvia  
 en la noche, jadeando en la hierba,  
 trayendo en hilos aroma de las nubes,  
 poniendo en nuestra carne su dentadura fresca.  
 Y el mar sonaba. Tal vez fuera su espectro.  
 Porque eran miles de kilómetros 10  
 los que nos separaban de las olas.  
 Y lo peor: miles de días pasados y futuros nos separaban.  
 Descendían en la sombra las escaleras.  
 Dios sabe a dónde conducían. Qué más daba. "Ya es hora  
 -- dije yo --, ya es hora de volver a tu casa." 15  
 Ya es hora. En el portal, "Espera," me dijo. Regresó  
 vestida de otro modo, con flores en el pelo.  
 Nos esperaban en la iglesia. "Mujer te doy." Bajamos  
 las gradas del altar. El armonio sonaba.  
 Y un violín que rizaba su melodía empalagosa. 20



The poem is framed by verses which emphasize the "here and now." At the beginning of the poem the speaker stops time to dwell on a moment of love ("Aquí, en este momento, termina todo, / se detiene la vida . . ." (ll. 1-2) ). In the last lines he mocks his earlier sentimentality (" . . . Qué ridículo todo: este momento detenido . . ." (l. 49) ). The speaker has been trying to relive the joy and passion of early love. The ubi sunt motif is apparent in the repeated question "Dónde, dónde la noche aquella, la de ayer . . . Dónde la noche, dónde el mar azul, las hojas de lluvia . . . Dónde, dónde la noche aquella, / dónde el mar . . ." (ll. 24, 34, 48-49). The repetition of the question has a cumulative effect, dramatizing the passage of time and the speaker's desire to recapture the past.

There are two ways in which the speaker presents the ideas about time and love. The first is by means of a series of kisses. In lines 2 through 8 the anecdotal references create an atmosphere of sensual awareness in which sights, touch, smells and sounds are vivid. The sentence "Nos besamos en carne viva," suggests the vitality and passion of youth. In line 9 the speaker switches from present to past, while still describing the same scene. This gently removes both speaker and reader from the vivid moment just described and suggests that the speaker has been trying to recapture that time and place in his mind. The kiss around which the first scene centered, and the youthful passion it represented have faded into the past.

The next mention of a kiss occurs in lines 28 through 31; ". . . Y yo puse mis labios / una vez más en la mejilla de ella. Besé hondamente. / Los gusanos labraron tercamente su piel. Al retirarme / lo vi. Qué

importa, corazón . . ." The macabre image of the worms graphically pictures the passage of time in a condensed form. It is not a realistic description, but rather a metaphorical transformation of abstract time into a concrete image. The speaker's reaction is enigmatic. It is an implied question; its answer must be taken from the images which surround it.

The final reference to a kiss appears in lines 38 through 40: "Yo besé/ la frente de ella, los ojos con arrugas/ cada vez más profundas." The tone and language of this passage are more subdued than before. The face is an image whose changing appearance indicates the passage of time. In this case it is immediately followed by one of the "Dónde . . ." questions, returning one's attention to the poem's first scene. The repetition of the kiss is an indicator of time's passage and the evolution of the speaker's perspective towards this.

The speaker also dramatizes the passage of time through the use of dialogue. In lines 14 and 15 the dialogue breaks the spell of the scene and creates a sense of immediacy and motion: " 'Ya es hora/ -- dije yo --, ya es hora de volver a tu casa.' " The continuation of the dialogue leads the reader into the first noticeable time lapse: "Regresó vestida de otro modo, con flores en el pelo./ Nos esperaban en la iglesia. 'Mujer te doy.' " (11. 16-18). The speaker focuses only on the most important elements of life, and these are dramatized by the dialogue, which emphasizes their immediacy and importance to the speaker.

In lines 24 through 25 the "Dónde . . ." question indicates the next time lapse. As in the first example the speaker indicates motion and uses the image of the door to suggest the passage of time. The

transition is from youth to middle age, from wedding to children. Whereas in the wedding scene his wife wore flowers in her hair, in this scene the flower image indicates their aging: "El cáliz de una flor/ gris que giraba en torno vertiginosa." (ll. 32-33). The speaker goes from the anecdotal scene of dancing to a metaphorical level in which the speaker is the immobile center of a flower which whirls through time. He suggests that it is time which propels one through life. The suggestion of whirling motion is again created in the last lines of the poem ("este disco que gira y gira en el silencio . . .").

The final temporal jump begins with an exchange between children and parents in line 37. In the verses which follow the sleepy-eyed children become young adults leaving home. The speaker's vision of the cyclic nature of human life becomes clear through these temporal condensations and through the flower and music images. He uses the same language to describe his children as he earlier used to describe himself in young adulthood: "con su amor,/ con sus noches de estrellas, con sus mares azules,/ con sus remordimientos, con sus cuchillos de buscar pureza bajo la carne." (ll. 45-48). Only the final phrase contains a new image not presented in the first lines of the poem. These verses reiterate what the temporal condensations and the imagery progressions have suggested — that one must look for meaning in life beyond the ever-changing appearances of the physical world. The speaker suggests that the flesh ages and dies as time passes, but that there are certain abiding universals, such as love, which remain constant. Through a very concrete, personal poem Hierro reiterates one of the central thematic paradoxes of his work -- the cyclic nature of the universe, and the individual's more immediate





héroes ecuestres del Renacimiento . . .  
 Era otra cosa el hombre que yo vi.  
 Nació en alguna aldea del interior de España.  
 La piel endurecida, impasibles los ojos  
 que nada vieron nunca si no fue la llanura  
 circundada de encinas, donde nació y vivió. 60

(Donde vivió esperando  
 su tren de muerte, como yo ahora espero,  
 mientras nerviosamente escribo estos recuerdos,  
 al tren que ha de llegar a Medina del Campo  
 casi al amanecer. Estos sucesos  
 ocurrieron lejos de aquí, y en mí vivían  
 solicitando forma, para no ser pura nostalgia.  
 Sólo esta noche pude hallarles la palabra.) 65

Allí vivió veinte años. Un día, le hizo hombre  
 la guerra: le dio fe, lejanías y llamas. 70  
 Llegó hasta el mar; el mar le hizo sentirse libre;  
 mojó en el mar su cuerpo,  
 conquistó tierras, hizo prisioneros,  
 bebió vino de muerte, sintió tristeza y sintió ira;  
 tal vez fuera marcado por la metralla. Estuvo vivo  
 como nunca lo estuvo ni volvería a estarlo. 75  
 Dio razón y entusiasmo a su vida:  
 se la jugó con alegría a una carta tapada.  
 Luego, volvió a su pueblo a ensartar días y cosechas,  
 a dorar con melancolías 80  
 su estatua coronada de olas.

Y he aquí que al cabo de los años  
 llega otra vez junto al mar luminoso.  
 Donde dejó entusiasmo, vida y fe, 85  
 ha encontrado el silencio,  
 el mismo de las eras de su aldea,  
 más ya sin esperanza.  
 Ha desfilado entre banderas, entre cánticos;  
 resucitaron las palabras en la garganta joven; 90  
 ha bebido el vino de antaño  
 y paseado su embriaguez gloriosa.  
 Desde las doce a la una y media  
 ha durado el desfile de estos supervivientes,  
 nostálgicos representantes 95  
 de un drama, escrito hace quién sabe cuántos años.  
 Después de la comida y los discursos  
 cayó el telón. Y oyó el silencio de los espectadores.  
 Y el silencio del mar. Y el de su vida.  
 Dijeron: "A las nueve al autobús; 100  
 hay que llegar temprano a casa."  
 Oyó el silencio de su vida.

Desconocido entre desconocidos,  
 anduvo por las calles, sin rumbo. Se sentó  
 enfrente de las olas. Volvió el naípe 105  
 y no había figura pintada en él. Y oyó el silencio,

¿Comprendéis? El nordeste cesa al atardecer. 3  
 Ya ni siquiera hace temblar la ropa de este hombre.  
 No le deja en la mano el aroma del arma  
 con que mató a la muerte hace ya tiempo. 110  
 Van los muchachos por su lado, destruyen  
 la muerte con la música, como ayer con la pólvora.  
 Destruyen con la música la vida.  
 Con la música crean un inmenso silencio.  
 (p. 437)

In "El héroe" the speaker alternates between present and past tenses. He uses the present to address the reader directly, as in stanzas six and ten, thereby drawing the reader into the poem as a fellow observer. He also speaks in the present tense in the third and seventh stanzas when he describes the stimulus to write the poem: "No es frecuente que sea así, pero sucede, como ahora:/ de súbito se enciende mar y música;/ estallan tiempo, espacio, fuera y dentro;" (ll. 26-28). More concretely in lines 62 and 63 he suggests that he is writing the poem while waiting for a train.

The major part of the poem, however, is his memory of a past encounter with an old man who had died while sitting on a bench waiting for a train. Before introducing the hero, the speaker creates a vivid setting through contrasts between music and silence, life and death, present and past. These introductory lines prepare the reader for the hero's death, but not for the element of surprise connected with it. The first stanza is like the opening panoramic shot of a movie, gradually focusing closer and closer to the detail of the scene. The speaker's first word ("Of") emphasizes sensorial perception, and links the natural music of the ocean's waves to that contrived by man, in terms of the

speaker's perception of and identification with rhythm and music as they reflect the eternal and the temporal levels of life. He mentions several of the West's best musicians from the past -- Bach, Schumann, Brahms, Debussy -- as well as some more contemporary composers and musicians -- Boulez, Berio, Stockhausen, Luis de Pablo. To these figures he contrasts the popular music and dances of the day, calling them "Músicas muertas." In the last lines of the stanza he relates his own poetry to music, emphasizing its fleeting temporality.

In the second stanza the speaker turns his verbal camera on the hero. The adjectives "indiferente" and "anacrónico" set this figure outside of the first stanza's temporality. He is sitting on a stone bench; stone is used to indicate death in several places in Libro de las alucinaciones, the most notable being "Mundo de piedra," in which the subject's own vision of everything turned to stone indicates that he has died. This hero is anonymous and indifferent. His indifference alienates him from his own "pecho cubierto de medallas y nobles cintajos, / maravillas de seda y cobre." (ll. 18-19). Even though there are several clues to the hero's death, they could all be attributed to senility or to sleep. Only in retrospect does the reader come to realize that the hero was dead from the very beginning of the poem. The hero's anonymity in life and death is an ironic commentary on the arbitrary and transitory nature of fame. This old man could be anyone; the details of his life could parallel those of veterans from any number of wars, yet his experiences in the war became the focal point of his life. This is the paradox of man's limited understanding and perception of life.

The speaker's own vitality in the third and fourth stanzas by contrast

augments the hero's isolation from the world of the living, while suggesting a broader vision of life. Words like "armonía," "huracán irresistible," "fuego" and "felicidad" sharply contrast the speaker to this "descorazonadora criatura, / carcomiendo la plenitud," (ll. 36-37). In the fourth stanza the speaker contrasts the hero's lifeless silence to the music around him. Music throughout the first stanzas has been descriptive of life and man's ability to integrate temporal and eternal realities into creative expression. By repeating "silencio" three times in lines 39 through 42 the speaker intensifies the reader's identification of the hero with death.

Still the speaker does not confirm the hero's death; instead, in stanzas five through eight he gives a synopsis of the hero's life, characterizing the humbleness and simplicity of rural Spanish villages. In the sixth stanza the speaker contrasts the archetypal image of the noble Greek and Renaissance heroes to this contemporary peasant-turned-war-hero. The hero's eyes and skin suggest his limited understanding and perceptions of life. "La piel endurecida, impasibles los ojos / que nada vieron nunca si no fue la llanura / circundada de encinas, donde nació y vivió." (ll. 59-61). These stanzas have a heavily ironic tone. This "hero" is not the glorious warrior of the past, but a peasant caught up by chance in his country's civil war; it is the war which brings him to life ("Un día le hizo hombre la guerra . . . / bebió vino de muerte . . . / Estuvo vivo como nunca lo estuvo ni volvería a estarlo." (ll. 70-77). The war, whose reckless slaughter of human lives immediately suggests death, and the sea, the eternal symbol of life, are the two conflicting images with which the

speaker characterizes the hero. It is paradoxically to the sea that he returns to die. (ll. 84-88).

In the ninth stanza the speaker uses several images to metaphorically announce the hero's death. The first is the imaginary drama, whose players are the nostalgic figures of his past, and whose final curtain suggests death. The second is the already established image of silence: "Y oyó el silencio de los espectadores./ Y el silencio del mar. Y el de su vida." (ll. 98-99). It is not the silence of the images, but the inability of the old man to perceive them which indicates his death. Finally the speaker says, "Volvió el naípe/ y no había figura pintada en él. Y oyó el silencio." (ll. 105-106).

If by chance the reader has not understood these allusions to death, the speaker extends them in the final stanza, which begins "¿Comprendéis?" The images of sound and silence, of life and death, are interwoven as the stark contrasts which have hitherto suggested the hero's death now confirm it. The realization that the hero has been dead from the beginning of the poem is an ironic climax to the poem's drama. Both the tone and the subject matter are somber. The ideas are expressed through images which by the end of the poem are laden with the feeling of tragedy. The hero is nameless; like Manuel del Río he is an archetypal representative of Hierro's Spain. Hierro's deep concern with human potential and values, which has led critics to label him a "social" poet, is readily apparent in this poem. Nevertheless the poem is neither maudlin nor dogmatic. The metaphorical presentation of the themes of life, death and time has the same narrative or epic quality which characterizes many of the alucinaciones. After setting the scene in the first stanza, the speaker begins

a dramatization of the hero and his world which reaches a climax in the last stanza. The reader is drawn into the experience of the poem as the synthesizer of the speaker's and the hero's perspectives.

Many of the poems in Libro de las alucinaciones embody a dramatic tension created by the jarring contrast between the speaker's inner and outer worlds. They reflect the uneasiness of a man who has not realized a harmonious union between his ideals and the reality which surrounds him. The speaker's ironic and detached acceptance of this tension is one of the unifying elements of the book.

In "Yepes Cocktail" Hierro dramatizes these preoccupations in a highly ironic fantasy whose central character is Juan de Yepes (San Juan de la Cruz). The possibility of the mystic poet attending a Twentieth-Century cocktail party is at once delightful and devastating. Hierro allows for both reactions, and in fact encourages them. The humor of the situation alleviates the thematic tension.

Juan de la Cruz, dime si merecía  
la pena descolgarte, por la noche,  
de tu prisión al Tajo, ser herido  
por las palabras y las disciplinas,  
soportar corazones, bocas, ojos  
rigurosos, beber the soledad

5

-- ¿Otro whisky?

La pelirroja  
 -- caderas anchas, ojos verdes --  
 ofrece ginebra a un amigo.  
 Hombros y pechos le palpitan  
 en el reír. ¡Oh llama de amor viva,  
que dulcemente hieres! . . .

10

Junto al embajador de China,  
 detrás de la cantante sueca,  
 del agregado militar  
 de Estados Unidos de América,  
 Juan de la Cruz bebe un licor  
 de luz de miel . . .

15

(Dime si merecía  
la pena, Juan de Yepes, vadear  
noches, llagas, olvidos, hielos, hierros,  
adentrar en la nada el cuerpo, hacer  
que de él nacieran las palabras vivas,  
en silencio y tristeza, Juan de Yepes . . . 25  
Amor, llama, palabras: poesía,  
tiempo abolido . . . Di si merecía  
la pena para esto . . .)

El aplaudido  
autor con el puro del éxito, 30  
la amiguita del productor  
velando su pudor de nylon,  
las mejillas que se aproximan  
femeninamente: "Mi rouge  
mancha, preciosa . . ." (Mancha amor 35  
cuando en las bocas no hay amor.)

(Juan de la Cruz, dime si merecía  
la pena padecer con fuego y sombra,  
beber los zumos de la pesadumbre,  
batir la carne contra el yunque, Juan 40  
de Yepes, para esto . . . Vagabundo  
por el amor, y huérfano de amor . . .)  
(p. 426)

"Yepes Cocktail" is an allegorical parody. It is more complex than the earlier allegories, which were usually an extended metaphor whose abstract meaning was developed through a central, sensorial or personified image. The central focus in this poem is the dichotomy between inner and outer "realities" whose values are incompatible. There is a more comfortable balance between the speaker's perspectives in this poem than in Con las piedras, con el viento. There is also a more relaxed and expansive structure than in many of the allegorical sonnets in Cuanto sé de mí. The implications of the parody are more subtle than before, partly because of the dramatic sense of immediacy in the poem and partly because of its juxtaposition of two quite different worlds, each of which represents a distinct way of life.

There are two opposing personalities in the poem — San Juan de la Cruz and the cocktail-party crowd, which as a group is an archetypal parody of superficiality and lack of vision. The latter group of nameless voices and faces functions as one character, while San Juan is the archetype of intense spiritual development and expression. The cocktail party is a stylized parody which links these two worlds. There are three images whose repetition and variations best exemplify the poem's structural unity -- the eyes, the mouth and the heart. Each is developed by association. The contrast of the literal and symbolic interpretations of these images is the key to the parody.

The three images are introduced in the first stanza, in which the speaker directly addresses San Juan de la Cruz in an interior monologue: "Juan de la Cruz, dime si merecía/ . . ./ soportar corazones, bocas, ojos/ rigurosos, beber la soledad." (ll. 1, 5-6). In this stanza, as in the parenthetical fourth and sixth stanzas, the language and details are reminiscent of Juan de la Cruz's life and his poetry. For him the eyes and heart perceive and reflect the "llama de amor viva;" thus, the image of eyes is associated with the contrasting elements of "fuego y sombra," "noche" and "llama," also metaphorical expressions of the mystical experiences of San Juan.

The heart's "amor viva" reflects not earthly passion, but spiritual bliss; love is not a superficial human exchange, but rather the reason for the disciplined elimination of meaningless habits and activities from one's life. The speaker captures this best in the fourth and sixth stanzas by a series of words in whose meanings intermingle the metaphorical and abstract expressions of the mystic's life. There is no anecdotal

detail; its absence expresses his desire to "adentrar en la nada el cuerpo," to eliminate all the meaningless trivia from his life. In these sections there are a number of infinitives ("descolgarte," "ser herido," "soportar," "vadear," "adentrar," "padecer," and "batir") which impersonally suggest this quest for enlightenment through suffering.

In the first, fourth and sixth stanzas the mouth is a double image. It is the means of poetic and mystic expression: "Hacer que de él [el cuerpo] nacieran las palabras vivas,/ . . ./ Amor, llama, palabras: poesía,/ tiempo abolido . . ." (ll. 23-24, 26-27). In this sense it represents a goal which Hierro has expressed throughout his poetry -- to be able to step outside of time and capture in words those elusive universal truths which will bring him enlightenment and peace of mind. He is describing here the creative process through which man may learn to overcome the limitations of his own perspective. On the other hand, the mouth is the image which suggests the absorption of enlightenment through suffering and solitude: "beber los zumos de la pesadumbre," "beber la soledad," "Juan de la Cruz bebe un licor/ de luz de miel . . ." (ll. 39, 6, 19).

"Licor" is the image around which the two worlds most immediately pivot. There is a play on words which pushes the reader abruptly into the world of the cocktail party. While Juan de la Cruz is drinking solitude and honeyed light, the rest of the party drinks whisky and gin. The metaphors of mystical enlightenment are contrasted to alcohol, the favorite contemporary deadener of sensitivity and perception. The reader must synthesize these images and draw his own conclusions about their meaning. "¿Otro whisky?" is the bridge between the inner world of the

speaker and the outer world of his immediate surroundings, While the first, fourth and sixth stanzas are totally introspective and pensive, the second, third and fifth stanzas are like a movie camera casually scanning the people at the party.

In the second stanza the speaker begins his parody by contrasting the description of the "pelirroja/ -- caderas anchas, ojos verdes --" to his version of the verse from "Llama de amor viva." The eyes indicate sensuality, rather than spiritual depth, as before. There is no heartfelt emotion, only superficial gaity ("Hombros y pechos le palpitan/ en el reír."). In the third stanza there is a similar structure -- the buildup of the pompous and artificial atmosphere, which is abruptly contrasted to the serene image of San Juan. There are no verbs in the first four lines of this stanza; the scene is frozen in time. The only action is that of the mystic drinking his "licor de luz de miel." Finally, in the fifth stanza the parody reaches its climax. The phrases "El aplaudido/ autor con su puro de éxito," and "la amiguita del productor/ velando su pudor de nylon" blast the reader with their mocking tone. The scene is devoid of any deep or meaningful human exchange. The woman is totally dehumanized. Her rouged cheeks are the substitute for her personality. Her vapid statement is the springboard for the speaker's bitter and ironic judgment of this scene: "(Mancha amor/ cuando en las bocas no hay amor.)" (ll. 35-36).

The eyes, the heart and the mouth contain the core of the poem's contradictory elements. The tension created by these contradictions is increased by alternating the introspective and the extrospective stanzas. In stanzas one, four and six the speaker uses the traditional eleven-

syllable line, sometimes coupled with a seven-syllable line, which San Juan de la Cruz used in "La noche oscura" and "Llama de amor viva;" in the remaining stanzas the speaker chooses the nine-syllable polyrhythmic line used infrequently until the modernists began to experiment with it.<sup>3</sup>

The use of partial lines makes the transition between these two meters more fluid (ll. 7-8; 28-29). Italics and parentheses set apart the speaker's inner monologue from the cocktail scene. The speaker's presence in the poem is most directly conveyed through the repeated phrase "Dime si merecía . . ." (ll. 1, 20, 37), but his perspective is also apparent in the ironic parenthetical commentary at the end of the fifth stanza: "(Mancha amor/ cuando en las bocas no hay amor.)" (ll. 35-36).

The juxtaposition of inner and outer worlds is similar to "Mambo" (p. 336) and "Sinfonietta para un hombre llamado Beethoven" (p. 360). As in the latter of the two, this speaker identifies with a creative artist whose art has transcended the passage of time and the limitations of human perception. In the present poem one also sees the influence of San Juan's use of allegory to explain his intangible mystical experiences in concrete language, just as the speaker in "Sinfonietta" divides the poem into symphony movements. Both poems pay tribute to the men they portray in their form and content.

"Yepes Cocktail" is a highly stylized parody through which one sees the tension which results from the conflict between the speaker's ideal spiritual world and his physical reality. By alternating between these two exaggerated archetypal worlds the speaker creates a sensation of

restless movement which reflects his state of mind. The central focus of the poem is the speaker's characterization of a Twentieth-Century man surrounded by mediocrity, superficiality and a lack of transcendent values such as love. It is the speaker who organizes the inventive presentation of his conflicting thoughts and observations. By means of word plays, repeated images and distinctive narrative styles he creates an alucinación which makes the reader laugh at the same time that he contemplates the serious implications of the parody. This poem exemplifies the precision and craftsmanship which Hierro has displayed throughout his work. The close relationship between the form and the content creates a complex poetic experience in which speaker, language and ideas are balanced.

"Alucinación submarina" is one of the most artful and innovative of Hierro's alucinaciones. It is very similar to science fiction in subject matter, since it is about a man captured and forced to live as an underwater slave. Technically the poem is a series of contrasts in perspective in which the first-person speaker compares past to present, youth to old age, freedom to confinement and illusions to reality. These underlying motifs create an allegorical meaning which complements and universalizes the fantasy. The speaker is similar to other first-person speakers in allegorical poems such as "El enanito;" nevertheless, there is a more sophisticated narrative distance and depth of subject which only begins to emerge in Quinta del '42 and Cuanto sé de mí.

Tal vez os cueste comprenderlo. Yo mismo,  
 en este mármol verde de oleaje glacial,  
 no lo comprendo bien del todo.  
 Quizá nadie jamás reciba este mensaje.  
 O, cuando lo reciba, no sepa interpretarlo.  
 Porque todo, allá arriba, habrá variado entonces  
 probablemente. (Aquí seguirá todo igual.)



Somos felices, aunque todavía  
 quedamos muchos viejos (la vida es larga aquí),  
 y aún recordamos, y aún sabemos  
 cuando es de noche arriba . . . 50

(Pocos conocen el significado  
 de esa luz tenue -- luna, decíamos -- que se abre  
 en el silencio negro, prodigiosa.  
 Y nos besamos cuando nos ilumina . . .) 55

Esto es lo malo; los recuerdos.  
 Los que nacimos allá arriba, recordamos.  
 Algunos aún soñamos y revivimos mitos  
 y fábulas. Las viejas damas, cuando llega la noche,  
 suben ligeras a la superficie 60  
 a hechizar marineros, a destrenzar para vosotros  
 canciones y prodigios, mientras los jóvenes sonríen.

Aún recordamos; es lo malo. Este mar, por ejemplo,  
 pero visto desde la playa.  
 Y los sonidos . . ., los rumores . . ., el prodigio  
 de nubes, 65  
 de matices, de flores . . ., los aromas aquellos . . .  
 Y, sobre todo, tanta vida nuestra  
 que les dio belleza y sentido . . .

A veces nos decimos si no estaremos engañados.  
 "Ningún tiempo pasado fue mejor . . ." Es posible. 70  
 Nos lo dicen los jóvenes cuando les relatamos  
 historias que no entienden . . .

Todo tiempo pasado  
 era la juventud, y eso sí era mejor.  
 La juventud es un diamante en medio del camino. 75  
 Hasta llegar a ella, nada miramos sino a ella.  
 Cuando la rebasamos -- porque el fin nos reclama  
 y es imposible detenerse --,  
 es ya pasado. Y nada vemos. Y sólo recordamos  
 el instante, el relámpago; en que camino y juventud  
 coincidieron. 80

Tal vez ahora nos deslumbre  
 no el sol, sino el diamante bajo el sol,  
 tal vez . . .

Un día dije a los jóvenes: "Vamos  
 a rescatar por un momento el paraíso, 85  
 a revivir la vida que no se ahogó en el mar."  
 Volví con la emoción y la inquietud de los  
 retornos,  
 como una ruina que visita a un ser viviente.  
 "He aquí mi antiguo reino," dije.

. . .Cómo olvidé que el sol nos abrasa los ojos, 90  
 hechos a la luz tenue de las profundidades.  
 Y nos ahogábamos -- ya somos criaturas marinas --,  
 Cómo olvidé, cómo pude olvidar  
 el trueno de la voz, el bramido, el estrépito  
 del viento entre las copas de los árboles . . . 95  
 Cómo olvidé que nuestro pasto, nuestros movimientos  
 eran mecánicos y torpes . . . (Aquí en el mar es todo  
 deslizamiento, suavidad, armonía . . .)  
 Sufrí cuando los vi reír entre jadeos,  
 entre toses y ahogos a los jóvenes . . . 100  
 Cómo pude quemar mi recuerdo, empañar  
 la luz de mi diamante . . . Cómo no supe a tiempo  
 que al volver a la superficie  
 lo destruía todo y me quedaba  
 sin mar, tierra, ni cielo, pobre superviviente 105  
 de la nostalgia y de la decepción . . .  
 (p. 410)

The first-person speaker is relating his story to an unknown audience ("Quizá nadie jamás reciba este mensaje.") (l. 4). By directing himself to someone else he establishes a conversational tone, and the dramatic effect of an interior monologue. The speaker's presentation of contrasting elements controls the reader's perception of the world of the poem. The reader becomes, in fact, the mythical person finding a message in a bottle which has washed up on the shore. Although this metaphor is not new, Hierro transforms it into an intimate vision of life and the poetic process. The bottle metaphor presents two of the central images -- the land and the sea.

The main images of the poem appear in pairs -- the land and the sea, the sun and the moon, the diamond and the road. The sun and land represent the speaker's youth, while the moonlight filtered through the darkness of the sea is the world of his maturity. In the third stanza he dramatizes the two worlds. (ll. 19-25). Although there is no direct clue about the identity of "los japoneses," I think that they represent the ever-changing modern world in which efficiency and hard work become

the means of survival, The captors are really the expanding of elements of the middle class, which began to grow by leaps and bounds after Spain was admitted into the United Nations. In a later stanza when the speaker says, "La esclavitud es Sísifo. Nosotros somos útiles./ Somos granero de la Humanidad." (ll. 44-45), he is speaking about the adults whose life is centered around endlessly repetitive work necessary to support their families. It is through the diffused moonlight of his memories that the speaker looks back to the more carefree days of his youth. The moonlight transforms the reality of his youth in the same way that it did in "Noche para un juego de luna." (p. 165).

The central tension of the poem is developed through the speaker's memories: "Esto es lo malo; los recuerdos./ Los que nacimos allá arriba, recordamos./ . . ./ . . .Este mar, por ejemplo,/ pero visto desde la playa." (ll. 56-57; 63-64). The last sentence is an especially clear perspective reversal, totally sensorial, while at the same time suggesting a more profound meaning.

The image of the diamond in the road complements the perspective development seen thus far: "Todo tiempo pasado/ era la juventud, . . ./ La juventud es un diamante en medio del camino./ Hasta llegar a ella, nada miramos sino a ella./ Cuando la rebasamos . . ./ . . ./ . . . sólo recordamos/ el instante, el relámpago en que camino y juventud se coincidieron." (ll. 73-80). The speaker makes a direct comparison between youth and the diamond. He then develops the image in relation to a third element -- the road of life. He creates the sensation of movement towards and away from this moment. In this way he expresses one of his predominant concerns throughout his poetry -- man's place in time's continuum --

through an extended metaphor. Throughout Libro de las alucinaciones the reader is confronted with Hierro's preoccupation about aging, as seen in "Acelerando." Yet this preoccupation is muted, and even in the predominantly testimonial poems of the last section, it is artfully woven into the images. In this case the diamond of youth gone by is now the speaker's focal point. Like the reflected light of the moon, this dazzling reflection changes the speaker's perception of his world.

The poem's dramatic quality increases as the speaker describes these two worlds, and the action reaches a climax in the eleventh stanza when he returns to the surface and says, "He aquí mi antiguo reino." (1. 89). The final stanza is the epilogue of the poem, in which the speaker stands back from the world he has created, and balances the conflicting elements in a more objective way than before. He is, in fact, stripping his world of the images which had symbolic meaning for him, such as the sea, the land and the sky; instead, he begins to confront himself with the abstractions these images represent. He does this through a series of phrases beginning "Cómo olvide . . ." in which the speaker finally breaks out of memory's trap and realizes the relativity of past and present to one's perspective. The repeated phrases build up an intense tone of self-recrimination and the poem ends with the speaker's understanding of what his focus on the past has done to the present: "lo destruía todo y me quedaba/ sin mar, tierra, ni cielo, pobre sobreviviente/ de la nostalgia y de la decepción . . ." (ll. 104-106).

In this book there is a fusion of the characteristics of both testimonial and allegorical poems. The presentation of a greater variety of subject matter and the greater distance between speaker and world combine

with the rambling, stream-of-consciousness style of the early testimonial poems. The alucinaciones are generally longer than a page, with irregular stanzas and infrequent rhyme schemes, as is evident in "Alucinación submarina." Nevertheless, Hierro does not abandon his earlier precision of form. The later poems are the expression of a more mature artist who has had time to experiment with many techniques, and who now combines the best elements of his earlier allegorical and testimonial poems to create the alucinación. At times, as in "Alucinación submarina," the poem's world may be totally baffling until one begins to put together the pattern pieces of ideas and images which the speaker presents in fragmented order.

"Nocturno" is the first poem in the "La noche" section, and is perhaps the hardest alucinación to unravel. There are three distinct moments which are interwoven into an almost simultaneous experience. Each of these moments is explained somewhat by a key sentence in the poem. Hierro explains this structural technique as follows, "Por el hilo del verso inicial (verso inicial cronológicamente, acaso no sea después el que principiará el poema) el poeta saca el hilo de su pensamiento lógico."<sup>4</sup> The most important key appears in lines 30 through 32: "Alguno contaba/ la guerra donde perdiera/ su corazón." These verses establish the narrative structure of the alucinación. The second explanatory sentence, "Tenían los caballeros/ cubiertos los hombros de alas/ de niebla . . ." (ll. 25-27) explains the perspective of the speaker in the first three stanzas as that of a parachutist floating through the sky towards land. The third key sentence is "Tenía un vestido púrpuro/ y brazos blancos . . ." (ll. 52-53), and refers to the woman to whom the speaker loses his heart. The "story" which unifies these three moments

is deliberately illogical and disjointed; its structure is like a cubistic painting. For this reason it helps to keep these key sentences in mind when reading the poem.

El álamo bajo el águila,  
la pesadumbre . . .

De dónde  
la nube, la ola en la rueca,  
la estrella sobre la roca,  
las cuerdas tintas en rayo . . .

Entre los ángeles de agua  
el aire trenza y destrenza  
sus pies pálidos . . . Columnas  
siempre relampagueando  
dentro del mar . . .

(no tenía  
sentido).

Qué se dirían.  
Quién sería el hombre. Quiénes  
serían los caballeros  
que no estaban . . . Se levantan  
resonando la armadura,  
tajando con sus espadas.

De quién será el brazo frío  
que ha tocado. En él, el viento  
gira y clama. (Una mujer  
desparramaba las cartas  
sobre el azul del relámpago.)

Tenían los caballeros  
cubiertos los hombros de alas  
de niebla. Entraba la noche.  
pisaba el mar. Quién diría:  
"Que llueve, señor." (Señor  
Amor). Alguno contaba  
la guerra donde perdiera  
su corazón.

Hace más  
de mil años que no canta.  
Pero en este instante grita:  
"Te quiero, te quiero."  
(Lo sé, aunque no pueda oírlo.)  
El cristal multiplicaba  
la mesa de humo y de lino  
donde se besaron.

¡Qué juventud a la orilla  
 de la ceniza, cintura  
 de escarcha! Los tulipanes  
 se acodan en el silencio.  
 Y arden las hojas. La perla  
 se desnuda entre los rizos  
 del volcán. Trono de sombra,  
 agua hilandera. Los ojos  
 vuelven a vivir sus cárceles.  
 Pero no puede (quién no  
 puede) volar de cancancio.

45

50

Tenía un vestido púrpuro  
 y brazos blancos. Mejor  
 es no pensar, no pensar,  
 no pensar . . .

55

Eran las doce  
 de la mañana. Voló  
 con mucho espanto. Allí habría  
 ángeles de piedra. Y mucho  
 espanto.

60

Y no volverá más.

(p. 401)

The speaker in "Nocturno" is a third-person, reflective witness, a silhouette in the background of the poem. Like the entire anecdotal level of the poem, his presence is indistinct, because of the intermingling of past and present, as well as the illogical, surrealist metaphors which describe the speaker's memories. This haziness contrasts sharply to the emotional intensity these memories evoke in the speaker. He uses the verb "volar" as a double-entendre link between the past and the present. The flying image begins and ends the poem. In the last lines it is the metaphorical return of the speaker to the present. The short sentences of lines 56 through 60 are divided by the verses. The rhythm is choppy and complements the sensation of fear the speaker feels. His memories are dead -- "ángeles de piedra." "Piedra" again indicates death, as it did in "El héroe" and in "Mundo de piedra."

In one sense flying is the sensorial expression of the mind's wanderings to and from the past. It is also that element of his memories which metaphorically describes them. In the first stanza the scenery is presented from the point of view of a man slowly descending from a war plane in a parachute; it is somewhat confusing because there is no explanation of the situation until later. The popular tree is a stark marker seen from the sky; the eagle metaphorically suggests a bird of prey. "Pesadumbre" indicates the gravitational force which allows the downward motion of the parachuter. These three unmodified nouns create a sense of mystery tinged with uneasiness. Without any adjectives to limit the associative qualities of the nouns, the speaker invites the reader to participate in the creation of the scene, by linking the seemingly disparate elements in his mind.

In the second and third stanzas the speaker introduces the parachuting man, and presents the scene from his perspective. He is like the experiencing speaker in Con las piedras, con el viento. By using the third-person instead of the first, Hierro establishes considerable narrative distance from the subject, both in the experiencing and the reflecting speakers. The description is fluid; its images are those gathered by the man as he slowly floats towards land; there is a stream-of-consciousness association among them. There are no verbs in the second stanza, and only one adjective, so the sense of capturing the fleeting essence of the scene is enhanced. There are four noun phrases, each of which has a prepositional phrase whose relationship to the noun it modifies suggests motion: la nube/ de dónde; la ola/ en la rueda; la estrella/ sobre la roca; las cuerdas tintas/ en rayo. The first suggests

wind; the second, the water's movement against a boat's hull; the third, the visual transference of light through the atmosphere and its reflection on a rock; the fourth, the lines of the parachute stretched taut in descent. The parachute's descent seems part of the harmonious and constant motion of the universe. In line 4 the predominance of vowels heightens this fluidity.

The third stanza presents this scene in a metaphorical way. The air becomes the sea; the clouds and parachutes, "Angeles de agua;" the men floating through the air, "Columnas/ siempre relampagueando." This image of the sea augments the feeling of slow, fluid motion, and implies that this action takes place at night. The first verbs of the poem are in this stanza ("el aire trenza y destrenza . . ."). The personification of the air creates a visual sensation of movement in and out of the parachute ropes. The verbs are in the present, suggesting the immediacy of this whole scene; nevertheless, the last two lines suggest that this may not be the case, because they are in the imperfect: "(no tenía/ sentido.)" The first scene is separated from this comment by ellipses; the regular eight-syllable verse is divided into two four-syllable lines; and the comment is further removed by parentheses. All of these separating devices, except the verb tense, are nonverbal, visual signs of narrative distance.

In the fourth stanza the first four verses contain implied questions in the conditional tense, suggesting speculation about the men with the parachutes. These questions are separated from the rest of the stanza by more ellipses. The present tense which follows ("Se levantan.") returns the reader to the original scene, and contains the first terrestrial

action. "Armadura" and "espadas" suggest that they are soldiers, and create a romantic vision of warriors from antiquity. The two gerunds ("resonando" and "tajando") simultaneously indicate noise and action.

The fifth stanza begins with another implied question, this time in the future, thereby maintaining the feeling of the immediate scene. It introduces the first human contact in the poem, emphasizing by the word "frío" its anonymity. The slow motion of the second stanza is abandoned: ". . . el viento/ gira y clama." As in the second stanza the speaker then pulls back, as if to put distance between himself and this scene. He uses another parenthetical sentence in the imperfect to introduce the woman. The metaphorical action of throwing cards to the wind suggests that she is abandoning herself to Fate.

The sixth stanza continues in the past, as the fourth did after the speaker's first parenthetical comment. This flowing from present to past and back again augments the stream-of-consciousness effect, at the same time that it implies the speaker's need for emotional distance. The sixth stanza contains the core of the anecdote. The parachuters are metaphorically described; the scene is set as nightfall at the shore. The lines "Alguno contaba/ la guerra donde perdiera/ su corazón." give the reason for the speaker's tendency to subdue the emotional intensity of that encounter by telling parts of it in the past. Its reflective tone causes the reader to step back from the scene which immediately precedes it.

The sixth stanza introduces the idea of love amidst the horrors of war. In the seventh and part of the eighth stanzas the speaker describes this love encounter. The personalities of the two lovers are not developed, nor are they even given names. This emphasizes the feeling of

anonymity and discreet distance necessary to keep such an intimate scene from becoming either vulgar or maudlin. Hierro uses this technique in Con las piedras, con el viento to universalize the experiences he describes.

In this poem the juxtaposition of war and love scenes creates the effect of a cubistic painting. The speaker takes fragments from each scene and rearranges them, disregarding chronological order and thereby presenting a new, subjective vision which stimulates the speaker's un-ordered memories. Both love and war represent a loss of innocence ("¡Qué juventud a la orilla/ de la ceniza . . ."). The speaker's temporal distance from this scene mutes its emotional intensity. "Te quiero, te quiero" is immediately countered by the parenthetical remark, ("Lo sé, aunque no pueda oírlo.") The image of "cristal," similar to Hierro's poetic "vasija," is a screen through which the speaker looks from present to past. It warps and multiplies the images until they become hazy and indistinct. The love scene is described in a totally metaphorical way. The slightly irrational and dense images are another way of making an intimate scene less accesible on an anecdotal level. After his brief description the speaker immediately withdraws from his flashback: "Los ojos vuelven a vivir sus cárceles./ Pero no puede (quién no/puede) volar de cansancio." (ll. 48-51). The alucinación is over.

The play on the word "volar" becomes clear in the last ten lines. The speaker's desire to flee from this memory is countered by a desire to linger, to block out the disillusionment and defeat he now feels. This is especially evidenced in lines 52 through 55, where the description of the woman in the imperfect is followed by "Ma<sup>í</sup>or/ es no pensar, no

pensar/ no pensar . . ." The repetition of this phrase is like an echo. The repeated vowels (o-e-a) and the stress pattern (/u/, /u/, /u/) fades into the ellipsis. The last lines frame the anecdotal part of the poem at the same time that they suggest an intense despair and disillusionment about the past. It is dead; its memories are "ángeles de piedra."

This poem marvelously captures the essence of the alucinación. It is a "projection of consciousness" where past and present, fact and fantasy, emotion and reason are intertwined to create a visionary experience whose totality far exceeds the sum of its parts.

Libro de las alucinaciones is the climax of Hierro's poetic endeavors to date. He perfects the imaginative and innovative alucinación by maintaining a delicate, sophisticated balance of form, ideas and perspective. He continues to use elements of his earlier testimonial and allegorical poems, but he freely mixes their different qualities. He leans more than ever towards other art forms, such as music, painting, drama and the novel, to express his complex vision of life. The generally longer verses and poems create a novelistic effect, as do the use of characters, a well-developed plot, dialogue and narrative presence. In many of the poems there is a more apparent irony and despair than before in relation to the contemporary mediocrity which the poems present. The speaker's ironic tone and the highly stylized structure of the alucinaciones indicate an awareness of the tensions which he incorporates into these metaphorical fantasies. They also suggest his resignation or acceptance of these tensions. He does not present the reader with a resolution of the tensions he develops in the poems; rather, he portrays contradictory elements such as love and war or life and death as

paradoxically existing simultaneously. By means of a careful balance of theme, content and form of expression Hierro artfully creates a world in which fact and fantasy, emotion and reason, past and present form one complex, cohesive experience. In the innovative alucinaciones Hierro reveals an artistic sensitivity to the sound and meaning of words which makes him one of Spain's best contemporary poets.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>José Olivio Jiménez, Diez años de poesía española: 1960-1970 (Madrid: Insula, 1972), p. 123.

<sup>2</sup>Cuanto sé de mí, p. 458. All subsequent references to poems will be from this 1974 edition. The pages will be indicated in parentheses at the end of the cited material.

<sup>3</sup>Tomás Navarro Tomás, Métrica española, 3rd ed. (Madrid: Guadarrama, 1972), p. 508.

<sup>4</sup>José Hierro, "Poesía y poética," Arbor, XXIV, No. 85 (January 1953), 29.

## CONCLUSION

José Hierro is always conscious of the intricate pattern of subject matter, theme and form in his poetry. The evolution of his perspective and style evident in his complete works refutes the assumption by some that he is a "social" poet who never changes.<sup>1</sup> For Hierro a poem is a metaphorical creation of the imagination in time which transcends the immediate anecdotal reality of the poet. It embodies his thoughts, memories, emotions and physical sensations. He adapts poetic form to the demands of his subject, as he indicates in the Prologue: "La forma modela, contiene exactamente el fondo . . . Supedito todo al efecto general del poema." (Cuanto sé de mí, pp. 15, 17). In his reportajes and alucinaciones the world of the poem is nearly always a concrete setting. In them he uses everyday language to create multiple levels of meaning. He expresses ideas and perspectives through imagery, balancing the words' tones, sounds and rhythms to both theme and subject matter.

His struggle to understand and accept the abstract nature of time is characteristic of all his poetry. As José Olivio Jiménez suggests, time is probably the most important theme in post-Civil War Spanish

poetry, especially in the works of Vicente Aleixandre, Luis Cernuda, Hierro, Carlos Bousoño and Francisco Brines.<sup>2</sup> Hierro's approach to this subject as it relates to the individual is especially similar to that of Brines. His first book -- Tierra sin nosotros -- is a chronicle of Hierro's attempts to integrate subjective and objective elements from the past. One sees the evolution of Hierro's perspective toward time, life and death through the eyes of a first-person speaker, who is the voice of all those who suffered in the Civil War. His yearning for his youth and the painful memories of the war gradually ease into an acceptance of the past and present. In Tierra sin nosotros there is little distance between the speaker and his world. The metaphorical world of the sea, the wind, and the seasons reflects subjective, changing states of mind in the speaker. In these poems Hierro steps outside of his immediate anecdotal reality, transcending its temporal and spatial limitations, to create lyric expressions of intense, melancholic longing.

In Alegría Hierro balances the melancholy of his first book with a newfound joy. Its bittersweet joy evolves from the poet's earlier sense of loss and sorrow. The poems point to the paradoxical realization that joy and sorrow can exist simultaneously. While developing the same themes as in Tierra sin nosotros, Hierro explores new ways to express them metaphorically. He intermingles visual, auditory and tactile sensations with imaginative effects and memories.

The everyday language of the testimonial poems in Tierra sin nosotros and Alegría creates archetypal experiences of an introspective nature. In Con las piedras, con el viento the poet continues to write testimonial poems, but he also develops allegory more than in the first two books.

Through these two distinct kinds of narration he characterizes the limitations of time and the fallibility of human perception, expressing themes and narrative perspective metaphorically. In the allegories the speaker maintains a slightly ironic, detached stance. He personifies an abstraction or a feeling through an extended metaphor whose concrete characteristics come to represent a thematic scheme. This is an important innovative technique in contemporary Spanish poetry. Such distinct poets as Antonio Machado, Jorge Guillén and Claudio Rodríguez describe the world around them through metaphors and symbols which also suggest abstract themes like time, love and death. Into the highly stylized settings of Hierro's poetry are woven the subjective and objective qualities of time, and the differences between illusion and reality.

In the testimonial poems Hierro presents an evolving perspective toward time and love through the eyes of an experiencing and reflecting speaker. By varying narrative distance, tone and structure, and by fragmenting the sequence of events, Hierro creates a dramatic tension which reflects the emotional intensity and immediacy of the experiencing speaker as compared to the more impersonal, contemplative perspective of the reflecting speaker. These two speakers represent different stages of Hierro's evolving perspective. The reader is drawn into the book as the synthesizer of the different perspectives in the allegorical and testimonial poems. The use of different speakers as a literary device in post-Civil War poetry is evident not only in Hierro's work, but also in that of Dámaso Alonso, Claudio Rodríguez and José Ángel Valente. These poets experiment with perspective in order to blend individual and universal experiences into the metaphorical world of their poems.

While Hierro's first three books are quite introspective in subject matter, he begins to describe a wider range of people and places in Quinta del '42. He develops social and historical subjects, such as his attitude toward his homeland and compatriots, without overshadowing the artistic expression of the poetry. The themes of time, death and the relationship of the external world to thoughts and ideals are presented in the context of contemporary Spanish society.

In Quinta del '42 Hierro includes both allegorical and testimonial poems in which he gives the reader close-up and long-range views of his inner and outer worlds. He relates his personal experiences, thoughts and feelings to a broader social and historical structure. In both kinds of poems he frequently employs contrasting imagery to create dramatic tension. By developing new ways to approach subject matter -- such as the use of archetypal and visionary imagery and a third-person speaker -- he presents a more comprehensive poetic statement which relates the individual to his historical, artistic and social background.

Incorporating much of the thematic and subject matter of Quinta del '42, Hierro creates more intricate, complex poems in Cuanto sé de mí than in any of his earlier books. One finds a more frequent fragmentation of events and perspectives, as well as an increasingly-present dramatic tension which is illustrated by metaphorical contrasts, parody, plays on words and flashbacks. The poet combines memories, thoughts, facts and fantasies to suggest a stream-of-consciousness narration which is often highly ironic. The interrelationship of form, mood and perspective reflects the disparities between Hierro's inner thoughts and

ideals, and his vision of reality. While one still distinguishes testimonial from allegorical poems, the distinctions are less striking than in his previous books. His experimentation with all elements of poetic form foreshadows the innovative nature of his last book.

Libro de las alucinaciones combines the introspective focus of Hierro's first three books with the increasing social and historical awareness of Quinta del '42 and Cuanto sé de mí. The alucinaciones absorb characteristics of both the earlier testimonial and allegorical poems. The poet integrates the form of the poems with the ideas they contain, embodying the tension of a man at odds with himself and his surroundings. The highly-stylized alucinaciones, in which visionary language, parody, irony and temporal fragmentation give Hierro greater distance from the theme of time than before, suggest that there may be no resolution to the tensions and conflicts which have characterized Hierro's poetry from the beginning. Nevertheless, the narrative detachment and innovative expression of these thematic and personal concerns indicate the refinement and sophistication which Hierro achieves in his last book.

Hierro bears far more resemblance to certain poets such as Francisco Brines, Claudio Rodríguez and José Ángel Valente, who stand out in the poetry of the sixties, than to poets like Blas de Otero and Gabriel Celaya, with whom he is often grouped. His innovative alucinaciones point to the trend of the sixties and the seventies to move away from social concerns per se, and to value the total poetic experience, not just the subject matter, the theme or the form. Like Claudio Rodríguez, for example, he uses speaker, irony, allegory and metaphorical contrast

to express his complex vision of life. Increasingly in his last two books his experimentation with the transformation of reality through visionary expression and fantasy is similar to the effects achieved by such poets as Angel Crespo and José Angel Valente.

While Hierro is a product of his times, as he so often characterizes himself, his poetry transcends the limitations of particular experiences, such as those connected with the Civil War. Only by studying individual poems from nearly twenty years of work does one see that Hierro is a writer whose continuous experimentation with language, structure and perspective eludes categorization. For example, while one finds a thematic interest in time and the individual similar to that of Antonio Machado, his manner of expressing this concern is quite different. Hierro's stylistic precision and craftsmanship remind one of such poets as Jiménez and Guillén, yet there is little similarity in subject matter to these poets. Like Dámaso Alonso, Hierro experiments with speaker and perspective to create the chaotic world of post-Civil War Spain. He expresses social concern and awareness in his poetry, without using it as a political lever, as do many of his contemporaries. He is one of the few poets of the fifties who breaks away from an emphasis on socially-oriented subjects to experiment with the incorporation of dreams, fantasies, history and facts. By means of variable narrative distance, intricate metaphorical contrasts and the careful relation of form to theme and subject matter Hierro underscores his importance as a post-Civil War poet who both reflects the poetic tradition of Spain and foreshadows the poetry of the sixties and the seventies.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> José Battló does not include Hierro in his Antología de la nueva poesía because he says that Hierro has already established himself as a social poet, as witnessed by his inclusion in Ribes' Antología de la joven poesía española.

<sup>2</sup> José Olivio Jiménez, Cinco poetas del tiempo: Vicente Aleixandre, Luis Cernuda, José Hierro, Carlos Bousoño y Francisco Brines, 2nd ed. (Madrid: Insula, 1972), p. 13.

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