NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES IN THE RURAL NOVELS OF ENRIQUE AMORIM

by

F. Scott Helwig

B.S., Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, 1959
M.S., Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, 1962

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Dissertation Committee:

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Chairman

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PREFACE

In recent years, the literary works of Enrique Amorim have earned increased recognition by scholars and critics. This development is especially evidenced by the inclusion of his works in modern anthologies and the translation of his novels into several foreign languages. Between his first literary work, Veinte años (1920)--a collection of poems--and the posthumous novel, Eva Burgos (1960), extends a vast literary production which has earned for its author a high level of prestige throughout the continent. These forty years show an indefatigable labor in the short story, novel, poetry, theater, cinema, and journalism.

In spite of Amorim's tremendous activity in the other literary genres, his fame will most likely rest on the novel. Considering the abundance of his novelistic production, relatively little evaluation has been done in this area. Some studies, generally of individual or selected novels, appear in articles, and Alicia Ortiz has made a valuable contribution with her work, Las novelas de Enrique Amorim (Buenos Aires: Compañía Editora y Distruibidora del Plata, 1949), which includes most of Amorim's novels up to 1949. Although her study does not discuss Amorim's narrative techniques in any

detail, it does provide a plot synopsis and a succinct, but penetrating, criticism of the merits and deficiencies of each novel. One study of Amorim has been completed recently by Mr. K. Mose entitled "Enrique Amorim: The Passion of an Uruguayan" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1969). At the time of this writing, however, it is unavailable for reference since the author refuses permission to consult the work. Therefore, its content and scope are, as yet, unknown. Hugo Rodriguez Urruty has contributed a valuable service to students of Amorim with his work Para la bibliografía de Amorim (Montevideo: Publicaciones de Agon, 1958). Although the work does not pretend to be exhaustive, it contains some information not available in other critical works: for example, a brief discussion of Amorim's work in the movie industry and his interest in art. A preliminary study has been made of Amorim's short stories up to 1948 by Mary Helen Lewis ("An Analysis of the Cuentos of Enrique Amorim" [Master's thesis, University of Kansas, 1948]), but an evaluation of his total work in this field remains to be done. Mme. H. Pottier has done a linguistic study (Argentinismos y uruguayismos en la obra de Enrique Amorim [Montevideo: Publicaciones de Agon, 1958]), in which she analyzes Amorim's reproduction of the rural rioplatense dialect. Because of the recognition afforded Amorim, more intensive treatment

of his works is needed in order to evaluate his contribution to modern Spanish-American fiction.

Although studies have been made of Amorim's literary works, none have concentrated on the narrative techniques which he employs in his novels. The author died on July 28, 1960, so it is now possible to make a definitive study of the author's narrative method.

The present study focuses attention on five novels which portray the rural Uruguayan scene: La carreta (1929), El paisano Aguilar (1934), El caballo y su sombra (1941), Corral abierto (1956), and Los montaraces (1957). Since critics are in agreement that Amorim's rural novels are superior to his urban and detective novels, this study is limited to the first group. It concentrates on those particular narrative techniques which are best exemplified in the individual novel under discussion, although supplementary examples may be drawn from other works to support and clarify the analysis. The primary aim of this study, then, is to illustrate Amorim's use of selected narrative techniques: thematic elements, setting, time, focus of narration, structure, vocabulary and syntax, modes of characterization, and use of myth as a unifying agent.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

From the time of Sarmiento's Facundo in 1845, the huge inhospitable pampa has been a protagonist in the flourishing literature of the rioplatense region. It is an area where physical geography has had a profound effect upon the people, molding their way of life, creating a unique culture with unique problems. Sarmiento describes a struggle to civilize this region which is infested by nomadic barbarians, a region which is also the abode of a feudal form of society ruled by the caudillo.

Since that time, the pampa has been interpreted in a variety of manners by succeeding generations of poets, essayists, and novelists. Some, like Sarmiento, picture it as a harsh, fierce land. Others, such as Ricardo Güiraldes, tend to idealize it and emphasize the exotic, romantic view of the gaucho. One modern writer, Enrique M. Amorim, who interprets this vast area, gives a panoramic view of the land gradually changed by the continuous advancement of civilization, sometimes solving old problems, but often simply replacing them with new ones.

Enrique Amorim was born in Salto, Uruguay on July

25, 1900. Unfortunately, there does not exist a great amount of biographical material. His family, of Portuguese extraction on the father's side and Basque on the mother's, was one of the land-owning class.[1] Amorim grew up in the rural environment of the family ranch in northern Uruguay near the Brazilian border. Life there provided him with a wealth of experience and interest in the customs and culture of the somber, frugal people who labored on his father's ranch. At the age of seventeen, he was sent to Argentina to study. He attended the Colegio Internacional in Olivos, a small town near Buenos Aires. He belonged to a small group of intellectuals which formed around a respected humanist, Francisco Chelia, and it was there that he gained his first journalistic experience by writing for the school paper. He returned in later life to occupy a position as secretary in a tax office in Buenos Aires and to serve for a while as professor of literature in the school where he had once been a student.[2]

An unfortunate experience during the Perón regime led to Amorim's self-imposed exile from Argentina, the

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[1] José Pereira Rodríguez, "Enrique Amorim," Revista Nacional, 5 (1960), 462.

[2] Enrique Amorim, Letter to Angel Flores, Oct. 19, 1954, cited by Angel Flores, The Literature of Spanish America (New York: Las Américas Publishing Company, 1967), IV, 347.

nation he considered his second homeland and to which, according to Miguel Angel Asturias, he never returned. "Amorim no volvió a Buenos Aires: en la época de Perón alguna vez la policía pretendió detenerlo al bajar del avión, y lo detuvo, y esto bastó para que jamás intentara retornar, no obstante el entusiasmo que le despertaba esta gran capital . . . "[3] He seems to have possessed an appetite for travel as a good number of years were spent in visits to Europe and North America. It is interesting to note his opinion of the United States. In the Foreword to the English translation of El caballo y su sombra, Amorim describes the profound impression which this dynamic country left upon him.

> I have traveled much. Not long ago when I crossed North America from New York to Los Angeles I realized that this earth's most prodigious accomplishment is the formation of the United States. I believe that if I were faced with the problem of describing earthly life to an inhabitant of Mars, Moon, or Saturn, I'd be content to try to tell him about the United States.[4]

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[3]Miguel Angel Asturias, "Enrique Amorim," Ficción, 28 (Nov.-Dec., 1960), 54.

[4]Enrique Amorim, The Horse and His Shadow, trans. Lt. Richard L. O'Connell and James Graham Luján (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1943), p. x.

Amorim wrote regularly for La Prensa of Buenos Aires and served as movie critic for El Hogar and Nosotros.[5] He was active in the Sociedad Argentina de Escritores and representative of the P. E. N. Club at meetings in The Hague and New York.[6] His works have been translated into French, German, Portuguese, Italian, Czech, and English.[7] One novel, El asesino desvelado, has been edited and is currently available for use as a classroom text.[8]

His literary initiation was lyrical--a volume of poetry published in Buenos Aires in 1920 titled Veinte años, with a prologue by Julio Noé and an evaluation by the Argentine poet Fernández Moreno.[9] This poetic vocation remained with him throughout his life, for one of his last works, Mi patria (1960), was a collection of poems. All in all, his poetic production comprises some nine

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[5]Hugo Rodríguez Urruty, Para la bibliografía de Amorim (Montevideo: Publicaciones de Agon, 1958), under section titled "Addenda".

[6]Enrique Amorim, El caballo y su sombra (Buenos Aires: Amigos del Libro, 1941), p. 6.

[7]Enrique Amorim, flyleaf of Los montaraces (Buenos Aires: Editorial Goyanarte, 1957).

[8]Enrique Amorim, El asesino desvelado, ed. J. Chalmers Herman and Agnes Brady (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952).

[9]Juan Carlos Welker, "La obra literaria de Enrique Amorim" in Enrique Amorim, La carreta (Buenos Aires: Claridad, 1932), p. 153.

volumes plus other poetry not yet collected.[10]

Amorim has also experimented in the theater. In 1952, he published a collection of three plays entitled La segunda sangre.[11] The play which gives the volume the title is, according to Amorim, a dramatic version of a previous short story titled "Detrás del muro."[12] The other two plays are Pausa en la selva and Yo voy más lejos.

Amorim's work in movies has been extensive. In Para la bibliografía de Amorim, Rodríguez Urruty cites Amorim's activities in the movie industry as writer, director, and critic. He further states that Amorim's role as cinematographer has been recognized in at least two works on the history of the Uruguayan cinema.[13] In addition to his contributions in commercial cinema, Amorim took movies of many of his artistic and literary friends during the course of his numerous travels.

De sus andanzas por tierras extranjeras volvió

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[10] Rodríguez Urruty, Bibliografía, section titled "Poesía".

[11] Enrique Amorim, La segunda sangre (Montevideo: Impresora Uruguaya, 1952).

[12] Enrique Amorim, Letter to Omar Prego Gadea, Marcha (Montevideo), Año XV, No. 713, March 26, 1954.

[13] Rodríguez Urruty, Bibliografía, section titled "Addenda".

> con un filme excelente: más de noventa escritores, de los mejores de su tiempo, figuran en ella, moviéndose entre sus libros, en su ambiente familiar, junto a los paisajes amados. Esa película cinematográfica que era el orgullo de su realizador, fue regalada a la Sociedad Argentina de Escritores. El Instituto Cinematográfico Argentino copió dicho filme para conservarlo, como una preciosa documentación biográfica de grandes intelectuales, artistas y escritores del mundo actual.[14]

Amorim manifested an interest in the short story early in his career. In 1923, he published his first volume of stories, startling critics by using his own last name as the title.[15] Harley Oberhelman explains the reasoning behind this uncommon action. "Amorim justified this unusual title by quoting the Spanish version of a Persian proverb: 'Todo lo nuestro se llama como nosotros'."[16] His total production in this genre consists of eleven volumes of short stories from 1923 to 1960 plus, according to Angel Rama, sufficient

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[14]Pereira Rodríguez, "Enrique Amorim," p. 462.

[15]Enrique Amorim, Amorim (Montevideo: Editorial Pegaso, 1923).

[16]Harley D. Oberhelman, "Contemporary Uruguay As Seen in Amorim's First Cycle," Hispania, 46 (1963), 317.

individual works to comprise two or three more volumes.[17]

One outstanding characteristic of Amorim seems to have been his devotion to correspondence with friends and fellow artists. Miguel Angel Asturias states: "Pocos hay que hayan escrito tantas epístolas de toda clase . . . no empleaba la misiva por escribir sino por comunicar ideas, proyectos . . . "[18] Amorim's faithfulness to his friends, partly evidenced through his tremendous amount of correspondence, is further illustrated in an incident concerning his relationship with the great Uruguayan cuentista, Horacio Quiroga. The latter, impoverished and almost forgotten, had died in a hospital in Buenos Aires. Amorim succeeded in having Quiroga's remains returned to his native Salto.[19]

To evaluate Amorim's place in the scheme of recent novelistic currents and tendencies and his development and contribution to the Spanish-American novel, one must return to the twenties, Amorim's formative period, the time when he first made his appearance on the literary scene. In the period from 1920 to 1940, the most apparent characteristic of prose fiction was the desire to

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[17]Angel Rama, "Enrique Amorim, cuentista," Los mejores cuentos (Montevideo: Editorial Arca, 1967), p. 5.

[18]Asturias, "Enrique Amorim," p. 54.

[19]Pereira Rodríguez, "Enrique Amorim," p. 463.

capture what was considered to be truly Spanish American. Disdaining the possibility of encountering the authentic Spanish America in the city, and moved, many times, by their anger at an unjust social or political system, the criollista novelists turned to the rural areas to capture the essential, the "true" nature of the locale. The general characteristics of this regional novel are a delineation of the character traits of the inhabitants, descriptions of the customs and life in the area, and a wide panorama of the political, social, and economic problems, often accompanied by an emphasis on reform or abolishment of injustices in these areas.

Political, economic, and social ideologies came to play a decisive role in the novel and the authors attempted to integrate new techniques in an esthetic expression of their particular theme. In spite of the authors' search for novelistic models in the United States or Europe, an indelible nativist character is stamped on the majority of the novels because the central theme or preoccupation of the artist was lo criollo, the total life of the particular region. This nativist expression took on, of course, characteristics of wide diversity, depending upon the locale being described. In those countries with large indigenous populations, a major branch of the criollista movement appeared in the form of the indigenist novel. In other countries, the

authors attempted to capture the essence of their particular region--Gallegos in Venezuela, Rivera in Colombia, and the myriad of Mexican writers who dealt with themes of the Revolution.

In the rioplatense region, the most picturesque and the most characteristic of the region was the gaucho, but by 1930, the treatment of the gauchesque theme was diminishing. Up to this date, a thriving production had existed by such writers as Javier de Viana, Roberto Payró, Carlos Reyles, Benito Lynch, Ricardo Güiraldes, and others. But by 1930, Viana, Payró, and Güiraldes were dead and by 1932, Reyles and Lynch had completed the major part of their literary production.

During the twenties and thirties, a struggle developed between the criollista outlook and a more universal, cosmopolitan view of the role which literature was to take. The documentation of social changes on the pampa continued to appear in regional prose works of that decade, but in diminishing quantity in relation to the over-all production of the rioplatense novel. Despite the continuing presence of the vast pampa, the centers of culture were the cities and the writers were generally urban dwellers. In the bustling capitals of Montevideo and Buenos Aires, in large part made up of rootless immigrants, not only national, but even individual

identity was in question.[20] During these years of the thirties and early forties, three main areas of change were occurring in the field of the novel. First, the regionalistic novel, which was concerned with the customs, problems, and psychology of life on the pampa was disappearing in favor of an increasing interest in the urban situation. The urban centers provided a cosmopolitan setting far different from the provincial characteristics of the plains and as the writers abandoned the rural area to turn to the urban for their settings, their works reflected more universal problems and situations. Second, a trend was manifested away from exterior social questions toward interior individual problems and even the modern crisis in man himself. Third, a growing interest in new novelistic techniques showed increasing dissatisfaction with the old realistic and naturalistic moles of narration.

To understand the forces behind these changes, one need only consider the political and social events occurring during the thirties and forties. Two world wars, the economic depression of the thirties, the Spanish Civil War, the "Cold" War, and the constant threat of nuclear annihilation, joined with the breakdown

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[20] Jean Franco, An Introduction to Spanish-American Literature (Cambridge: Univ. of Cambridge Press, 1969), p. 320.

of traditional values, led to a profound moral crisis in modern man. No geographical entity was exempt from this pressure, exerted either directly or indirectly, and the Spanish-American republics were catapulted into the international scene by the course of modern events. The moral crisis produced by this series of events resulted in a mental state of anguish, fear, desperation and, sometimes, violence. This state of anxiety was not concerned so much with the exterior world, because modern technology was producing more material welfare for man than ever before, but rather an interior crisis. The constant pressures, the feeling of isolation and abandonment, led the individual authors to seek the answers within themselves, to delve into the deepest secrets of man's own nature in search of the solutions to the doubts, fears, and enigmas.[21]

Given the changes in emphasis from regional to universal and from exterior to interior, it is natural that recent writers have experimented in new techniques, ones that are capable of expressing man's psychological reality and his struggles, not necessarily with the outer world so much as within himself, his modern civilization, or with life in general, which often appears maddeningly

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[21]Orlando Gómez-Gil, Historia crítica de la Literatura Hispanoamericana (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968), p. 670.

absurd. Since the scope of this study allows only a cursory glance at some of the new innovations, only a few general tendencies or currents may be mentioned. Modern themes tend toward the abstract--a rejection of society, a rebellion against a reality that is repugnant to man, an effort to break the solitude which binds man in a state of incommunication, a feeling of hopelessness in trying to bring some logic to an illogical, absurd existence. To achieve the description of the interior moral state of contemporary man, new techniques take the place of traditional methods which cannot describe the complex workings of the human mind. The interior monologue, the free association of seemingly unrelated thoughts and ideas, and the fragmentation of chronological time in an endeavor to portray psychic time represent techniques which attempt to delineate the workings of man's mental facilities. The use of myths, both classical and modern, the portrayal of collectives rather than individual protagonists, and the wide use of symbolism and allegory provide a more universal character for the contemporary novel. Magic realism, the use of pure fantasy, and the employment of the labyrinthian theme underline the illogical aspects of an absurd existence.[22]

While the aforementioned tendencies in the

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[22] Ibid., p. 671.

contemporary novel illustrate a firm and decided reaction against traditional regionalism, the criollista novel has not disappeared from the literary scene. There are those writers who continue producing works which concentrate on regional aspects, using the old techniques and there are those criollista writers who, while limiting themselves mainly to nativist themes and locales, have attempted to incorporate some of the newer techniques.

Amorim made his literary debut during the twenties. At this time, two major factions in Argentina, representing opposing esthetic views, participated in a literary polemic which was representative of the battles of similar groups throughout Spanish America. In Argentina, the two factions took the names of the streets which the particular group frequented. The elegant, cosmopolitan street of Florida served to designate the vanguardists who felt the need to reform literature, who insisted on complete freedom, and who did not care if the obscurity of language resulted in a loss of communication. This group stood out for its production in verse.[23] In contrast, Boedo street was frequented by a group of non-conformists who, through their literature, attempted to reform the world by means of a sociological

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[23] Enrique Anderson Imbert, Spanish-American Literature: A History (Detroit: Wayne University Press, 1963), p. 457.

art. These writers, who leaned toward the left politically, tended toward the conservative esthetically. Their most common theme was the bitter, tragic lives of the oppressed and the primary vehicle of expression of the Boedo group was prose. It was a voice of protest and rebellion, a "committed" literature, an expression containing the sordid picture of an oppressed society with a longing for redress of social injustices.[24] Raúl Larra gives a general picture of the traits shared by these writers of Boedo. "Creen en el pueblo, no se burlan del honorable público y buscan elevarlo con su literatura: defienden sin vacilaciones la revolución socialista de octubre."[25] The outstanding figure of the group is Roberto Arlt (1900-1940), an impassioned and deeply committed writer whose major works were being produced at the time that Amorim (also a member of the Boedo group) was just beginning to receive recognition for his novelistic talents. In spite of the fact that the Boedo group was short-lived, with the various members developing along their individual trajectories, the important thing to note is that Amorim, in continuing

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[24]Rafael Alberto Arrieta, director, Historia de la literatura argentina (6 vols.: Buenos Aires: Ediciones Peuser, 1959), IV, 218.

[25]Raúl Larra, Roberto Arlt, el torturado, (n.p., Editorial Futuro, 1950), n. pag., quoted in Arrieta, Literatura Argentina, IV, 642.

along the road that the group had indicated, remained steadfast throughout his literary career to the original credo of a committed literature.

Amorim's first three novels, Tangarupá (1925), La carreta (1929), and El paisano Aguilar (1934), fall into the costumbrista category. These novels, written when regionalism was a main trend in South-American fiction, place Amorim in the mainstream of the novelistic current at that time. Although the more universal novel, with emphasis on the psychological, has exemplary proponents in Eduardo Barrios and Eduardo Mallea during the twenties and thirties, their novels, like the stories of Jorge Luis Borges, are representative of an esthetic minority of the period.

The decade of the forties is an important one because the year 1941 marks the appearance of El caballo y su sombra, the novel most critics cite as Amorim's masterpiece. This is also the time when Eduardo Mallea produced Todo verdor perecerá and when Juan Carlos Onetti, perhaps Uruguay's best novelist today, was beginning to make his presence felt. A comparison between the two aforementioned novelists and Amorim shows a distinct contrast of style and theme. Amorim treats sociological themes, with emphasis on the exterior, the concrete. The description of the protagonist in El caballo y su sombra is limited to physical details and

personal actions with little attempt to portray psychological development. In contrast, Mallea and Onetti delve into the innermost recesses of their protagonists' minds, concentrating on their tortured thoughts, emphasizing their alienation. While the prose of Mallea and Onetti falls into the mainstream of the new Spanish-American novel, Amorim, in El caballo y su sombra, follows the criollista tradition of Lynch and Payró, with continuing stress on the regional. This does not mean, however, that Amorim was solely concerned with the rural scene, but only that his early works deal primarily with that particular setting. After World War II, Amorim shows an awakened interest in the detective novel, a genre not cultivated extensively in Spanish America, and also a growing concern about the urban situation.

It is in 1945, with the publication of El asesino desvelado, that Amorim enters the realm of the detective or mystery novel. This continuing interest is evident later with the publication of Feria de farsantes in 1952 and Corral abierto (1956). Amorim was not very successful with his detective novels in terms of favorable reviews by the critics, nor in terms of financial rewards, if one is to judge by the author's own words. In Feria de farsantes, a novel with autobiographical elements, he states that he should have made money from El asesino desvelado but did not and, for some reason,

places the blame upon the editors. "El asesino desvelado debió producirme dinero. Pero usted sabe, los editores . . . "[26]

Critics either tend to ignore Amorim's production in the detective genre or to disparage it, and rightly so. Amorim detracts from the reader's interest in his mystery novels by combining the murder element with extraneous material. He resorts to trick devices such as forged fingerprints and unopened letters or solves the "crime" by explaining it as a suicide. To resort to these tricks is to deny the reader equal opportunity with the detective in solving the crime and leaves the reader feeling cheated. The solution in this type of fiction often lies in the area of science fiction, not in logical deduction. One must conclude that Amorim's forte was not in the area of the mystery novel and that his critics are justified in ignoring this aspect of his novelistic production.

In the late thirties, when the trend begins to shift toward a more cosmopolitan tendency in literature, Amorim attempted to enter this growing mainstream with his urban novel, La edad desparejа (1938). In a panorama of city life in Buenos Aires, Amorim creates a central personage who serves more as an observer and chronicler

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[26]Enrique Amorim, Feria de farsantes (Buenos Aires: Editorial Futuro, 1952), p. 159.

of character types and events than as a protagonist. Alicia Ortiz describes the work thus: "Novela moderna a la manera de las obras de John Dos Passos, de Hemingway, de Elmer Rice, es panorámica, capta todas las luces y sombras de la ciudad mostrándola como un personaje múltiple que se prodiga, uno y diverso, en los destinos de todos."[27] Unfortunately, while there are admirable passages in the work, the wide diversity of types and characters described results more in a confusing montage than in a portrait of "Juan Argentino." Amorim's attempt to portray the modern urban environment with its solitude, fears, frustrations, and general struggles is, perhaps, a laudable endeavor but one which he is not successful in mastering, and he returns in his next novel, El caballo y su sombra (1941), to the more familiar setting of the pampa.

A common element which runs through almost all the works of Amorim is that of a social protest emanating from the author's deep compassion for the downtrodden in any locale, rural or urban, and his empathy with their problems, sufferings, and aspirations. For the reader who follows Amorim's novelistic production from the beginning, it is no surprise that his literary evolution is accompanied by an ideological one as well. The

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[27] Ortiz, Novelas, p. 40.

preoccupation with social justice manifested by the Boedo group is increasingly apparent with the emergence of each new novel of Amorim. In his first urban novel, La edad despareja (1938), he paints the social confusion and disorientation of the rioplatense society at that time. In the rural novels, El paisano Aguilar, El caballo y su sombra, and La luna se hizo con agua, he describes the machinations of unfeeling and incompetent politicians.[28] It is with Nueve lunas sobre Neuquén (1946) that Amorim's ideological stance is firmly identified with the Communist movement. Alicia Ortiz cites this urban novel as a pivotal work in his literary creation. "Es un salto sobre su producción anterior que comporta un cambio fundamental en su actitud creadora. Con ella pasa Amorim al plano de la literatura de tendencia proletaria que en nuestro

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[28] La luna se hizo con agua, published in 1944, provides another illustration of the theme previously presented in El caballo y su sombra--"civilización y barbarie." It portrays a struggle between two opposing viewpoints, reactionary versus progressive, which is embodied in the conflict between a rancher and his more liberal, social-minded daughter. The work reiterates the need for improving the lot of the lower class, especially in the eradication of ignorance and superstition. The author's theme, however, is not as well illustrated as in El caballo y su sombra and the ending leaves the reader wondering if the idealistic young protagonist will ever achieve any of her oft-expressed goals. The need for political and social reform expressed in La luna se hizo con agua, however, serves to identify the novel as another step toward an increasing manifestation of leftist ideology in Amorim's novelistic trajectory.

medio tiene escasa expresión."[29] La victoria no viene sola (1953) follows the trend set by Nueve lunas sobre Neuquén. The title is taken from a quote by Stalin.[30] The novel portrays Amorim's sympathy with the Communist cause and his strong condemnation of the persecutions endured by the party members in their struggle to better the economic and social circumstances of the working class.

Most of Amorim's urban novels then, are characterized by strong social protest and often accompanied by the espousal of Communist goals. The fervent advocacy of social change is not a weakness in itself. But to imbue a work with propaganda and still maintain a high literary standard is a difficult task and Amorim is not successful. Engels, in a letter to another socialist novelist, Minna Kantsky, warned against preaching in the novel, stating that the opinions or the tendency of the author should emerge from the characters and the circumstances themselves. "But I think that tendency should arise of itself out of the situation and action, without being specially emphasized, and that an author is not obliged to give the reader a ready-made historical future

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[29] Ortiz, Novelas, p. 43.

[30] Gómez-Gil, Literatura hispanoamericana, p. 694.

solution of the conflict he depicts."[31] Certainly one reason that Amorim's urban novels have not been well received is that he did not follow this sound advice. Almost all the urban novels display a bitter lack of faith in what Amorim considered an unproductive bureaucracy and he evidently was not able to hold his emotions in check.

The rural novels produced by Amorim after World War II follow the ideological pattern established in the urban novels although the tendentiousness of the author is not so obvious. These later works dealing with the rural environment treat sociological themes with emphasis upon improving the welfare of the impoverished lower classes.

In summation: Amorim's early rural novels (Tangarupá, La carreta, and El paisano Aguilar) are mainly concerned with providing a panorama of the unsettled pampa and its inhabitants and, although sociological and political problems are evident, they do not receive the primary emphasis. The rural novels produced after World War II display ideological and social preoccupations similiar to those of the author's urban novels, but the themes are more artistically presented. In spite of the fact

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[31] Friedrich Engels, Letter to Minna Kantsky, quoted by Ralph Fox in The Novel and The People (New York: International Publishers, 1945), p. 90.

that Amorim's growing interest in the modern urban environment might seem to presage an evolution in literary themes and techniques, his treatment of man and contemporary society remains faithful to the Boedo tradition. The modern crisis in individual man, which provides the themes for the contemporary trends in Spanish-American prose fiction, does not appear in Amorim's novelistic world. Instead of placing emphasis on the interior or psychological aspects of man, Amorim continues to portray the exterior--the political, sociological, and economic situation. In keeping faith with the Boedo credo, Amorim has placed himself outside the present mainstream of the South American novel and, as such, serves as a representative of a lingering criollista tradition.

CHAPTER II

SETTING AND THEMATIC ELEMENTS

(La carreta)

Amorim's first novel, Tangarupá, was published with three short stories.[1] The author, evidently encouraged by the success of "Las quitanderas," in which he portrays a picturesque figure--the wandering prostitute--decided to expand the original story. By means of additions and retouchings, it was turned into a novel. The work consists of a number of individual episodes related to the aimless trajectory of the carreta. The cart functions as a bond of interest for the numerous characters who come into contact with one another. Originally the cart is a circus vehicle. Because of financial failure, the circus breaks up. However, the women in the group have discovered that they possess a commodity highly in demand on the womanless plains of northern Uruguay, and they supplement their income after hours. With the disintegration of the circus, the troupe divides. Led by Matacabayo,

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[1] Enrique Amorim, Tangarupá (Buenos Aires: Editorial Claridad, 1925). The three stories are titled "Las quitanderas," "El pájaro negro," and "Los explotadores de pantanos."

a harness repairman, five of the quitanderas wander from settlement to settlement, meeting new faces and adventures, incorporating new personages into the history of the cart. At the end of the work, the vehicle comes to rest, a decrepit wreck. Thus the novel starts with the birth of the cart as a mobile whorehouse, follows its trajectory throughout its odyssey, and ends when the cart is abandoned by the majority of its inhabitants in their search for a different life.

The migratory prostitutes in La carreta are referred to as "quitanderas." The question of the originality of this type of character forms the basis for a literary polemic and a lively discussion among the specialists in Uruguayan folklore. Lexicographers generally agree that the quitandera, as Amorim portrays her, has never existed. The historical meaning of the word refers to the woman who earns a livelihood by running a quitanda, a booth or stall in which snacks, pastries, and fruit are sold, and has no relationship to the women depicted in La carreta. Welker states that Amorim's success in realistically portraying this type of imaginary woman led a French author, Adolphe de Falgairolle, to plagiarize the character. He published a novel in Paris entitled La quitandera, supposing that this type of imaginary

person was as commonplace as the gaucho.[2]

The fact that Amorim portrays the pampa through nonhistorical personages such as the quitanderas led one critic to condemn him for an over-abundance of imagination, and a resulting lack of verisimilitude: " . . . hasta en sus mejores obras como, 'La carreta' o 'El paisano Aguilar,' no se halla verdaderamente nuestra realidad, ya que hay demasiado de imaginación para poder representar con ellas la situación, el ambiente o los tipos de la campaña rioplatense."[3] This point of view fails to recognize that Amorim's intent was not to reproduce reality by a descriptive inventory of a mass of accumulated data, but rather to suggest the essence of that reality by capturing the spirit. As Fernán Silva Valdés ably explains, the artist's first consideration is to create, not to reproduce.

> La carreta de Amorim no constituye un episodio común de la epopeya campesina; no era nada común ni habrán visto muchos un prostíbulo rodante, sino por excepción. Ello no le quita mérito: se lo da más bien. Copiar, trasladar episodios vulgares es menos importante--siempre

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[2]Welker, "Enrique Amorim," p. 154.

[3]Sarah Bollo, Literatura uruguaya, Vol. II (Montevideo: Ediciones Orfeo, 1965), 142.

> dentro de la obra de arte--que crear. Aunque ese tipo de carreta haya existido--caso de excepción--no puede negarse que Amorim lo ha creado; y al decir crear, no me refiero a la invención pura, sino al hecho de comunicarle vida patente al ser, o al objeto ser que presentamos, haciendo de él un arquetipo.[4]

The creative artist employs environmental phenomena in a different manner than the historian, and the abundant use of exterior "realistic" detail may inhibit the portrayal of the most fundamental element--the essential spirit of the region. Art, according to Aristotle, expresses the possibilities of human nature and experience, not so much the particular, but the universal. "The difference between the historian and the poet is not in their utterances being in verse or prose . . . the difference lies in the fact that the historian speaks of what has happened, the poet of the kind of thing that can happen."[5] The fact that La carreta provides the reader with an experience based not on an exact reproduction of the social situation, as would a documentary, is evidence of its contribution to art, and therefore, Amorim's

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[4]Fernán Silva Valdés, "La carreta," Nosotros, 78 (1933), 99.

[5]Aristotle, Aristotle—Poetics, trans. and ed. Gerald F. Else (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1967), pp. 32-33.

imaginative employment of the quitanderas is entirely defensible.

The author portrays the wretched lives of the plainsmen, giving a panoramic view of their physical and spiritual isolation, and describing the trials of these people by concentrating especially on three thematic elements: (1) sex, (2) death and violence, and (3) poverty, ignorance, and superstition.

Sex

Sex is a recurring thematic element throughout the rural novels of Amorim and in La carreta is elevated to primary importance. Love barely appears in this work--that is, love in the sentimental or romantic sense of the word. In place of this emotion, ruthless passion and physical lust abound, fulfilling a desperate biological urge and the need for procreation, but supplying little of the deep feelings of affection and tenderness generally associated with the word "love." Amor, in this novel, is almost synonomous with sexual gratification. Sex presents a tremendous problem for the inhabitants of the desolate plains of northern Uruguay, an area where only one woman exists for every five men. The adventures of the fictional beings, the quitanderas, provide the illustration of this compelling problem.

To show that this human situation is one that is

imposed upon man by the nature of the land which he inhabits, man is shown to be a product of the plains, possessing the same characteristics as the environment which molds him. The author draws strong parallels between man and the land. Amorim's pampa is depicted as dry and hot. Going one step further, the author characterizes the inhabitants as suffering from thirst. But this thirst is one for love, affection, companionship, and some hope for a better future. It is caused by misery, hopelessness, and a physical and spiritual loneliness that turn men back toward their primitive instincts. This thirst is rarely quenched.

> . . . fosa reseca, agrietada por el sol.[6]
>
> . . . se llamaba Chaves. Treinta años de soles y vientos ásperos, que bien pueden sumar cuarenta de vida (LC. 34).
>
> Pasó por la oscuridad aquel paisanaje mentiroso; pasó frenético, sediento y áspero . . . (LC. 38).
>
> . . . [los gauchos] idénticos en el fondo; bestias sedientas de placer (LC. 38).

In this environment of spiritual aridity, the quitanderas are constantly at work to satiate the maddening "thirst."

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[6]Enrique Amorim, La carreta (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1952), p. 118. Subsequent references to this edition will be included in the text and will be cited LC.

> El viejo carretón de las quitanderas siguió andando por los campos secos de caricias, prodigando amor y enseñando a amar (LC. 77).
>
> [Las quitanderas] Conformando a los hombres y sacándoles sus ahorros; mitigando dolores, aplacando la sed de los campos sin mujeres (LC. 76).
>
> Clorinda y Leonina pasaron hasta la madrugada conformando bocas sedientas y manos ásperas . . . (LC. 34).

Amorim not only shows the relationship between man and the land by depicting the two as hot, thirsty, and dry, but also emphasizes the relationship in his manner of describing the sex act itself. The method of the author is to show the effects of bodily movement on natural surroundings. Chiquiño, in his first sexual experience, takes Leopoldina in the open air with the weeds for a bed.

> Luego la vibración del cuerpo de Chiquiño y el largo suspiro de Leopoldina, sin palabras ya, dominando el deseo tartamudeante del muchacho.
>
> El campo exhalaba un olor fuerte, a yuyo quebrado y húmedo.
>
> La lumbre tenía dos puntas de fuego en los tizones. Y una nubecilla de polvo cruzó por el humo, dorando la pálida claridad (LC. 43).

The odor of broken vegetation and the cloud of dust is sufficient to describe the action, while the two points of fire reflect the passion of the two bodies. This device is not limited to natural environment, however, for Amorim uses non-natural surroundings in the same manner. In a scene which takes place in the dismal cabin of a boat, the same technique is observed.

> Y seguida a la palabra, la acción. Y el rechinar de un elástico, protestando el peso de los cuerpos, y la madera frágil del tabique crujiendo, y el golpe de un codazo en la cabecera y palabras entrecortadas por suspiros ahogados (LC. 65).

Thus the ambiance does not exist for its own sake, but rather serves a primary function in this novel. Natural surroundings provide an atmosphere of aridity, serving as a background for the inhabitants who are characterized by a constant thirst for a fulfillment which they seldom achieve. Or when non-natural surroundings are used in the same manner to describe the character's actions, the misery of the inhabitants' existence is reflected in the poverty of the ambiance.

One of the most macabre scenes involves sex. Amorim illustrates that although the gauchos may be sex-starved men, capable of brutish actions, there are still limitations. In this scene, the author depicts the sexual

profanation of the corpse of his wife by the Indian Ita in his final "goodbye."

> Como Ita demoraba en salir, decidieron llamarlo. El hombre de los cabellos largos se dirigió a la puerta, y, metiendo la mano en una rendija, agrandó el espacio, logrando mirar para adentro. Un quejido salió de su garganta:
>
> —¡La Virgen me perdone! . . . dijo dramáticamente. ¡Joi Dió!
>
> Y tapándose los oídos, despavorido, corrió hacia donde estaban las mujeres. . . .
>
> Ita, el indio milagrero, estaba desnudo, y desnudo el cuerpo de la finada, desnudo el cadáver de la Pancha. Bárbaramente unidos, frenético el indio desde la vida. La mujer, fría. Los brazos de la hembra caían como péndulos de la cama. Iba la boca del indio de un lado a otro del rostro exangüe, besándola, en aquellas últimas nupcias, a la luz de un candil parpadeante y amarillo (LC. 55-56).

The scene is described simply with emphasis upon the reflexes of the gaucho who witnesses the action. His horror-stricken reaction upon viewing the morbid scene is that of a man who, although accustomed to death and capable of extreme violence himself, is filled with revulsion at such abnormality.

Sex is a preoccupation of Amorim throughout his novels although it may not always play the role of a major thematic element as it does in La carreta. In his first novel, Tangarupá, where the author is intent on portraying the harsh realities of pampean life, sex appears as a major problem. The action of the novel revolves around a young orphan boy and a young married woman, and illustrates the misery, poverty, and superstition experienced by the dwellers of the pampa. Juan Carlos Welker makes the following observation of Tangarupá.

> En Amorim resulta interesantísimo ver cómo él ataca directamente en su novela "Tangarupá" uno de los más tremendos problemas de nuestra campaña: El problema sexual. En el paisaje árido, sin mujeres, que pinta Amorim, la pasión sexual, se vuelve en el hombre como estos juncos resecos y calcinados por el sol, que al menor contacto se quiebran estallando con áspero ruido. Está en las páginas de "Tangarupá," toda la tragedia de esas vidas sin luz . . .[7]

The most shocking illustration of this problem is given through the eyes of Panta, the young protagonist of the novel. In chapter eleven, the author opens with a short description of the three bachelor brothers of the

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[7]Welker, "Enrique Amorim," p. 157.

estancia, "Rincón." The eldest, don Pedrito, goes to town every Saturday night to visit his "china" while the two younger brothers stay at home out of respect for the feudal authority of the eldest.

> Jamás se les cruza por la cabeza la idea de ir a Saucedo por la noche. Se verían allí con el hermano mayor. . . . Solamente cuando muera el hermano mayor, podrá hacerlo el segundo, dada la jerarquía establecida e imperante en la estancia. El menor de los tres hombres pisa los umbrales de los treinta años . . . [8]

This description of the two younger brothers who have denied themselves access to this source of sexual relief serves as an introduction to a scene which illustrates the barbarous solution to their problem. The protagonist, Panta, is crossing some land near the ranch of the three brothers when he comes upon a strange sight--a man in a peculiar position on his horse.

> . . . dióse cuenta de que el hombre volcaba sobre el animal todo el peso de su cuerpo. Recostaba la cara en los cojinillos del recado. . . .
>
> El bulto se agitaba con movimientos

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[8] Enrique Amorim, Tangaruná (Montevideo: Editorial Arca, 1967), p. 68. Subsequent references to this edition will be included in the text.

desconcertantes (Tangarupá, 70).

Recovering from the shock of seeing a man having sexual relations with his mare, Panta finds himself suffering from the same need to fulfill this strong biological urge. "Un deseo seco y terrible, le colocó una nube roja delante de la vista" (Tangarupá, 71). Here again, Amorim describes the scene in a matter-of-fact manner but registers the shock in the personage who witnesses the occurrence. In this scene, the author has not only shown sex to be one of the worst problems faced by man on the womanless plains, but by coupling man and animal, shows man to be reduced to a primitive, bestial state, dominated by his instinctive urges.

Another example of showing the sexual act through its effects on surroundings occurs in Tangarupá. In the scene which depicts Panta and María in their first and only sexual relationship, the author shows the two bodies falling together accompanied by various other falling objects. "Cayó una silla. Arrastraron los pies, como si una enorme carga pesase sobre los cuerpos. Un florero, que abría su boca redonda hacia el techo, esperando una flor de trapo, se tambaleó al golpe de los cuerpos en la cómoda" (Tangarupá, 46). In addition, the flower and the flower vase with its "boca redonda hacia el techo" are suggestive of sexual symbols and thus the sexual coupling is actually reflected in the surroundings.

Natural surroundings reflect the act also when the author, a few lines later, employs the same technique by using light as a phallic symbol. "Cuando abrieron la puerta, entró por ella un encendido dardo de oro" (Tangarupá, 46). For María, this is indeed a golden penetration, because from this encounter, her supposed sterility has been cured.

In his earlier novels, especially Tangarupá and La carreta, Amorim shows the sexual problem to be primarily due to the shortage of women on the pampa. Thus the bestial character evidenced in the sexual activities of the plain's inhabitants is directly due to their natural environment. Amorim continues to display an interest in sex throughout his novelistic production. However, as the author's advocacy of social justice grows in his later novels, the blame for the bestial character of the lower-class rural dweller is no longer placed upon the land, for the pampa has now been tamed. The peons who work on the large ranches now live in sordid little settlements such as the one vividly painted in the novel Corral abierto. Hunger, poverty, and misery are constant companions of the inhabitants of these settlements, and the author makes it clear that this suffering exists only because of the selfishness and lack of humanitarian interest on the part of the ruling classes. In one scene of Corral abierto, the protagonist enters a house

unexpectedly, surprising a father in bed with his daughter. The scene is portrayed as seen through the eyes of the protagonist and disgust is registered in his reaction. The daughter is embarrassed and shamefully covers her head. But the father's explanation, "—Qué le vamo a hacer . . . Así es la vida.",[9] is replete with all the resignation of a man who knows no other kind of life, and incorporates Amorim's accusation of a society that would allow people to live under such conditions.

This social criticism through sex as a thematic element is especially evident in Eva Burgos, a novel published posthumously. The protagonist, a young prostitute whose name serves as the title, is shown by the author as satisfying the same thirst that existed on the pampa. "Allí Eva amantó a todos los perros hambrientos: en esa fuente bebieron todos los Rómulos y Remos del pueblo, todos los labios que tienen sed incontrolada y son capaces de pagarla."[10] After Eva's ascent from her lowly origins to the highest social circles of Europe and Uruguay, she comes into contact with the decadence and depravity of the upper social strata. It is

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[9] Enrique Amorim, Corral abierto (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1956), p. 177. Subsequent references to this edition will be included in the text and will be cited as CA.

[10] Enrique Amorim, Eva Burgos (Montevideo: Editorial Alfa, 1960), p. 25.

through the first person narration of her experiences that the author illustrates his condemnation of an affluent upper class which turns human beings into objects to be manipulated and exploited for the selfish interests of the idle rich.

The sexual exploitation of lower-class youths appears in Corral abierto where the author refers to a homosexual's dealings with young boys who work for him, and in Eva Burgos where the police rape the incarcerated prostitutes.

In summation, many examples exist of Amorim's use of sex as a thematic element in his later novels but all serve the same purpose. In portraying the bestial character of the poverty-ridden, uneducated lower class, the author condemns society for allowing the existence of conditions that would produce such individuals. And in the portrayal of the sexual depravity which characterizes the upper class, he criticizes the selfishness and lack of regard for the welfare of their fellow human beings.

Violence and Death

Life on the sparsely-inhabitated pampa is savage and cruel. It is a land of brutal men, hardened by a harsh environment. Death, usually accompanied by violence, is a common occurrence and accepted with a stoic

resignation or even an indifferent detachment. Death serves to emphasize the bestiality and the primitive passions of the inhabitants of this brutal region.

In La carreta, two principal characters, Mat cabayo and his son, Chiquiño, both meet violent ends: the father, killed by a bullet, and the son, felled by a blow on the back of his neck. Correntino dies from a beating administered him to stop "eso de llorar por una hembra" (LC. 77). Since there is a shortage of women, it is only natural that men should quarrel over who is going to possess them. This occurs in several scenes. Violence and death take on a macabre aspect with the sadistic vengeance of Chiquiño. His rival and victim, Alfaro, is not to know the peace of a graveyard. Chiquiño has been planning his revenge methodically, and after murdering Alfaro, disposes of the body by feeding it to his pigs which he has been starving for two or three weeks. Alfaro's demise is reflected in the dying sun which stains the earth. "Un rayo rojo a ras de tierra doraba los campos" (LC. 80-81).

Like the sexual problem, which is directly related to the environment, violence in the plainsmen is a characteristic shared with and caused by the violent pampa. Thus Amorim takes pains to link nature with the scenes in which violence or death occur. One example is Amorim's use of nature to foreshadow violence or death.

In one scene, Matacabayo is waiting for the revolutionary forces to arrive. Serenity is depicted in the cart's reflection in the placid water. "La carreta solitaria, detenida en la vecindad del paso, se reflejaba en el agua mansa de un sangrador" (LC. 104). Soon, however, the peaceful image is shattered by the flap of a fish's tail. "La carreta reflejábase en el agua . . . la imagen se quebraba en mil pedazos . . . " (LC. 104). The next time the peaceful water is broken, it is caused by the desperate flight of the revolutionaries who are pursued by government forces. "Los fugitivos cayeron al paso, ahogando su precipitado rumor en el agua tranquila" (LC. 105). Matacabayo, fleeing for his life with the others, is shot from behind.

Another device to link man and the land is Amorim's use of nature to coincide with intense emotions which lead to violence or death. In chapter eleven of La carreta, first published as a short story entitled "El pájaro negro," the tale is woven around three characters: Cándido, el loco, whose only reply to any question is "el lau flaco"; the storyteller, who is loved by all for his entertaining tales; and the third, the aguafiestas, an irritating provoker who destroys the gaiety by interrupting the story with sarcastic remarks. The storyteller's enchantment over the crowd is broken by these remarks. The references to the raging storm outside

echo the tension, and the allusions to the aguafiestas as a bird of ill-omen spread a shroud of evil portent over the scene.

> La lluvia arrecia. Azota el vendaval. Tempestad o tormenta que traen hasta las casas a esos pájaros negros que al día siguiente, cuando el sol comienza a secar los campos inundados, desaparecen misteriosamente. Dejan impresión de mal augurio y no se los olvida jamás.
>
> El forastero tiene apariencias de pájaro de tempestad. Al terminar una de las historias más exitosas, pregunta con sorna:
>
> —Y, ¿quién era el comisario en ese tiempo?
>
> El auditorio siente una ráfaga helada (LC. 84).

The stranger has hit the storyteller in his most vulnerable spot, by breaking the spell of mirth cast by his tales. It is emphasized by Cándido's insane repetition of his only phrase: "el lau flaco, sabe, el lau flaco" (LC. 84). The atmosphere, formerly one of gaiety, is now charged with foreboding, which works against the inspiration of the storyteller. He flees the scene, attempting to cross the river to friendlier faces.

> Seguía cayendo la lluvia torrencialmente. . . .

> Se larga en el torrente. Un agua negra, salpicada de relámpagos, marcha con árboles y animales. Más que una arteria de la tierra, parece un brazo de la noche. . . . "El cuentero" sólo piensa en el halago de la gente que lo quiere y en alejarse del enemigo que le trajo la tormenta (LC. 85).

But the river, which appears as the "arm of night," is really the arms of death reaching out to the storyteller. His body is discovered the next day while in the distance the aguafiestas gallops away, his black poncho in the wind "con aletazos de pájaro que huye" (LC. 86). Thus nature not only contributes to mood, echoing the violence of the emotions, but takes an active role in the tragic outcome.

Amorim may use nature to reflect a character's state of mind in a particular instance. One scene, explicit in macabre detail, portrays Chiquiño's delirium. He lies dying on the open pampa, bathed in moonlight, his decision to open the coffin of his wife frustrated by a blow on the neck. Nevertheless, his dream prolongs the action, that of opening the coffin, retrieving the bones covered with putrid flesh, washing them in the arroyo, until, one by one, they escape through his fingers to lie, dispersed, at the bottom of the stream.

> La luna estaba alta . . .

> Un rayo de luna chocaba sobre la vaina de plata . . .
>
> Había lugares grises como manchas de sarna, que podían estar blancos a la luz de la luna . . .
>
> El camino, iluminado por la luna . . .
>
> El arroyo corre, como si la luna lo persiguiese . . .
>
> . . . con ojos más codiciosos que la luna.
>
> ¿Por qué se le escapan como peces tiesos para irse en la corriente perseguida por la luna?
>
> ¿Huirían de la luna aquellos pedacitos de luna tan puliditos y tan limpios?
>
> . . . alguien, a verlos creerá que la luna ha caído del cielo . . . (LC. 116-118).

The brillance of the moonlight illuminates every detail of the delirium. But just as moonlight is only a reflection, so the dream is only a confused and distorted reflection of reality, and the workings of Chiquiño's mind are those of a lunatic.

Violence and death appear frequently throughout Amorim's novelistic production. In the early novels such as Tangarupá and La carreta, violence or death, like sex, is used to reflect the nature of the land itself. It is a harsh, cruel environment and the people who inhabit

this region are intimately related to and affected by their environment. They are products of the land and they exhibit identical characteristics. In El paisano Aguilar (1934), the cruelty and violence of the land not only brutalize Aguilar, but lead to his defeat. Droughts deplete his herds and eventually a flood destroys them, along with the protagonist's last hope of success. Violence in nature appears in this novel primarily to aid in plot development and characterization. In El caballo y su sombra (1941), the death of Rossi's child is sufficient to provide motivation for his seeking revenge. Here, the violence and death serve for character development. In the same novel, the death of Nico's child and subsequently, that of Nico himself, signify the victory of progress over tradition. In this instance, death is used as a thematic illustration.

In Amorim's mystery novels, of course, death serves as a triggering device to set off a series of events leading to the eventual solution of the murder. In later novels, where the pampa has been tamed, the blame for violence and death commonplace among the lower class is switched from the natural environment to the social situation. As with the thematic element of sex, Amorim uses violence and death to illustrate social ills caused by indifference or deliberate exploitation on the part of the ruling elite.

In Nueve lunas sobre Neuquén (1946), the cruel and barbarous methods of the regime in power are attacked. Amorim displays the struggles and persecutions of the Allied sympathizers during World War II. The novel begins in November, 1944. In spite of Argentina's pretensions of neutrality during the war, sympathy runs high for the Axis and there is no doubt that the regime in power is violently pro-Nazi. The story opens with the marriage of two young working-class people. At the wedding reception, four members of the leftist party complain about the treatment given the political prisoners in Argentina. By focusing on one character, Amorim recites the cruelty of which the regime is capable. Constantino relates the tortures suffered by his brother who has fallen into the hands of the government agents. The brother is beaten, threatened, suffers continual interrogations and harassment. He is even tortured by the use of an electric needle. In this instance, violence has become a weapon of persecution of the ruling elite. Farías, a young idealist, attempts to picture himself suffering these torments. The result fills him with fear, for he doubts that he can maintain silence under the stress. Later, lacking confidence in being able to withstand torture, Farías commits suicide by throwing himself under a train rather than take the chance of betraying his comrades. One questions whether Farías' idealism is sufficient motivation for

suicide, but Amorim is attempting, through Farías' selfless act of sacrifice for his friends and ideals, to gain the reader's sympathy for the persecuted workers.

In the opening scene of La luna se hizo con agua (1944), cruel punishment by those in power is again illustrated. A baqueano[11] who is condemned to die for aiding the escape of some revolutionaries is buried neck deep and trampled by a herd of horses. This scene serves as exposition since it occurs many years before the rest of the novel's action. It also serves as character motivation for the protagonist who, by trying to better the lives of the peons on the ranch, is attempting to atone for the barbarous deed of her ancestor. In Los montaraces (1957), a wet cowhide awaits a worker who has dared to leave his job. If he is found, he will be wrapped in the cowhide to await death as it slowly dries and crushes him. These examples illustrate the use of violence by those in power to persecute or exploit the lower class and serve to paint the selfish, bestial character of those who have no concern for the welfare of the humble.

In summation, in the early novels where the pampa is still unmarred, the people are conditioned by environment, and the violent characteristics they display reflect the violence of the pampa itself. In later novels, the

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[11] An expert guide or scout.

thematic element of death and violence may serve as an aid in plot development, characterization, or as illustrations of the author's theme, but always serves to point out the social injustices suffered by the lower class in their struggle for a better life.

Poverty, Ignorance, and Superstition

The pampa of La carreta is not only a violent land but also a poor one. It is a primitive area, sparsely settled, untamed and uncultivated. Man has yet to learn to exploit this savage region, to make it produce a good livelihood for him. Therefore, the people of this land exhibit the same characteristics. They are poor, both physically and spiritually.

The sedentary concept of family life does not appear in La carreta. However, the desire of the unfortunate women, whose fate it is to wander forever, is one of longing for a home, a place to call their own. The hopelessness of ever achieving their dream of owning their own plot of ground is a direct precedent for what becomes one of the author's prime concerns in later works--the unjust distribution of land. This thematic element is not as important in this novel as in others, but its major role in later works lends a significance to it that makes it worthy of mention.

In one scene, the cart is passing by a ranch house

and the house is depicted from the viewpoint of the cart's inhabitants.

> Desde la carreta, la estancia se veía sin rencor. Se veía con los ojos de la fatalidad, con la mirada de la resignación, con la sumisión de quienes todo lo acatan. La carreta, el azar, lo que se gana y que se pierde en los caminos, lo que puede hallarse, lo inesperado, capaz de surgir del fondo de la noche sin fondo; caer del cielo en los días que ni en el cielo se cree (LC. 59).

In this scene, the parallel phrases stressing "fatalidad," "resignación," and "sumisión," emphasize the hopelessness and stoic acceptance of the fate of the women in the cart. The last sentence with its contrasting phrases echoes the vicissitudes of a life of aimless wandering, "el azar," with no goals. The lack of faith, "ni en el cielo se cree," and the bottomless despair, "la noche sin fondo," are suggested in a way that no accumulation of physical details could equal.

The paragraph immediately following consists mostly of rhetorical questions. These questions are given by an omniscient author who sums up the thoughts of all the quitanderas, thus bringing the problem into focus. The peaceful, sedentary existence of the estancias contrasts sharply with the endless movement of the wandering cart.

> ¿Por qué estaban ellas enclavadas en los cerros y tenía que rodar la carreta, como rancho con ruedas, siempre por el camino, sin hallar un trozo de tierra que no fuese de nadie? ¿Es que no habría un rincón en el mundo, para dar de comer a los bueyes, sin tener que pedir permiso, un palmo de tierra para sembrar un poco de maíz y esperar la cosecha? ¿No habría en la tierra tan grande, tan grande, un pedazo de tierra sin dueño? (LC. 60).

The remainder of the scene is punctuated with repetition, underlining the endless movement of the cart. "Pasó la carreta.", " . . . se veía pasar la carreta . . . ", "Desde la estancia se la veía pasar . . . " (LC. 60). The hopelessness of achieving the desire of stability, a place to call home, is summed up in one sentence--the cart has no goal. "Sin embargo aquella carreta, únicamente tenía rumbo cuando se detenía en la noche" (LC. 60).

A startling contrast occurs in the final chapter. The cart has come to rest and its tortuous journeys across the pampa are over. "La carreta había echado raíces. Las ruedas tiradas a un lado, sólo conservaban los restos de uno que otro rayo. Las llantas, estiradas, habían sido transformadas en recios tirantes. El pértigo, clavado en el suelo de punta, hacía de palenque. La carreta habíase convertido en rancho" (LC. 129). The

reader is painfully aware of the tragic paradox. For only when the cart has ceased to function, only when it is dead, will it become attached to the ground; only when its inhabitants, condemned to a nomadic existence, have ceased to live, will they possess their little plot of ground in which to rest.

The hopelessness of these people without goals, without roots, is a characteristic they carry from birth since many of them are illegitimate, the products of simple chance. In summing up the description of a particular character in El paisano Aguilar, Amorim shows that this character is representative of many of the plain's inhabitants.

> ¡Hijos del campo, nacidos del azar, al azar concebidos! Hijos de la soledad, del bostezo, del aburrimiento. Hijos engendrados bajo los techos de los ranchos, por los hombres de las casas. Hijos de los caminos, de la entraña fácil o necesitada, que se expone bajo las carretas, entre los barrancos, por los pajonales. Hijos del surco humano, aguardador de la semilla, como la única alegría de la existencia. . . . Promiscuidad del campo, venganza terrible de

la llanura.[12]

The spiritual poverty evidenced in these people of the plains is accompanied by ignorance and superstition. In the earlier works, ignorance and superstition are simply a way of life on the pampa. But in the later novels, Amorim again places the blame on the upper classes for allowing such conditions to exist. In La victoria no viene sola (1953), Amorim focuses on the protagonist, showing some of his youthful experiences through the flashback technique. The most impressive of these is one in which Tomasa, the maid in the protagonist's household, murders her illegitimate new-born son by hanging him in the hole of the latrine. Amorim portrays deep sympathy, through the protagonist, for this working girl, forced to perform such a deed through fear of losing her job. This illustration of the protagonist's early life also serves to provide motivation for the main character's struggle in trying to better the lives of his lower-class acquaintances.

Superstition, often personified in the curandera, plays an important role in the early novels where there is no recourse to advanced medical treatment on the pampa.

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[12]Enrique Amorim, El paisano Aguilar (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1958), pp. 114-115. Subsequent references to this edition will be included in the text and cited as EPA.

However, in Los montaraces (1957), a later novel, it has become an instrument of exploitation in the hands of the owners of a lumber firm, who use it to control and exploit their laborers.

This third thematic element consisting of poverty, ignorance, and superstition is employed throughout his novels by Amorim in the same manner as the others. In early novels, it is simply a characteristic of the miserable lives of the plain's dwellers. In later novels, these become devices of social protest to gain sympathy for the lower classes, showing them to be victims of exploitation by the upper levels of society.

In summary, the elements of sex; death and violence: and poverty, ignorance and superstition appear throughout almost all of Amorim's novelistic production. They perform various functions by serving as aids in characterization, plot development, and setting. In early novels they tend to describe the pampa and its inhabitants, showing an intimate relationship between the land and the people. In later novels, they serve as thematic aids, means by which Amorim illustrates the injustices suffered by the lower classes and his sympathy for their struggle against an unjust exploitation by the upper classes.

CHAPTER III

FOCUS OF NARRATION, SPACE, AND TIME

(*El paisano Aguilar*)

This novel evolves around a strong central protagonist, Pancho Aguilar, a young man raised on the family ranch, "El Palenque." His father, who has spent his life as a rancher, struggling against the many adversities which characterize life on the pampa, has planned for his youngest son to be a man of the city. This wish is not fulfilled, however, for at the time of the father's death, Pancho is the only remaining heir. Returning after years of absence in the city, Aguilar feels ill-equipped to take up his new role as *estanciero*. But he really had never adapted to city life and beneath his urban exterior still lie those rural traits which had earned for him the nickname of "paisano" from his fellow students.

The first problem to overcome is one of adaptation to his new role without the peons noting his feelings of inadequacy. This is accomplished and, by the end of the first third of the novel, Aguilar has shed his urban cocoon, emerging with a rough exterior that reflects his true essence--a man of the plains. From this point,

Aguilar's circumstances begin to deteriorate. Successive misfortunes befall him, leading him deeper and deeper into debt. He finds himself taking on other responsibilities with which he has no desire to burden himself. He feels trapped between his fiancée in town and his rural mistress who has borne him a son. Floods, drought, and sickness deplete his herds; mortgages pile up. The loneliness and monotony of the long days mesmerize him and the vast limitless spaces close in, imprisoning him, inhibiting freedom of movement.

Confronted with the only alternative available to him, that of fleeing the non-productive and decaying ranch, he makes his decision to head northward with a band of smugglers to a life of action, free from all responsibilities. Frustrated in this attempt by unforeseen circumstances, he apparently resigns himself to staying on the ranch with his mistress.

In Norman Friedman's classification of various types of plot, El paisano Aguilar best fits the category of the "degeneration plot."

> A character change for the worse occurs when we start with a protagonist who was at one time sympathetic and full of ambition and subject him to some crucial loss which results in his utter disillusionment. . . . There is a sequence of feeble and short-range hopes followed by the

materialization of long-range fears . . . [1]

The reader's reaction to Aguilar's eventual failure, while tinged with disgust for his indecisiveness, tends toward a feeling of sympathy because the author shows that the flaw in the protagonist's character is not entirely of his own doing and also because the protagonist's fate is decided, in part at least, by misfortunes such as disease, drought, and floods: conditions over which the rancher has no control.

With the exception of some mental flashbacks (or, in one instance, a dream) the over-all structure of the novel is lineal, that is, a series of actions which result in Aguilar's defeat. Exposition is woven into the fabric of the plot and either given in the form of mental flashback through the protagonist's memory or through direct narration by the author. In chapter I, through the memory of Aguilar, for whom "era imposible desviar los recuerdos, no dar cursos a las evocaciones de la infancia" (EPA. 7), the author gives the history of the ranch's inhabitants, including the protagonist, thereby setting the scene, characters, and opening situation. Successive flashbacks occur throughout the work serving as exposition or aids to characterization.

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[1] Norman Friedman, "Forms of the Plot," in The Theory of the Novel, ed. Philip Stevick (New York: The Free Press, 1967), p. 165.

The complication consists of two phases. In the first third of the novel, the question is basically one of the protagonist's complete acclimatization to the country. This change, made voluntarily by Aguilar, is shown primarily by the author's description of the protagonist's exterior and, therefore, appears to be more of a change of manners than of character. The rest of the novel concerns Aguilar's increasing disillusionment and eventually his involuntary surrender to the pampa after suffering a series of misfortunes. In both parts of the novel, whether the emphasis is on the exterior or interior transition of Aguilar, the structure is lineal--a series of occurrences all contributing to the change.

The denouement, Aguilar's failure with the ranch, coincides with the moment of illumination (Amorim's illustration that Aguilar has succumbed) when the bank decides to foreclose. Nevertheless, one door to escape still remains--Aguilar's escape to the north with the stolen herd. The climax of action occurs in a dramatic scene in which a flash flood threatens the extinction of the herd. In the futile attempt to save it, Aguilar's last hope is smashed, leaving the protagonist in a state of stoic resignation to whatever the future may bring.

The exceptions to the serial arrangement of episodes in El paisano Aguilar appear in two forms. First are the

flashbacks, mentioned above, which serve as legitimate and useful aids to exposition and characterization. The second, which constitutes the novel's most serious defect, is the inclusion of certain episodes which are lacking in thematic value or, in other words, do not serve to support the major theme. One example is Aguilar's attack of sickness while at the whorehouse and his subsequent recovery in town. This episode leads to a cul-de-sac, with the reader wondering why it was included in the novel, since it serves no other purpose than to offer Amorim an opportunity to sermonize directly against "solteronas." Another instance illustrates again Amorim's habit of self-plagiarism. This is his inclusion of two short stories, one of which is completely lacking in thematic relevance.[2] This insertion of extraneous material tends to destroy the unity of the basic theme--the failure of the central personage.

The author's manipulation of the setting reflects the changes occurring in the protagonist. The action alternates between town and country, but as Aguilar's urban manners diminish, so do his visits to his fiancée in town. In the first half of the novel, these visits serve

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[2]"Quemacampos" and "Un peón." Both stories appeared originally in one of Amorim's collections of cuentos: Horizontes y bocacalles (Buenos Aires: Ediciones El Inca, 1926).

to show the changes taking place in the protagonist, changes from urban mannerisms to rural, which the author portrays through the observations and comments of Aguilar's acquaintances in town. In the second half, the author limits the trips to three or four and employs these occasions to illustrate Aguilar's complete inadaptability to city life. Thus the artist juxtaposes settings to show the metamorphosis which occurs in the protagonist and the eventual victory of the pampa is reflected in the diminishing role that the urban setting plays.

While the major theme of this novel is the traditional one of "civilización y barbarie," which displays man's struggle against the telluric forces of the pampa and, in this case, the resultant victory of nature, there is also a strong sub-theme. For the novel demonstrates that while the forces of nature are indeed formidable, they are not unconquerable. Why, then, does Aguilar fail?

The critic, Juan B. González, points out that Amorim's intent, with his portrait of Aguilar, is to paint the modern gaucho, a being characterized by abulia, inadaptability, and nomadic tendencies, which make him a misfit in modern society, unable to cope with present-day problems and, therefore, doomed to failure.

> Deducimos . . . que Amorim, de modo deliberado o no, nos da con el paisano Aguilar otro

> avatar del legendario personaje, confirmando otra vez, por si ello fuera necesario, que el gaucho-paisano es el mismo inadaptado, destinado a ser barrido por el progreso europeo, que hace sesenta años pintara Hernández. . . . La inconformidad gauchesca, la cobardía frente a los obstáculos diarios, la carencia de espíritu de empresa, el natural fatalista y haragán del criollo se salvan intactos en Aguilar.[3]

Aguilar's character is complex and the protagonist himself really feels that his goal is to make a success of the decaying ranch. But the author makes it clear from the very beginning that the struggle between man and nature is hopelessly lopsided. In the opening paragraph, Amorim describes Aguilar's first week on the ranch. "Y desde la ventana de su cuarto, permaneció más de una semana inactivo, mirando el campo, a veces tras la humareda de su cigarrillo" (EPA. 7). This is not the portrait of a conqueror but of an abulic dreamer and Aguilar's efforts do not become much more intense throughout the rest of the novel. As the protagonist's character emerges, the image of indecisiveness is

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[3] Juan B. González, "Letras argentinas: Una novela gauchesca," Nosotros, 1 (1936), 444.

strengthened. "Un día, sin querer, tropezó con una frase de Flaubert que le hizo meditar: 'Sus padres tenían dinero para pagarle una carrera, pero no les alcanzaba para comprarle un destino.' A él le había sucedido algo semejante" (EPA. 17). Finally, the author explains directly that the protagonist is a member of a "lost" generation, those sons born to money but lacking a dream or goal in life.

> No les agradaba nada en particular, no tenían gustos definidos . . . los padres habían laborado para ahorrar algo en el Banco, la fatiga después y la necesidad de descanso consiguiente les impidieron forjar sueños. Por esa razón, sólo dejaron frutos materiales; y los hijos, los nietos, se vieron en el mismo estado de salud espiritual. . . .
>
> Aguilar no era un ambicioso de dinero, pero carecía de toda otra ambición (EPA. 135).

The author shows this weakness in Aguilar's character in other ways. For example, irony appears in the title of El paisano Aguilar in the oxymoronic juxtaposition of "paisano" and "Aguilar." It is significant that the author uses paisano instead of gaucho. The lofty and noble qualities associated with the eagle appear directly contrasted with "paisano," which takes on a pejorative sense perhaps of "hick" or "bumpkin." This use of irony

in the title shows that Aguilar does not possess those heroic qualities necessary for a victory over his powerful adversary, the pampa. The author reinforces this illustration later in the work with another example of ironic juxtaposition which contrasts Aguilar's optimistic dreams with the reality which eventually disillusions him. "Nuevo paisano, nuevo conquistador de tierras ariscas" (EPA. 98 [Italics added]). Thus the author succeeds in portraying a type of person who does not possess the forceful characteristics necessary to conquer and exploit the savage pampa and therefore, by his very nature, is destined to defeat in his struggle.

Focus of Narration

Throughout the novel, the author maintains an omniscient viewpoint, enabling him to focus upon any character and delineate his thought processes. At times, in relating a scene, Amorim prefers the dramatic method of presentation, in which the scene is presented completely without the author's intrusion. In this type of narration, the reader is not privy to the characters' thoughts, but relies on actions and dialogue completely. More often, Amorim chooses to present the action through the eyes of one of the characters, showing the effects of the action through the observations and mental processes of the "central intelligence"--the focus of narration at that

particular time.

Although the central point of interest is Aguilar's transformation, the author focuses on other characters to perform certain functions: to aid in characterization, to illustrate certain misconceptions that townspeople have of life on the ranch, or to criticize the social structure in one manner or another.

In one instance, the author attacks the archaic social structure of the rural area by portraying the subservient attitude of the tradesmen toward the feudal _estancieros_, the lords of the land. By focusing on Sofía's father, Aguilar's future father-in-law, Amorim describes through direct narration the feelings of social inferiority experienced by Mr. López and the latter's idealization of his daughter's fiancé. "El ideal de toda su vida fue ser _hacendado_. . . . ¡Viejo e inveterado orden jerárquico del comercio! Un productor de suelas, un transformador de la materia prima que Aguilar apenas si cultivaba, se sentía inferior, sí, inferior ante el hacendado de _El Palenque_. Absurdo concepto del casi feudalismo americano" (_EPA_. 93). By concentrating on this individual, Amorim displays what he considers to be a completely inverted hierarchy, and his contempt is especially manifested in the word "absurdo."

Another strong social criticism is evidenced when Amorim, portraying some politicians in their visit to a

neighboring ranch, displays the corruption and duplicity which characterize an outmoded caudillismo. Unfortunately, while this episode could well have contributed to Aguilar's growing feeling of hopelessness, the author fails to relate it to the main struggle between the protagonist and the pampa. Furthermore, its force is diluted by the author's direct intervention with much sermonizing. His point is well made through the action and dialogue of the characters and the author's additional comment is detracting.

By focusing on Aguilar's neighbor, Cayetano, Amorim portrays the outmoded reactionary caudillo, the feudal lord par excellence. Cayetano's misguided faith in the wily politicians leads him to make substantial contributions to them and this relationship offers Amorim the opportunity to criticize the whole archaic political system. In addition, Cayetano's plans for his son are exactly the same as those that Aguilar's father had for Pancho--first schooling, and then a career in the city. In one scene, where Cayetano is sending the boy off to school, Aguilar empathizes with the boy, mentally reviewing the identical episode in his own life. Cayetano's failure to provide his son with a spiritual goal (like Aguilar's father) is evident when the boy returns to the ranch, having failed in the city. Thus Amorim uses this episode to provide the reader with a further insight

into the character of Aguilar himself.

In the first third of the novel, Amorim uses Aguilar's visits to town in order to illustrate the change from urban to rural mannerisms which occur in the protagonist. By focusing on Sofía and Luciano, Aguilar's fiancée and friend, the author illustrates these changes by means of dialogue. "Antes, sé que leía diarios, revistas. Ahora . . . —y Sofía quedó sumergida en hondos pensamientos. . . . ¡Se está poniendo como un verdadero gaucho!" (EPA. 128-129). This dialogue serves as an introduction to the author's direct relation of the exterior metamorphosis in Aguilar.

> Y había, por fin, una violencia en el rostro de su novio, infundidora de miedo. Violencia de la llanura, mirada de lucha, terquedad en el juicio, intolerancia y vehemencia, arrinconadas en su silencio, en una parquedad casi misteriosa. . . . Las mismas características faciales que en el colegio le dieron el mote de "paisano," ahora, en el campo, se hacían permanentes, fatales; eran ya su verdadero rostro (EPA. 129).

Although the emphasis in this passage is on the physical alteration of the personage, inclusion of such words as "violencia," "intolerancia," "terquedad," etc., suggests that the exterior changes reflect an interior regression to rural character traits which were only dormant in

Aguilar.

At the end of the novel, Amorim suggests the need for new approaches to conquering the pampa, stating that present methods have resulted in failure. Through Luciano (the name bears the sense of "he who enlightens") he suggests some of the solutions such as new legislation and population of the empty pampa, solutions which he will dwell upon in detail later in El caballo y su sombra. His indignation, aroused by the backwardness of rural existence, is brought out more strongly by his use of a violent, pathological vocabulary.

> [Luciano] auguraba, por lo tanto, la solución de los arduos problemas económicos mediante la implantación de leyes avanzadas, de una legislación que permitiese la explotación de la tierra a un mayor número de personas y en forma intensiva.
>
> —¡Y caminos, caminos, Pancho; para drenarles esa vida pestífera que llevan ustedes; para limpiarles el tumor de la indolencia, de la haraganería hereditaria! Fecundar la tierra, inyectarle una savia nueva mediante nuevas leyes . . . —charlaba Luciano . . . (EPA. 192-193).

The idealization of country life that is evident in the attitude of Sofía's father is echoed in another character. Tota, a young prostitute in town, is a

disillusioned girl, withdrawn and incommunicative. To the surprise of all who know her, her interest is enlivened tremendously when Aguilar suggests that she spend a week on his ranch. Her enthusiasm is boundless as she imagines for herself the carefree life of the country. This romantic viewpoint of one who has never had to confront the destructive forces of nature contrasts sharply with the burdens and disillusionment suffered by Aguilar.

This misconception of ranch life is shared by the bankers in town. Focusing on Aguilar, the author shows, through mental flashback, the over-simplified solutions offered by the town bankers to the protagonist's difficulties. To the townsmen, Aguilar's misfortunes in his struggle with the savage environment are simple problems easily rectified by manipulations on paper--a new loan, a few more IOU's, his signature on a new mortgage, and all his problems disappear.

> Los problemas intrincados, las soluciones ar-duas, aparecían, por magia urbana, por tretas incomprensibles, meros juegos de niños. Aquella montaña de cuotas atrasadas, de vencimientos agobiadores, no eran sino fantasmones creados por la estancia. Todo se podía arreglar mediante un ligero cambio de ideas, tres o cuatro pagarés, una firma más y asunto terminado (EPA. 164).

Thus difficulties which seem insurmountable when directly

experienced by the rancher take on an almost insignificant air when viewed from the eyes of Aguilar's friends in town.

The use of shifting focus of narration to provide the author with opportunities to criticize sociological or political inequities is common in Amorim's novels, especially in his later ones, where the author's works take on a strong theme of social justice. By concentrating on the misery and suffering of the lower classes, but focusing from time to time on the upper class, he forges a strong contrast, pointing out the selfish, often decadent, characteristics of the ruling elite.

This shifting focus of narration, in addition to providing the author with targets for social criticism, is employed by Amorim as an aid to characterization or to provide exposition. One of the best examples of exposition, by focusing upon a particular character, appears in El caballo y su sombra. In the first half of the novel, there is a distinct advantage in presenting the action through Marcelo's eyes, for the latter has been absent from the scene of action for ten years. Either Marcelo notices changes having occurred in the recent past or learns of them naturally through conversations with other characters. Since the reader sees most of the action in the first half of the novel through Marcelo's eyes, he is fully informed not only of the information that Marcelo

receives, but is also privy to the personal conclusions or judgements that Marcelo makes concerning the information. Thus by focusing on Marcelo, the author is able to provide exposition in an entirely logical and natural manner.

Space

In El paisano Aguilar, the main interest evolves around Aguilar's disillusionment and subsequent failure. Therefore, the principal focus of narration is centered on the protagonist. The author shows the changes in Aguilar to be motivated primarily by the solitude and silence of the vast distances and the monotonous repetition of long, dreary days.

> Le habían llegado muy escasas noticias del pueblo vecino y comenzaban a agriársele la soledad y la distancia (EPA. 28).
>
> . . . sus ojos padecían esa irritación que producen, en los párpados, los espacios abiertos contemplados de la mañana a la noche (EPA. 68-69).

Amorim shows the passing days as identical, with nothing to distinguish one from the other, through comparisons to natural phenomena with which Aguilar would be familiar. "Sus días parejos eran como esas tropas de un solo pelo, como esas arboledas plantadas en línea"

(EPA. 154). The monotony of silence weighs heavily on the plainsman as brought out by Amorim with a beautiful example of synesthesia. "Cuando soltó los auriculares, el silenc de plomo de la estancia le pesó en el alma . . . " (EPA. 30).

Amorim personifies the pampa as man's adversary, a voracious monster which consumes man's strength and swallows him up. "Insaciable planicie, devadora de toda energía, acaparadora de hombres . . . " (EPA. 98). Even death is an insignificant detail, destined for oblivion. "Una muerte en el campo se diluye en la inmensidad, se la devora la llanura, acunadora de todos los olvidos" (EPA. 189).

It is through two types of images that Amorim best displays Aguilar's transformation and these appear throughout the novel. The first of these is the circle figure, a symbol with the inherent suggestion of an enclosure. It is used by Amorim in this novel to describe the feelings of imprisonment that Aguilar experiences. This immobility felt by the protagonist is threefold. First, he is a prisoner of abulic indecisiveness, unable to cope spiritually with the vast open spaces of the pampa. Second, he feels tied down physically by responsibilities: the ranch, his mistress and son, his fiancée in town, and the debts he has incurred. Third, he is a prisoner of time, with frustrated desires to return to a youthful

era of freedom from responsibility. The circle figure is intimately related to and artfully employed in the illustration of the first two of these three facets of Aguilar's imprisonment.

In some instances, Aguilar's encirclement is suggested in general terms.

> Se sentía como una cuña, encajada en la immensidad que le rodeaba . . .
>
> . . . y las [tres mil cuadras] sintió apretujarse, rodearle, ceñirle (EPA. 16 [Italics added]).

Other examples refer specifically to the encirclement. "Se hallaba como en un círculo estrecho, entregado de cuerpo y alma a la estancia, a su paz, a su soledad, al silencio . . . con esa inmovilidad que acompaña hasta exasperar" (EPA. 65). Paradoxically, the vast open spaces imprison Aguilar, turning him in toward himself.

> La llanura se le apareció más que nunca como una prisión, cuyas paredes, en lugar de alzarse, se tendían sobre la tierra hasta el horizonte. . . .
>
> Se le habían cerrado todas las puertas y era tan sólo un punto en el vasto círculo del horizonte (EPA. 187).

The circle figure takes other forms as well, suggesting even direct physical contact. As Aguilar's

responsibilities and problems mount, he suffers the feeling of being roped or choked.

> Aguilar probó mil recetas . . . para evitar aquel lazo . . . (EPA. 142).
>
> . . . su recuerdo molestábale, como el botón de un cuello estrecho que hinca en la nuez (EPA. 141).
>
> . . . una angustia jamás experimentada se le anudó a la garganta (EPA. 30).

The monotony and loneliness are so great that time itself appears to stand still and is pictured, like Aguilar, as being choked into immobility. "Si la soledad se padece entre cuatro muros, termina por hacerse un nudo y ahorca las horas (EPA. 18). The circle of the limitless horizon begins to close in on the protagonist, depriving him of all freedom of movement until, toward the end of the novel, Aguilar is dehumanized, pictured as a wild beast whose spirit has been broken, and is now imprisioned in a circular pen. "Acorralado por todos, embretado, se había puesto el pelaje de la fiera mansa" (EPA. 162). His neighbor, Cayetano, has suffered the same fate: " . . . las trampas rodeándole, como corral de palo a pique" (EPA. 163).

To complement the circle images which portray Aguilar's captivity, the author employs a contrasting set of images which concentrate on Aguilar himself, rather

than the encirclement. Through comparisons to forms of vegetable life, such as trees and vines, the author shows the protagonist to be "ensnared" or "rooted" to the center of the surrounding circumference. First are those images which describe Aguilar in general tree-like terms, as when the author shows Aguilar's inadaptability to town life, describing his uneasiness as a result of being "transplanted." "En aquel ambiente de piedras y cemento se sentía un poco vegetal, árbol trasplantado de rugoso tronco. Marchitado el semblante, como las hojas de una fronda revolcada por los caminos" (EPA. 192). Both Aguilar and his neighbor are described in terms of trees. Thus, the author, who already had linked their fates together when he described both of them as penned animals, now reinforces that parallel.

> Don Cayetano, un tronco recio . . . (EPA. 163).

> Malvina se acercó al paisano Aguilar, de pie e inmóvil, como un árbol (EPA. 196).

The fact that Aguilar is pictured in the last example as "de pie" is of special significance. In an early part of the novel, the author relates, in a rather long passage, the tremendous feeling of optimism that Aguilar experiences when on horseback--a feeling of dominance over his environment and of belonging to the pampa.

> Desde su caballo, por vez primera, sintió

> cierto dominio sobre la tierra que pisaban los ágiles cascos de la bestia.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> . . . Aguilar se sentía en su rol, identificado con el campo. No cabe duda, pensaba, estoy en mi medio. Gozo de esta paz, de este sosiego; y es hermoso arrear su fortuna, desde el lomo de un caballo (EPA. 50-51).

At the end of the novel, a startling contrast is made. With emphasis on the fact that Aguilar is on foot, the author forges the image of a tree rooted firmly to one spot. "De pie, recostado a un poste del portón . . . De pie, con los ojos bebiendo una luz indecisa. Los pies calentando la tierra, como la calientan las raíces tentaculares del ombú. De pie en la alta noche, mudo y sin ideas, como un rotundo algarrobo centenario" (EPA. 163). The contrast between the two passages clearly underlines not only Aguilar's complete loss of mobility and command, but his reduction from a dominant role to a vegetable-like state, "mudo y sin ideas."

In the last chapter, this image of Aguilar as a tree is carried even farther. Aguilar is in town with his friend, Luciano. The two encounter examples of petrified trees and the characteristics of the hardened trunks, "duros, ejemplares, ásperos" (EPA. 195), are clearly those of Aguilar. The comparison is brought about by

means of dialogue followed by the author's focusing on Luciano, delineating his thoughts.

> —¿Cuántos años se necesitarán para llegar a este estado? —se preguntó en voz alta Luciano.
>
> —Andá a saber; a lo mejor, en poco tiempo, un par de años . . .
>
> El rematador lo miró de soslayo. Poco tiempo, se dijo. En poco tiempo el tronco de un árbol no se hace piedra por la acción de las aguas, del limo. Se necesita quizás un siglo . . . Sin embargo, reflexionó, en qué pocos años, en la intemperie y la bárbara soledad de los campos, un ser humano se convierte en . . . (EPA. 195-196).

Reinforcing the imagery which portrays Aguilar's imprisonment--his being ensnared at the axis of the circumference--is the significance of the name of the ranch itself. El Palenque, the hitching post, is suggestive of captive immobility. The author relates Aguilar's associations to the name. "El Palenque, nombre evocado de sometimientos, de domesticidad: prisión al aire libre, palo asegurado en la llanura, atrapador de nómades, asegurador de animales, clavado vertical en la tierra, enredado de lazos y cabestros. Palo erguido en el campo, punto céntrico del círculo inmutable del horizonte" (EPA. 174).

While these complementary images of circumference and axis appear in separate instances in many parts of the novel, there is one chapter in which they are intimately coupled and augmented by other imagery. Aguilar has been in the woods with the smugglers, listening to their tales of adventure, and eventually falls into a drunken sleep, with his usual feelings of being imprisoned. "La noche y el monte fueron una misma cosa prieta y circular, con las apariencias de un calabozo. Prisión total, que Pancho hizo suya, en una pesadilla alcohólica jamás sentida" (EPA. 157). During this drunken sleep, he has a dream. In order to understand the significance of the events occurring in the dream, one must be aware of the fact that at age twelve, Aguilar was forced by his father to leave the family house, never to enter it again until the father's death, to go to live in a nearby brick house with his brothers and the ranch hands. The memory of this mysterious action on the part of his father perplexes Aguilar and when his disillusionment is complete, he realizes that his father's intention was that the sons, by coming into contact with the nomadic gauchos, might choose a career other than that of estanciero, thereby escaping the entrapment that the father himself had experienced by remaining on the ranch. To describe this strange action of the father, Amorim resorts to another image which also has significance in the dream. This is

the reference to Aguilar and his brothers in terms of birds, fledglings forced to leave the nest.

> Llegados al perfil de la adolescencia, como pájaros que se emancipan de la tutela de los padres, tenían que irse fuera del nido de piedra y convivir, en la casa de ladrillos, con los troperos, peones, mensuales, "agregados" (EPA. 8).
>
> Dentro de aquellos muros se había incubado un sueño de empresa (EPA. 8 [Italics added]).
>
> Evocaba irremediablemente, la vedada residencia de piedra, el misterio de aquel encierro de su padre, donde empollaba a los hijos para expulsarlos al llegar a la adolescencia . . . (EPA. 10 [Italics added]).

In the dream, Aguilar sees his father standing next to the main house. The cracks in the walls become roots and vines, rising from the ground, entwining the father, immobilizing him. Aguilar, in the bunkhouse, is laughing at his imprisoned father. The peals of laughter become white birds which enter the main house and emerge blackened. Their white plumage, transformed into a milky white liquid, oozes from the house and is devoured by the thirsty ground. With his mistress Malvina in his arms, Aguilar appears as a youth. Suddenly his three brothers, who had escaped into the outer world, appear on horseback accompanied by

the smuggler, Laguna, and all continue to ride around the house, forming the familiar circle figure. The horses grow larger and larger as the house diminishes to nothing. Aguilar joins the men on horseback and, breaking free of the circle, the men head northward, abandoning the father, who now stands alone.

This dream is the best example of Amorim's use of symbolic imagery, symbolic in the sense that there is no direct, one for one, allegorical relationship between the symbols employed and their application to this particular dream. They are suggestive of many associations. However, an attempt is made in the present study to tie them in with imagery employed by the author in other parts of the work so as to provide a meaningful and logical relationship between them and the over-all theme of the novel.

As the dream is presented, it is clear that Aguilar's circumstances on the ranch coincide with the same ones in which the father had found himself--imprisoned and desirous of freedom from responsibility. The father is pictured on foot, "como un centinela siniestro" (EPA. 159), suggesting the prohibition of his sons' entrance in the main house. The cracks become vines, twining around the father's head, immobilizing him: " . . . no podía quitar su cabeza de la enredadera que le ceñía" (EPA. 159). One crack separates the father's head from his body and is suggestive of an inner divisiveness. The ensnared head is the center

of logic, telling the father he must stay and face the responsibilities, but the body (the heart) longs to flee.

From time to time, glimpses of the darkened interior of the house are possible. Various articles appear such as flags, gold coins, a cask of caña. The latter two possibly represent the materialistic outlook and dissipation of the father, and the flags suggest possible political machinations or entanglements.

The fact that Aguilar sees himself in the bunkhouse as an adolescent is suggestive of his desire to return to the days of his youth, a period free from the responsibilities associated with the main house. His laughter is a reflection of a gay spirit, free from the worries which plague his father. Birds are symbols of liberty and the coupling of laughter with birds is an identification of happiness with the liberty and freedom of movement inherent in the bird symbol. Only when the birds come into contact with the house, the seat of responsibilities, do they emerge blackened with despair and hopelessness.

The dream occurs only in black and white, diametrically opposed symbols of positive and negative. The gloomy interior of the main house is associated with sadness and despondency while the symbols in white are associated with hope, gladness, and innocence. The loss of youthful hope and gaiety is insinuated by the white plumage, converted into a liquid, which is swallowed by

insatiable earth. It is also significant that the horses offering the means to escape are light-colored and that the guns that the men are wearing, hinting at an exciting life of danger and action, are nickel-plated.

In the dream, Amorim again makes the contrast between the man on foot and the horseman. Aguilar joins his brothers and the smuggler on horseback as they ride around the father, who remains, on foot, rooted to the ranch. The symbol of the man on horse suggests dominance, strength, and mobility. He is the master, the controlling spiritual force which prevails over matter (the horse) and maintains freedom of movement. The men on horseback form the circle figure, imprisoning the father at the axis. But at the end, they break the bounds of the imprisoning circle to head north to a life of action, free from unwanted responsibilities, while the decaying ranch disappears, swallowed by the ravenous pampa.

Thus Amorim has united, in one highly symbolic passage, the same images that he employs separately in other parts of the novel. There is the image of the bird, suggestive of youthful innocence and liberty, the juxtaposition of man on foot and the horseman, and finally, the circle figure formed by the mobile horsemen with the stationary figure of the father, "rooted" to the axis.

The feeling of isolation experienced by Aguilar, which results in ensimismamiento, is due to his living

in a vacuum. The vast expanse and solitude of the indomitable pampa turn men inward upon their thoughts and impede their turning to constructive action. This effect of space is amply illustrated also in El caballo y su sombra, where the days on the ranch pass without incident. Amorim displays the effects of the vast expanse and the monotonous repetition of the ranch's daily routine on Marcelo, who has been living in the city for ten years. "Se sentía incapaz de levantar la voz, sin ánimo por dar un paso, para estructurar un solo proyecto con salida al mañana."[4] Marcelo's sister-in-law, Adelita, warns him of the terrible loneliness of the pampa one evening at sunset: "Esta es una hora de prueba Marcelo —le dijo cariñosamente— si la soportas o si gozas con esta tranquilidad, habrás vencido la terrible soledad del campo" (ECS. 41). But no one ever really conquers the loneliness and monotony of the empty days, for Amorim describes the effects on the whole family: "Sin saber por qué, la familia tornábase hosca, ensimismada . . . Era nada más que el fin de la gran jornada vacía, con leguas y leguas abiertas a los cuatro vientos" (ECS. 44).

Marcelo, like Aguilar, feels the effects of the

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[4] Enrique Amorim, El caballo y su sombra (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1957), p. 42. Subsequent references to this edition will be included in the text and cited as ECS.

monotonous repetition in the erosion of his urban manners which Amorim describes through direct narration. "Habíase incorporado al ambiente, metiéndose en el ritmo cansino de la estancia. . . . Hasta empezó a descubrir en sí mismo huellas del campo, de sus lejanos días, cargados, lentos como carretas laneras. Sintióse víctima del vacío circundante, de la tenaz modorra campesina" (ECS. 45). Implicit in this description of the vast, unpopulated plains, is Amorim's criticism that the pampa is a wasteland. It has not been conquered and exploited nor will it be until new approaches are implemented. The solutions to this problem are to be found in new legislation, modernization, and population of the pampa with new blood. These solutions, while amply illustrated in El caballo y su sombra, are yet to be realized in El paisano Aguilar. The latter novel ends with the complete dominance of Aguilar by the pampa, with the protagonist "rooted," "de pie e inmóvil, como un árbol" (EPA. 197). He hears the murmurings of the pampa, but mute and incommunicative, he is unable to respond, "Porque aun no ha comenzado el diálogo entre el hombre y la llanura" (EPA. 198).

Time

Although Amorim does not employ time as a central theme in his novels, he does use it as technique in some instances. In El paisano Aguilar, the contrast between

two temporal periods of the protagonist's life--Aguilar's youth and maturity--is emphasized. His youth is characterized by two periods: one, that of his early experiences in the bunkhouse with the gauchos and his brothers and, the second, his schooling in the city. As Aguilar's disillusionment grows, he finds himself strongly attracted, not to the city life, which he has rejected forever, but rather to the life of his youth in the country. This was a period of contact with the nomadic gauchos, a life of adventure which was completely free from the responsibilities and debts which burden his maturity. His desire to flee to the north to a life of smuggling is a manifestation of his wish to return to the life of his youth. This is made clear in the dream in which Aguilar pictures himself in the bunkhouse, as a child, free from the duties and obligations symbolized by the main house. The impossibility of recapturing one's youth is not only evidenced at the end of the novel with Aguilar's failure, but also is illustrated in a previous episode.

In a visit to the whorehouse in town, Aguilar is seated on a bed, looking at a photograph album belonging to La Cubana, one of the prostitutes. In one photo, the girl appears at age fifteen in a white dress. Happy because Aguilar recognized her as the youthful girl in the photograph, La Cubana runs to the wardrobe and takes out a small, white dress--the one which appears in the

photo. She has conserved this relic from her youth and now, seated on the bed beside Aguilar, she holds it maternally, rocking it as if it were a child. As it evokes memories of a youthful innocence, La Cubana is transported back in time, escaping from the ugly present. Then, sighing, the woman goes to the wardrobe and returns the dress to its place among the others.

It is significant that this episode and the one in which Aguilar has his dream are the only ones in the novel which are narrated completely in the present tense. In the dream, the description in the present allows the reader to experience vividly the imagery with which the action is described. In this episode, the action is frozen in the present just as the actions portrayed in the photographs are frozen for eternity.

To emphasize the contrast between La Cubana's youth and her sordid present, two portraits of the woman are juxtaposed. One is the maternal image, mother with child, and the other is the fallen woman, lascivious and stained. The first image is presented in Amorim's reference to the photograph as being "Un retrato para el álbum de una esposa, de una madre" (EPA. 84). It is echoed in La Cubana's rocking the dress, like a child: "Un silencio preñado de pensamientos . . . " (EPA. 86 [Italics added]). But Amorim's description makes clear that the youthful past is never to be recaptured, for the "child" that La

Cubana holds is dead. "¡Un niño muerto! . . . Eso era el trajecito pequeño, escaso de tela . . . Un niño exánime" (EPA. 86).

In contrast to the maternal pose of La Cubana, stands the wardrobe representing her present life and containing "la ropa de las noches largas, con amaneceres sucios" (EPA. 86). It reflects the sordid ugliness of the woman's present situation--" . . . el armario, que tiene una impudicia de mujer tendida en un diván, con las piernas al aire" (EPA. 86).

The white color of the dress, like the birds in the dream is suggestive of innocence and is strongly contrasted with the dresses presently worn by the prostitute. "El armario . . . deja ver la entraña viva de los trajes . . . Entraña de lujo, de vicio, de humo . . . Colores vivos . . . El angustioso presente" (EPA. 86). La Cubana's mental return to the present is portrayed as a burial, an interment of the "niño muerto" in the wardrobe. The innocent past is swallowed up by the ugly present. "Entre un azul eléctrico y un rojo infernal, el niño muerto, amortajado de vivos colores, queda inquieto. Se ve la lonja blanca, como una raya de tiza. No alcanza el ruedo de los otros vestidos. Niño perdido en una multitud venenosa" (EPA. 87). This "burial" of the past occurs previously in the novel when Aguilar's complete divorce from city life is portrayed in his

discovery of a long-forgotten hat in his wardrobe, one he had worn in the city. "Recogió con violencia una camiseta sucia que halló a mano y la arrojó encima del sombrero, como quien echa una palada de arena sobre un foco de incendio" (EPA. 69). His burying the "past" under the "dirty present" is repeated in the actions of La Cubana.

The portrayal of La Cubana's youth is also echoed in Aguilar's dream. Both personages are represented by white figures, a dress and a bird, associated with innocence, and both are shown to have lost that innocence: La Cubana, whose colored dresses reflect the sordid, stained aspect of her maturity; and Aguilar, through the birds, whose black color reflects his despair and dis-illusionment. Although La Cubana seems resigned to her fate, Aguilar seeks to return to a youthful period, free from responsibility in the form of a smuggler in the north, far from the ranch which imprisons him.

A somewhat similar example of Amorim's use of time appears in El caballo y su sombra. However, unlike Aguilar, who attempts to return in time, the protagonist, Nico, is waging a desperate but hopeless battle against the inexorable forward march of time and the inevitable changes that accompany it. The author portrays the rancher, Nico Azara, in his attempt to maintain the traditional past against the changes introduced by the newly-arrived

immigrant farmers. Nico's energy is channeled into any means to isolate and insulate his ranch from the outer world of change and progress and therefore, from time. His life revolves in an atmosphere where change has ceased, immobilized in a timeless vacuum. Any intrusion from the outer world of the surrounding settlers and their new life is seen as a threat to his concept of life and even his own identity. To him, the pampa is his domain. He is the patrón. The new farms are destroying a tradition of which he is the center and over which his progeny are to extend his dominance infinitely through succeeding generations, thus assuring him a form of immortality.

However, Nico's thirst for eternity emerges in another way also, because infinity in time still implies forward movement and change--a ceaseless series of actions with cause and effect relationships. True eternity is timelessness, motion frozen with no evolution to mark the passage of time. It is this desire to establish a timeless vacuum for which his brother, Marcelo, criticizes Nico, this " . . . propósito de hacer de la estancia un lugar fuera de lo común, detenido en el tiempo" (ECS. 11).

To Nico, the traditional way of life is eternally valid and the past becomes the present for the present is the past, forming a serialistic pattern endlessly repeating itself. Nico's solution to the external threat is

to isolate the ranch completely, to insulate its traditions from any contaminating contact with the outside, to freeze time and immobilize evolution.

To achieve this isolation from the threatening exterior, Nico has refused passage across his lands and when the settlers continue to cut his fences in order to detour around the impassable muddy stretches in the road, he orders the ground next to the road to be plowed, thus impeding trespassing on any part of his land.

It is unknown if Amorim was acquainted in depth with the psychoanalytical theories of man's concept of and relationship to history, but his portrayal of Nico's fixation to the past corresponds to one current theory of this phenomenon. Norman O. Brown, in Life Against Death, explains man's plight as due to his being the only neurotic animal afflicted with an unconscious quest to maintain and extend the past into the future.

> The difference between men and animals is repression. Under conditions of repression, the repetition-compulsion establishes a fixation to the past, which alienates the neurotic from the present and commits him to the unconscious quest for the past in the future.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Man, the discontented animal, unconsciously seeking the life proper to his species, is man

> in history: repression and the repetition-compulsion generate historical time. Repression transforms the timeless instinctual compulsion to repeat into the forward-moving dialectic of neurosis which is history; history is a forward-moving recherche du temps perdu, with the repetition-compulsion guaranteeing the historical law of the slow return of the repressed.[5]

Such fixation to the past is admirably illustrated in El caballo y su sombra. Amorim's characterization of Nico as a man desperately attempting to hold on to his past is constant throughout the novel. But it is in the last chapter where the point in time of the two main characters is shifted in such a way that, for them, the past is being relived in the present; or, it becomes difficult for them to distinguish the present from the past.

At the beginning of the last chapter, Rossi, an Italian immigrant farmer, accompanied by his wife and two friends, is desperately trying to transport his child to a doctor for serum to save him from diphtheria. Emotions are frantic and the obstacles are many. The old Ford is undependable, rain is falling in sheets in a blackened

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[5] Norman O. Brown, Life Against Death (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1959), pp. 92-93.

night, bottomless mudholes pockmark the road. The chains on the wheels are coming apart as the lightning illuminates the fear on the silent faces. Action is fast-paced with one obstacle overcome only to be replaced by another. An impassable bog in the road is encountered and the car is forced to by-pass it by cutting across Nico's land. After successfully detouring the bog, the car turns back toward the road. Coming over a rise, the occupants are dismayed to find themselves confronted by a plowed strip of ground separating them from the road. No alternative is available except to attempt the crossing. The attempt fails and the car is hopelessly mired. Up to this point, the action has been fast, and the emotions have been as aroused as the weather. During the trip, events from Rossi's memory of the war had been surfacing and present objects and events reminded him of his days in the trenches.

> El alambrado que acababan de voltear le hizo pensar en los cercos de las trincheras, en aquellas crespas trampas de acero, ya casi olvidadas. Las había vivido en una noche lluviosa, también de presagios siniestros. Estuvo enterrado en una profunda zanja, después de una batalla. . . Toribio Rossi se sorprendió de recordar las alambradas de la guerra. La noche y las penurias lo precipitaron sobre

el lejano pasado (ECS. 154).

Once again Rossi is trapped and buried, this time in plowed ground which is false and useless, for it was not cultivated to produce, but to capture. The images are sinister and threatening. "La tierra partida, en encrespados surcos estériles, hacía materialmente impracticable el terreno. A la luz de los relámpagos, ondulaba la falsa chacra de los Azara, amenazante para los viajeros. Surcos inútiles, entraña negra de la tierra tendida como una celada. Tierra movediza, cruel" (ECS. 156). The maternal aspect of the earth, suggested by "entraña," takes on a malignant character with the addition of the modifier "negra." The evil sterility of Nico's land is contrasted with the fecundity of the young immigrant mother. "Allí, en un pantano, una madre —surco fecundo— y tres hombres sin palabras, atrapados por la tierra, cercados por el lodo" (ECS. 159). But soon the images reflect the face of death, prognosticating the death of the child. The rocking of the car in the attempts to free it from the quagmire becomes the "siniestro movimiento de cuna" (ECS. 156). The mud, first characterized as a trap, is now pictured as a grave with accompanying images of death. "Una sepultura, a fin de cuentas; una larga fosa empapada. Se perdía en la oscuridad de la noche la boca de lobo que mandaran abrir los de 'El Palenque' [Nico's ranch]. Negro sudario para los que cortaran el

alambrado del camino" (ECS. 156). The frantic race against time has been lost. The emotions and suspense aroused are now stilled, a stillness reflected in nature. "Apagaron el motor. La lluvia disminuía, menudeaban los relámpagos. . . . Y el inmenso silencio de la noche vino a visitarles. Una noche sin nadie emboscada en el horizonte. . . . Caía una lenta llovizna helada" (ECS. 156-157). Rossi wanders through the night, confused and disoriented. The impressions and events that he has experienced this night have aroused vivid memories of his war experiences. The sound of his feet in the mud now return him to a world previously experienced. "Cada vez que hundía la bota, un eco inolvidable le repercutía en los tímpanos. De pronto, oyó en sus propios pasos los de un soldado que marcha" (ECS. 161). The transformation is a complete one as recent events are erased from his mind.

> ¡Un, dos! ¡Un, dos! Toribio Rossi se volvía soldado. Otra vez soldado. Una vez más. Sobre el eco de sus pasos se superponían centenares de pasos. No avanzaba solo. Iba en patrulla. Cientos de pasos . . . Era la tropa, sí, la división guerrera, la patrulla que se adelanta hacia un punto determinado. En sus oídos aumentaba el tropel de botas guerreras (ECS. 160).

Rossi is now a soldier seeking combat. Previously he had been confused and disoriented. Now, the action that he is to take is becoming increasingly clear to him and the dawning of the day coincides with this clearing of his tortured mind. First there is the "claridad indecisa del amanecer" and then "el sol aparecía" (ECS. 160) as Rossi, having reverted to his old identity, is now bent on revenge. The military terms expand to include the description of Nico, who has ridden out to meet the stranger on his land. "Los cabezazos del animal rayaban la cerra-zón mañanera. Caballo de jefe, trote de que se adelanta en el pelotón, haciendo sonar sus metales" (ECS. 161).

A duel ensues, the ritual duel with knives. Nico feels drawn back in time. He is now in the open air where disagreements have always been settled man to man. The tradition of the criollos has made his machetía the duel.

> juveniles. "En el bajo," en el tradicional bajo de la estancia.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Del fondo de sus días criollos, ásperos y valientes, una voz le precipitó la sangre.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Valor a campo abierto, que apetecían los de su estirpe, allí en el bajo donde aprendió a ser hombre (ECS. 161-163)

To confront "el último gaucho sucio" comes " . . . Toribio Rossi, ex soldado de la guerra, hijo de las trincheras, renacido para la lucha cuerpo a cuerpo. . . . Volvía atrás. No había vivido ninguna vida, después de las últimas batallas del año 18" (ECS. 164).

Once again, the action is reflected in nature: "Lenta venía la alborada, luchando con las nubes" (ECS. 164). The duel results in Rossi's victory, who receives amnesty from Nico before his death. The gauchos obey Nico's wish for, as followers of the traditional past, "conocen muy bien las leyes del campo abierto, las del bajo . . . Y las saben cumplir" (ECS. 166).

While the preceding examples of Aguilar and Nico are the best examples of Amorim's uses of time, there are a few other instances in which he resorts to time as a technique in illustrating some point that he wants to impress upon the reader. He does this by describing, in the background, the ticking of a clock. One example appears in El paisano Aguilar and is used to emphasize the protagonist's loneliness and feeling of being imprisoned by the monotonous routine. "Los muros de piedra le aprisionan y el tac-tac de un viejo reloj clavetea su soledad" (EPA 112-113). Another example is in La carreta. A scene occurs which depicts the initiation of a young girl into the profession of the quitanderas in the infamous transaction of the sale of Florita to don Caseros. The

scene takes on a comic aspect before the perplexity of the old man and the innocent abstraction of the young virgin. Don Caseros, holding Florita's hand in the cart, is inhibited by his uncertainty as to what to do next, while his watch incessantly marks the slow passage of time through the embarrassing confrontation.

> Sin valor para tentar un cambio de posición, tomó los dedos de una mano de Florita . . . En mala postura, una de sus piernas comenzó a dormírsele, pero no tenía valor para estirarla. [Florita] Abstraída, oyó el tictac del reloj. Y entre la visión sedosa del pañuelo y el inocente tictac, le asaltó un sueño avasallador. . . . Cabeceó una vez, pero se rehizo al oír el tictac del reloj. . . . Cayó dormida . . . Don Caseros la dejó dormir. Era una solución el sueño de la "botija," en el embarazoso trance en el que se hallaba. Don Caseros ya no sabía dónde posar sus manos, qué hacer con la criatura dormida en sus brazos. No era el amante. Más bien parecía el padre de la muchacha.
>
> Aguardó un rato; el tiempo, según sus cálculos, necesario para poseer a una virgen . . . Divagaba, pensaba en cosas lejanas, oía el tictac de su reloj. Y cuando lo creyó oportuno, tosió e hizo ruido (LC. 90-91).

Through insistent references to the ticking of the watch, the technique reinforces the author's illustration that it is the vast chasm of time itself which separates the young girl and the old man.

In summary, Amorim maintains an omniscient viewpoint in El paisano Aguilar, allowing him to portray the mental processes of any given character. Most often, he presents the effects of the action through the eyes of a "central intelligence" who serves to observe, interpret, or evaluate that action. The shifting focus of narration serves different functions such as aids in characterization or exposition, but most important, for thematic illustration. By concentrating on individuals representative of particular classes or professions, Amorim displays misconceptions, social inequities and injustices, or provides himself with spokesmen who illustrate solutions to existing problems.

The immobilizing effects of space on Aguilar are shown artistically through two types of images--the circle and the center point. The monotony, solitude, and overwhelming vastness of the pampa reduce man to a state of ensimismamiento. In addition, the personification of the endless plains as a monstrous antagonist contrasts with the dehumanization of Aguilar. Amorim's use of space to illustrate the transformation in Aguilar functions as an aid in characterization, but inherent in the

author's portrayal of the empty plains is a thematic illustration--his condemnation of an unjust land distribution and the need to populate the vast expanse in order to exploit and conquer it.

Amorim does not employ "time" as a central theme but uses it as a technique to aid in characterization or in plot development. Although these instances are not numerous, they appear often enough to show Amorim's awareness of time and his ability to employ it artfully if so desired.

CHAPTER IV

STRUCTURE AND STYLE

(El caballo y su sombra)

El caballo y su sombra, published in 1946, represents, for most critics, Amorim's masterpiece. It brings together previous themes and preoccupations of the author, but also displays new interests in the area of social reform. In this sense, it marks a point of transition toward later novels of strong social protest. Whereas thus far in his rural novels, Amorim has limited his treatment almost entirely to inherent problems of the pampa itself, he now demonstrates an interest in outside influences and pressures; i.e., problems created by the arrival and the effects of displaced persons and refugees from Europe. In Amorim's opinion, these rusos will serve to provide the infusion of new blood and energy necessary to conquer the vast and wild pampa.

The story begins with the arrival of Marcelo at the ranch of his brother, Nico. Marcelo's return, ostensibly to accompany a newly-acquired purebred stud, is really an excuse to absent himself from Montevideo. He is involved in efforts to aid the illegal entry of refugees from Europe and the current investigations in the capital have pressured

him to flee the city. Nico sees the entry of the immigrants as a threat because, as nearby estancias are sold and divided into small farms, a tradition and a way of life which he is dedicated to maintain are slowly disappearing.

The fraternal rivalry between Marcelo and Nico is renewed and further compounded by Marcelo's role in the entry of the refugees and his defense of them. The antagonism and conflict between the brothers becomes more and more intense as their arguments grow longer and more vehement. Eventually, when Nico not only verifies Marcelo's involvement with the refugees but also sees that Marcelo has won over his wife, he forces his brother to leave the ranch. Before Marcelo leaves, he establishes a clandestine relationship with Bica, a peasant girl, who is the illegitimate half-sister to Adelita, Nico's wife. Shortly after Marcelo's departure, Bica's pregnancy is discovered.

The second half of the novel focuses primarily on the immigrant colony, although Amorim shifts back and forth between this setting and the ranch. The contrast between the two is illustrated in every aspect of daily life. Nico's harassment of the farmers becomes more severe. He prohibits passage across his land, plows strips of ground along the road for barriers, and orders the arrest of immigrants he suspects of butchering his cattle, even though he realizes that his accusations may be unjust. To add to the problem, two events leave Nico in a frustrated rage:

the breeding of his prize stud, Don Juan, to a little mare, without his knowledge or consent, and the death of his new-born heir. His seething anger is seeking release when the final confrontation occurs.

Toribio Rossi, an Italian immigrant, is attempting to take his dying child to a doctor for diphtheria serum. Forced to bypass a mudhole in the road, he becomes trapped in Nico's barrier of plowed ground and the baby dies. Rossi, seeking revenge, encounters Nico. A duel ensues, and Nico is killed.

The epilogue pictures Bica, nursing her child, watching the birth of the little colt sired by Don Juan. Adelita has given her a plot of ground, a subdivision of Nico's ranch, which he had fought so long to maintain intact.

The theme of the novel is the author's advocacy of "progress." It is a modern continuation of the old theme of "civilización y barbarie," illustrated through the conflict of two cultures in rural Uruguay. The basic conflict is comprised of several elements:

1) Cultural and national origin--criollo vs. European immigrant.
2) Economy--ranching vs. agriculture.
3) Population--uninhabited expanse vs. settlements.
4) Land distribution--feudal latifundios vs. privately-owned agricultural plots.
5) Social class--landed aristocracy vs. lower class.

Structure

The structure of El caballo y su sombra, with the exception of some flashbacks and one chapter formed around a fireside tale, is basically lineal and composed of clashes between the opposing forces of ranch and immigrant colony. In Part I, where the setting is limited to the ranch, the antagonists of this conflict are Marcelo, the apologist for the immigrants, and Nico, the defender of traditional values. Almost every chapter of Part I contains a confrontation between these two antagonists. The action progresses in serial form marked by a sequence of disagreements and arguments between the two brothers. The confrontations grow in seriousness, finally ending in Marcelo's forced departure from the ranch.

Part II follows somewhat the same pattern, and although the confrontations are not always direct ones between Nico and the colony itself, Nico always feels the unpleasant effects of the colony's actions. The incidents continue, attack from one side being followed by retaliation from the other. The mutual harassment finally reaches the boiling point and explodes, concluding with the duel between Nico and Rossi.

Exposition

Exposition and characterization are scattered

throughout the chapters, woven into the fabric of the plot and are inseparable from it. Direct exposition is limited and appears to be avoided by the author. He prefers to present background information so that it performs multiple functions such as providing motivation for certain actions in the present, introducing or characterizing a certain personage, or providing important characteristics of the setting. For example, before arriving at the ranch, Marcelo is imagining the reception that he will receive from each person after his absence of ten years. He mentally predicts the reactions, individual by individual, thereby introducing them to the reader. Each character will react in a particular way because of his former relationship with Marcelo or because of his peculiar personality make-up. Thus the author portrays, through Marcelo's mental anticipation of a future event, not only past occurrences, but also certain pertinent facets of characters that the reader is soon to meet. In addition, the author has also managed to include the setting and the motivation for Marcelo's visit.

> Marcelo pasó revista a la gente que iba a encontrar en la estancia. Y tropezó, una vez más con la exagerada viudez de su madre, luto de soledades y de ayes. Lo recibiría suspirando, con el nombre de su padre, "un santo varón," siempre en los labios. . . .

> Marcelo avivó la imaginación al calcular el comentario que se levantaría en torno a su visita, y más aún cuando llegase el padrillo de pura sangre que había comprado en Palermo, por cuenta de su hermano Nicolás, para una posible sociedad.
>
> "Nico se va a volver loco de contento —pensaba—. Adelita aprobará la tentativa de refinar la raza de la estancia. Mamá, desentendida, indiferente, no dará ninguna importancia a la adquisición. Los peones ya habrán preparado el 'box' y se disputarán su cuidado." Se regodeaba imaginando escenas (ECS. 11-12).

Another device that Amorim commonly employs in exposition is dialogue. It is quite normal that Marcelo, who has been absent for ten years, be informed of occurrences and changes that have taken place in the recent past. In this manner, the reader receives the information through the dialogue of the personages.

Complication

As stated in the discussion of the general structure, the action progresses through a series of conflicts between the two antagonists, Nico and the colony. In Part I, the arguments between Nico and Marcelo, who is

advocate for the colony, become more and more violent, rising to a dramatic and impassioned climax in which Nico, in a frenzy of rage, expels Marcelo from the ranch.

The author builds tension in several ways. First, he chooses patterns of repetition to underscore the increasing seriousness of the disagreements. The sheer accumulation of unpleasant arguments which arouse former antagonisms would probably be enough, by itself, to bring the conflict to a head. Nevertheless, the author supplies additional motivation for Nico's final action.

The time element in Marcelo's visit, especially with respect to the "novelty" of his arrival and the first few days of his visit, is an important ingredient in the determination of the amount of enmity displayed between the two. In the early part of Marcelo's visit, both brothers attempt to control their behavior, showing a forced courtesy to each other. As the novelty wears off, they tire of disguising their true feelings and abandon tact as they realize the impossibility of ever reconciling their opposing positions.

Nico's suspicions as to Marcelo's involvement in the refugee problems are aroused and strengthened by newspaper accounts of new findings in the current government investigations going on in the city. Ultimately, he verifies, through a radio broadcast, his brother's active role in aiding the immigrants immediately before the

final showdown. The most important factor, however, in Nico's decision to evict Marcelo seems to be jealousy of the brother's influence on Nico's wife, Adelita. This cannot be proved since Amorim does not allow the reader to enter Nico's thought processes, but it is strongly suggested as the most influential motive by Micaela, the mother, when she asks Marcelo, in the interests of maintaining peace in the family, to follow Nico's orders to leave.

In Part II, the mutual harassment of the two factions, Nico and the colony, follows the same pattern as in Part I. That is, it consists of a series of incidents, increasing in seriousness, partly because of the simple accumulation of disagreements, one piled upon the other. But Amorim also supplies exterior motivation for the final confrontation which does not have its direct source in the conflict between the two factions.

First, there is the death of Rossi's baby, for which Nico is only indirectly responsible, but which supplies all the motivation needed for Rossi's action. For Nico, three events have occurred, separate from his battle with the colony, that have placed him in a violent state of mind: the breeding of his prize stud to a nag, by his own peons, without his knowledge or consent: his being forced, by Adelita, to give a portion of his estate to Bica: and the death of his heir, the embodiment

of his future dreams.

Thus while Amorim relies mainly upon a lineal pattern of confrontations between the two sides which increase in severity due to their repetition, he also supplies personal motivation for the characters who are to take part in the individual conflicts.

Denouement

The moment when Nico's failure or success becomes clear to the reader and to the protagonist himself does not occur until the end of the last chapter. It becomes evident at the end of the duel when Nico receives his mortal wound. Thus the climax of action (the duel ending with death) coincides with the denouement (Nico has failed) and also the moment of illumination--Amorim's message is that the past is dead, progress is the victor.

Substructural patterns

In addition to the lineal pattern of conflicts between Nico and the colony that Amorim employs for his basic structure, there appears throughout the novel another type of substructural pattern based on antithesis and, to a lesser extent perhaps, on complement.

Antithesis is obvious in the physical organization of the novel. It is divided into two parts with emphasis first on the ranch and then on the colony. Two antagonists, the ranch and the immigrant colony, are in conflict.

Two settings and two cultures with their appropriate characters are contrasted. There is the contrast of time, a traditional past versus a progressive present with the main problem being the question--who will dominate the future? These contrasts are rather obvious and appear quite logical and natural to the reader. But this pattern of antithesis is carried out and refined, appearing in numerous instances where the author desires to carry contrast down to minor events or characters. Two examples will suffice to illustrate this tendency.

The first is an example in character antithesis, a contrast which echoes the two opposing elements--the criollo tradition and the immigrants' new way of life. The setting is the colony, where a father and his family are contrasted. Don Prudencio, an old gaucho, is now a farmer and a member of the immigrant colony. His whole existence has been transformed by his marriage to a German immigrant, who was his nurse while he was in the hospital. Don Prudencio has thrived because of good harvests but still feels trapped by his new life and yearns for the former solitude as a gaucho on the pampa. "Si cultivaba la tierra, no era por amor a la agricultura, sino porque un buen día se descuidó y resultó como pialado por el surco. Había torcido su destino Paulina, la alemana, que tuvo de enfermera en el hospital del pueblo" (ECS. 100). In another portrait, Amorim describes

Prudencio's daughter, Olga, who spends hours standing by the road, fascinated by the traffic and imagining the distant places and adventures awaiting her over the horizon. The water images contribute to the effect, especially since it occurs during a drought.

> En veinte leguas a la redonda, nadie padece tanto el camino. Hormiguea en su sueño, se alarga más aún en sumisos atardeceres. Ha terminado por ser una presencia constante, la única tierra que conquistaría si fuese libre. . . . Cuando la llaman, regresa de mala gana. Le gusta estar en la proximidad de las huellas, que se parecen a las ondas del río.
>
> Para ella, el camino es un río, pero un río que tan pronto corre hacia el norte como hacia el sur. Desde su ribera lo oye crecer opulento, cuando la cosecha rebasa los precios y se vuelca por los caminos, dirigida hacia ocultos destinos (ECS. 99).

Olga's obsession with the road and the hubbub of the traffic is delightfully contrasted with don Prudencio's nostalgia for the past when Amorim presents them in the same scene, but at opposite sides of the house, with Olga viewing the road in front and don Prudencio, in the back, gazing at the vast expanse of pampa.

> Olga, en el camino, acodada en el portón,

> hasta que el cielo se llenase de estrellas. El camino seguía atrayéndola con los vehículos que cruzaban los sábados con mujeres, con hombres alegres . . . Y don Prudencio, inmóvil, tomando mate en el lado opuesto de la casa, contemplaba la lejanía, el desierto. Era un mojón de cara al pasado, azotado por el miedo y la desconfianza, el miedo al mañana, poblado de "rusos," de alemanes, de polacos . . . (ECS. 103).

The two generations, one looking forward and the other back, are a reflection of the two major antagonists in the novel.

Another case of antithesis is shown in the abrupt change which comes over the ranch toward the end of the novel. Normally, the humdrum, monotonous existence on the ranch is characterized by easy-going peons performing their daily chores with the emphasis on routine and a minimum of action. However, Chapter IV of the second part opens with a scene depicting frenzied activity engendered entirely by Nico's anger. Amorim skips from one character to the next and his nouns follow one another in multiple accumulations to reflect the high degree of movement. The present participles provide an immediacy to the scene and, with their inherent suggestion of activity, contribute to describe a bustle that is completely foreign to what the reader has

come to expect from the ranch.

> El peón casero barriendo los gallineros; otro, arrancando los yuyos que la pereza, el desgano y la indiferencia dejan crecer a sus anchas. Duvimeoso regando con creolina el pesebre de "Don Juan." El correntino Eduardo, encaramado en el molino, engrasándolo y, abajo el quintero, matando las hormigas. El chófer que limpia las bujías y cambia el agua del radiador. . . . Actividad insólita, movimiento inusitado, porque don Nico alzó la voz . . . (ECS. 135-136).

This particular example describing a state of hyperactivity which is antithetical to the normal state of inactivity on the ranch occurs at the very beginning of the last chapter and serves an important function. The immediate effect upon the reader is an aroused curiosity as to the motivation for Nico's anger. Later, the reader is informed that Nico has learned of the trick the peons played on him involving Don Juan, and they are now bearing the brunt of his anger for his having been duped. Thus Nico's awareness of the trick contributes to his violent state of mind at the final confrontation.

Another substructural pattern that Amorim employs widely throughout the novel is that of complement, appearing in the form of a parallel development in his characters or, in other instances, characters who complement each

other. Two examples will illustrate this technique.

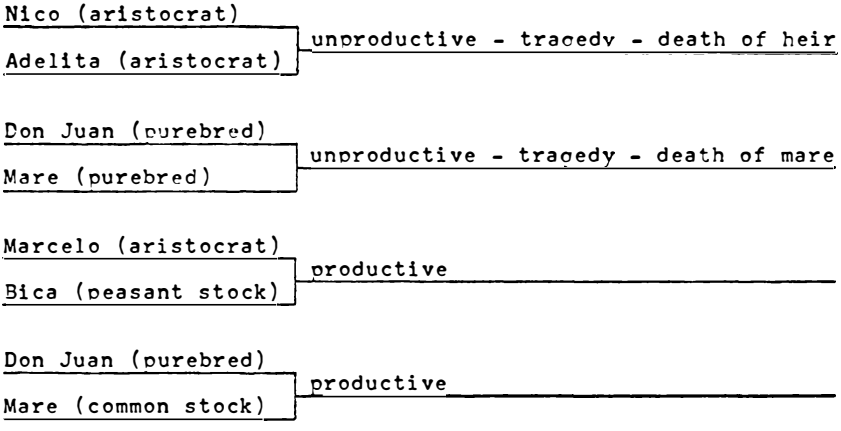
It is obvious that in a case where two antagonists, such as the ranch and the colony, are in conflict, there will be antithesis. To balance the conflict, Amorim places on each side, a character who sympathizes with the opposing view. In this manner, he provides a minor conflict of interests in each setting (ranch and colony) that echoes the main conflict between the two major antagonists. For example, in the first part of the novel, Nico and Marcelo are in serious disagreement. This is due in part, of course, to personal reasons, but each character has chosen opposite sides in the main conflict. While Marcelo, on the ranch, sympathizes with the colony, there is a member of the colony, don Prudencio, who agrees with Nico's point of view. The minor conflict exists between him and his son, Juan, and repeats almost exactly the conflict between the two aristocratic brothers.

Marcelo's criticism of Nico's attempt to stop time and forestall progress represents exactly Juan's opinion of his reactionary father. Juan's dreams for the rich, fertile ground that is someday to be his, are frustrated by the old gaucho, Prudencio; and the rage Juan feels toward his father is akin to that of Marcelo toward Nico.

> Al divisar los campos que rompiera con el arado, las tierras de su segura herencia . . . [Juan] se sintió henchido de orgullo. Eran suyas y

> las transformaría en fecundos sembrados de un trigo especial. Tierras para la semilla mejor que se vendiera en la capital. Iba forjando un futuro grandioso. Al entrever los techos de su casa, se le presentó la valla del padre autoritario, reacio a toda innovación, enemigo suyo, enemigo del hijo ingenioso y admirado, que inventaba cosas, que quería modificar los útiles de trabajo, los medios de transporte. Y sintió una repentina cólera (ECS. 104).

A second example of complement is interesting because, in this case, the author develops a parallel between characters and animals. To follow this parallel development, one should remember that Marcelo and Nico are brothers and that Adelita and Bica are half-sisters, with the former being raised as legitimate and the latter as an illegitimate orphan peasant. One hope or, at least, one solution that Amorim seems to offer for some of northern Uruguay's social problems is the dissolution of the great dichotomy existing between the upper and lower social strata. In this novel, the old-line aristocracy fails to produce heirs while the mixture of the social classes is successful and offers optimism for the future. This mixing of classes and the resultant success is reflected in the case of the horses, a success which contrasts with the failure and tragedy that accompany the pairing-off of the blue-blood aristocrats.



It is no accident then, that Bica, her newborn child, the mare, and the foal are the focus of interest in the final scene of the epilogue, for it is here that Amorim displays his optimism for the future.

In summation, the substructure of El caballo y su sombra rests on antithesis and complement. Through antithesis is reflected the desperate struggle being waged between two opposing forces. The battle lines are drawn in the settings with distinct cultures, in the characters who wage this war, and even in time--a traditional past versus a progressive present. Through complement, the author displays struggles waged between minor characters, alliances and disagreements which reflect the major conflict.

Structurally, El caballo y su sombra is probably Amorim's best novel, but even this work has one major weakness. Why does the author, after presenting most of

the action in the first half of the novel through Marcelo's eyes, have him disappear midway through the book? The reader has sympathized with Marcelo, has come to identify with him. His disappearance deprives the reader, momentarily at least, of a perspective from which to judge the actions of other characters. The conflict between Marcelo and Nico, carefully prepared and artfully presented in the first half, is left hanging. The reader feels that loose strings are left dangling, that Marcelo somehow should have been present, or even taken an active part in the denouement.

Unfortunately, most of Amorim's novels are not structured as well as El caballo y su sombra. In truth, structural faults seem to be the major weakness in his novelistic production. In the discussion of El paisano Aguilar, for example, it is pointed out that the major defect is structural--the inclusion of certain episodes which do not serve to support the author's major theme and, therefore, are lacking in thematic value. This same weakness is evident in other works such as Corral abierto. In this novel, the problem is one of selection or limitation of themes. The author attempts to include too many themes and the structure is fragmented. There are even those cases in which it appears that Amorim starts a novel only to lose interest in it after arriving at the halfway mark and the entire structural unity is destroyed by trying to

combine it with another theme and plot taking place in an entirely different locale.

Although in many novels, the inclusion of episodes which do not support the theme directly may be considered a structural defect, La carreta serves as an example in which the loosely organized structure definitely aids the author in the presentation of his theme. An analysis of the framework of this novel reveals a structural technique in some ways similiar to El caballo y su sombra.

La carreta is almost completely episodic. The majority of chapters could be put in a different order or almost any one of them completely eliminated without changing greatly the novel's total effect. The cause for this is the previous appearance of individual chapters published separately. Amorim states: " . . . si lee con cuidado La carreta, verá Vd. que el tratamiento es estrictamente de cuento al punto de que muchos capítulos aparecieron en La Nación de Buenos Aires . . . "[1] As mentioned before, Tangarupá was accompanied by three cuentos: "Las quitanderas" (segundo episodio), "El pájaro negro," and "Los explotadores de pantanos." All three are incorporated into La carreta, almost without alteration. Thus this novel, which consists of a series

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[1]Enrique Amorim, Letter to Omar Prego Gadea, Marcha (Montevideo), Año XV, No. 713, March 26, 1954.

of episodes with very little interweaving, lacks a basic plot.

Nevertheless, one advantage is distinctly evident in this type of structure. The constant coming and going of new characters and the continual shifting of scene serves to provide a vast panorama of life on the pampa, depicting not just the suffering of one or two individuals, but rather the degradation and misery which is common to all the lower-class inhabitants of the desolate plains.

If each chapter is reduced to its most important component, thirteen of the fifteen chapters fall into one of two groupings or a combination of the two. The first grouping depicts the sexual relationship between a man and a woman, and the second displays a rivalry or a confrontation between two men. It is evident then, that the structural pattern of the chapters serves to reinforce the thematic elements discussed in Chapter II: sex and death. Sex is displayed in the first category--man plus woman, and death or violence appears in the second--man versus man.

Going one step further, and combining the two categories, the entire problem appears. The shortage of women, in a bestial environment, leads to a primitive and vicious conflict: the violent struggle of men over the possession of one woman.

The sentence structure reinforces the structural

organization of the chapters. The sentences tend to be longer and augmented by more parenthetical expressions than those of El caballo y su sombra. This characteristic leads to greater difficulty in isolating particular recurring patterns. Nevertheless, two basic types emerge most commonly and coincide with the author's use of the thematic elements. The first is a sentence composed of two contrasting phrases that are sometimes directly antithetical. This type of sentence is the germ of what later becomes the salient feature of El caballo y su sombra. Here it serves more for contrast than for antithesis.

The reader, aware that half of the chapters are based on a structure consisting of two opposing forces--that is, man versus man--encounters a similar pattern emerging in the sentences.

> Unos a través de un tabique y tras de un encerado el resto (LC. 63).
>
> A ratos la veía con uno, a ratos con otro (LC. 20).
>
> Una se llamaba Rosita, y Leopoldina la otra (LC. 19).
>
> Se oyó bostezar a uno, soñar en voz alta el otro (LC. 64).
>
> A la derecha [illegible]izales. A la izquierda, la cancha de carreras (LC. 44).

Thus the thematic element of death or violence, appearing through the confrontation of two opposing rivals, is supported by the structural arrangement of both chapter and sentence.

The other pattern that appears is the sentence consisting of three parallel phrases.

> Con los ojos de la fatalidad, con la mirada de la resignación, con la sumisión de quienes todo lo acatan (LC. 59).
>
> La mujer era una carga ya sobre el hombro de uno, ya entre los brazos del otro, ya entre las piernas del tercero (LC. 66).
>
> Aquel encuentro, aquel descubrimiento, aquel sonreír . . . (LC. 89).
>
> . . . repetidos árboles, insistente maleza, uniforme ribera (LC. 61).
>
> Como cosas de Dios, del destino, de la fatalidad (LC. 60).

The function of this ternary arrangement varies. In some instances, the repetition serves to provide emphasis. In others, it stresses monotony. Examples abound of sentences consisting of three parallel syntactical elements with identical structure within the individual phrases. This trifold structure not only establishes a rhythmic prose pattern but also helps to underline the monotony of the cart's existence. It must be pointed out here that this

sentence consisting of triads is so common throughout Amorim's work, that it seems in many instances at least, to be a subconscious stylistic phenomenon on the part of the author. This is not to say that it does not contribute in one way or another to the total effect that the author is trying to achieve, but simply that the author may not be conscious of using it in every instance. In any case, it definitely is a pronounced stylistic characteristic of the author in most of his novels.

Amother structural arrangement that Amorim employs is the parallelism in characters. In El caballo y su sombra, this device is used to show minor conflicts that reflect the major one. In La carreta, it is used somewhat differently. In order to illustrate the hopeless fate of these people, he demonstrates the similarities between two or more characters in different stages of their lives. It becomes obvious to the reader then, that the younger character represents the past of the older one and the older represents the future of the younger, since the latter is following the identical path of the former.

To represent the men, father and son are depicted in the first chapter, where the author portrays the son's following in the footsteps of his father. Both, continuing along the same road of violence with the quitanderas, end by violence. Matacabayo's fate is described simply: "Los huesos de Matacabayo sirvieron para abonar las

hambrientas raíces de los dos arbolitos. Por varias primaveras, en muchas leguas a la redonda, no se vieron dos copas de oro más violento que las de aquellos espinillos favorecidos por la muerte" (LC. 107). The identical fate is reserved for the son. The author forges the comparison between father and son in the description of the latter's death.

> Los huesos de su padre, sirvieron para abonar los espinillos. Su ánima andaría por las flores doradas. La suya en una fosa reseca, agrietada por el sol.
>
> Ambos conocieron el amor sobre una tierra áspera.
>
> Barro y frescas flores de espinillo (LC. 118).

The same technique is employed with the women when Florita, an innocent young girl of thirteen, is initiated into the profession of the guitanderas. Florita represents the youth and the past of all the guitanderas, just as the old madame, la Mandamás, represents the future awaiting them. The portrayal of these characters in several stages of their lives results in a telescoping of time, informing the reader that this is, in reality, only one life, a life of misery and degradation common to and shared by these nomads of the plains.

This parallelism in characters appears in El paisano

Aguilar with the identical function when the author links Aguilar's fate to that of his father. In Aguilar's dream, his father appears imprisoned on the ranch, but the same thing will occur to Aguilar himself. This common fate of father and son is prepared for on the first page of the novel when Aguilar pastes his name over that of the father on the family account book: " . . . escribió con caracteres tipográficos: Francisco Aguilar. —Año 19 . . . —Bajo aquel rótulo impecable quedaría para siempre, amarillento y oculto, el nombre de su padre y otra fecha: Año 18 . . . " (EPA. 7).

Style

Amorim's style is marked by simplicity and directness. Sentences are usually short and devoid of rhetorical involutions. His prose is characterized by his conscious adaptation of style to the effect he is trying to achieve. He uses style to reflect and reinforce the structure through which he presents his story. Both the beauty and the savagery of the pampa are expressed by his language in the description of the setting. The author's social consciousness is evidenced through descriptive and narrative style and his personages are sketched by their manners of speech or a few choice words describing their character, actions, or physical appearance.

Analysis shows interesting relationships of style to

the four aspects of the novel which are mentioned above: (1) structure (2) setting (3) the author's social consciousness, and (4) characterization.

Relationship of style to structure

The most interesting aspect of Amorim's style in El caballo y su sombra is his use of words reflecting either the antithesis or the parallelism evident in the substructural pattern discussed previously. Sometimes the antithesis occurs in the same sentence.

> [Marcelo] estiraba las piernas por debajo de la mesa porque se le acortaban las ideas (ECS. 45 [Italics added unless otherwise noted]).
>
> La noche lo encontró con la pipa apagada, todo él encendido de pensamientos nuevos (ECS. 42).
>
> De frente al cadáver, de espaldas a la noche . . . (ECS. 143).
>
> El rostro carbonizado de Segundo Sánchez, a la luz lechosa de la madrugada (ECS. 143).

At times it occurs in separate, but usually closely grouped sentences. "Surcos inútiles, entraña negra . . . " (ECS. 156) and "Una madre —surco fecundo— . . . " (ECS. 159); " . . . la llanura impávida y empapada" (ECS. 9) and " . . . el viento del norte, húmedo e indeciso" (ECS. 9).

This same device appears in La carreta where it serves to support the structure. Since the thematic element of death or violence pits man against man, these sentences of contrast or antithesis tend to reinforce the structural arrangement. In addition, the antithesis tends to emphasize the theme by contrasting the dreams and goals of these people with the terrible reality of their existence.

> . . . de cara al cielo, de espaldas al suelo pedregoso (LC. 67).
>
> . . . lo que se gana y que se pierde en los caminos (LC. 59).
>
> . . . surgir del fondo de la noche sin fondo; caer del cielo en los días que ni en el cielo se cree (LC. 59).
>
> . . . gritos ásperos y trinos dulzones (LC. 61).

This trait of antithesis appears in embryonic form in La carreta, but is fully developed in El caballo y su sombra.

The parallelism discussed earlier is reflected in Amorim's style also. His choice of words which complement each other abound in phrases and sentences throughout the novel. They often appear linked in pairs in the same sentence. "El barro y el cielo, ambos del mismo tono" (ECS. 9-10); "El agua y el viento disputándose la

hegemonía de los ruidos campesinos" (ECS. 10); " . . . la exagerada viudez de su madre, luto de soledades y de ayes" (ECS. 11); "Las hojas carnosas del eucalipto citronela o las suaves del malvón" (ECS. 39); " . . . su salud de vaquillona, su alegría animal" (ECS. 26).

In other instances they appear in a series: "Caras secas, rostros curtidos, manos ásperas" (ECS. 97); "Los campos, el ámbito campesino, el silencio, la cinta de la lejanía . . . " (ECS. 17); and "Dueño y señor, eje del latifundio, punto céntrico de la circunferencia . . . " (ECS. 136).

Thus in La carreta and El caballo y su sombra, one finds reflected in the author's choice of vocabulary, the antithetical and complementary structure on which both novels are based.

Relationship of style to setting

In the early novels, Amorim's pampa is a lonely region of vast and empty spaces and the author often paints its characteristics through his style. On the plains, one day succeeds another in a boring routine and in the monotonous repetition, time almost goes unnoticed. "Se le iban amontonando los días como porciones de pasto seco en la joroba de la parva" (EPA. 7). The stillness, the silence of the uncommunicative pampa actually weighs on Aguilar. It is yet another of the many burdens he

has to bear and is expressed by the author by means of synesthetic images: "Un silencio pesado —que parecía aplastar el empastado campo . . . y poner un yugo sobre cada bestia . . . " (EPA. 10); " . . . el silencio de plomo de la estancia le pesó en el alma . . . " (EPA. 30). The lonely men of the pampa band together around the campfire to relate stories of yesteryear. Joined together by the "cuerda verde del mate" (ECS. 57), they poke the ashes of the fire "como si fuesen encendidos recuerdos" (ECS. 57).

Women from the small towns bordering the huge ranches who had dreamed of an exciting life in the city see their dreams die and resign themselves to a life of boredom on the lonely ranches: " . . . iban a enterrar sus sueños . . . con crucecitos de bostezos" (EPA. 165).

Sometimes the setting reflects the human situation. Aguilar's attempt to escape, to break free of the bonds of responsibility is echoed in the breaking of the day. "Apretados amaneceres, lucha de sol por abrirse paso, rompiendo un cielo durísimo . . . Por los caminos venía el día, como desatando nudos invisibles" (EPA. 163).

Personification of nature, as evidenced in the example above, is common since the natural elements often take an active role in deciding man's fate. "El naciente desprendía haces de luz, espadas de un verdugo que eliminaba las cabezotas dormidas de las nubes" (EPA.

98), and "[Nubes] . . . espiando la llanura . . . Expectantes en el cielo . . . Unicos testigos de la llanura" (ECS. 9).

The pampa is a harsh land and the personification of natural forces such as floods and droughts creates, for man, an antagonist capable of extreme violence. A flashflood, for example, is a terrible thing for man and beast and appears as a monster desirous of devouring the inhabitants of the plains. "Un enemigo brotado de la tierra . . . que alza su cólera, expide su ira, lanza su vómito mortífero . . . aumenta su rabia, escupe su muerte" (EPA. 177).

While the environment is shown to be harsh at times and contributes to the suffering of the pampa's inhabitants, it also has its moments of beauty and serenity. The following description in El caballo y su sombra serves as a link between two separate scenes and marks the end of the work day. It also contributes to the mood by the evocative quality of its images. The light bathing the animals gilds and freezes them into motionless participants of a religious drama. The personification of the trees, the author's synesthetic use of light, and the emphasis on words expressing religious qualities paint a scene in which nature has ceased to be passive and all aspects of it are active participants in solemn worship of the passing day.

> Caía la tarde. El crepúsculo embellecía la estancia. Apretados y negros nubarrones hacia el norte y el sur. Por una abertura entre los densos cirros del poniente, se colaba el sol. Un campo dorado abarcaba la arboleda, encendiendo el verde que contrastaba con las espesas nubes de los restantes puntos cardinales. El sol, resplandeciente en la brecha, como en una ventana. Las vacas miraban hacia el poniente, en extraño éxtasis, con los cuernos erguidos, para que la luz se los dorase. Los pájaros . . . se dejaban bañar por aquella claridad prodigiosa. Colocados estratégicamente en las ramas más altas, inmovilizados por la luz. Los añosos árboles, graves, solemnes, despedían el día campesino con sus adioses lentos que manda la brisa vespertina. Los troncos lucían sus heridas y las arrugas de los años. Una pareja de horneros alardeaba saludable alegría, en el pretil de la casa. El primer fogón alzaba un humo ceniciento, en columna impecable hasta más arriba de las ruedas del molino. El Angelus reducía a todos a un silencio religioso (ECS. 37).

In Amorim's depiction of setting, a tone of irony may be expressed through style. One example of this occurs in

his description of "La Pensión," the whorehouse that Aguilar visits during his trips to town. The religious terms employed here are incongruous and humorous when the reader considers the function of the establishment. "Claustral y silenciosa vivienda. Alguna noche, el rito exige . . . ", " . . . los árboles inocentes . . . ", " . . . Tiene algo de convento" (EPA. 76).

Another stylistic device appearing in many of Amorim's novels is that of repetition. Chapter V of La carreta, for example, is a cuadro de costumbres, completely divorced from the major theme of the novel. But it contains a remarkable example of Amorim's use of repetition in relation to setting and mood. In the opening paragraph of this chapter concentrating on local color, the author does not attempt to reproduce the picturesqueness of the locality's activities by photographic multiplicity of detail, but by a marshalling of materials, carefully selected, to suggest the central spirit of the locale depicted.

> Era domingo en las enaguas almidonadas de las chinas; era domingo en el pañuelo blanco, rojo o celeste que engalanaba a los hombres; era domingo en el caballo enjaezado con primor . . . Domingo en la lustrada bota, en la espuela reluciente, en la crin recién tusada de los pingos. Era domingo en el camino trillado y

> en el vaso de caña servido hasta los topes. Era domingo, en los palenques, cruzados de cabestros. Domingo en la veleidosa taba dando tumbos en el aire y en la cantada apuesta corajuda. Domingo ruidoso en los cintos gordos de patacones. Domingo ruidoso en el moño primoroso, oscilante en las trenzas, secreto en los corpiños. Domingo tendido sobre los mostradores, bañados de vino. Domingo en el chaschás de las bolas de billar y en la confusión gárrula de los tacos. Domingo en la carcajada y las palabras sin control. Y domingo en la seriedad responsable del comisario, en la preocupación avarienta del bolichero y en las artimañas celestinescas de la Mandamás (L, 44).

The careful selection of material, coupled with the repetition of "Era domingo," shows the holiday spirit and gaiety permeating every aspect of the rural existence. The rhythm created by this repetition is evocative of a ritual incantation, giving the description a special quality, establishing a mood out of the ordinary. This tends to make the reality depicted general rather than specific and is ideal for description and the establishment of mood.

Another interesting stylistic technique of Amorim is

the depiction of a general mood or emotion in characters through their effect on an inanimate object. The inanimate object may or may not be personified. In El paisano Aguilar, when the protagonist suffers an attack of illness, the meal of ravioli awaiting the characters is completely forgotten in the excitement. As the author explains directly, a dramatic action seeks a physical object in which to crystallize itself. For example, in the case of a drunk causing a scandal, a piece of the drama might be seen in a broken window. In this case, the drama is embodied in the plate of cold ravioli, now ignored by everyone because of Aguilar's illness.

> El plato de ravioles intacto, recoge esa tristeza que no sabe en dónde fijarse cuando en una casa pasa algo serio. . . . Aquella vez, en el plato frío de ravioles, cayó todo el peso del drama. El miedo, el aletazo de la muerte, la sorpresa, sobre la fuente de ravioles . . . En aquella pasta verdosa, cadáver pequeño de la cena (EPA. 90).

In summation, Amorim's uses of style in relation to setting fall into two major areas. First, through style is shown the reflection of the human situation in the setting and the intimate relationship between man and the land. Nature is often personified to illustrate the active role it plays in the lives of the characters.

Second, certain stylistic techniques (repetition, for example) are artfully employed to describe setting and establish environmental mood.

Style in relation to social consciousness

Most of Amorim's rural novels are related from the viewpoint of an omniscient author and El caballo y su sombra is no exception. The author usually remains hidden from the reader during the unfolding of the tale. There are a few cases, however, when the reader realizes that he is being addressed directly by the author. These instances usually concern episodes in which there is a great deal of suffering--animal or human. It appears that Amorim sympathizes so strongly with this suffering that, for him, an authorial intrusion is justified or perhaps necessary. One outstanding example occurs in the description of the little mare's death in which Amorim relates the effect of death on animals and their awareness of its coming.

> Cuando anda la muerte por el campo, los animales la advierten. El hornero se despierta y pía sin cesar. Los perros cruzan entre las enredaderas, bajo los cercos de alambre tejido, como tratan de quitarse del cuerpo algo que les estorba o para rascarse una repentina sarna.
>
> La muerte no pasa invisible por entre los

> animales. No anda tan sigilosamente como entre los hombres. Es más franca. La agonía de un animal trastorna más la vida de sus semejantes que cualquier agudo y mortal sufrimiento del hombre. Se nos dice: "ha entrado en agonía". Y, a pesar el ello, nos dormimos. Pero los tramos finales . . . perturban la existencia de los animales que están cerca. Las alteraciones se suceden con un sentido misterioso (ECS. 71).

In the episode just cited, Amorim speaks directly to the reader, but other instances occur where the author's sympathy for the misery and suffering of the poor are evident through his choice of vocabulary. One example occurs early in the story. A little boy from the immigrant colony approaches Marcelo's car to ask for a match. The physical appearance of the child, his face buffeted by the cold wind, immediately gains the sympathy of the reader.

> Sus lindos ojos negros se destacaban en la cara enrojecida por el aire frío, por el viento castigador de aquellas regiones. Se acercó tímidamente.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> El chófer le dio una caja. El chico manipuló en ella, para sacar lo que necesitaba. Y sacó humildemente un solo fósforo, un

minúsculo fosforito, con diminuta delicadeza (ECS. 13).

His actions, described by the repetition of diminutives and the insistence on his "timidity," "humility," and "delicacy," convey to the reader the author's sympathy for the refugees and his feeling that they are, indeed, asking for very little.

Another example of the author's social consciousness through style occurs in El paisano Aguilar, when Amorim, by means of Aguilar's dialogue with Sofía, criticizes "old maids." It becomes clear that the term in this context refers to those people, in general, who share the characteristics evoked by the expression "old maid." These characteristics are envy, bitterness, and the tendency to criticize and gossip. They are personified in the form of the old lady who, while sewing, is serving as chaperone when Aguilar is talking to his fiancée. Through images pertaining to sewing, Amorim shows the old woman's predilection for poking her nose into everyone else's business. "La solterona puso su aguja, su hilo y su terrible dedal en la tejida conversación de los novios" (EPA. 94).

Amorim's criticism of the conniving politicians who visit Cayetano's ranch in search of campaign contributions is evident in style. The lies and false promises of the politicians will have no effect on the taming of

the pampa, and ranchers like Aguilar and Cayetano can expect no relief in return for their votes and contributions. The pampa, personified here, will not be bribed nor even answer. "El paisaje deshumanizado, los caminos ásperos, el horizonte infinito no responden, a pesar del mentiroso llamado de la ciudad . . . Unos votos, unos pesos, nada son ante la grave magnitud, que aguarda, paciente y segura, la hora del desquite" (EPA. 110). The proposals of these politicians serve to maintain an outdated caudillismo and are not the solutions that are needed to exploit the wild pampa.

Relationship of style to characterization

The relationship of style and characterization will be analyzed more fully in the chapter "Characterization," but one illustration may be included here. Chapter VI of El caballo y su sombra consists of a fireside tale related by an old blind gaucho. The story is a dramatic one. Don Ramiro, stranded on a log during a flash flood, is surrounded by hordes of poisonous snakes, spiders, and all manner of animal life, including a mountain lion. The story is full of action and culminates with the gaucho's blindness due to a snake bite. The dramatic narrative style of the old man's tale is especially vivid in contrast to the polished descriptive style of the author's introduction.

> El fogón es nómade, está de paso. Nació en el aduar y sigue como el humo, sin norte, al azar del viento. Tan sólo queda la moneda de plata de la ceniza y la costilla pelada que jalona la marcha. El tiempo de un fogón es el tiempo de un relato, o de un lamento o de una payada. Y esta vez es la historia de una ceguera. La voz de don Ramiro, ciego y viejo y gaucho, bordeó las brisas y las palabras empujaron los tizones, como si fuesen encendidos recuerdos. Desde su noche impenetrable el criollo contó la historia de unos ojos:
>
> —Yo le había alvertido al pardo Farías que no se largase en el Paso del Cementerio. ¡Si no era pa mí desconocido, no! . . . Más de una vez había quedau embretau en la chorrada. Pero el muy terco no me hizo caso. (ECS. 57).

The old man's dialect is a realistic imitation of a gaucho's speech and his reference to inanimate objects by comparing them to animals is natural to a man who has lived with them all his life.[2] "El arroyo Viboritas es

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[2] The question of the authenticity of Amorim's reproduction of rural speech served as a basis for a linguistic study. In the editor's note, the author is quoted: " . . . me permitió destacar el carácter profundamente tradicional del vocabulario empleado [en La carreta y El caballo y su sombra] así como la exacta reproducción de las particularidades fonéticas,

ansina . . . Hincha el lomo como un aporreau y da un corcovo . . . " (ECS. 57); "[El coche] empezó a estornudar como petiso mañero. . . . Más que por l'agua parecíamos arrastraus por una manada de potros sedientos. . . . Y en menos que canta un gallo . . . " (ECS. 58). Amorim reinforces this relationship between the old gaucho and animals by another simile. "Don Ramiro, entrecerrando los párpados, alzaba la cabeza para husmear como los toros en celo" (ECS. 10). The author has pictured don Ramiro through style in at least three ways: first, the old man's dialect; second, his manner of speaking or narration (don Ramiro's reference to animals); and third, the author's personal descriptive style (simile describing don Ramiro's animal-like action).

The analysis thus far has covered Amorim's three major rural novels of his early period. It should be pointed out here, that a strong relationship exists among them. They all may be viewed as lineal descendents of Amorim's first novel, Tangarupá, and serve to provide the reader with a vast panorama of rural Uruguay in its development from an early era to the modern.

Tangarupá vividly paints a savage countryside and

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morfológicas y sintácticas que registran los estudios de dialectología americana. (Mme. H. Pottier, Argentinismos y uruguayismos en la obra de Enrique Amorim. [Montevideo: Acon, 1958], inside front cover).

serves mainly to present the initial setting. La carreta develops the theme of spiritual and physical isolation compounded by the terrific sexual problem. In El paisano Aguilar, civilization confronts the wilderness in the form of the protagonist, Pancho Aguilar, but the pampa emerges the victor in the unequal battle. The struggle of individual man against the overpowering destructive forces of the plains is a hopeless one unless accompanied by a strong creative will--a will to transform the plains, to exploit them. The abulic character of Aguilar results in his being devoured by the plains and leads to the last line in the novel, "Porque aun no ha comenzado el diálogo entre el hombre y la llanura" (EPA. 198). Employing this quote as an epigraph at the beginning of El caballo y su sombra, Amorim illustrates the relationship between the two novels. While there is no continuation of the story, no sequel as such, and relationships between the characters in the two novels are not important, El caballo y su sombra is definitely an outgrowth of the former. Amorim himself, in the Foreword to the English translation of El caballo y su sombra, underlines the thematic unity.

> In Tangarupá I wrote with an adolescent's wonder, picturing the estancia, poor and dramatic--almost a rancho still. In The Peasant Aguilar a boy who comes back from school to manage his

> lands is trapped and finally reduced by the plains that surround him. And today, correcting a new edition of La carreta, I realized that in this story of women, wandering in an ox cart over the plains, with their alarming miseries, I had my strongest theme.
>
> The Horse and His Shadow gathers all these themes and resolves them in the light of today's life.[3]

The protagonist in El paisano Aguilar is incapable of establishing a "dialogue" with the plains through lack of a will to create something out of the savage region. But in El caballo y su sombra, the will has appeared and the forces are at work. Time has passed and it is no longer a question of individuals, but rather collectives at work. The established and traditional way of life is in deadly combat with a menacing enemy, a new civilization, recently arrived. This new culture is represented by the immigrants, who have transformed the pampa into a productive agricultural area, finally achieving the long-sought victory over the plains.

Thus the close relationship among the novels is evident. Each serves to illustrate various stages in the development of the pampa and each novel is concerned with

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[3]Amorim, Horse and Shadow, p. ix.

the problems and manner of life in each successive stage. Viewed collectively, they provide the reader with an artistic history of the region's development up to the present.

In summation, the basic structure of El caballo y su sombra is a lineal, cause and effect, pattern. Substructural patterns, based on antithesis or complement serve to reinforce the theme. By means of antithesis, the author reflects the basic conflict between ranch and immigrant colony and, through complement, he illustrates minor struggles and alliances which also echo the major battle.

Amorim's style reflects and reinforces the antithesis and parallelism characteristic of the structure. It evokes mood by description of the setting or shows the relationship between setting and character. The author's sympathy with the miserable plight of the poor is shown in the style of his narrative descriptions of them as is his sympathy for any suffering experienced by man or animal. And finally, style in dialogue is used to delineate his personages.

CHAPTER V

CHARACTERIZATION

(Los montaraces)

This novel, published in 1957, treats the exploitation and misery of the downtrodden workers of Isla Mala, and their struggles to better their working conditions. The novel begins with Cecilio, the protagonist, at home with his father, Maragato, and his newly acquired step-mother, Floriana. When the latter becomes ill, medicinal herbs are needed from the local curandera. To reach her, Cecilio swims across the river and back, a feat which was considered next to impossible.

Cecilio returns with the medicinal herbs, but his appetite has been whetted for the adventure that awaits him on Isla Mala. Later, without notifying anyone, he swims to the island. There he makes the acquaintance of Anacleto, a woodcutter hiding from the foreman with whom he has had an argument. He informs Cecilio of the situation on the island. It is managed by a large lumber firm stationed deep in the forest, where many lumberjacks carry on the labor of cutting the trees. The work is hard, the conditions terrible. Many of the men are wanted by the law, and so are not in any position to

complain of the hardships imposed by the owners. All are in debt to the company store and with all the exits sealed, escape is impossible. To discourage investigation into the terrible conditions suffered by the workmen, it is to the advantage of the owners of the company to exploit the fear and superstition surrounding Isla Mala.

Since the foreman's temper has now cooled, Anacleto rejoins the woodcutters accompanied by Cecilio. During the days following, Cecilio conceives a plan to escape from the island, en masse, and not to return until better conditions are guaranteed. A large number of men are organized by Cecilio and Anacleto. They slip down to the river at night to make their escape by swimming the river. However, upon reaching the other side, Cecilio discovers that only five men have arrived. Fear of the piranhas and the powerful current in the river have frightened the others into remaining even under the adverse conditions.

The men eventually return in an attempt to reorganize the rest in another escape. This time, the endeavors of the protagonist meet with success. The morning following the exodus, not a single ax-blow is to be heard. The men make their way by two's and three's to Puerto Lamento where they reunite to demand a fairer contract and better working conditions. Arriving on the

island, Cecilio breaks the arm of one of the foremen in a fit of temper and is arrested.

The last chapter concerns the Ulloa family who are the owners of the lumber firm, and has little to do with the main theme and action of the novel. It is precisely the inclusion of this last chapter which gives rise to a primary structural weakness of the novel. The work is divided into four parts. The first three revolve around the development of the central personage, Cecilio, showing his attainment of manhood and his growing concern and efforts for the betterment of social conditions among the woodcutters. The fourth part, treating the Ulloa family, introduces new characters, a new setting, and new conflicts. This addition destroys the structural unity of the work. The author makes some attempts to relate this last part to the previous happenings but the reader is forced, toward the end of the work, to abandon his familiar perspective and acquaint himself with new personages and an entirely new situation. In Part III, when Amorim describes one of the management's henchmen, he feels himself drawn away from the main thread of the story and returns to it stating, "Pero ésta es la historia de un grupo de montaraces y no de las artimañas de los gringos."[1] It is to be regretted that he did not carry

[1]Enrique Amorim, Los montaraces, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Goyanarte, 1957), p. 116. Subsequent references to this edition will be included in the text and cited as LM.

out this assertion.

Since the novel's theme is concerned with the abolition of the abominable working conditions of the laborers, the author takes pains to illustrate the injustices under which these men are forced to work. To portray this cruel exploitation, Amorim resorts to the familiar thematic elements of death, violence, and superstition. The people who inhabit the banks of the river in which Isla Mala lies are the poor and uneducated. Superstition is an integral factor in their lives, as the author manages to show through various means. Throughout the work, the author portrays the protagonist and his fellow workers seeking signs or auguries which might forecast the success or failure of an action or a person. The night before the workers go on strike, Cecilio seeks a prognostication of the success of the mission in the birds which appear. "Sólo faltaba que una lechuza rasgara el aire nocturno para que Cecilio encontrase presagios en la víspera de la evasión" (LM. 117). The death of the ruthless overseer is foreshadowed through his companion, a black cat: " . . . el gato negro no iba a traerle buena suerte" (LM. 129). Such examples abound, since these are primitive and ignorant men for whom the embodiment of wisdom is to be found in the magic of the curandera.

Amorim's purpose in establishing this aura of

superstition is to show how the fear and ignorance of the area's inhabitants are exploited. The deplorable working conditions on Isla Mala are hidden from the public simply because no one dares to enter the island. Nothing is really known about Isla Mala, but fantastic tales are circulated. Sometimes the sound of wood-chopping is heard, but the people refuse to believe that any human can exist in such a foreboding environment. No one has ever returned alive from the place to destroy the superstitions although many men have tried, judging from the numerous bodies found in the river, all with a mysterious bullet hole in the forehead. Because of the inexplicable happenings, a multitude of legends and superstitions have sprung up and circulated, legends and fears that the company has exploited in order to guard its mode of operation from the public eye. Through direct exposition, Amorim establishes the atmosphere of the foreboding island. "Isla Mala era el comienzo del trópico . . . Feudo erguido en el agua, país de extrañas leyendas . . . " (LM. 18). The myths concerning the island are are passed down from father to son. "Los hombres . . . prefirieron, generación tras generación, mantener el mito de lo salvaje. Los niños aceptaban el sortilegio de la aventura cuando padres o abuelos contaban algún remoto episodio de las tierras vírgenes" (LM. 19). Amorim describes the rural dwellers' belief thus:

> Pestes, arañas dañinas, insectos, duendes y aquelarres, "lobizones y aparecidos," mantenían a Isla Mala lejos de toda posibilidad. Mandinga, el Diablo, hacía inhabitable el paraje para gringos y criollos. Así como los animales salvajes la preferían, la leyenda negra la hizo habitable para hombres sobrenaturales. Nadie había regresado de Isla Mala. Nadie quería exponerse a la picadura de víboras o insectos malignos. Como era imposible remontar el río, los inaccesibles límites de Isla Mala se perdían en la imaginación de los pobladores de Las Tunas (LM. 19).

When one of the men attempting the escape from the island dives into the river, he strikes his forehead upon a rock. The doctor who makes out the death certificate perpetuates the legend of Isla Mala when he gives his conclusions as to the cause of death. "El médico certificó muerte por asfixia. Y un orificio de bala en el hueso frontal. —Podía ser una bola arrojadiza de los indios —dijo, para mantener el mito" (LM. 87). Thus the superstitions and legends surrounding the island are actively encouraged by the company to aid in the exploitation and control of the workers.

Death and violence, which were an inherent part of life among the rude peasants in Amorim's early works,

now play a different role. When these thematic elements appear in Los montaraces, they do not illustrate the violent nature of the men themselves, but rather the cruel exploitation and enslavement perpetrated by the owners of the lumber firm. Medical treatment is available to the foremen, but not to the common woodcutters. Through dialogue, Amorim relates how one of the workers, Vergüenzas, had died after having been refused treatment for a snakebite. "—Lo había picado una yara. Como no lo picó mientras trabajaba . . . andaba lejos del obraje . . . el canalla no quiso curarlo" (LM. 66). Later, through direct exposition, Amorim contrasts the case of a foreman who has died, but only after receiving good medical care. "El capataz terminó su vida más allá de palos blancos. Los capataces no caían en el campo de trabajo como el negro Vergüenzas" (LM. 109). Numerous examples of this lack of humane treatment appear in the novel, sometimes illustrated through dialogue, sometimes through action, most often through direct exposition on the part of the author.

Characterization

While characterization is only one of the major elements of fiction, the success of a novel ofttimes depends upon how effectively the author has created "real" characters. The personages serve as vehicles in the

illustration of the author's theme. If the characters are unreal, if they do not come alive, the reader does not identify with them nor sympathize with their struggle in the dramatic conflict. The reader's acceptance of the story depends upon his willingness to believe that the personages act "in character." If the author desires to convince the reader that the character's actions are natural, he must create a character who would logically react in a given way in a given situation. To create a character who is convincing requires painstaking work of the novelist and in most of his rural novels, Amorim performs well. While he is not a creator of such giants as Don Quixote and Sancho, his personages do "come alive" and are interesting and convincing to the reader. It is unfortunate that no studies have been made on the various techniques which Amorim employs in characterization. Perhaps the best way to analyze his methods of delineation in Los montaraces is to follow his procedure, step by step, in the creation of the central character.

The main theme of the novel is the author's protest against the exploitation suffered by the woodcutters. Therefore, the dramatic conflict revolves around the protagonist, Cecilio, in his struggle to alleviate the social injustices imposed by the management. To perform this role, the protagonist should be one who has the reader's sympathy and who demonstrates those qualities of

forcefulness, dedication, and leadership which will enable him to succeed in his endeavor. To create a true-to-life portrait of his type of individual, Amorim structures the novel so that these facets of Cecilio's character are seen to emerge one by one. The basic structure of the novel follows that of a Bildungsroman, or a "novel of formation." That is, the episodes form a series of experiences that contribute to the formation of Cecilio's character, a type of character natural to one who can lead the woodcutters in their fight for decent working conditions.

Three distinct phases in Cecilio's character emerge during the tale, corresponding to the divisions the author has made in Parts I, II, and III of the work. Part I may be labeled "Boy to Man." It is here that Amorim establishes the basic character of his protagonist. The author introduces Cecilio as a boy of fifteen, almost a man. He immediately gains the reader's sympathy for the young man by showing Cecilio's concern for his father who has spent two lonely years as a widower. "Cecilio le encontró preocupado y creyó que era su deber darle un consejo" (LM. 8). The father, Maragato, brings home a new wife and Cecilio, finding a strange woman in the house upon his return home " . . . tosió fuerte, como él creía que debía hacerlo para anticipar su llegada" (LM. 9). The author's use of the word "deber" in the

preceding two examples emphasizes Cecilio's observation of filial "duty" toward his father. His respect for his elders is evident in his greeting of Floriana, his new stepmother. "Cecilio murmuró un tímido 'buenas noches,' tendió la mano a la desconocida y se sentó al lado del padre en humilde actitud" (LM. 9). Up to this point, the author has presented a boy who gains the reader's sympathy by his good qualities. He now shows the boy on the threshold of manhood through Floriana's observations. "No me habías dicho que tu hijo estaba tan crecido. Un poco más y es hombre" (LM. 10). However, the obstacle to the boy's acceptance into manhood lies in his father's refusal to recognize his maturity until he has proved himself by breaking a colt. Maragato continues to call him "Cachorro" and still squats with the boy seated between his knees. It shames Cecilio that his friend, Perico, has noticed this protective attitude of his father, and through dialogue, Amorim provides one of the spurs which goad Cecilio into proving himself. "No te dejés tratar así —le había dicho Perico . . . ¿No ves que nunca vas a salir de entre las patas de tu tata . . . ?" (LM. 11).

Cecilio, like all young boys, dreams of adventures, especially on Isla Mala. Through direct exposition, the author relates the exciting and dangerous feats of prowess passing through the turbulent imagination of

Cecilio. Then the protagonist is put to the test. Floriana has become ill and medicinal herbs are needed. To obtain them, one must cross the river with its dreaded current, the "Cola del Diablo." Amorim shows his protagonist to be willing and able to accept the challenge through three methods. First, by means of Cecilio's speech, he displays the protagonist's determination to be directly involved in the venture. The effects of this speech and this determination are shown upon the father, as Maragato sees himself in the young man's bravery. "Mara no había oído hasta entonces una réplica de tono tan decidido. La resolución del hijo parecía que era cosa suya. Hasta la voz la sintió como propia. No era Cecilio quien se rebelaba. Era él, el mismo Maragato . . . " (LM. 15-16). Second, respect is accorded Cecilio through the speech of a passer-by who, while admiring Cecilio's swimming ability, comments to Maragato, "Tenés un hijo que te va a salir taura . . . " (LM. 22). Third, the author has the father admire the physical attributes of his son which reflect inner characteristics of firmness and vigor. Thus Cecilio's character emerges by three means: (1) through the protagonist's speech, (2) by his reputation or the opinion of him that is held by another personage, and (3) through physical description.

The success of Cecilio's mission enables the author

to point out Cecilio's strengths. Amorim drives the point home, showing the effects of this daring deed on other characters. Maragato now considers his son to have proven himself. "Cecilio ya era un hombre. No necesitaba acreditarse hineteando baguales. El lomo del río también servía para sentar patente de macho" (LM. 23). The curandera has refused to charge Cecilio for the herbs, saying "Andá nomaj . . . No me debej nada. A loj que vienen a nado no hay que cobrarlej . . . " (LM. 20-21). And finally Perico, who previously criticized Cecilio for allowing himself to be treated as a child, now accords him the respect of a veritable hero after hearing the tale of the crossing. "Perico lo miró como debe mirarse a un héroe. Un reverencioso silencio cerró el relato" (LM. 25).

At this point, the author has portrayed a character who not only is eager for adventure, but who possesses the character traits essential for the surmounting of obstacles which may bar his road to success. However, one feat is not enough to impress these traits on the reader's mind. To insure the desired impression of Cecilo's character, it is necessary that he author establish a character pattern. In this case, the author shows that his character's exploit was not just a fortuitous occurrence, but rather a reflection of his protagonist's true personality. The establishment of

the character pattern involves repetition but, at the same time, it involves variation to avoid boredom. To achieve this, Amorim provides other exploits showing Cecilio's skills and prowess, but each one different enough so as to provide variation within the same pattern. Cecilio's swim across the river is followed by his taming of a colt. The fact that the horsebreaking occurs in a dangerous place, according to local superstitions, makes the deed even more significant.

Cecilio's thirst for adventure has been awakened. Fearing that he will be trapped, as was his father, by family responsibilities before he has a chance to experience these new adventures, he refuses to allow his attention to be diverted from his main goal--a voyage to Isla Mala. At the end of Part I, Cecilio swims the river again, unable to resist the attraction of the mysterious island.

Phase II in the development of the protagonist's character may be labeled "Apprenticeship." Cecilio now is in a strange environment, replete with dangers and obstacles foreign to his experience. To illustrate Cecilio's competence and ability to cope with this new world, the author continues his delineation of character pattern through another test. Traveling alone through the forest, Cecilio encounters a yarará, an extremely poisonous snake. The call to adventure excites him. Furthermore,

he dares not let the snake escape: " . . . no tendrá más remedio que continuar andando con el terror a las espaldas, con el seguro infortunio persiguiéndole. Ningún presagio tan grave como una víbora atravesada en el camino" (LM. 58). In one of the most dramatic passages in the book, Amorim describes Cecilio's beheading the snake with his knife. This episode not only reinforces the character pattern of Cecilio but also provides for the respect which the woodcutters will show him later. When he relates the confrontation to Anacleto, a seasoned woodcutter and closest companion to Cecilio, the protagonist confesses that he was unable to find the reptile's head. Anacleto is impressed but remains outwardly impassive as he points out the head to Cecilio. "—La tiene prendida a las bombachas, mi amigo . . . —Se la señala con el cuchillo— ¡Mire! ¡Mire! El muchacho baja la vista venciendo el impulso de terror. Colgada de sus ropas está la cabeza de la víbora" (LM. 59). By this time, the author has successfully impressed upon the reader that Cecilio is a superior individual. But he is also human for the author shows another facet of his character--his youthful naïveté. In a scene where Cecilio is writing a letter for La Pelada, the only woman on the island, he misinterprets her tears, supposing that she is crying due to loneliness for her mother. In reality, she has never even known her mother and is

lamenting the misery of her total existence. A similar misinterpretation of the protagonist appears in one other instance early in the novel and provides a "rounding out" of a character which would otherwise tend to be "flat." This naïveté is not a defect of character which would cast doubt upon Cecilio's eventual success, for it will disappear with experience, but serves to make him more human, more realistic and even more appealing to the reader. As time passes, the author, through direct exposition, shows Cecilio gaining the confidence of the woodcutters. "Cecilio conquistó la simpatía de todos" (LM. 68). He now employs that confidence to unite the workers behind a plan: " . . . fue madurando el plan de Cecilio . . . tenía prestigio suficiente para convencer a cualquiera" (LM. 68-69).

His apprenticeship is successfully completed when Anacleto recognizes him as an equal, no longer considering him as his personal peon. Cecilio manages to control his emotions outwardly for a while, but the author shows the reader, through exterior description, the joy that the protagonist is experiencing as he walks away from Anacleto. "Pero comprendió la intención de Anacleto: tratarlo de igual a igual. Dejaba de ser un peón. Anacleto preparó las brasas. Cecilio caminó hacia la orilla. Se atravesó una nube de mariposas blancas. Se le pegaban a los ojos. Las más tenaces libaban en los

lagrimales" (LM. 100).

For a protagonist to possess the ability or capacity to act, a tool, weapon, or some particular skill is often necessary to perform the action. In this case, the weapon that Cecilio will employ is the general strike. Amorim has painstakingly prepared for Cecilio's familiarity with the efficacy of this weapon earlier in Part I, through dialogue. Cecilio relates to Perico the success with which the peons of a certain ranch had utilized this weapon, when they fled to the woods, leaving all the chores to be handled by the cruel rancher himself.

> —¿A qué se fueron al monte, che? —preguntó Perico.
>
> —Pa dejar solo al patrón. No quedó naides en la casa, hicimos güelga . . .
>
> —¿Y qué les dijo el patrón?
>
> —Qué va a decir . . . ¡nada! Pero tuvo que encerrar los terneros de las lecheras, meter las majadas en el corral, él solito . . . Ordeñó pa sus hijos . . .
>
> —¿Quién?
>
> —El patrón. Tuvo que hacer todo y . . . y no apareció más con el rebenque (LM. 28).

Since the protagonist possesses the weapon and also those character traits which logically grant him a

leader's role, the stage is now prepared for Cecilio's utilization of the unity of purpose that he has established among the workers. However, the attempt to vacate the island fails for, at the last moment, most of the men back out, fearing to cross the river with Cecilio and his closest friends. The strike has failed and the men continue living under the old law--survival of the fittest. "La Compañía imponía la única ley: la de la selva" (LM. 76).

Part III may be labeled "Maturity and Success." Whereas in Part II, the men were concerned about their individual fates, now Cecilio manages to impose on all the woodcutters a mutual concern over the collective welfare of the group--" . . . una nueva forma de convivencia. . . . nuevas leyes de la selva" (LM. 114). Cecilio's bravery continues to be displayed through his actions and speech. For example, he defies superstition by mentioning a dead man's name directly. The author displays Cecilio's superiority over the other men when he later explains the valor required for such an act.

> Mencionar a un muerto en tiempo presente era de mal agüero. Solía decirse siempre: "el finau, que en paz descanse . . . ", o "el finau, que Dios tenga a su lado", etc. Cecilio necesitó sacar fuerzas nuevas para sobreponerse a la creencia de una superstición.

Anacleto no se hubiese atrevido a mencionar al compañero ahogado en forma irreverente (LM. 111). Everything goes according to Cecilio's plan. The island is vacated and it appears that the company will be forced to negotiate contracts, but in the final moment before success, one last obstacle is raised. This one is different from all the preceding barriers, for the conflict here is internal. Cecilio is torn between carrying out his struggles on behalf of the woodcutters or staying with Aminda, a young girl with whom he has fallen in love. The author paints the first signs of Cecilio's wavering through Perico's observations of the protagonist: " . . . estaba pronto a ver reflejadas en el rostro de su amigo las veladas dudas de un combatiente arrepentido" (LM. 138).

By emphasizing the physical, the author shows Cecilio to be an "imprisoned" victim of sensual desire. "El encuentro con Aminda, el choque de su sangre contra las propias paredes de una cárcel carnal, lo habían internado por derroteros ajenos a la lucha reivindicatoria de los montaraces. . . . la secreta aventura amorosa centraba su imaginación en unos ojos, en una boca, en unos brazos calientes" (LM. 139). The girl attempts to exact a promise from Cecilio to abandon his fight for justice. Little by little, his enthusiasm for the struggle diminishes as he is incessantly attracted to her. The author underlines, through repetition, Cecilio's compulsion to return to her

time after time.

> Volvió a meter las manos . . . bajo la cintura de la mujer. Volvió a ceñir el talle de Aminda . . . Volvió a ver el alto remaje reflejado en las pupilas de la muchacha . . . Volvió cinco o diez veces a soplar los cabellos de Aminda . . . Volvió a caminar . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Diez, veinte veces, cien veces volvió a ver Cecilio a Aminda. Volvió a verla al borde del río . . . Volvió a verla tirada a todo lo largo que podía, sobre la sombra densa (LM. 139-141).

Cecilio's sense of duty and adventure is too strong, however, and enables him to overcome the obstacle presented by Aminda. Amorim has previously prepared for this crisis and now the warning given Cecilio long ago by his father counsels him to see the battle for the woodcutters completed. "Si uno acampa en Las Tunas, ya no sale más de aquí . . . Las mujeres le meten tornivos a uno . . . Yo caí en el lazo, y lazos me paso haciendo desde que vos naciste . . . " (LM. 38). Thus Cecilio returns to lead the woodcutters in their successful demands for new and better working conditions.

In the last chapter, where the action is divorced from the woodcutters' struggles, there is one other

personage who displays a development in character. She is Wanda, the wife of Alfredo Ulloa. Alfredo is a strong, domineering man, completely opposite from his intellectual brother, Diógenes. At the beginning of the last chapter, Wanda is shown to be submissive to Alfredo, usually deferring to his wishes. Wanda is generally satisfied with her life, but one great disappointment has marred her existence. "Sus veintiocho años en saludable plenitud fueron machucados cuando su marido, luego de consultar a los médicos, le dió la noticia de que jamás tendrían hijos" (LM. 152).

Alfredo is aggravated by Wanda's fame as a marksman and the thought of her superiority in any area infuriates him. Through direct exposition, but as if Alfredo were experiencing these thoughts himself, Amorim describes her skills. "Wanda Saravia montaba espléndidamente a caballo. Wanda Saravia tiraba al blanco. Wanda Saravia bajaba hasta la orilla del agua y los disparos de su arma predilecta sonaban en el fondo del barranco" (LM. 153). The author's repetitious use of "Wanda Saravia" suggests that the constant mention of his wife's name is a source of irritation and aggravation to Alfredo. Her skill is a terrible blow to her husband's ego. While he manages to control himself in front of Wanda, the author shows, through Alfredo's actions, the true effect upon him. "Pero cada vez que descubría en el suelo una cápsula de

balín hundíalo furioso en la tierra con un golpe de taco. Las huellas de Wanda lo exasperaban . . . " (LM. 153). By this means, the author has not only established Wanda's basic character but also her situation and relationship to her husband.

Since Amorim delineates Wanda's character in only one chapter, the portrait emerges almost entirely through direct exposition. Nevertheless, in that exposition, certain effects are achieved through the author's style. When Alfredo is absent for ten days, Wanda experiences a freedom from his domination, a liberty and harmony that she had forgotten even existed. Amorim describes this change of mental state, emphasizing Wanda's renascence through sentences with triads.

> . . . un ser recién creado, recién bajado del cielo o recién incorporado a la creación . . .
>
> ¡Qué bellas sensaciones! Wanda palpaba el aire suyo, sin un solo rumor, sin un solo tabique, sin una sola división separadora.
>
> . . . supo, por vez primera, lo que era el abandono, el relajamiento, la auténtica molicie.
>
> Sentía livianas las piernas, ágiles los brazos, el pecho ensanchado.
>
> Reinar en Los Tejados iba poco a poco

> resultándole un don del cielo, una dicha inesperada, una felicidad inmerecida (LM. 161-162.).

After this experience of freedom from Alfredo's tyranny, Wanda realizes that her life has been void and fruitless. Through images of heat and burning, the author characterizes her as a thirsty animal, burning with desire for fulfillment. She seeks this fulfillment in Diógenes, taking advantage of Alfredo's absence to seduce the brother.

> Wanda atrapó la mano en el aire, y llevándosela a los labios la cubrió de besos, la quemó con la brasa de su boca. Diógenos cayó de rodillas junto al sillón de su cuñada, y sus labios recorrieron el cuerpo de la bella mujer que se ofrecía como si fuese la primera vez que calmara la sed que la abrasaba.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Wanda estiró el pescuezo como una venada sedienta . . . (LM. 166-167).

She decides to escape Alfredo's domination by going with Diógenes, whom she feels she loves. But another change occurs when Diógenes informs Wanda that it is really Alfredo who is sterile, that he had paid the doctors to misinform her. Now, rather than simply escape Alfredo's dominance, Wanda's primary goal is to seek revenge for

Alfredo's cruel deceit. Confessing her unfaithfulness to Alfredo, she attacks his vanity by declaring her awareness of his sterility. This is more than he can stand and, in a rage, he pushes her to her death in the river. The incident is explained, by Alfredo, as an accidental fall and the novel ends on this note of injustice.

Minor characters in this novel are aligned according to their role in the struggle between the management and the woodcutters. Even Wanda's attempt to escape Alfredo's domination reflects Cecilio's struggle against the lumber firm. Although Cecilio never comes into direct contact with Alfredo, the latter is represented in the form of "El Capitán," a cruel, despotic foreman. To the woodcutters, and therefore to the reader, he is the personification of the company's exploitative cruelty. Amorim shows him to be a man with values completely inverted from the norm. A lover of animals, he delights in the most sadistic of tortures for men. The best illustration of his character occurs in a scene where he is delineated through speech and actions. "El Capitán" has planned to make an example of one of the woodcutters by wrapping him in a wet cowhide. When exposed to the sun, the hide will shrink and crush him. The man escapes and one of the foremen suggests substituting a dog for the man to serve as a warning to the workers. "El Capitán" flies into a rage, striking the man with his whip.

> . . . El Capitán dejó caer sobre su cabeza el más feroz rebencazo que hubiera dado en su vida. Y en seguida le cruzó la cara con otro golpe de lonja, antes de que los saltos de su caballo espantado lo alejaran de la presa.
>
> —¡Mal nacido . . . ! ¡Canalla . . . ! —gritó El Capitán—. ¡Torturar a un perro! ¡Tomá! ¡Tomá! (LM. 120).

All of Amorim's rural novels have the pampa for their setting with the exception of Los montaraces, in which the action takes place in a forest. In line with this change of scene, an interesting innovation in Amorim's mode of characterization occurs. Minor characters are described in terms of trees or by reference to parts of trees. On the very first page, Amorim sets the pattern through his direct description of Cecilio's father, Maragato. "La viudez lo tumbó como a un árbol. Ahora el tronco empezaba a recibir los bienes de la naturaleza: la humedad, el calor, el viento. En la dura corteza del rostro su sonrisa recordaba los verdines que trepan a los árboles vencidos por el hacha" (LM. 7). Throughout the novel, the same device is employed.

> Perico era más nuevo que astilla recién cortada (LM. 100).
>
> [Facundo López] Parecía una llama de leña

verde que se apaga (LM. 71).

[Cecilio] debía dejar caer la cabeza como gajo de camalote cortado (LM. 140).

. . . la dura madera de aquel despótico personaje . . . (LM. 129).

. . . los robustos brazos, duros como ñandubay . . . (LM. 130).

[Los hombres] se perdían como pequeños troncos flotantes . . . (LM. 122).

When Cecilio swims across the river to the curandera, the setting sun turns the water a fiery red, and Cecilio is presented through the image of a log on a bonfire. " . . . el cuerpo insumido en las aguas, como un leño de ceibo en las llamas de una hoguera" (LM. 20). That night, after the exhausting swim, Cecilio " . . . cayó en la cama como un tronco" (LM. 21).

The purpose of this particular stylistic device, the linking of men and trees, is not only to aid in characterization, but also to serve as a thematic illustration. In one instance, a magnifi ent specimen of a tree has been mistakenly cut down although it was to have been saved. One of the foremen states that the error is not a serious one, for all the surrounding trees have been cut down. The large tree, without the support and protection of the surrounding trees, would have been blown down by the wind: " . . . el urunday vivía gracias

al apoyo de los restantes árboles . . . " (LM, 72). Since the author has characterized the woodcutters in terms of trees, the implication here is clear that the men's safety and success is to be derived from their unity and mutual support. This serves to drive home Cecilio's contention, stated in a previous analogy between men and trees. "Todos podemos ser uno solo. Lo malo es que no nos juntamos como los troncos de las jangadas. Una viga sola no anda río abajo. Todas juntas pueden mucho" (LM, 66-67). Thus Amorim's style not only serves as an aid to characterization but provides support for illustration of his theme--the unity of the workers.

In the other rural novels the tendency is to delineate men by references to animals rather than to trees. Some broad generalizations may be formed from the wide variety of animal images that he employs. Members of the aristocracy are often presented in comparisons to the horse. Through this analogy, the author displays traits such as forcefulness, dominance, and strength. The peons are generally shown as dogs to portray either faithfulness or submissiveness. The lower-class women of the pampa are compared with cows, stressing docility, submissiveness, and fertility. In Los montaraces, the author makes a special effort to describe his characters in terms of trees. Even so, there are instances when he resorts to his more familiar

comparisons. For example, La Pelada is described as " . . . un árbol pesado . . . " (LM. 103), but she also reminds Cecilio of a dairy cow: " . . . la última vaca lechera que ordeñara" (LM. 54). Aminda and Floriana are described in the same manner: "Maragato eligió a Floriana porque tiene algo de vaca lechera, es vacuna como será Aminda cuando se le agrande la cintura" (LM. 140-141).

One of the best examples of characterization through comparison to animals occurs in Tangarupá. The dehumanization of the protagonist, Panta, is achieved when the author draws an exact parallel between him and an ox, both drinking from the same muddy river. Panta, who is an orphan of unknown origin, is identified with the "animal sin historia" and both suffer not only the biting of the flies but their whole miserable existence with passivity and resignation. The author first portrays the drinking beast.

> Un buey obscuro, metido en el barro hasta la panza, rumiaba la modorra de la hora, sacudiendo la cola, que a veces, se le quedaba encima de las ancas, para caer después como si con ella se desmoronase su resignación de bestia. . . . Los tábanos sangraban su lomo. El parpadeo lento y poco frecuente de sus grandes ojos mansos, interrumpía el llanto continuo y perenne de su trágica resignación. La cabeza

> caída, sostenía el yugo del sol, obligándole a volcar el mundo vacío de su entraña de animal sin historia . . . (Tangarupá 73).

On the following page, the protagonist is shown, in the identical situation, suffering the stinging flies with the same stoic resignation. "Agachóse para alzar el agua en sus manos y beber en ellas. Cuando las levantaba unidas . . . un tábano encajaba el mismo tiempo, su dañino aguijón en la nuca del sediento. Dióse un eficaz manotón . . . Y volvió a bajar la cabeza para beber el agua en sus manos sucias y callosas . . . " (Tangarupá 74).

In an episodic novel such as La carreta, characterization is minimal and is generally given through direct exposition. Usually a brief character sketch suffices to give the reader a fair idea of the character's personality and physical make-up. One salient detail is generally enough to individualize the character for the reader's identification. There are Don Casero's white scarf, Correntino's "llorando por una mujer," and Chaves' black kerchief which covers part of his face and hides a mystery. In La carreta, it really does not suit the author's theme to individualize these characters deeply, but rather to show that all of them are, in fact, identical, hopelessly following in the footsteps of their predecessors just as others will follow them. Thus many

of them are almost faceless, for it is humanity itself which is being characterized.

To show the bestial characteristics shared by all these rural, lower-class personages, Amorim employs his usual method: the analogies between characters and plants or animals. In this manner, he successfully gives the portrait of a rude and savage land, with the suffering, misery, and hopelessness that reduce men to a level of primitive instinct.

Two minor characters in El paisano Aguilar serve as prime examples of Amorim's characterization through style. The first is Juliana, Aguilar's servant. Juliana is the epitome of the "china," submissive and docile. Her essence, as far as Aguilar is concerned, is reflected in every object on the ranch and is emphasized through the author's repetition. To illustrate the bestial characteristics of Juliana, Amorim again resorts to the animal comparisons, in addition to the analogies with the lowly, filthy objects littering the ranch house. Although the description is narrated directly, it sums up Aguilar's feelings concerning the omnipresence of his servant.

> Juliana, pasiva, bestial, con inocencia de vaca, con zalamerías de perra, con sumisión de oveja, con mirada de yegua por parir, estaba en todo lo que veía a su alrededor. En el

> mate manoseado; en el sobeo de sujetar las tamberas; en un ba[illegible]o tirado en el suelo; en un par de espuelas [illegible]nloladas; en la sucia y ahumada puerta de la cocina; en un banquito de ceibo . . . Todo pertenecía a su alma, a su olor, a su voz que regateaba, a esa mujer profundísima del campo, a veces casi mineral (EPA. 68).

The stoic passivity of the lower-class women is summed up in one scene where Juliana, through her speech and actions, displays complete resignation to her fate. When Aguilar grabs her and attempts to make love to her for the first time, she reacts completely without surprise or emotion. "Presa entre sus brazos, envuelta la cara en trapos, sin mirarle y sin sorprenderse, sin un temblor, como si aquello fuese muy natural y guardado de tiempo atrás, abrazada fuertemente por el patrón, ceñida a su cuerpo se limitó a decirle: —¡Luego señor, luego! ¡Que se me quema el asau!" (EPA. 66).

The second example of characterization through style concerns the rancher, Cayetano, who is Aguilar's neighbor. Nicknamed "Quemacampos" for his habit of doing just that, he rides forth over the plains, lighting matches and throwing them over his shoulder, never bothering to look behind to watch the blazes he starts. By direct exposition, Amorim establishes Cayetano's destructive

habit, showing it to be the old reactionary's idea of progress. "Odiaba la chirca, los pastizales, el yuyal, y era partidario de las quemazones que limpian los campos de garrapatas y hacen brotar pasto fino y alimenticio. . . . Sus ideas de progreso giraban alrededor del saneamiento, por medio de quemazones" (EPA. 32-33). Emphasizing this outstanding characteristic, Amorim continues the delineation of Cayetano through his style, showing various aspects of the rancher by references to heat or burning.

> . . . acompañando la blasfemia que ardía en sus labios amoratados y carnosos . . . (EPA. 32).
>
> . . . toda su indumentaria contrastaba con los arrestos imprevistos del dominador, cálidos en su palabra segura (EPA. 33).
>
> . . . a pesar de ser hombre de campo, cabal, también ardían en su vida algunas llamas del hogar ciudadano (EPA. 36).
>
> Don Cayetano ofreció cigarrillos, en una petaca de nonato y en la cual, a fuego, aparecía estampada la marca de la hacienda (EPA. 37).
>
> Le quemó la voz altanera de don Cayetano (EPA. 45 [All italics added]).

Thus, through style, Amorim stresses the salient

characteristic that he has previously established through direct exposition.

Characters and setting are intimately related in Amorim's rural novels. In La carreta, for example, the environmental aridity is profoundly reflected in the wearisome, spiritless life of the region's dwellers and their search for sexual fulfillment. Aguilar's character is strongly affected by the "imprisoning" spaces as is Costa's by the sordid surroundings of the colony, Corral Abierto.

One device that Amorim employs to characterize his lower-class personages has already been discussed--their portrayal in terms of animals in the novels of the pampa, or in the case of Los montaraces, by references to trees. This mode of characterization, because of the tendency to dehumanize the personage, serves to emphasize the bestiality or, at least, the more primitive qualities of the characters. Sometimes, to stress the dehumanization even more, Amorim personifies the setting at the same time, with the result being a complete identification between the personage and his environment. The best example occurs in El caballo y su sombra, although this device appears in other novels as well.

Describing the poverty-stricken colony of the immigrants, Amorim shows the ravages of environment evident on the mud and straw shacks to be reflected in

their inhabitants, who are described as being made of the same materials.

> Ranchos de abode y paja amarillenta que miran el camino con ojos legañosos. Puertas a medio cerrar, empujadas por el viento, castigadas por la lluvia (ECS. 132).
>
> Gente de los ranchos, pedazos de barro, harapientos y remendados como los techos de las viviendas y las empalizadas de las letrinas (ECS. 130).

The personification of the shacks, coupled with the complete identification of the immigrants and their dwellings produces a total dehumanization of these suffering people.

The best examples of Amorim's creation of character probably appear in El caballo y su sombra. In this novel, the author employs all of the modes of delineation used throughout his novelistic work to produce the most vivid and life-like of personages. The characterization in El caballo y su sombra is from the viewpoint of an omniscient author. Nico is the focus of character and it is his story. But it is related primarily through the minds, observations, and reactions of other characters to Nico. Nico is a "flat" character in the sense that the reader sees only one facet--his refusal to accept change and other points of view. If he were an ordinary

person, his reactionary ways would be of no interest. But he is a stubborn, forceful man, wielding great power and influence over a number of human lives. The actions and conflicts forthcoming from his one-sided character will have a profound or disastrous effect on numerous other personages.

The author characterizes Nico with a minimum of well-chosen descriptions, generally in images relating to animal or vegetable life. The similes and metaphors usually emphasize some forceful characteristic.

> Aquel orgulloso ejemplar físico —tronco de roble del que Nico alardeaba— podía darle [a Adelita] buena simiente (ECS. 11).
>
> Dos metros de erguida salud vegetal (ECS. 11).
>
> Alto, recio, plantado como un árbol, con algo de vegetal en sus lentos movimientos, Nico Azara contemplaba su padrillo (ECS. 50).
>
> [Nico] pensó en su padre. . . . El heredaba sus grandes rasgos. A campo abierto, sin protección, sin testigos, compenetrado del vigor animal de la bestia que montaba (ECS. 82).

Another image illustrates the bellicose side of his character: " . . . la carcajada inocentona de Nico, semejante a las cortinas de humo que lanzan los buques de guerra para cubrir la retirada" (ECS. 24).

His pride in the traditional ranch work is evidenced in his dress and the continual odor of animal disinfectants that accompanies his presence.

> Venía sucio. Una ráfaga de creolina que apestaba, entró con él en el comedor (ECS. 31).
>
> Nico quería impresionar a su hermano con sus trazas de trabajador. Volvía salpicado de creolina y antisárnico, desgarrada la camisa, el cabello revuelto. Su fortaleza gaucha, desafiante, provocadora (ECS. 43).

However, the negative effect of Nico's intransigence is primarily displayed through the reaction of other characters. To the settlers, he is a remnant of the past: "el último gaucho sucio" (ECS. 84). His own peons betray him by breeding his registered stud to a little nag, revelling in their vengeful trick. "Duvimeoso apretaba los dientes con rabia, al morder la chala. Aquel robo, aquella decisión, era como un desquite. . . . No comentaban el 'contrabando.' Sobraban las palabras. ¿Para qué explicar el odio al patrón . . . ?" (ECS. 120-131). The animosity and rivalry between the two brothers is evident from the second page of the novel when Amorim characterizes Nico through Marcelo's memory.

> Enumeró los caprichos de su hermano Nico, protector de tipos extraños, amigo de tener a su servicio sujetos de rara catadura. . . .

> Censuró su costumbre de albergar y proteger a esa gente hosca y misteriosa. Peones astrosos, a los que pagaba una miseria. . . . Despreciando estos hábitos, Marcelo Azara llevaba diez años sin visitar aquellos pagos (ECS. 10-11).

Even Adelita, Nico's wife, who is the model of sweetness and refinement, is forced to turn against him to assure justice for her half-sister, Rica. So the reader, who observes Nico principally through the eyes of other characters, has no alternative but to react unfavorably toward the reactionary rancher. While admiring and respecting the physical vigor and forcefulness of his character, it is, nonetheless, the primitive bestiality which predominates in the reader's conception of Nico.

Thus Amorim emphasizes only one side of his protagonist's personality. Nico is delineated mostly through his relationships with other personages and these contacts with other characters are usually charged with animosity. But he is not reduced to a simple type or caricature for, in spite of his flat characterization, he is too vigorous and strong. He stands out from all the other characters by the simple fact that he is alone in his struggle.

He is the last gaucho, the solitary defender of a disintegrating order. Certainly it is Amorim's intention that Nico symbolically represent the reactionary forces in the conflict, but he still retains his position as an

individual in the mind of the reader.

It is in the character of Nico's mother, Doña Micaela, that Amorim successfully paints a caricature or type. The entire make-up of her personality can be summed up in one word--avarice. Her greed is exaggerated to the point of abnormality. She would be laughable were it not for the power she wields over the poor servants. She is the bane of Bica, who suffers silently under her watchful dominance and she saves every scrap of food: "Ni los perros sabían aprovechar los desperdicios" (ECS. 46). Since Doña Micaela is a minor character, the author generally delineates her through direct exposition. The best example of Amorim's description of her occurs in a scene at bedtime. Normally, Doña Micaela rests well after a successful day of frugal thriftiness, but Nico's acquisition of the new stud destroys her tranquillity. Unable to sleep, she abhors the added expense and imagines the animal's horrendous appetite.

> Algunas noches la patrona se acostaba íntimamente satisfecha . . . Cualquier economía le proporcionaba un sueño tranquilo, un despertar menos agrio. Temía que se enteraran de un uso personalísimo: dormía entre las frazadas, para ahorrarse el lavado de sus sábanas. Cuando, al fin de la semana, Bica

> intentaba llevar su ropa de cama al lavadero--
> la lavandera cobraba por pieza--, la corría
> de su cuarto:
>
> —¡Usted sale de aquí! ¡Esto es asunto
> mío! ¡Nadie la ha llamado!
>
> Y, a pesar de meterse en la cama, feliz
> en su avaricia, envuelta en las mantas, no
> pudo apartar de su sueño la idea del caballo.
> Lo veía monstruoso, enorme, devorar fardos
> de alfalfa, y triturar maíz, ruidosamente (ECS,
> 46).

The careful delineation of Micaela's abnormality serves an important function. It is significant that "la rata," as the servants refer to Micaela, is the only personage in the household who sympathizes and defends Nico's point of view. Of course the reader, repelled by Doña Micaela's abnormality, has no recourse but to feel unfavorably toward Nico. In this manner, Amorim has avoided the necessity of direct exposition in the characterization of his main personage and maintains an objectivity which allows the characters to relate their own story.

The one character of the novel that is well developed is Bica, the servant girl. This is necessary, for it is through her personal fortune that Amorim illustrates changes taking place in the social order of the pampa and through her that he suggests the solutions which are

presented in El caballo y su sombra. Bica is the illegitimate half-sister of Adelita, Nico's wife. An orphan from an early age, she passed from family to family, growing up as wild as the horses she helped the gauchos to break. Toughened by the elements and solitude, she gained the respect of the gauchos. "—¡Con ésa no se juega! A 'la gaucha' la trataban de igual a igual" (ECS. 39). Nevertheless, this hardness is manifested in firm flesh and a healthy animal beauty that attracts Marcelo's eye from the first moment he sees her. Underneath her tough protective exterior lies a tender woman, eager for love and affection, crying for escape from years of loneliness. The reader must admire the manner in which Amorim shows her metamorphosis, step by step, mostly without direct exposition. Through memory flashback, the author gives an outline of Bica's life previous to Marcelo's arrival. Emphasizing the effects of environment and loneliness upon her character, he paints her as an intensely individualistic girl, completely independent of men.

> Se le abrieron de par en par las puertas del recuerdo . . . Volvió sobre su pasado, de carne tierna, de piel suave, tan lleno de pequeños miedos que después se disiparon, poco a poco hasta ponerla hombruna y retobada, capaz de enfrentar a cualquier hombre en la noche. . . .

> Más de una vez creyó en su fealdad para explicarse la indiferencia de los hombres. Se lo dijo a una vieja lavandera, la que le respondió:
>
> —¡Buena suerte tenés que no te han metido un hijo en las entrañas, con lo linda que sos!
>
> Y ella, que tenía entonces quince años y aparentaba mayor edad, le respondió con una frase que recordaba en ese momento con la misma intensidad:
>
> —¡No he encontrado el hombre que me pueda derrumbar! (ECS. 53).

But changes begin to take place, changes that surprise Bica herself. She is unaware of her relationship to Adelita and it is through Marcelo's suspicions and inductions that the reader learns of it. He secretly observes her shock and surprise upon seeing her reflection in a mirror with her hair raised in imitation of Adelita. Her bewilderment upon seeing an attractive and very feminine image sends her away in confusion. Her feminine tenderness is manifested later by giving Adelita an affectionate but timid kiss upon learning of the latter's pregnancy. "Se puso de pie sin tiempo para recapacitar y la besó rápidamente, como si pasase por su lado, inclinándose a observar su labor. Y huyó por la galería, roja y avergonzada" (ECS. 54). Once the dam of Bica's reserve is cracked, the emotions stored within for so long

burst forth in a passionate affair with Marcelo. It is a purely physical relationship, characterized by brute animalistic passion and an almost complete lack of verbal expression.

> Cada vez que se veían en su cuartucho de madera y cinc, ambos enmudecían, y ella no se atrevía a iniciar una conversación. . . . Cuando una palabra amanecía en su boca, se le estrangulaba la garganta. Y entonces, reía, reía . . . A Marcelo la mudez de Bica le daba un sabor auténticamente campesino. Decidida a contarle todo, a revelarle su estado [embarazo], ella sólo tenía fuerzas para abrir los labios, cerrar los brazos y ceñirlo contra su cuerpo (ECS. 89).

The result of this union is unwanted pregnancy and abandonment for Bica when Marcelo is forced, by Nico, to leave the ranch.

The characterization of Bica is accomplished in several ways, usually without direct exposition from the author. The fact that she is an orphan is probably symbolic of spiritual aloneness. It is through Marcelo's mental observations that her physical attributes are recorded. "Sus brazos fuertes pero armoniosos, la frente buída, el pecho prominente. Marcelo estaba habituado a ver muchachas débiles, de tipo netamente femenino. Bica

le impresionó con su erguida figura . . . " (ECS. 29). The animal images that Amorim commonly employs to describe his rural characters are used in Bica's delineation.

> " . . . ella antepone su salud de vaquillona, su alegría animal." (ECS. 26).
>
> . . . [Bica] comprendió que ella era una "orejana" . . . (ECS. 27).
>
> De niña, los Aguilar se la pasaban de brazo en brazo como un cachorro (ECS. 47).
>
> Bica lo miró sonriendo. Una sonrisa fácil, de animalito agradecido (ECS. 77).

Running like a leitmotif throughout is the appearance of flowers or their fragrance in almost every scene in which Bica is present. Adelita's statement at the beginning of the novel in reference to Bica--"Nunca la verás sin su ramita de espliego, de eucalipto o su hoja de malvón . . " (ECS. 19)--is dutifully observed by the author. The continual accompaniment of the flowers suggests the tenderness and femininity inherent, but hidden, by the toughened exterior of Bica.

Bica, then, is a well-delineated personage. She is characterized by the author in numerous ways but normally without his direct intrusion. The role she plays is important because she signifies Amorim's solution to pressing social problems. It is not only that the child resulting from the union between Marcelo and Bica

represents the fusion of the landed aristocracy with peasant stock. More important is that Bica, as mother of Marcelo's child, is given a small chacra carved out of the ranch. The chacra marks the division of the ranch which Nico had feared and fought against so long. The trend initiated by this division of the latifundio is, to Amorim, the road to the solution of Uruguay's unjust land distribution.

In summary, Amorim establishes his characters in a variety of ways: their actions, speech, relationships with other characters, their thoughts and emotions, their memory and future aspirations, and their adaptation to their environment. His novelistic world is peopled with a diverse range of individuals, realistically portrayed and leaving a vivid impression upon the reader. The character type is common throughout Amorim's rural novels. In the early works, it serves to portray typical personalities common to the pampa: for example, Doña Micaela, the miser; Don Cayetano, the reactionary; and Juliana, the stoic, docile peasant woman. As the author's preoccupation with social problems grows, the character type serves Amorim with particular social, political, or economical targets for criticism. Thus "El Capitán" of Los montaraces represents cruelty and despotism, and numerous minor characters in Corral abierto signify classes or professions which are uncaring or oblivious

to the need for social reform.

It is difficult to single out any particular male character who best represents Amorim's modes of delineation. Cecilio, in Los montaraces, is as well done as any in the sense that the author portrays a complete pattern of maturation by diverse techniques. On the other hand, Aguilar's characterization, with respect to his growing sense of imprisonment, is perhaps the best delineation through the use of accompanying imagery. Bica represents probably the best delineation through a wide variety of techniques with a minimum of direct authorial intrusion. Amorim's characters are usually not profound nor complicated although many are well drawn. Rather than serve as subjects of a detailed psychological portrait, their function is to provide the author with vehicles to carry out the illustration of his theme.

CHAPTER VI

MYTH AS A UNIFYING AGENT

(Corral abierto)

One of the outstanding characteristics of Amorim's novelistic production is the variety to be found throughout. This diversity leads to difficulty in attempting to group his works into classes or types. The novels are set in different backgrounds and vary in length, plot, and technique, as well as in intrinsic literary value. The division of his novels into three groups--rural, urban, and mystery--for purposes of this study is an attempt to place them in categories which appear most obvious.

Corral abierto, published in 1956, combines elements of all three aforementioned categories: city, country, and detective novel. The first part of the novel is set in a city environment, Montevideo, and the action revolves around the solving of a murder. In the second half, the scene shifts to the country. The story begins in the capital with the discovery of the body of Paco Dodera, manager of a ceramics plant, and Costa's employer. The suspicion immediately falls upon the young Costa since the murder weapon, a knife which was left in the body,

is later determined to belong to the boy. He is taken into custody and placed in the care of an orphans' home after suffering interrogation and physical abuse in an attempt to make him confess. He is released much later, since his alibi, that he was working far away that night, cannot be disproved. Nevertheless, the suspicion remains.

Costa becomes a carpenter and through diligent labor manages to buy a new blue suit. He is immediately detained by a policeman and questioned as to the origin of the suit. Because of this persecution and his police record, he loses his job. Now, completely disillusioned, since employment is unavailable to him on account of his past, he decides to return to his birthplace, Corral Abierto. Rezéndez, the only police official believing in Costa's innocence, follows Costa on his trip home.

Unknown to the police officials, other than Rezéndez, there is an interesting suspect in the case. She is Gemma, an Italian Jewess and former sweetheart of Dodera. Her motive for murder would be one of revenge. One night at a gathering at his house, Dodera took from the wall an ancient blunderbuss. In the hope of creating some excitement, he loaded it with the heads of matches. When jokingly aiming it and firing at Gemma, bits of rust, metal, dirt, and wood flew into her face leaving her terribly disfigured and permanently blind.

By tracing the whereabouts of Gemma, Rezéndez

discovers that she has been receiving letters from Dodera for years since the accident. However, she has never opened them. In hopes of clearing Costa of suspicion, the letters are opened and a surprising discovery is made. Dodera had committed suicide.

This leaves Costa free to return to the city, but due to his unpleasant experiences there, he elects not to do so. He arrives at Corral Abierto and through his skill at carpentering and his qualities of leadership, he soon becomes the spokesman and leader of the settlement. After a great deal of work, he organizes the suffering people of Corral Abierto for a vast exodus from the colony in an effort to escape their miserable existence. On the way, they pass through Los troperos, a nearby ranch. The grotesque multitude marches on toward the railroad station. There, the pestiferous army boards the train and heads away from Corral Abierto. There follow individual descriptions of a number of the group and the story ends thus, with their escape from the dreadful colony and their hope for a brighter future in the city.

The themes are multiple in this work. In the first half of the novel, two are intertwined--social justice and the murder mystery. While the action revolves around the solving of the murder, another element emerges: the problem of juvenile delinquency. Through the latter,

Amorim attacks various social inequities and faults inherent in the modern urban society of Uruguay. In the second half, the author continues his protest, but treats problems related to the rural area.

The first two-thirds of the novel are marred by the author's tendentiousness, while in the last third, his protest emerges more from the circumstances and characters themselves. Amorim's social criticism is voiced principally in two ways: first, through the author's direct intrusion and second, by focusing on individual characters representative of a certain class or profession.

In the first group fall those direct observations of the author concerning certain social evils such as the use of mate. The author considers it a deceptive tool for the upper classes to pacify and discourage rebellion among the lower classes.

> El mate teje paciencia. Sus pausas son malas consejeras para la rebelión . . . El mate amansa, empareja, somete. Es el yugo, a veces: otras, es la manea. Se piensa, se discurre, se reflexiona mucho, desmasiado. Es la trampa. En China fue el opio en manos del Imperialismo. Dentro de un siglo tendrá valor esta comparación. (CA. 51).

Another tool serving those in power and enabling them to disguise or hide social ills is that of science. "La

ciencia suele ser una obsequiosa celestina. Ninguna como ella para soslayar la verdad, ni tan servil para escamotear la realidad" (CA. 152). In other instances, the author does not intrude directly, but his presence is barely hidden as in his description of the whorehouse. "El prostíbulo parecía estar bajo una enorme piedra. De esas piedras que, al levantarlas, uno encuentra una colonia de bichos que en la humedad se reproducen en abundancia" (CA. 89). The second method, that of focusing on an individual character, is used by Amorim when he wishes to illustrate the faults of a particular class or profession. The doctor in his Cadillac who gives Costa a ride during the latter's journey to Corral Abierto typifies the medical profession's lack of concern for the state of health among the poor. Despising work with the sick and suffering, the doctor " . . . salió del infierno del hospital para palpar con sus manos delicadas una realidad mucho más cómoda: La Estancia. Los Ganados. Las Cosechas" (CA. 70). The author provides an ironical twist at the end of the ride. It becomes apparent that the doctor and his driver did not pick up Costa because of compassion but simply because they needed some weight in the back of the car "—Ahora vas a ver cómo colea —dijo el chófer—. Como te decía, ves, lo que le faltaba era un peso atrás. No se puede andar con un coche como este, casi vacío. ¿Te convencés ahora?" (CA. 74). The

police, in general, are shown to be unsympathetic, even brutal. During Costa's interrogation and later, during his detention concerning the origin of his new blue suit, the persecution of the young boy by unfeeling police bullies is stressed. By focusing on the judge who handles Costa's case, Amorim portrays the politician who does absolutely nothing, for by doing nothing, he makes no political enemies and thereby rises to greater positions of power. During one phase of the journey from the capital to Corral Abierto, Costa shares a bus ride with two schoolteachers. By directly relating the content of their conversation, Amorim paints the terrible state of education in the rural areas.

In the last chapter, the protagonist makes a mental review of several acquaintances who are accompanying him on the train heading toward Montevideo. Through this this summation of various persons, with emphasis on their unrealized dreams and their frustrated hopes, a strong social protest emerges. Reference to those responsible for having inflicted the misery and suffering upon these people appears indirectly in the summation of each individual's merits. There is Ramón, whose father is also his grandfather. His physical deficiencies arouse a cold, detached, clinical interest among the doctors, but never the slightest interest in helping the boy directly. "A Ramón le han sacado fotografías unos doctores que se

acercaron en inspecciones sanitarias. Le sacan fotografías siempre que los visitan y se van con ellas, sin que jamás le hayan enviado una copia" (CA. 196). The common thematic element of the thirst for land appears again. Fabián, who dreams of owning his own tractor and plot of ground, will never realize his ambitions. "No hay un trecho para él. Ni lo habrá cuando se muera" (CA. 194). Sex is employed to show the bestial nature of those forced to live in the squalid settlement of Corral Abierto. "[Perico Millán] Va soñando con algo obsceno, una ternura rosilla, separada de una tropa que a cada rato lo mira acusadora" (CA. 196). A strong indictment of the national unconcern for the suffering lower class occurs with the description of Luciana's dream in which the author's direct intervention is evident. With her beautiful face marred by the pustules of smallpox, she dreams of singing the national anthem with her school-teacher, Miss Nella.

> Están cantando el himno nacional. La bandera flamea en lo alto, en la cumbrera del rancho. El escudo, brilla al sol. La señorita Nella, baja la bandera y se la pone entre sus manos. Cantan el himno. Dejémosla que cante la canción de la patria. En ella se habla de la Libertad y de tiranos que tiemblan. Es bella, en el sueño. Que Luciana no se despierte. Se

vería el rostro hermoso cubierto de pústulas.

Que sueñe, que siga soñando (CA. 194-195).

While the author concentrates on numerous characters to portray various social evils or to criticize particular classes and professions, he balances this criticism by introducing another set of minor personages who serve as spokesmen, offering certain solutions to vexing social ills. There is Rezéndez's wife, who is a fervent advocate of abolishing capital punishment and better treatment of youthful offenders. On the way to Corral Abierto, Costa meets an old Spanish revolutionary who stresses the need for action and the necessity of teaching the lower class their rights and privileges. The mechanic, who is a member of a group advocating agrarian reform, speaks to Costa of the poor who " . . . laboraban la tierra para gente poderosa, a los que no se le veía ni pasar por allí" (CA. 136). Most of the characters of this type serve to provide an "education" for the disillusioned young man who has failed to realize his dreams in the city. Corral abierto then, is marked by numerous direct intrusions which amount to preaching. Even when Amorim attempts to illustrate his criticism by focusing on minor characters, the episodes and dialogues are often superfluous and the reader feels that this long parade of personages, who have little or nothing to contribute to plot development, only serves as a vehicle for

delivering the author's impassioned propaganda.

Corral abierto may be divided, structurally, into three basic parts. The first third of the novel concerns Costa's experiences in the city--the accusation of murder accompanied by police brutality and persecution, ending with his final rejection of urban life signified by his decision to return to Corral Abierto. The second third concerns his journey from the city to the colony and the last third, his successful unification of the people and their departure, en masse, toward a more promising future.

The variation of theme and setting in the work leads to some confusion in attempting to integrate the novel into a meaningful whole, to show that all parts are, in reality, related to each other. It is only when the reader reaches the last third that a pattern emerges to produce a more or less unified whole out of the seemingly disparate parts.

It becomes evident in the last part that what had previously appeared fragmentary in the first two thirds becomes more complete and explicit when the work is viewed in the light of the author's use of myth. While it is true that other novels of Amorim might be analyzed in their relation to myth, Corral Abierto appears to be the only one in which the author consciously cultivates myth in illustrating his theme. The following analysis of Corral abierto concentrates on two aspects of

Amorim's use of myth: (1) the mythical framework itself which serves to provide a known and recognizable pattern for the work as a whole and (2) the manner in which myth becomes a tool of creation in the hands of the artist, who effects changes and variations to suit his own particular needs in the illustration of his theme.

The framework of Corral abierto is analogous to one of the common rites among primitive societies--the initiation ceremony or puberty rite. This is concerned with the transformation from boy to man, leading to the acceptance of the young man as a full-fledged member of the communal society. The initiation symbolically transforms the novice into an embryo, who then is "reborn" to enter society as a responsible and culturally-awakened being. This symbolic regression is signified by the separation of the neophyte from the society, perhaps by inclusion in a hut or sacred place, or through some other symbolic return to the embryonic state in the womb. At any rate, the separation is prerequisite to the return which will represent the rebirth.[1]

During the neophyte's separation, he undergoes instruction in the group myths consisting of a knowledge of group origin, morality, laws, etc. The result of this

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[1]Mircea Eliade, Myth and Reality, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1963), pp. 77-84.

initiatory instruction is a rebirth of a spiritual nature, leading to the individual's emergence on a higher spiritual plane. These initiatory ceremonies consist, then, of three basic stages: separation, instruction, and return (rebirth). These rites evoke the numerous myths which follow the pattern of the initiatory rite in which the hero experiences, often in various stages of a journey, a series of revelations which exalt him or elevate him to a higher spiritual level. This transformation often ends with the hero's return to his people to bestow the blessings of that knowledge upon the society.

The first third of Corral abierto, which deals with Costa's experiences as a young boy in the city, may be termed the "separation." It is through this stage that Amorim portrays the innocent, naïve conception that the young protagonist has of society. To prepare for the "awakening" and the hero's grasp of reality which is to come in the second phase of "instruction," complete annihilation of the protagonist's existing faith is necessary. Thus it is that Costa's "separation" results in a complete disillusionment of previous concepts. The hopes and dreams that the young boy expects to realize in the city are shattered by the discovery that there are two existing classes: those who are governed by the law and those who are exempt from it. The latter group, consisting of the rich and powerful, are outside

the law, as in the case of Paco Dodera. His crime, which results in the blindness of Gemma, never appears in the newspapers, for Dodera resides in the realm of the untouchables: " . . . uno de esos lugares donde la fortuna, grande o pequeña, sirve para vivir fuera de la sociedad. Especie de oasis, donde se podía hacer de todo, sin que persona alguna lo supiese" (CA. 13). Costa's persecution by the police, on the other hand, amounts to a personal hell and the experience is equivalent to a purgation of his misguided hopes and dreams of being accepted in this strange society.

The shattering of Costa's dreams, then, amounts to a complete disillusionment of previous concepts and, as such, corresponds to the first phase of the cyclic order inherent in the initiatory ritual. This cyclic order calls for the "death" of the initiate which precedes his "rebirth." It follows the idea that " . . . for something genuinely new to begin, the vestiges and ruins of the old cycle must be completely destroyed."[2] Also inherent in this stage is the concept of sacrifice. "The pain and torment of death stand symbolically for the sacrifice that must always be made before the new can come into being . . ."[3] For Costa, the "death" of his old dream

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[2]Eliade, Myth and Reality, p. 51.

[3]Jolande Jacobi, Complex, Archetype, Symbol in the

is mandatory for the rebirth of the new one to come. Costa, now completely disillusioned, decides to return to Corral Abierto. The symbolic return to the womb has been accomplished in the separation phase and the death of Costa's hopes and dreams have prepared for his rebirth.

The second phase of the initiation rite begins. The fertile ground of Costa's mind has been cleared and the sowing of knowledge commences. In the primitive rituals, the neophyte is introduced to the sacred truths. Often this occurs during long voyages which retrace routes originally blazed by mythical beings.[4] It is during Costa's journey back to Corral Abierto that he receives his "education" and becomes an "awakened" individual. Through his encounters and conversations with various characters, Costa gains an awareness of possible solutions to the unjust social situation which he has recently experienced. His return to Corral Abierto finds him an awakened man with possible solutions to the plight of his suffering brothers. He has returned on a higher spiritual plane and is ready to bestow the blessings of his transformation upon his people.

Psychology of C. G. Jung, trans. Ralph Manheim (New York: Pantheon Books Inc., 1959), p. 177.

[4]Charles W. Eckert, "Initiatory Motifs in the Story of Telemachus," in Myth and Literature, ed. John B. Vickery (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), p. 164.

It is evident at this stage that a cycle has been completed. Costa's descent into utter disillusionment followed by a subsequent ascent to a higher spiritual plane follows the basic formula of one of the common cyclic myths. "The cyclic myth may be described as a spiralling motion in which the hero experiences a descent (kathodos) and an ascent (anodos), emerging not at the point of outset, but at a higher level."[5] To draw a parallel from Biblical sources, the example of Moses illustrates the three phases of the initiatory rite which Amorim's protagonist undergoes: (1) the separation of Moses from the group to go to Mount Sinai, (2) instruction (the bestowal of knowledge by God), and (3) the return to lead the people toward the Promised Land. The final third of the novel fulfills the third stage of this cyclic myth--Costa's return and recognition as leader by his people, ending with their exodus from Corral Abierto toward a more promising and hopeful future.

Thus the general outline of the novel may be described as being structured around a universal myth and, as such, serves to provide a limited description of the work in terms of the central archetype. However, the simple identification of the work with myth says nothing

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[5] Robert Harrison, "Symbolism of the Cyclic Myth in Endymion," in Myth and Literature, p. 230.

in terms of the function of that myth in the particular work. Therefore, the next step is no longer that of identification, but one of differentiation. In other words, how does the author employ that myth and what changes does he effect so that the myth becomes a tool of creation to illustrate his particular theme?

In the first two thirds of the novel, the protagonist has gone through a complete cycle: a descent into a hellish existence followed by an ascent to a higher spiritual plane accompanied by more optimism. The last third of the novel repeats the identical cycle, except that here, instead of the protagonist, it is the suffering people of Corral Abierto who experience the descent and ascent.

The author portrays the people of the colony as having already made the descent. Through a series of images, increasing in intensity, he shows them to be the inhabitants of a veritable "Hell." Amorim establishes the character of Corral Abierto early in the story when Costa, under interrogation by the police, gives his origin: " . . . el culo del mundo . . . " (CA. 20). When the protagonist, having suffered a tremendous disillusionment in the city, decides to return, a doctor compares it to Daniel's entering the lion's den: " . . . ¿para qué meterte de nuevo en la leonera?" (CA. 68). Continuing to make direct analogies to their hellish

existence, Amorim describes the people in their miserable condition: "El hambre dio los toques últimos a caras infernales" (CA. 175 [Italics added]) and " . . . eran dos espléndidos cancerberos del infierno" (CA. 172 [Italics added]). In addition to the direct references to "Hell," the author employs images referring to flames, burning, and heat. Summer enters with a searing blaze. "Enero atravesaba Corral Abierto con llamaradas de calor" (CA. 171). The shacks of the settlement appear to be burning. "Ardían las únicas chapas de cinc de un rancho levantado en el linde . . . " (CA. 171). The inhabitants are plagued by illness in their "burning" huts. "Los enfermos ardían bajo el caparazón encendido" (CA. 172 [Italics added]). The entire colony is a hotbed of sickness. "La tierra elevaba su infección como una hoguera de humo" (CA. 172 [Italics added]).

One specific example illustrates the depths to which these miserable people have descended. This is the incestuous relationship of Juan Frontera and his young daughter. In the description of Frontera's house, the author underlines the fact that the outstanding characteristic of the shack lies in the beautiful red geraniums which adorn the doorway: " . . . lo que singulariza al rancho son los tiestos con geranios rojos que para el caminante desaprensivo, son objeto de regocijo" (CA. 174). The irony is that this beautiful facade

hides a "hellish" depravity. When the protagonist unintentionally discovers father and daughter in bed together, the flowers now take on another aspect--that of live, burning coals which line the gateway to Frontera's private hell. "Los geranios rojos arden como brasas" (CA. 178). Later, when the people have boarded the train for their exodus, they are shown to have escaped from the "burning" torments of Corral Abierto, and the train protects them from " . . . las llagas que el sol maltrataba" (CA. 186).

Amorim uses fire not only to portray the torments suffered by the inhabitants of Corral Abierto, but also employs it as an agent of transmutation and purification. When the pestiferous horde leaves the colony, it passes through a nearby ranch house. The infection is immediate and the only remedy is to burn the house complete with all furnishings. Through dialogue, the author describes the fate of the house. "Esta noche se alzará una columna de humo y llamas. Tendrán que hacer arder los muros. . . . Todo arderá" (CA. 184). Again, through dialogue, Amorim describes the identical fate of Corral Abierto. "Corral Abierto está vacío. Esta noche le prenderán fuego" (CA. 185). Thus the "flames" which previously signified the torments of the inhabitants now serve as an agent of purification. In addition, by representing the complete destruction of the past, it signifies the

preparation for the "rebirth" of the people who, like the Phoenix, will rise, reborn, out of their own ashes.

One other element is introduced by Amorim in the description of the infestation of the ranch house. This is the idea of vengeance. As the bleeding mass marches through the house, the walls and floors are soon stained with blood: " . . . del suelo brotan manchas sanguinolentas. . . . Años, cientos de años pasan lentamente por la casa y grietas de sangre bajan por las paredes . . . " (CA. 183). The interpretation can be twofold. In one sense, the blood of the victims serves to signify atonement and, as in all sacrifices, prepares the way for acceptance and salvation. In the other sense, Amorim is placing the blame for "years and years" of suffering upon these favored members of society who have ignored the plight of the masses. Their reward for their "sins" is prognosticated in the fate of the ranch house--consumption by fire. Thus the cycle has come full swing and the upper class experiences what the "burning" souls of Corral Abierto have suffered so long. Amorim is saying, in essence, that society must change before it is too late, for "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

In the description of the setting, Amorim shows Corral Abierto as Hell. In the description of the people who inhabit this colony, the author expands his imagery,

borrowing heavily from Christian myth, showing Corral Abierto to be the abode of the dead: " . . . Corral Abierto era un capítulo del Infierno. Al despuntar el alba, imitaba la triste fisonomía del camposanto" (CA. 173 [Italics added]). But according to the teachings of Costa, the deceased of Corral Abierto are not really dead. Counselling the recently-widowed wife of Delibrando Andrada not to hold the traditional wake, Costa explains that this is done only for those who have died. "—Se vela a los que mueren —dijo Horacio—. Don Delibrando sigue vivo en el rancho. Es de los que no tienen derecho ni a morirse" (CA. 158). Amorim explains that the deceased are only waiting until such time as they are needed: " . . . nadie debe morir. Ninguno moriría. Apenas si eran metidos en un cajón y quedaban a flor de tierra, por si les necesitaba . . . " (CA. 159). The same idea is expressed later, with the suggestion that the dead will be "called forth" at a later time--an event associated with the Second Coming. "Horacio 'El Carpintero', aseguraba que nadie moría, que estaban allí, cerca, prontos para escuchar un llamado, listos para responder" (CA. 161).

It should be noted in the quote cited above that Costa is known to all as the "Carpenter." The fact that he is a carpenter is certainly not fortuitous. As time passes, Amorim drops the name of Costa and refers to him

only by this title. Step by step, in the third part of the novel, the protagonist emerges as a Christ-figure. "'El Carpintero', venido al ranchería misteriosamente, y que andaba de un lado para otro, ocupándose de los enfermos y los muertos" (CA. 158). His "mysterious" origin takes on the guise of the supernatural according to the mother of the Carpenter, who considers him to be the recipient of special favors from the heavens. "Ella lo creyó bendecido por la luna y las estrellas" (CA. 171). The Carpenter ascends to the role of leader and is accorded a tremendous respect and honor among the people: " . . . fue tendiendo la mano a unos y a otros, unas manos de carpintero que honraba tocarlas" (CA. 160). Gradually, these people, so accustomed to hopelessness and despair, find their faith restored and embodied in the Carpenter. "Tenían necesidad de creer en algo, en alguien. Ahora creían en 'El Carpintero', simplemente porque sí, por la sencilla necesidad de creer" (CA. 170).

In his ministrations to the sick, the Carpenter remembers Gemma, whose disfigured face caused everyone to suspect her of being a leper. The Carpenter's willingness to minister to those who are so ill that they have been virtually ostracized is suggestive of Christ's healing of the leper. "Aceptaba el trato con los podridos, aquellos a los que nadie tendía la mano si ofrecían

el mate. En esos momentos pensaba en Gemma, 'la judía leprosa'. Tal vez aquellos desdichados no estaban enfermos de nada contagioso" (CA. 153). In the scene depicting the death of Delibrando Andrada, Amorim draws the two elements together: the portrayal of Corral Abierto as Hell and the portrayal of Costa as the Christ-figure. A doctor has been called but he arrives too late to save the old man. Preparing to enter the hut in order to make out the death certificate, he finds his way barred by the Carpenter who, with arms outstretched, is pictured as crucified. "Crucificado en el vano de la puerta, desdeñó su ira con un movimiento de cabeza" (CA. 156). The doctor, insisting that he must make out the death certificate according to law, is dumbfounded when he receives the reply that this particular region is not part of Uruguay.

—Aquí los enterramos sin certificado.

—No sé . . . pero me parece que . . .

—Nada —dijo Horacio—, este lugar es muy distinto. No estamos en el Uruguay.

—¿No están en el Uruguay? —preguntó el médico. . . .

—¿En dónde estamos entonces? —prosiguió el médico sin muchas fuerzas.

Horacio llenó el pecho de aire, crispó las manos, entrecerró los labios y el médico

creyó oír que le respondía: "¡Estamos en el mismo Infierno! . . . (CA. 157).

The disregard for legalities which is evident in Costa's barring the door to the doctor is indicative of a new militant spirit in the protagonist. This new characteristic of the Carpenter is emphasized by the images which Amorim chooses to delineate his protagonist. While portraying Costa as a messiah who will lead his people to salvation, the author insists on his militancy, showing him to be formed from the tough raw material of the working class. In several scenes, Amorim pictures him either with tool in hand or as being made of the same tough steel as the tools which he wields.

> . . . recio como una herramienta de trabajo (CA. 173).
>
> Una pesada herramienta de acero que se imponía (CA. 170).
>
> La voz del Carpintero tiene sones de metal . . . (CA. 175).

In a similar image, Amorim shows Costa's return to the "fires" of Corral Abierto in order to fulfill his destiny. The image shows Costa's transformation, the tempering of this crude iron from the proletariat: " . . . debía volver a Corral Abierto. Necesitaba pasar por las brasas, exponer al rojo vivo antes de someterse al martillazo y el yunque" (CA. 128). The strength and

militancy evidenced by the Carpenter carry over to the people as his teachings begin to take effect. Following his exemplary lead, the people show a change in their attitude toward death, attributing to it a lesser degree of importance as they accept the Carpenter's explanation that death is only an intermittent and temporary state in preparation for a singular event yet to come. "'El Carpintero', sonreía misteriosamente. Fabricaba cajones para sus muertos sin darle a la muerte el lugar que antes mantenía. Y todos aceptaban, todos acataban, todos acompañaban a sus enfermos hasta el borde de la tumba, sin quejarse" (CA. 161). The former fear of death is now replaced by the same militant spirit evident in their leader, while lamentations at the burials now take on the tone of an anthem of war: " . . . salían . . . gritando y llorando, pero llorando de otra manera con una voz firme, una voz nada fúnebre, entonada como un canto guerrero" (CA. 161).

In addition to portraying Costa as a working man through images referring to tools or metal, Amorim emphasizes the workman's coveralls which the people associate with their leader.

> Vestía azul mameluco de mecánico. Parecía un obrero de la ciudad . . . (CA. 169).
>
> Su mameluco ajustado a la cintura, con alguna herramienta en los riñones para parar

el golpe del enemigo (CA. 188).

The fact that his coveralls are blue is significant. In the first third of the novel, Costa's dream is to own a new dress suit. The author relates the long hours of labor necessary for Costa's purchase of the suit. Amorim then focuses on Costa's landlady. By displaying, through her mental processes, the curiosity of the old woman as to why Costa has chosen that particular color, he incites the curiosity of the reader as well. However, at this stage of the novel, the author does not provide a solution to the riddle. Costa is detained and questioned by a policeman as to the origin of the money needed to purchase the suit. As a result of spending the weekend in jail, the new suit is utterly ruined. The import of this particular event is not evident to the reader until later, when the author emphasizes the Carpenter's work suit, which also is blue. In a reference to the coveralls, late in the novel, Amorim finally illustrates the significance of the color blue. "Era fácil imaginarle con su azul mameluco de trabajo, azul, azul de sueños . . . " (CA. 188). Thus Amorim equates blue with Costa's hopes and dreams. The ruining of his new blue dress suit then signifies the destruction of Costa's dreams for success in Montevideo. Amorim further suggests that his dreams are to be realized among the working class by portraying his successful role as leader among the

miserable people of Corral Abierto. This is in accord with the pattern of the initiation rite--the symbolic death (of his dreams) before the rebirth can take place.

Costa's dream is born anew, a different dream, but one of which the exact nature is unknown to the reader because the Carpenter keeps it to himself. "El Carpintero' tuvo un sueño que no se atrevió a contar, no lo entenderían" (CA. 163). It is not until the end of the work that the realization of the dream is effected--the exodus from Corral Abierto.

The blue color which characterizes the workman's suit is also associated with water. The function of this association is twofold. First, it is employed to embody a critical barb against society for not only allowing the existence of such places as Corral Abierto, but for actually ignoring and concealing their presence. The blue which represents the water of Corral Abierto on the maps of the history books is indeed portrayed by the blue of dreams but, in this instance, it is a false, misleading dream. "Turbia y sucia proseguía el agua de la cañada, al pasar por el antro. Los cartógrafos, en cambio, la dibujaban delicado azul sobre el mapa. La mentira empezaba en el papel del documento público. Una inmensa mentira roía los libros, mordía las páginas de una falsa historia" (CA. 172). The second association of water concerns its function in the mythical framework.

Myths of cosmic cataclysms show the destruction of the world in numerous manners. Probably the most popular are myths of the Flood.[6] They show the destruction paving the way for the emergence of a virgin earth: " . . . if we examine the myths that announce the impending Flood, we find that one of the chief causes is the sins of mankind together with the decrepitude of the World."[7] While Amorim shows the actual destruction of the ranch house to occur through fire, he foreshadows its destruction through another cosmic force: that of the flood. The fact that the destruction unleashed in this instance is of a vengeful, punitive nature, has been discussed previously, and corresponds to the idea that this chastisement is wreaked on the landowners as payment for "sins." As the people pour forth from Corral Abierto, Amorim compares them and the pestilence accompanying them to a destructive flood. "Corral Abierto desemboca, al fin, en la mañana. Como por el sangrador del río corren las aguas turbias. Así van los hombres, las mujeres, los niños haciendo flotar las pestes como hace flotar el agua la resaca y los desperdicios" (CA. 180-181). Even the grass which surrounds the ranch house reflects the impending inundation by the infectious horde. "Un mar

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[6]Eliade, Myth and Reality, p. 54.

[7]Ibid., p. 55.

de verdura que en el estío vibra al levantarse el oleaje de las reverberaciones, avanza de continuo hacia la casa" (CA. 181 [Italics added]). Then at the entrance to the ranch house, the people are again compared to water. "La ola de la miseria humana crece, se amontona a la puerta de la casa grande" (CA. 183).

Water is associated with the origin of life, as Amorim suggests in his description of the sound of the river. "El arrullo maternal del río . . . " (CA. 166 [Italics added]). In addition, water is an important ingredient in baptism, a ceremony symbolic of rebirth. Amorim associates water with the Carpenter when he shows him to have been born next to the arroyo where his mother would go to wash clothes. "Lo había parido la mujer de Floro, en la cañada" (CA. 169). In two other images, the author draws parallels between the sound of the train which transports the people from the colony and the sound of rushing water.

> Las aguas del torrente, se oían como las ruedas de un tren en marcha (CA. 167).
>
> El ruido de los saltos de agua podría confundirse con los de un tren en marcha que se va perdiendo en el confín (CA. 203).

The analogy between both the Carpenter and the train with the "life-giving" properties of water suggests that the Carpenter and the train will both serve as vehicles in

transporting the miserable souls of Corral Abierto to their destined rebirth.

The use of color appears in another instance where Amorim combines color and animal imagery. In the author's description of the fetid atmosphere of Corral Abierto, he shows the site to be avoided by birds of white plumage: " . . . los pájaros de limpio plumaje huían de la miseria; sólo las calandrias se aventuraban" (CA. 172.). Later, as the colony makes its exodus from Corral Abierto, the column is preceded by happy birds, suggestive of optimism, while the dark-colored birds at the rear are evocative of the pessimism and despair that the people are leaving behind. "A la cabeza alertea una bandada de alegres teros que advierten al ciego la proximidad de los vados y las zanjas. A las espaldas, el velo negro de los pájaros de la carroña, cierra el paso de la columna" (CA. 180). Another use of animals occurs when the author describes the well-fed dogs of the wealthy ranch which contrasts sharply with many previous descriptions of the starving people of the colony: " . . . invadieron la cañada varios perros sedientos . . . Eran perros bien alimentados, de estancia." (CA. 94 [Italics added]). The same device is used later in the portrayal of the colony's exodus when Amorim interpolates descriptions of wild animals that the people pass on their way to the railroad station. The contrast

between the festering bodies of the people and the healthy bodies of the animals shows the natural state to be a healthy one. "La lechuza, arriba, salpica el aire con inquietud cazadora. El ratón, abajo, ha salido a la búsqueda de unas larvas. Los dos están sanos, los dos están limpios, los dos se muestran tal como vinieron al mundo" (CA. 180). The miserable condition of the members of Corral Abierto, then, is not natural, but rather due to conditions imposed upon them by an unfeeling society and results in a distortion of the image intended by nature.

This scene of the exodus is the most vivid in the description of the suffering people of Corral Abierto. The grotesque multitude is composed of blind children, the cancerous with their rotting flesh, those with festering pustules, and the tuberculars. They are followed by the bald syphilitics, those with smallpox, and other naked, bleeding, and festering bodies. These last two chapters are described by Roberto F. Giusti thus:

". . .una visión de esas que suelen decirse apocalípticas o dantescas, de gran vigor en su énfasis descriptivo. . . . Pintura simbólica, aspira a competir con las más fantásticas fantasías con que el arte deslumbró de horror los museos"[8] The Carpenter's faith in the eventual victory

[8] Roberto F. Giusti, "El novelista uruguayo Enrique Amorim," Atenea, 39, No. 396 (April-June, 1962), p. 43.

to be wrought by his pestiferous "army" is shown by Amorim's use of repetition. Focusing on the Carpenter and reviewing his thoughts, the author uses parallel phrases to evoke rank upon rank of the miserable souls.

> Avanza a la cabeza, avanza por el camino polvoriento. Sabe que nadie osará detenerlos. Nadie les cerrará el paso. Y si caen los niños sobre sus pupilas muertas, pasarán los lentos cancerosos como una perezosa brisa maligna. Si los cancerosos caen . . . avanzarán los granos multiplicados de diez inconfundibles señores del carbunclo. . . . Y si caen éstos, pasarán adelante los de la fiebre bubónica . . . Y si éstos caen, avanzará la hueste amarilla de los tuberculosos . . . Y más atrás . . . cien hombres y unas veinte mujeres sin cabellos . . . Y si es poco, vendrá la exhibición de mujeres y niños . . . (CA. 180 [Italics added]).

The author's use of irony is effective in emphasizing the grotesque face which the multitude presents during the exodus. In the scene in which the noxious mass is approaching the ranch house, the author portrays a young law student from the city who is visiting the ranch. It is through his eyes that the author presents the apocalyptic vision. The irony lies in the mistaken assumption of the young man that the horrible faces of those

approaching are masks, because the exodus occurs during Carnaval.

> —Vienen enmascarados —dice un mozo rubio que ajusta los prismáticos a sus grandes ojos de joven visionario—. Adelante, vienen seis máscaras grotescas. ¡No sabía que aquí festejan el carnaval!
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Por el sendero ya vienen los niños ciegos, y los cancerosos de horripilante faz ofrecen sus nuevas caretas para los prismáticos del huésped pertrechado.
>
> —No son máscaras, escuche . . . son . . . Sí, son máscaras, pero unas máscaras distintas . . . ¡Qué curioso! Cómo pueden divertirse así . . . ¡Ah no, no son máscaras! . . . —sigue balbuceando— (CA. 181-182).

As the multitude grows closer, they take on the appearance of actors in a grotesque play.

> Los espantosos actores entran en el campo visual como una pesadilla dantesca.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Aquella hidra de mil cabezas monstruosas paraliza su voluntad. . . . Cada arbusto, cada planta, cada árbol frutal, el follaje de las matas olorosas, recibe sumiso a los

enmascarados del dolor (CA. 182-183).

References to the suffering "actors," Dante, the "masks," and the "Hydra" all serve to reinforce the aura of mythical drama surrounding the exodus.

One example of Amorim's effective use of repetition occurs in a scene describing the march from Corral Abierto. Leading the multitude, which is headed by blind children, down the railroad tracks toward the station, the Carpenter is in the process of realizing his unvoiced "sueño," the dream of delivering his people to a promised land. The emphatic repetition of the "straightness" of the road and the identification of the Carpenter with the metal tracks is obviously an allusion to the words of St. Matthew: "Straight is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life . . . "

> El sueño de los niños es una línea recta. Los ciegos aman los caminos rectos, la rama recta, porque las líneas rectas vencen a las curvas. Transitan por un territorio de sueños felices, en una realidad que se asemeja a las dichosas apariciones nocturnas de caminos rectilíneos la voz de "El Carpintero": y en el suelo, el camino de hierro que no hay más que seguirlo para vencer la pesadilla (CA. 185).

This, then, is the ideal road, one that will lead to the realization of their dreams. The fact that they are

children and blind is suggestive not only of their innocence, but also that they are following the Carpenter through blind faith in his ability to deliver them from damnation--from the "Hell" of Corral Abierto.

Toward the end of the penultimate chapter, when the people have boarded the train and started their journey toward the city, the author's style suggests that this is no normal voyage. It is, rather, the day of deliverance, the final journey to the well-deserved reward of these suffering people. Previously mentioned was the fact that the people, once they have boarded the train, are protected from the "burning" of the sun. Moreover, to these miserable souls, the advertisements in the train coaches are definitely presages of the paradise awaiting them at the end of their ride. "Así durase cien años el viaje en aquel vagón, no les importaría nada porque las estampas son del Paraíso y los colores, sin duda, del cielo. Faltan ángeles, sí, pero la sonrisa que se abre como una flor, cerca de un cepillo de dientes, es celestial. Sólo en el cielo se debe sonreír así" (CA. 186). The author's reference to the "colores . . . del cielo" now links the celestial blue to the fulfillment of these people's dreams, as Amorim had done previously with the protagonist's blue coveralls ("azul de sueños").

Once the train is underway, the monotonous rhythm lulls the people to sleep. The author shows this sleep

to be universal through repetition. "Duermen las mujeres preñadas . . . Duermen las prostitutas . . . Duerme Juan Frontera . . . Duermen los que tienen el cuerpo encendido de viruela . . . Duermen los que tienen . . . Duermen . . . " (CA. 189). The author had previously shown the straight rails to be the ideal road. In addition, the manner of life illustrated in the advertisements is, for these people, only to be realized in Paradise, a kind of life of which one only dreams. At the end of the penultimate chapter, the reader has the distinct impression that the author is making a play on words, that this sleep (sueño) into which the people have fallen is, in reality, the realization of each individual dream (sueño) and that this sleep is one from which they will not awaken. The author suggests this in his description of the monotonous rhythm which lulls the people to sleep. "Se siente la cabeza . . . envuelta en el ruido adormecedor, que intenta ser interminable, que puede resultar infinito" (CA. 188 [Italics added]). By the end of the chapter, the author's style equates the people's destination, that is, the city, with heaven itself, reiterating the "eternal" aspect of this journey. "Zumba el tren, zumba la marcha, cada vez más veloz, tremendamente veloz como si fuese a estrellarse en una ciudad de algodón que los espera con abundante cloroformo para el sueño eterno" (CA. 189). The cotton, evocative of clouds, is

shown to be permeated with a chloroform not only to provide for sleep but also for the release from pain and suffering. Thus the destination contains the soothing balm for those who are to realize, at last, their dreams in the eternal sleep.

Up to the last chapter, the action follows a sequential or linear movement in time and shows a normal development based on cause and effect. Inherent in the initiatory rite, however, is another type of time--the cyclical movement. Charles Eckert explains why the initiation is an apt vehicle for the expression of both myth and history.

> Initiation is peculiarly apt for expressing symbolisms appropriate both to myth and to history: the death and rebirth and the voyage and return of the initiate are perfect vehicles for the expression of repetitive and cyclical movements, while the change from boy to man and from ignorance to knowledge provide the potential for transitional and transcendental symbolisms.[9]

The last chapter is structured differently from any of the preceding. While the others were based on both the cyclical movement and the sequential or linear movement

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[9]Eckert, Myth and Literature, p. 168.

in time, in the last chapter time appears to have been suspended. There is no action and the moment of "eternal rest" indeed appears to have arrived. The chapter consists of paragraphs, each treating a particular individual on the train and commences with an identical phrase of introduction: "Este es Facundo— . . . ", "Esta es Renata— . . . " (CA. 191), etc. The chapter is composed of a short summation of the dreams of the sleeping individuals. The viewpoint is omniscient but the focus of narration or the "central intelligence" is the Carpenter, who mentally reviews the hopes, dreams, and aspirations of the individuals.

The over-all effect of this last chapter, in view of the apocalyptic vision which the author has established previously, is one suggestive of the Final Judgement--a review of the life, sufferings, hopes, and merits of each individual in question by their spiritual leader, the Carpenter.

The major theme of the novel, then, is the same as that of Los montaraces: the unification of the working class in order to voice its demands from a position of strength. It is in support of this theme that the author delineates his protagonist as a militant messiah or Christ-figure with emphasis on his workman's clothing and his association with tools. The vagueness of the conclusion leads to doubts as to what the future holds in

store for these miserable people. The title, however, offers an optimistic note. The word "corral" is reminiscent of the same type of imprisoning circular enclosure which immobilized the protagonist in El paisano Aguilar. It re-enacts the role which Aguilar's ranch, El Palenque (the hitching post), plays in signifying the rancher's captivity by the vast spaces of his physical environment. In Corral abierto, the fact that the imprisoning corral has now been opened suggests a new-found freedom from the despair and hopelessness which previously characterized the lives of the colony's people. Although the play on the words "sleep" and "dream" seems to suggest that the realization of their goals is still a dream as of now, it is just a question of time; and the author's faith in the eventual victory of the people is embodied in the epigraph of the novel: "El sacerdote del Dios de las cosas como son iba quedando en condiciones desventajosas respecto al sacerdote que sirve al Dios de las cosas tales como debieran ser. Rudyard Kipling, El Juicio de Dungara" (CA. 7).

In summation, Corral abierto is the only novel in which Amorim develops his major theme through the use of myth. The variation of themes, which at first glance, appear to be totally separate, are integrated into a whole by means of assigning them to a particular phase of the initiation rite. The persecution experienced by

Costa as a result of the murder investigation provides the author with an opportunity to reduce his protagonist to a complete state of disillusionment--a state representing the symbolic death which precedes the subsequent rebirth. The protagonist's journey, in the course of which he receives his education and emerges on a higher spiritual plane, is replete with the author's criticism of social injustices, both of rural and urban origin. The third step of the initiation rite, in which Amorim concentrates on the misery of lower-class rural dwellers, provides the author with the opportunity to offer a solution to the plight of the masses--an ultimatum to society voiced by a unified, militant, and determined proletariat.

To create a mythical aura, Amorim deftly employs a number of images supporting the basic structure of the initiation rite. The images of burning, the portrayal of the settlement as Hell and his use of fire and water as agents of transmutation and rebirth are artfully employed along with color, animals, birds and masks to portray the cyclical descent followed by the ascent. Just as the hellish descent embodies the author's vehement criticism of present-day circumstances, so the hopeful ascent is representative of his optimism for the future.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

With the exception of his use of myth, most of the general techniques that Amorim employs throughout his rural novels are evident from the beginning of his novelistic production. No major evolution in narrative techniques occurs. While there are minor variations to suit the individual theme of a work, the same major techniques serve to provide Amorim with a wide range of creative expression. The three basic thematic elements--(1) sex, (2) death and violence, (3) poverty, ignorance, and superstition--are used to describe the physical and spiritual deprivations suffered by the dwellers of the sparsely settled pampa. As the author's social consciousness grows more apparent in his later works where the pampa has been tamed, these same thematic elements, while continuing to characterize the people's lives, show the miseries of the lower class to be the direct result of exploitation by an unfeeling upper class. Thus the thematic elements which serve in the early novels primarily to characterize the lives of the suffering people by illustrating the effects of natural environment, later incorporate the author's criticism of the existing

human situation and his advocacy of social change.

The author's effective use of a shifting focus of narration is evident in his early novels where it may function as an aid to exposition or characterization but, more often, to illustrate varying concepts or viewpoints of a particular problem or vexing situation. Amorim continues to employ this technique in later novels, in some cases excessively, where he focuses on individuals either to portray defects in characters which are representative of a certain class or profession, or to illustrate solutions to existing problems through various characters who serve as the author's spokesmen.

The "imprisoning" effect of space plays a diminishing role in successive novels as the author portrays the pampa's metamorphosis from an uninhabited region to a settled area, yet the author continues to advocate a more effective utilization of space by converting the huge estancias into smaller and more productive agricultural plots, owned and managed by the individual farmers who work the land. This seems to be one of the solutions offered by Amorim in Corral abierto. The title suggests the need to open the land to the people, and to free them from the imprisoning confines of such miserable colonies as Corral Abierto. This preoccupation of Amorim with the unjust distribution of land is evident throughout his rural novels.

Amorim's use of time as a technique is not extensive although examples appear in La carreta, El paisano Aguilar, El caballo y su sombra, and Corral abierto, thus spanning the length of his novelistic career. In El paisano Aguilar, Amorim shows man's concept of time to be affected by space, resulting in time being "choked" into immobility. The ceaseless monotony combined with effects of space sap man's energies and inhibit any constructive action. In El caballo y su sombra, the struggle between the rancher, Nico, and the immigrants is also a conflict in time--a traditional past fighting for survival against a progressive present. In Corral abierto both lineal and cyclical time are inherent in the structure of the initiation rite, while the complete suspension of time in the last chapter evokes a sense of eternity--the arrival of the Day of Judgement. These instances show the author's awareness and able use of time as technique when it suits his purpose in characterization or in support of theme.

Although most critics justifiably cite structural faults as Amorim's greatest weakness, there are numerous instances in which structure admirably serves to illustrate and support the author's theme. In El caballo y su sombra, the struggle between opposing forces and the alliances resulting from this battle, are reflected in the two settings, the rivalry or parallelism in minor

characters, the differences in national origin, cultural and economic dissimilarity, and even in time itself--the present versus the past. This opposing structure, based on antithesis and complement, is even evident in the individual sentences and phrases.

Amorim employs style in a variety of manners to achieve diverse effects. He utilizes it to reinforce structure by employing patterns of antithesis and complement in his vocabulary. He forges an intimate relationship between man and the land by personification of nature and dehumanization of characters, by showing man's actions reflected in nature, or by illustrating the effects of environment in the formation of character. Through style, he injects irony or sympathy, and evokes mood in his descriptions. Repetition is artfully employed for a variety of purposes: for environmental descriptions where repetitive phrases capture salient details and emphasize the central spirit of the locale; to echo the monotony and boring routine of identical days on the vast stretches of open pampa; to illustrate the completeness or universality of some action or situation in which the use of repetition tends to express totality.

Amorim depicts his characters through a variety of perspectives. In minor characters, where delineation is limited, the author characterizes primarily by means of direct exposition, but often "tags" the personage by

emphasizing some particular trait, physical characteristic, or article of clothing or equipment. In the depiction of those personages who play a major role, direct exposition is augmented by other techniques. Diverse facets of character are introduced through actions, speech, relationship to environment and other characters, and through the personages' thoughts and emotions. Through dehumanization or comparisons of characters to animals, Amorim portrays the bestial qualities displayed by the lower class, qualities and characteristics due to the direct influence of natural environment or, in later works, characteristics resulting from the appalling and oppressive social situation. A telescoping of time is sometimes achieved when Amorim depicts two or three characters in different stages of life, but showing that the fate of the individuals is identical. Through this technique of compressing several stages of life into one moment, he manages to portray one, complete lifespan in a minimum of space.

Amorim's use of myth is the only technique which is not present throughout his novelistic works. Appearing only in Corral abierto (1956), it represents a conscious attempt at innovation.[1] Through the basic archetype of

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[1] Many aspects of the initiation rite are evident in a Bildungsroman or novel of formation such as Los montaraces, in which the protagonist goes through an

the initiation rite, but augmented by a vast amount of imagery evocative of Christian myth, the author portrays his messiah-like protagonist returning to his people, uniting them in the face of adversity and, finally, leading them to salvation. The dualistic nature of the imagery employed to describe the protagonist depicts him not only as a Christ-figure but also as a member of the new proletariat. Through this delineation of the main personage and the vivid imagery of the descriptions, the author illustrates his theme--that salvation from the intolerable social situation lies in a militant and unified working class which will force society to grant justice to the underprivileged.

In such an extensive novelistic production, one would expect a disparity of quality. Mario Benedetti is only one of several critics who point out this unevenness. "Amorim siempre fue un escritor de extraordinarios fragmentos, de páginas estupendas, de magníficos hallazgos de lenguaje, pero también de grandes pozos estilísticos, de evidentes desaciertos de estructura, de capítulos de relleno."[2] Structural weaknesses and an exaggerated

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educational process and emerges a mature, responsible individual. Corral abierto, however, is the only novel in which Amorim deliberately and painstakingly develops his major theme through the use of myth.

[2]Mario Benedetti, Literatura uruguaya del siglo XX; ensayos (Montevideo: Alfa, 1963), p. 55.

tendentiousness are the salient defects of Amorim's novels. The latter flaw is more evident in the urban novels, however, than in the works which treat the rural environment, and when Amorim is capable of controlling his impatience and passion, his formidable qualities as a stylist stand out.

Most critics, in their analyses of Amorim's rural novels, place him in the mainstream of the traditional realistic literature of the pampa. "Sus mejores novelas lo sitúan entre los buenos escritores dentro del criollismo regional hispanoamericano."[3] The author himself would probably agree with them wholeheartedly. "Unos meses antes de morir, frente a una encuesta que preguntaba: '¿Qué corrientes artísticas o qué autores entiende usted que apuntan hacia el porvenir inmediato de las letras?,' Enrique Amorim respondió: 'La única corriente es el realismo en cualquiera de sus formas.'"[4] Thus, by his own admission, Amorim is a representative of a criollista tradition which still lives. His use of myth in Corral abierto represents an innovative attempt to incorporate new methods and techniques, and although the association with myth does provide a more universal quality to the novel, the author, nevertheless, employs

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[3] Gómez-Gil, Literatura Hispanoamericana, p. 693.

[4] Benedetti, Literatura uruguaya, p. 52.

it to illustrate a sociological and political theme which is concerned with a particular region. In this sense, the novel retains its regional character. Thus, through forty years of prodigious labor, Amorim remained a faithful follower of the Boedo tradition. The reader who follows Amorim's production in the rural novel from the beginning to the end will experience a complete literary interpretation of the pampa's development up to the present time. At least two works, El paisano Aguilar and El caballo y su sombra, serve to justify the recognition accorded Amorim and will grant him a permanent place in the history of Spanish-American criollista literature.

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