

STRUCTURE AND TRANSFORMATION OF REALITY  
IN THE COLOMBIAN NOVEL 1967-1975

by

Raymond L. Williams  
B.A., Washington State University, 1972  
M.A., University of Kansas, 1974

Submitted to the Department of  
Spanish and Portuguese and the  
Faculty of the Graduate School  
of the University of Kansas in  
partial fulfillment of the re-  
quirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Dissertation Committee:

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Chairman

## PREFACE

The Colombian novel since Cien años de soledad tends to be overshadowed, as a genre, by the brilliance of García Márquez's great novel. There is only one study that takes into account the production from 1967 to 1975-- La narrativa actual de Colombia y su contexto social by Román López Tamés. Rather than an analysis of individual texts, however, this study uses the contemporary Colombian novel as a basis for observations about Colombian society. López Tamés formulates conclusions concerning solitude as part of the Colombian national psyche, the nature of the epoch of "la violencia", and the role of the church in Colombian society.

Other studies of the recent Colombian novel either focus exclusively on the fiction of Gabriel García Márquez or deal with the period before 1967. An excellent overview of the contemporary Colombian novel to 1967 is provided by Néstor Madrid-Malo in his article "Estado actual de la novela en Colombia". Carl Pedersen wrote a more extensive discussion of the Colombian novel in his doctoral dissertation "Main Trends in the Colombian Novel 1953-1967". These two studies provide an update to Evolución de la novela en Colombia by Antonio Curcio Altamar. Germán Darío Carrillo outlines the major works of the period 1960-1970 in an article "La narrativa colombiana (1960-1970)".

Isaías Peña Gutiérrez's La generación del bloqueo y del estado de sitio provides information about many of the writers

discussed in this study. His book contains a brief biography, an interview, and an extensive bibliography of the youngest generation of writers in Colombia.

The present dissertation is a study of the Colombian novel since the publication of Cien años de soledad in 1967. It terminates in 1975 only as a matter of practicality; this date has no special significance in itself for this study. The first chapter is an analysis of the novels of the year 1967 and provides a cross section of the fiction of that year through the analysis of the three most significant works besides Cien años de soledad. The next four chapters are analyses of four specific novels published after 1967. The second chapter is a study of Las causas supremas (1969) by Héctor Sánchez. All of Sánchez's novels have been published after Cien años de soledad. The third chapter deals with Cola de zorro (1970) by Fanny Buitrago. Although she belongs to the same generation as Sánchez (she was born in 1943 and he in 1940), she did publish one novel before 1967, El hostigante verano de los dioses (1963). The fourth chapter studies El bazar de los idiotas (1974) by Gustavo Alvarez Gardezabal, the youngest (born 1945) and most productive of these novelists. He has published three novels between 1967 and El bazar de los idiotas. The fifth chapter is an analysis of El otoño del patriarca by García Márquez. The last chapter is an overview of the novelistic production in Colombia from 1967 to 1975. The trends outlined are based on the analyses of the individual novels in chapters one through five. Conclusions relevant to the entire study are set forth in this final chapter.

Two concepts that are important to this study, experience and dynamism, are based on their use in The Spanish-American Novel by John S. Brushwood. Experience refers to a novel's coming into being. A novel is an experience for its reader just as a sunrise is an experience for its observer. The dynamism is the factor that vitalizes, and perhaps revitalizes, this experience. It sustains the process of change in a novel.

This study is based on the assumption that the analysis of the structure of a novel will reveal aspects fundamental to its experience. By structure I refer to a work's basic organization. Each specific novel, then, has defined to a certain extent the nature of the analysis employed. Thus, I find the use of certain ideas set forth by Gérard Genette particularly useful in the analysis of El bazar de los idiotas and, to a lesser extent, concepts of Roland Barthes provide a basis for defining the structure of Las causas supremas. A second important, and related, consideration of all the analyses is the problem of the transformation of reality. I am concerned with the manner in which a basic anecdote is transformed into art, and I believe that an understanding of the function of the elements that effect this transformation is the key to experiencing an artistic work.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Professor John S. Brushwood for the advice, encouragement and discussions during the process of my study of the Colombian novel. I appreciate the assistance and suggestions of Professors Raymond D. Souza and Michael Doudoroff of the dissertation committee. Two persons not directly involved with this dissertation whose teaching of the



novel have been significant for me are Professors Robert Spires and Wolfgang A. Luchting. Invaluable contributions to my work in Colombia were offered by Professors Néstor Madrid-Malo and Gustavo Alvarez Gardeazábal. I would like to thank the Fulbright Commission of Colombia and its director, Dr. Francisco Gnecco, and the Graduate School of the University of Kansas for providing me the opportunity to carry out the research necessary for the preparation of this dissertation.

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## CHAPTER I

THE YEAR OF CIENT AÑOS DE SOLEDAD (1967)

The publication of Cien años de soledad gives special significance to the year 1967 in the trajectory of the Colombian novel. As a literary monument it marks the popularization in Colombia of a certain type of fiction to be identified in the course of this study as transcendent regionalism.<sup>1</sup> Important as was the appearance of this novel, it unfortunately overshadowed the publication of other works of considerable artistic merit. En noviembre llega el arzobispo by Héctor Rojas Herazo, the most important of these novels, recalls the regionalism of García Márquez's earlier works. Other noteworthy novels of 1967 are El espejo sombrío by Fernando Soto Aparicio and La infancia legendaria de Ramiro Cruz by Mario Arrubla.

In the history of Colombian prose fiction, prior to the spectacular fame of Cien años de soledad, there are noteworthy examples of all the major tendencies of the Spanish-American novel. Three significant and representative predecessors are María (1867) by Jorge Isaacs, La vorágine (1924) by José Eustacio Rivera and La marquesa de Yolombó (1928) by Tomás Carrasquilla. María represents the apogee of the Romantic novel in Colombia, and the latter two works are considered examples of criollismo and costumbrismo respectively. Two notable elements of María are its sentimental plot and its evocation of the region of the Valle del Cauca. The plot involves the story of Efraín, who must leave his beloved María in order to study in Europe. María be-

becomes sick and dies before Efraín can return. Through the evocation of the region of the Valle del Cauca, the narrator demonstrates that his passion for María is equalled only by his passion for this nature. The first-person narrator expresses these passions in a poetic language that has made the novel a classic in the history of the Colombian novel. His descriptions of customs are an overt expression of national culture.

Rivera's La vorágine also has a narrator-protagonist, Arturo Cova. In this case the protagonist leaves his beloved Alicia of his own volition, departing from Bogotá in order to maintain his freedom from her. He goes to the jungle and, like Efraín of María, is awestruck by the physical features of the region. Rural customs are also part of the particular region described. The story develops in three major stages: (1) the experience of the plains, (2) the experience of the jungle after separation from Alicia, and (3) reunion with Alicia followed by disappearance into the jungle.<sup>2</sup> In relating this story Arturo tells it in what is supposedly a diary form. The problem of this use of the first person arises when Arturo says things about himself that should be revealed by what other people say and do. He explains, for example, his own sensitivity.<sup>3</sup> In spite of several deficiencies, La vorágine remains an important contribution in the trajectory of the Colombian novel. It is also a premier example of traditional regionalism.<sup>4</sup>

La marquesa de Yolombó is not only associated with a particular place, but intimately so, and is thus the least universal of the three works. The narrator's tone and allusions to the

region are best appreciated by those who are already well acquainted with it. Carrasquilla creates the impression of oral storytelling by suggesting the narrator's presence without his actually entering to participate in the action.<sup>5</sup> As such, although technically a third-person narrator, his function is similar to that of the first-person narrator in the two novels discussed. The importance of place in this novel is appreciated by the fact that the first one-third of it is dedicated to telling the background of the protagonist and relating the history and customs of the region. By combining an understanding of the importance of place in the novel with the narrator's tone, it can be understood why, despite its importance in the trajectory of the Colombian novel, La marquesa de Yolombó has attracted relatively little attention outside of Colombia.

In the context of this study, another significant step in the trajectory of Colombian fiction is the more recent publication of three regionalist novels: La hojarasca (1955) by García Márquez, La casa grande (1962) by Alvaro Cepeda Zamudio, and Respirando el verano (1962) by Héctor Rojas Herazo. Each uses an identifiable regional base and transcends this regionalism by means of Faulknerian narrative techniques. La hojarasca describes Macondo during the period 1903-1928 by means of three narrators. These narrators are a nine-year-old boy, the boy's mother, and his grandfather. The effect of these techniques is a penetration of Macondo's reality beyond the visible and concrete reality experienced in La vorágine and La marquesa de Yolombó. These techniques move the reader more deeply into the underlying reality of

the situation and pique the reader's interest because effect is apparent before cause.<sup>6</sup>

La casa grande deals with the banana workers' strike made famous in Cien años de soledad. Two narrative techniques are significant in this novel. One is that only generic names are used: The Soldiers, The Sister, The Father, The Town, The Decree, Thursday, and so on. These are the chapter titles and they are the only identification of the chapters' content. The other narrative technique is really a complex of techniques because the author changes his narrative manner from chapter to chapter, creating different effects.<sup>7</sup>

Respirando el verano is perhaps the most Faulknerian of the three, comparable to La hojarasca in this respect.<sup>8</sup> The novel deals with a family during the civil war at the turn of the century. It takes place mainly in the twentieth century, but moves back in time to 1871. A younger member of the family, Anselmo, looks back into the past, and this is the means of understanding present reality.<sup>9</sup> An important point here is that through narrative technique present reality is expanded to include the past.

The experience of Cien años de soledad, the most important novel of 1967 and the point of departure for this study, is not based on Faulknerian narrative techniques. Rather, the storytelling is straightforward and traditional in most respects. Similar to the regionalism of La hojarasca, La casa grande, and Respirando el verano, however, the novel does have factors that

make the regionalism transcendent and thus universal experience. It transcends this region through a universal experience of creation; the life of Macondo reflects much of the history of Colombia; however, its implications make widening circles that include Spanish-American and even universal experience. It is preeminently the sense of origins, of creating-- almost biblical at times-- that is basically responsible for this experience.<sup>10</sup> Logical sequence is not ruptured in this novel through narrative technique, but a rough equivalent of the effect of such Faulknerian techniques-- the breakdown of rationale and the logical relationship between cause and effect-- is effected by pure invention. García Márquez insists on the artist's right to invent reality.<sup>11</sup> Thus, one character defies the laws of gravitation, while another engenders an incredible number of children. Neither of these experiences is entirely logical or explainable, making the effect in the novel similar to the effect created by a Faulknerian technique that reveals the death of a character in an interior monologue before the chapter in which the dead person is born, for example.

Although the publication of Cien años de soledad makes 1967 a key year in the development of the Colombian novel, it should not be considered an isolated phenomenon of literary excellence. In an article written in 1967, the eminent Colombian critic Néstor Madrid-Malo notes with optimism the state of Colombian fiction at the time:

Ante todo, es evidente que el núcleo más descollante-- el constituido por los novelistas de primera línea: Mejía Vallejo, Zapata Olivella, García Márquez, Santa, Ponce de Leon, Soto Aparicio, Cepeda Samudio, Rojas Herazo, Fanny Buitrago-- tanto por la calidad de la

obra ya realizada como por las especiales dotes que para el cultivo de ese género han demostrado poseer todos ellos, asegura la plena y eficaz presencia de Colombia en el conjunto de la novela latinoamericana de hoy. Mucho tiempo hacía que nuestra literatura no ofrecía un conjunto tan destacado y activo de novelistas con una tan positiva obra en su haber...<sup>12</sup>

Carl Pederson supports this positive evaluation in his study of the main trends of the Colombian novel from 1953 to 1967:

The contemporary Colombian novel is in a period of transition which had causes antedating the span of this investigation but whose main impetus coincided with it and continues beyond it. The quantitative and qualitative growth in the novel is unprecedented in the history of Colombia.<sup>13</sup>

It is in this context that the novels of the year 1967 may be considered. It can also be noted that Cien años de soledad did not have an immediate influence in Colombia. As the analysis of theme and technique in the novels of 1967 will suggest, these novels appeared in Colombia independently of the phenomenon of Cien años de soledad. In effect, Cien años de soledad entered the Colombian literary scene relatively late in the year 1967. The first public notice of the novel in Colombia's most influential literary organ, El Tiempo, appeared in July of 1967. I quote the news item in its entirety from the "Noticia de los libros" section of El Tiempo (the item is accompanied by a picture of the front cover of the novel):

Solamente "por el forro" vamos a conocer los colombianos Cien años de soledad, "La primera verdadera novela de Gabriel García Márquez" según Hersán. Porque algún amigo trajo únicamente-- y de contrabando-- dos o tres ejemplares de México, y de uno de ellos reproducimos esta carátula, y el capítulo que aparece en nuestro suplemento de "Lecturas Dominicales". Las trabas de la aduana, y otras trabas, parece que demorarán demasiado la llegada a nuestras librerías de esta



obra del glorioso Gabo, que tanta expectativa ha despertado. Por lo menos la primera edición-- que, como se sabe, es de Sudamericana, de la Argentina-- parece que ya está agotada...<sup>14</sup>

Thus, the situation of fiction in 1967 was such that the novels of this year should be seen as concurrent to Cien años de soledad, within a general context of innovation and positive optimism.

After Cien años de soledad, the most important literary achievement of the year is En noviembre llega el arzobispo by Héctor Rojas Herazo, winner of the Premio Esso for the best Colombian novel of the year. It is the story of the "gamonal" Leocadio Mendieta. It is also the story of Cedrón, the small town he dominates. Its inhabitants react to Mendieta and the long oppressive tradition he represents. Although he is the principal figure, the novel tells the story of numerous individuals living in Cedrón. This town, like Macondo, is located in the Atlantic coastal region, and Rojas Herazo employs this regional base to create a universal experience through narrative technique. The transformation of reality can be appreciated through an analysis of the novel's structure and narrative situation.

The novel consists of seventy-eight narrative segments that can be divided into (1) an introduction, (2) a first part, (3) an interlude, and (4) a second part.<sup>15</sup> The introduction contains thirteen narrative segments and suggests the main themes of the novel in a series of situations and characterizations. Life in

Cedrón is characterized by suggestions of decadence, terror, hatred, and imprisonment. The characters in the introduction function as reflections of life in Cedrón. The novel begins with the presentation of the mentally retarded Gerardo Diomedes Escalante, who, on the first page, eats a banana leaf. Besides his crudeness, the key to his characterization appears when Leonor, Gerardo's wife, blames Leocadio Mendieta for the condition of Gerardo, thus linking Mendieta with the condition of the inhabitants of Cedrón from the beginning of the novel. Still in the introduction, another character, when advised of Mendieta's approaching death, says: "Lo mata su pasado, lo que ha hecho a los otros."<sup>16</sup>

In this entire introduction the experience of life in Cedrón is communicated through a contrast between a metaphorical language (about abstracts concepts) on the one hand, and vulgar language and action on the other. The metaphorical language characterizes the people of Cedrón as mythical ghosts rather than real people: "Tenía cuarenta y tantos años de estar allí, prisionero de un conjuro, vigilado, entre evaporados aromas y drogas inexistentes, el fantasma de su amada botica" (p. 43) or "En el pueblo, en este instante, todo es tiempo espeso, espeso existir" (p. 45). The crudeness can also be noted in various passages: the banana leaf and feces that Gerardo eats; the actions of two boys, Alberto Enrique and Severino; the beginning of the fifth narrative segment with the sacristan's words: "Respetan el templo, hijoeputicas" (p. 23). The actual effect of this contrastive language is appreciated in the narrative describing a relatively insignificant inhabitant named Brígida Lambis. In the first narrative segment

describing her, the first sentence is abstract in its description of her circumstance: "En el pueblo, en este preciso instante, todo es tiempo espeso, espeso existir" (p. 45). Later in the same paragraph this abstraction is contrasted by a concrete description: "Y el retintín de un artefacto y el odio y el olor vegetal, agudo y fétido y exultador a un mismo tiempo, de lo que se pudre para alimentar a lo que estalla sumado a la evaporación fecal, entre el calor" (p. 45). At the end of the segment a character mentions in complete sobriety and hope that the archbishop will be arriving to the town the eighth of November, providing a certain optimism for the town within this generally suffocating atmosphere. The announcement, however, is followed by a contrasting reaction to the statement at the end of the last paragraph:

Y ha mirado los árboles y, confundiéndolo con una punzada en sus riñones (un relámpago que ilumina en totalidad sus inviolados valles de alegría y esperanza) ha sentido, lúcido y terriblemente, el peligro de vivir. Y se ha rascado la cadera por en cima del traje. (p. 46)

The contrast appears with the juxtaposition of the hopes of Cedrón with the last sentence. In the next segment concerning Brígida Lambis (pp. 49-51), there is first a vague reference to her past with Fabricio Lúa. In contrast with the human problem concerning her, and the abstract language used to communicate her feelings, this same narrative segment opens with the presence of two cucarachas: "Brígida Lambis se irritó de veras con las dos cucarachas que salieron disparadas del tazón" (p. 49). A contrast occurs at the end of this segment when Brígida sits on the same receptacle: "Y Brígida Lambis, eternando los párpados al aflojar todo su cuerpo en una corriente de delicia, oyó el rumor de su orín en el

polvo" (p. 51).

The first part of the novel, following the introduction, marks an abrupt change in the narrative which is appreciated by several factors. First, Leocadio Mendieta, the central character, enters the novel for the first time. Second, what has been to this point primarily an exterior or behavioralist study becomes interior and psychological. Third, what has been a description of the town on a synchronic level now becomes diachronic, moving back in time to the year 1896. Finally, this segment that marks the beginning of the first part (pages 51-61) is the first extended segment of the novel. It runs to ten pages, whereas the previous sections in the introduction were two to five pages.

The first segment of the first part deals with Leocadio Mendieta. It expresses in a more concrete form the themes that have been suggested in the introductory segments. The terror that seemed to be present in an abstract way in the introduction is personified in the character of Leocadio Mendieta. He is also the personification of the crudeness that has been noted as part of life in Cedrón. From the day Mendieta arrives to the town he establishes a reign of terror in which instinct predominates over reason. His first act upon arriving in the town is notably irrational and stands out in the narrative because it is the second sentence of this narrative segment: "La casa la compró sin conocerla (incluso nunca había estado en el pueblo), una noche, junto a la ruleta, oyendo el bondoneo de las tres grandes lámparas" (p. 51). The remainder of this segment supports this characterization: he treats his wife exactly as he handles his favorite mare; he raises

his children exactly as he raises his animals, and they literally behave like animals.

After this change toward profundity, the remainder of this first part (approximately the first half of the novel) contains both more abstract segments (as in the introduction) and segments of profound psychological and diachronic analysis (as in the section on Mendieta). The focus remains on the same themes--hatred, violence, decadence, and suffering in Cedrón's daily life. Six different narrative segments of this first part portray six different characters in detail while developing these themes.<sup>17</sup>

A circular structure is created in this first part of the novel through two effects. First, it begins with a depth study of Leocadio Mendieta and ends with a similar intensity. The last segments to appear at the end of the first part are this type of penetrating analysis. Second, a circular structure is created by beginning this part with the study of Leocadio Mendieta and ending it with one of the most emotional moments of the novel, in which Mendieta's wife Etelvina and his daughter Rosa Angelina sadly contemplate his imminent death. Thus, the part ends with focus on emotions that emanate from Leocadio Mendieta's presence, just as the entire first part of the novel has been an expression of his influence in Cedrón.

The three segments of the interlude (pp. 183-189) do not maintain the intensity of the first part, or of the second part that will follow them. They are short narratives that tell of some relatively banal event in an exterior manner: in the first a man crosses the plaza and urinates; in the second a boy visits

his father to ask him for money; in the third some young boys watch a horse. Structurally, these narratives function as a rest.

The second part begins with the same procedure that has been noted in the first: an abrupt change in the narrative by means of a penetrating psychological and diachronic analysis dealing with the same two characters that opened the novel.

This second part marks a change in the focus of the novel's themes. The first part elaborated a series of emotions-- hatred, terror, decadence and the past that created these feelings. In the second part the novel focuses more specifically on the theme of death. It culminates with the death of Leocadio Mendieta. As a parallel to the physical end of Mendieta, death pervades the atmosphere of Cedrón. Another death that takes place in the second part occurs when Macario beheads Cirineo. A comment by one character relates this death directly to Mendieta's presence in the town: "Se ve clarita la mano de Leocadio Mendieta" (p. 231). Another view of death is provided through the eyes of the young boys Severino and Pedro Angel. They observe the corpse of Cirineo (pp. 240-241). This juvenile vision is followed by another variation in the next narrative segment. It deals with old age and death through the point of view of the venerable Andrés Iriarte.

In accordance with the variations on the theme of death, various segments of the second part deal with Mendieta's agony in dying. He appears as a pathetic figure. Even on his death-bed he is not capable of reaching an awareness of his failure as

a human being. Upon realizing the inevitability of his death he states: "... ningún hombre es responsable de lo que ocurre" (p. 236). He does at the end express a certain feeling of guilt for his negative influence upon the life of his wife Etelvina, but even this recognition is within the context of refusing to accept responsibility for his actions. The descriptions of his death (some of the most technically successful sections of the novel), involve a manipulation of point of view between a third-person omniscient narrator and interior monologues by Mendieta. There are also points of view between these two extremes. The following passage expresses Mendieta's final alienation in his dying moments:

Pero algo, un dios risueño, retozón, le removía las entrañas sin participar en los resultados, distraídamente, como un niño que agitara con su mano el agua de un estanque. Fue un golpe sin gracia, grosero, en pleno esternón. Bajó la guardia, abandonó todo deseo de luchar. Oyó su frente chocando abruptamente contra el piso de cemento. (p. 329)

Rather than feeling the impact of his forehead hitting the cement, he hears it as another person foreign to the situation might. He thus witnesses his own process of dying as a being alienated from it. The actual moment of his death is communicated to the reader through a slight change in perspective. In the last sentence of this section we see Mendieta's final perception (before dying) through his own eyes:

Todavía, como un susurro entre las olas, oyó la voz de ella ("¡Mijo! Leocadio, ¿qué te ha pasado?") la distinguió plenamente en el vacío de su inesperada eternidad. (p. 330)

The four-part structure is the dynamic factor in the novel.

The presence of an introduction to the novel's themes, a pro-

fundization of these themes in the first part, and a variation in themes in the second part, produce constant change in the reader's experience. The preciseness of some aspects of such a structure creates contrasts and parallels that are basic to this experience. There is a parallel, for example, in the presence of a costumbristic interruption in the narrative in each of the two parts. The first section of this type is an extended segment which relates a cock fight. This realist descriptive segment appears in the nineteenth segment (pages 77-91). A second descriptive segment of this type appears in the second part in the form of an acrobatic show that visits the town (pages 218-225). The structural parallel is notable: the first section appears in the sixth segment of the first part and the second appears in the seventh segment of the second part.<sup>18</sup>

The narrative situation in En noviembre llega el arzobispo consists fundamentally of a third-person omniscient narrator who controls the narrative. From this omniscient position he is able to communicate detailed information. For example, he penetrates the characters psychologically ("pensó", "sintió", "creyó") and even indicates the exact time on the clocks ("... el reloj... anunciaba, con un atraso de diez minutos y catorce segundos, que eran las tres de la tarde" p. 19).

The narrator employs two significant variations from this standard omniscience that are important to the experience of the novel. The first variation involves a certain limitation of the narrator's omniscience: despite this basic position, his knowledge is limited for some characters. This is apparent in the



characterization of Mendieta. The first characterization information concerning him begins in complete omniscience: "Llegó una tarde de febrero de mil ochocientos noventa y seis..." (p. 51). On the following page, however, the narrator is less exact and more limited in relating Mendieta's anecdote: "Suenan como un río, había dicho alguien..." (my emphasis, p. 52). The use of "alguien" indicates a lack of total knowledge. Such limitations in the characterization of Mendieta contribute to the mythmaking of him. Later in telling Mendieta's story the narrator uses another phrase that creates doubt through limitation: "Quizá la mujer aplastaba con sus dedos la masa para hacer empanadas..." (my emphasis, p. 52). Despite the narrator's basic omniscience, by limiting it in certain situations he creates an element of mystery concerning Mendieta's arrival and settling in Cedrón.

The narrator uses a similar procedure in characterizing Eladio Finol (pages 150-156). The opening sentence of the characterization establishes the narrator's omniscience, providing the exact date of Finol's arrival: "Eladio Finol llegó al pueblo una tarde de aquel octubre de mil novecientos diez y siete" (p. 150). Soon the narrator's observations are more limited: "Nunca se supo con certidumbre en qué consistieron sus funciones judiciales" (p. 150). A few sentences later the narrator uses a form similar to the "quizá" previously employed to characterize Mendieta: "A pesar del calor o tal vez como una demostración más de todo lo corriente, incluso el mismo calor, merecía su desprecio, empezó a usar..." (p. 151). The effect is similar to the example of Mendieta, creating a mythical quality in

the character.

A second variation from the narrator's basic position is one that is more a reflection of the characters' perception than that of the omniscient narrator. For example, Celia is described in the church as follows:

El retrato sonrió complacido y aguardó, bien apretado en su ceniza, con un gesto de un hijo que ha llamado, de hijo que se asoma a una ventana, desde la muerte, para mirar a su madre destripando dos hormigas con su mano derecha. (p. 69)

One is tempted to attribute a picture that smiles to "magical-realism", but in this case it is the result of a specific and functional narrative technique. Although narrated by a third-person narrator, the fact that the picture smiles is a reflection of the emotional state of the character observing it, Celia. This narrative segment describes Celia's solitude, and the anecdote concerning the picture communicates her emotional state. It captures an emotional imbalance that she experiences while pondering the picture.

Other magical events take place when Auristela enters a church:

San José, agitando imperceptiblemente la varita de jazmín en su mano derecha, le susurró, con los labios ahuecados entre la barba de alquitrán, su agradecimiento por el manto nuevo. Al fondo, varios angeles, suspendidos por sus alas de papel crepón, sosteniendo los extremos del cielo, regañaban con seriedad de muchachos a dos querubines que retozaban a cada lado del tabernáculo. (p. 111)

Although narrated by a third-person narrator, it communicates the perception of Auristela as determined by her particular emotional state while in church.

Similarities in the effect of the novel's structure and narrative situation make it a remarkably successful total experience. There is a correspondence between the function of the novel's structure and narrative situation in the sense that structure and narrative situation together develop the novel's themes through similar uses of time. As has been noted, the structure develops along a synchronic line for the first thirteen narrative segments in which the present circumstance of Cedrón is described. The narrative becomes diachronic when Mendieta enters in the fourteenth segment. The synchronic and diachronic are also fused through the narrative situation: the characters experience the present as a continuous past.

In En noviembre llega el arzobispo Rojas Herazo uses a clearly defined regional base-- a small town on Colombia's Atlantic coast-- to make experience more profound than a mimetic description of this particular objective reality. Leocadio Mendieta becomes a mythic figure through specific narrative technique, and the manner in which his influence pervades and oppresses Cedrón is also made experience by means of specific narrative techniques. These transformational factors make the reader actively experience reality, rather than simply observing everyday external reality as he did in La marquesa de Yolombó.

Unlike the regionalism of Cien años de soledad and En noviembre llega el arzobispo, Fernando Soto Aparicio's El espejo sombrío is cosmopolitan in both sense of the word. The novel takes place almost entirely in the city, and the technique associates Soto Aparicio with many of the innovations of the contemporary novel.

It deals with a protagonist who studies himself and his past as he is in the process of becoming progressively more obsessed with the possibility of a revengeful murder. In general terms, the novel fits within the existentialist literary tradition. Typical of this kind of novel, it is narrated by the protagonist himself, often in an immediate present ("I see, I am thinking", and so on). But unlike many novels of this tradition (L'étranger, El túnel), it has considerable variation in narrative point of view. It also sets forth ideas that are fundamentally Christian rather than existentialist.

The basis for the novel's structure is a division into seven "Círculos" (or parts) which contain from two to eight chapters each. These "círculos" show the development of the twenty-year old protagonist, Alberto Franco, through a period of one day. For example, the first "círculo" begins at 4:25 a.m., the second at 7:20 a.m., and they continue in this manner chronologically. This development of one day is carried out, however, mostly in the beginning chapters of each "círculo". The latter chapters of each "círculo" describe Alberto's past. This past covers a period from Alberto's thirteenth year-- when his father is killed-- up to the present. The two chronologically developed narrative lines in the novel, then, are (1) one day in the life of Alberto the twenty-year old lawyer lawyer, and (2) Alberto's life from age thirteen to twenty.

The theme of "Círculo I" is death, and it is subtitled as such ("La muerte"). The theme of death is elaborated in two ways according to the two basic narrative lines described above.

The first time period is used in the first chapter of this "círculo", and it is narrated mainly in the immediate present by Alberto. Some paragraphs are related by a third-person narrator. After an initial establishment of the situation by a third-person narrator (the first paragraph), Alberto takes control of the story. He writes a series of statements about life and his feelings about it, such as "Amo la verdad: vivo en una era de hipocresía y de engaño".<sup>19</sup> On the second page he makes a statement that serves as the basis for the theme of death in this first "círculo": "Ahora me enfrento sereno a la muerte" (p. 10). From this point the narrative alternates between paragraphs by Alberto and paragraphs by the omniscient narrator. The experience of the chapter is based on deep-rooted emotions that obsess Alberto: his inexplicable (at this point) desire to die, a somewhat indifferent attitude about his own existence, and constant mention of revenge. Part of this experience is created through direct statement. Alberto's attitude is expressed in statements such as "Niego mi ser. No existo", and "De repente me invade un deseo inmenso de renunciar a todo" (p. 13). Alberto's statements contain obvious contradictions. For example, his supposedly indifferent attitude about life is not congruent with his extremely emotional obsession with revenge (if life is not important, why obsess oneself with revenge?). Also contradictory are his negation of the importance of existence, on the one hand, and his fundamentally Christian attitude on the other:

Muerto creyendo en que existe una vida más  
grande, más alta, más pura; en que la tierra  
es sólo un tránsito, desde un punto hasta otro;

en que estos dos puntos se asemejan y pueden resumirse en uno sólo; la realidad de Dios. (p. 14)

Besides direct statement, the experience is also communicated through the protagonist's particular circumstance. First, the fact that he feels the necessity of leaving a written testimony after his imminent death suggests the importance he attaches to communicating about his situation. Descriptions by the omniscient narrator reflect the protagonist's unstable psychic state. He explains in the first paragraph of the novel that objects assume an unclear ("borroso") outline. Trees bend as if an intense pain were destroying their roots. After a series of descriptions of this nature, the omniscient narrator explains that these objects reflect the protagonist's perception of the world: "Sólo las cosas reflejadas en él cambiaban. Fuera de su superficie, los árboles estaban quietos" (p. 9). The protagonist's actual physical environment is dismal: he is alone in a hotel room, one yellow light illuminates his room, and it is raining outside.

Alberto's specific circumstance of Chapter 1 is expanded in the second chapter of "Círculo I". It deals with the period when Alberto was thirteen years old. His father is assassinated when the two are walking along a rural road. The third-person narrator explains that this experience of death has been a profound one that Alberto will not forget.

The third, and final, chapter of "Círculo I" also focuses on death, dealing with the funeral for Alberto's father. This chapter is associated technically with the circumstances of the first chapter by means of the image of howling dogs. The sound of a

dog formed part of the situation described in Chapter 1. This atmosphere is evoked at the end of the funeral by describing a grey ambience and the sound of a dog once more:

Los cantos se apagaron y retornó el silencio. Por la puerta gris penetraron el frío y los quejidos de los perros errantes. Entonces se asomaron las estrellas, por primera vez desde el crepúsculo. (p. 44)

The past and the present, and the theme of death in the past and present are associated in this manner.

Círculo II advances the immediate present to 7:20 a.m. and continues the chronological development of Alberto's life after his father's death. Círculo II is organized like the first: the first chapter is narrated for the most part by Alberto, describing his immediate situation, and in the two following chapters an omniscient narrator tells of Alberto's past. He is now in high school and is reprimanded for writing too emotionally charged articles for the school's newspaper. This "círculo" is titled "Amor". The addition of love to Alberto's life creates a basic conflict that is developed in the remainder of the novel, and produces its principal tension. Technically, this tension is developed at the end of the last chapter of this "círculo" (in Chapter 6) by having the memories of the past smothered by a kiss from his girlfriend Cecilia. The vital and creative force she represents contrasts with the experience of death that has predominated up to this point in the novel:

Cerca a sus labios la boca de Cecilia se ofrecía, a él y se inclinó para besarla, y entonces sintió como si toda la vida se le fuera, como si en ese beso se entregara y recibiera, en cambio, el secreto de la potencia creadora, depositada en su rudo molde de arcilla desde el principio del tiempo. (p. 79)

The conflict between life and death forces (or love versus revenge) is further developed in *Círculo III*. It takes place at 10:30 a.m. in the immediate present. In his immediate circumstance, as always, the death-force is apparent: "Quiero morir crucificado, de espaldas contra el tronco en donde el plenilunio pintó su corazón y el mío" (p. 90). The conflict between these opposing forces becomes a highly personal conflict when, in Chapter 9, Alberto learns that Cecilia is the daughter of his father's assassin.

The remaining parts of the novel, from *Círculo IV* to *Círculo VI*, continue developing the basic tension as it has been discussed. Thus, in the immediate present he continues speaking of death and revenge, while he also affirms his beliefs in the hope for mankind. An example of these contradicting emotions is found at the beginning of *Círculo IV* when he states "Que exista el amor, amigos", and later takes out his revolver for revenge in *Círculo VII*.

The last *Círculo*, "*Último Círculo: La Venganza*" takes place at 8:25 p.m. and resolves the tension that has been developed throughout the novel. By means of a technical device (perhaps we might say a technical "trick"), the novel offers both possible solutions that have been suggested-- killing and loving Cecilia. In the first chapter, the first solution-- murder-- is described. It becomes apparent, however, that Alberto has only dreamed this resolution to the novel. In his dream he does murder Cecilia, thus avenging the death of his father (in his own mind). In the next chapter Alberto is once more in the room with Cecilia. Here the other force, love, predominates. The novel's resolution is a



basically Christian answer to the protagonist's questions. The final chapter begins as follows:

Sonríe, ama, perdona. Porque la sonrisa es un arma poderosa que nos permite ganar todas las causas; porque el amor es el fuego que nos sostiene, la combustión que nos ilumina, la savia que nos alimenta; porque el perdón es una muestra de la valentía elevada a la sublimidad. (p. 291)

The ideas and tone offered here are in accordance with Alberto's final decision. He does accept Cecilia as his wife and they affirm the desire to begin a new stage in their lives. Alberto has also apparently overcome the hatred that has obsessed him throughout the novel, thus resolving the tension.

El espejo sombrío is representative of themes common in the contemporary Colombian novel, such as the importance of tradition and family lines, the past as a key to understanding the present, and the effects of present-day Colombian society on the individual. It is also apparent that Soto Aparicio has consciously attempted to write an outstanding novel. This fact is evidenced in its pretentiousness and at times excessive literariness. For example, the narrator states his theory about the effects of environment on the assumption that such ideas will be accepted by the reader. In some cases he attempts to mitigate the directness of this effect by using the characters as communicators of the message. For example, in one section the narrator begins an extensive explanation of one of the novel's propositions by using Alberto's father (Ricardo) as a mouthpiece: "Ricardo decía siempre: Un niño es sólo un trozo de cera modelable, y al torcerlo, soportará toda la vida un aplastante cargamento de complejos" (p. 41). Soto

Aparicio is also pretentious when he attempts to justify the novel's themes. He does this by having Alberto read a newspaper article which supports the manner in which Soto Aparicio writes the novel:

Quando los escritores de nuestro país comprendan que es necesario abandonar los trillados surcos del costumbrismo; cuando tengamos conciencia de los conflictos intelectuales del mundo, y sepamos asimilarlos y verterlos en formas nuevas, encontraremos por fin una novela que nos represente con dignidad en cualquier parte. Pero mientras sigamos las huellas trazadas por los extranjerizantes o por los anquilosados literatos terrígenas, no adelantaremos un solo paso en el concierto de las letras universales. (p. 130)

The only function of this section in the novel is to comment on the novel the reader has in his hands. Similarly, the novel is consciously literary in its style. The novel begins "El agua caía de la llave alta sobre el espejo sombrío del charco" (p. 9). The first chapter of each "círculo" begins with a series of images to communicate the protagonist's spiritual crisis. This use of nature imagery is at times a positive contribution to the novel. It is also a consciously literary style because it contrasts so sharply with the remainder of the novel narrated by both the protagonist and the omniscient narrator. The style of Alberto, and of the omniscient narrator, other than in these opening passages, is simple and direct. Considering the trajectory of the Colombian novel from 1967 to 1975, El espejo sombrío is not among the better novels. Nevertheless, as part of the literary production of 1967 it serves as a notable example of both the state of fiction of that year and of trends in theme and technique that will be noted in novels that follow it.

Mario Arrubla's La infancia legendaria de Ramiro Cruz is a special case because it does not fit into the principal trends of the contemporary Colombian novel in either theme or technique. It is a rite of passage novel. Ramiro Cruz, a working-class city dweller, tells his story of growing up.

The novel's ten chapters have a three-part structure. The first part, Chapter 1, describes a character's life as a myth (this character is not Ramiro). It is a generalization that could apply to growing up as a universal phenomenon. The second part, Chapters 2 through 9, individualizes this myth by telling the story of one person, Ramiro Cruz. It is narrated by Ramiro Cruz. The third part, like the first, is narrated by an omniscient narrator. It associates the generalization of the first part to the specificity of the second. It tells of the later years of Ramiro's life.

The first part, Chapter 1, tells the story of the entire life of a character named Malacar. The fairy-tale tone of this chapter is appreciated in the first sentence: "Érase un hombre llamado Malacar que había pasado los primeros años de su juventud trabajando en el bosque como aserrador".<sup>20</sup> As an adolescent Malacar falls in love with María. When he asks her to marry him, María's father states that Malacar first will have to pass a series of tests ("pruebas"). Thus, Malacar's rite is clearly defined by the father. In defining the rite the style once more suggests the mythic quality of Malacar's adventures:

--Pero combatirás por ella durante un año largo.  
Conocerás a Sola y al tercer día me traerás su cántaro.  
Irás a la montaña y regresarás con la

moneda del Tentador. Pasarás un año en la ciudad en la que se aglutinan los hombres y volverás de allí con las aureas sortijas de la alianza. (p. 13)

Much of the remainder of the chapter is the relating of Malacar's tests. After successfully passing each of them, Malacar arrives at the "prueba de la ciudad" (p. 21). He reaches a crisis at this point, and takes his pen as refuge. He writes "Hay que vivir como todo el mundo". Through this act of writing he has thus reached a certain compromise with the world. He now settles in the city and takes a job as an employee in a grocery store. He continues writing his experiences in life. At the end of the chapter the narrator notes that he left thousands of pages as testimony to his exemplary life. This story is a metaphor for the content of the next nine chapters. Malacar is not the protagonist of the story we are to read. Similarly, however, Ramiro Cruz will pass through a series of "pruebas" in attaining manhood.

The second part, Chapters 2 through 9, relates Ramiro's rite of passage in detail. His first step away from infancy involves an initial alienation from his father. He observes his father's conflict with society, faces the reality of death in the demise of an uncle, suffers a frustrated sexual initiation, and joins in discussions of the larger world with his friends. They speak of the nature of the universe and Ramiro realizes for the first time that he is not at the center of it.

The final step in Ramiro's rite takes place in the last chapter of what I have described as the second part of the novel, this being Chapter 9. Most of the anecdote of this

chapter describes Ramiro's night life with his adolescent friends. The most significant part of this anecdote is an encounter with his father at the end of the chapter. He returns home drunk one night and his parents are waiting for him at the door. After observing Ramiro in this state, his father's only comment ends the chapter: "No me vuelvo a ocupar de él ni a decirle nunca nada" (p. 168). This point marks the definitive break from his father, and the end of Ramiro's infancy, as is explicitly commented at the beginning of the next chapter: "El padre, con la frase de su renuncia, puso fin a la infancia que él había también inaugurado. La infancia así dejó al hijo lleno de cuerdas rotas" (p. 169).

In the third part, Chapter 10, the narrative is once more in third-person, as in the first part. This third part is thus associated with the mythical story of the first part. It also relates to the second part because it is a continuation of Ramiro's story even though he is never named. The characters are now treated generically, as were some of the characters in the first chapter: "el padre", "el hijo", and so on. With the end of his infancy taking place at this point, the son (Ramiro) leaves home permanently for the first time. At the end of the chapter is his "return" (subtitled "El regreso"). It takes place after an extended period of absence. For example, his mother says to him: "Hijo mío, has peleado muchas batallas" (p. 179). Before taking a place as an adult in the community, he once again confronts his father. The son encounters the father in the same place he had left his father when returning home drunk, in the

patio, and they fight. The son strikes his father with mechanical movements which take on a quality of ritual:

Otro golpe. Sin odio, sin pasiones, de manera automática, el puño del hijo vino a estrellarse contra el pecho del padre. El mundo siguió en silencio para escuchar ese segundo golpe. (p. 180)

The novel's style and use of narrative point of view are important in the communication of Ramiro's changes in life as an archetypal pattern (a rite of passage), rather than an individual story peculiar to one person. An important stylistic feature is the fairy-tale style of the first chapter. One particularly significant aspect of narrative point of view is Ramiro's retrospective position in Chapters 2 through 9. Ramiro the adult tells the story of Ramiro the adolescent. When he describes a marriage in the neighborhood, he demonstrates an insight into the event that he would not have had as a young boy: "Muy pocas veces celebrábanse en el barrio matrimonios con todas las de la ley. El carácter pueblerino que todavía tenía la ciudad y la descomposición de la vida patriarcal que ese barrio condesaba aunábase para producir una institución conocida comúnmente bajo el nombre de 'Matrimonio Smith & Wesson'" (p. 65). This capacity for introspection is also evident in the narrator's vocabulary. For example, he describes his first communion as follows: "Durante la mañana no ocurrió prácticamente nada: comulgó, y de nuevo la hostia demostróse impotente para extirpar de mi espíritu los gérmenes subjetivistas del individualismo pequeño-burgués" (p. 72). He analyzes the conflict that is to take place with his father: "...la adolescencia que entonces principiaba anunciábase ya como

un proceso de auto-formación en el que iba a resultar inevitable el choque con el padre" (p. 166). These types of observations by the narrator make the novel a preeminently intellectual experience of rite of passage in itself, rather than the story of one individual.

The novel's dynamism is experienced through the changes in the protagonist, Ramiro Cruz. On the one hand, these changes involve the process from mythification to individualization discussed with respect to the novel's structure. At the same time Ramiro changes from a child to an adult. The reader's expectation of change is maintained through the tension between Ramiro the child and Ramiro the adult narrator. This tension has its basis in the contrast between Ramiro-the-child who acts and Ramiro-the-intellectual who narrates.

The novels of this year offer a variety of novelistic forms and a range of artistic merit. This brief overview of the narrative techniques is an indication of the Colombian novel's place in recent fiction and the "new novel". The transcendent regionalism cultivated by Rojas Herazo is a continuation of a particular tendency of writers of the Atlantic coast. As will be observed, there is a continuity in the novelization of region in this way. The continuity of trends noted in Soto Aparicio's El espejo sombrío is provided both by the novels he continues to publish after 1967 and especially in the theme of the past tradition as a vital part of the present circumstance. The introspective

and intellectual aspect of Mario Arrubla's La infancia legendaria de Ramiro Cruz is the most significant feature of the novel that will be observed in post-1967 fiction, especially in the young writers of Arrubla's generation as they demonstrate an awareness of their creation and their circumstance. An overview of the state of Colombian fiction indicates that Cien años de soledad did not arise out of a literary vacuum. Indeed, its enormous popularity created such an impression by overshadowing the other fiction of importance.



## CHAPTER II

## LAS CAUSAS SUPREMAS (1969)

The second novel published by Héctor Sánchez, Las causas supremas, like the key novels of 1967, Cien años de soledad and En noviembre llega el arzobispo, tells the story of a small town and is related to a particular region in "tierra caliente". Beyond these most basic similarities, however, little relationship can be noted between the transformation of regionalism in the 1967 novels and the experience in Sánchez's work, in which language and creation itself become fundamental to the experience. This very awareness of the act of creation, however, places the novel within the trajectory of the Spanish-American novel of the period, especially as seen in writers of Sánchez's generation.<sup>1</sup> The importance of language itself as an element fundamental to the experience of the work also relates it to recent tendencies in the Spanish-American novel in which the relationship between language and structure becomes an important question.<sup>2</sup> With Sánchez, anecdote is not entirely eliminated, as in some extreme cases of the manifestation of this recent emphasis on language, but the transformation of anecdote is a more conscious act experienced through language than in a traditional rendering of histoire to récit or than in a more inventive one such as that employed by García Márquez or Rojas Herazo.<sup>3</sup>

The novel relates the life of the small town over a period of time covering several months, focusing on numerous characters, especially those of the family of Leopoldo Agualimpia. No true

protagonist or consistently developed plot can be identified. Thus, the possibility of using a nuclear verb as a point of departure in describing the transformation process becomes difficult.<sup>4</sup> We might choose one of several characters as possible candidates for subject of a nuclear verb: Leocadio loses his authority; Cabo Romelio wins Carmen; Justo loses Carmen. Each of these possibilities, however, excludes a major portion of the novel once the nuclear verb is expanded. By using the generic "A town suffers" the problem of exclusion is resolved, but the generality of the sentence does not seem appropriate enough, since the experience is specific and personal in relation to characters.

The problem of the applicability of Genette's idea of the nuclear verb and its subsequent expansion provides an indication about the experience of Las causas supremas. In terms of structure, the novel requires a change in point of departure: rather than speaking of the "expansion" of a nuclear verb, a process more akin to "extension" and "variation" seems more appropriate. Following the ideas of Roland Barthes, the structure of this particular novel (or as he identifies it, "organization at the level of description") could be described within the plane of système rather than syntagme.<sup>5</sup> Traditional narrative forms function on the plane of syntagme; their signs use space as support and relationships are metonymic (contiguities for Jakobsen). The plane of système uses associations rather than space as support. Although not entirely traditional, the fictions of 1967, especially Cien años de soledad, operate primarily on the plane of syntagme rather than système.<sup>6</sup> This is also the case of much fiction published after the year of

Las causas supremas even in Sánchez's generation, as will be seen with Alvarez Gardeazábal.

The novel consists of thirty-two narrative sections that relate the story of the town in a chronological manner in a most general sense. Leopoldo Agualimpia's working-class family suffers continuous difficulties. Leopoldo's life becomes disrupted when his supposed nephew, Modesto, arrives in the town, moves into his house, and eventually seduces his wife Encarnación. Leopoldo's son Justo, a stereotype unpredictable adolescent dreamer, suffers his unconsumated love for Carmen, who eventually marries the more powerful and respected Cabo Romelio. The other son, Vicente, finds himself regularly in jail for drunkenness, and longs for Clemencia, the love he compensates for by seducing the maid of Clemencia's family. The priest, Ticora, suffers the loss of several sacristans and sexual relationships with his maid. The Cabo Romelio loses first a basketball game against a team for which his rival Justo plays, and second his leg when that same rival shoots him. Modesto endures several abortive artistic and financial undertakings, such as organizing a band and starting a barber shop. He later takes a beating from Leopoldo after the seduction of his wife. Doctor Rosas governs the town as its mayor and suffers a vapid relationship with his wife Albricias. Albricias is lethargic and depressed. Anastasio, more of a minor character, is jailed after being falsely accused of shooting Cabo Romelio. Tronera delivers messages and public advertisements and suffers the general misery of the town. At the end the town is flooded.

Whereas in the plane of syntagma the spatial relationship

between events as they appear in the récit is important, in this novel a more general association unifies the organization: the narrative sections are related because the people described in them live in the same town. A cursory overview of the novel's organization provides an indication of the nature of the associations and of the structure in the plane of systeme:

<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Association</u>
1	9-20	Leopoldo's family	Introduction (to family)
2	20-38	Dr. Rosas & Rómulo Leopoldo's past	Introduction (to Rosas & Rómulo) Similarity to section #1
3	39-46	Leopoldo & Encarnación Justo's yearning for Carmen	Similarity to section #2 Similarity to above (#3)
4	46-61	Dr. Rosas Vicente, jail, Clemencia	Similarity to section #2 Similarity to section #1
5	61-79	Ticora and Rosita	Introduction (to Ticora & Rosita)
6	79-89	Encarnación & Justo Romelio and Carmen Carmen and Justo	Similarity to #3 Similarity to above (#6) Similarity to above (#6)
7	89-92	Leopoldo in present Leopoldo in past	Similarity to #3 Similarity to above (#7)
8	92-107	Basketball game	Similarity to #6
9	107-119	Encarnación and Leopoldo's past Vicente	Similarity to #7 Similarity to above #9)
10	119-135	Leopoldo and family Modesto Ticora	Similarity to #9 Similarity to above (#10) Similarity to #5
11	135-153	Romelio and Bramadero Vicente and maid	Similarity to #8 Similarity to #9
12	153-175	Modesto's changes	Similarity to #10

<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Association</u>
13	175-193	Romelio in hospital Justo and Carmen	Similarity to #11 Similarity to above (#13)
14	193-201	Ticora and Rosa	Similarity to #10
15	202-212	Ticora and Tronera	Similarity to #14
16	212-252	Doctor Rosas Cabo Romelio's re- venge	Similarity to #4 Similarity to #13
17	253-271	Leopoldo's family The town in general	Similarity to #10 Similarity to all
18	271-277	Vicente and Cle- mencia La Quimera  Ticora	Similarity to #11  Introduction to her and similarity to #16 Similarity to above (#18)
19	277-289	Romelio in Bramadero	Similarity to #16
20	289-296	Anastasio, first- person	Similarity to #19
21	296-316	Vicente and maid	Similarity to #18
22	316-323	Tronera observes and remembers	Similarity to #15
23	323-340	Modesto, new busi- ness	Similarity to #12
24	340-354	Romelio and Carmen	Similarity to #19
25	354-370	Ticora and Rosas	Similarity to #18
26	370-384	Leopoldo in jail Modesto recovering	Similarity to #23 Similarity to above (#26)
27	384-396	Rosas and the flood problem	Similarity to #25
28	397-405	Ticora and Rosita Tronera disappears	Similarity to #25 Similarity to #22
29	405-420	Rosas and Albricias Vicente and maid	Similarity to #27 Similarity to above (#29)
30	420-431	La Quimera and flood	Similarity to #27

<u>Sec.</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Association</u>
31	431-438	Rosas and Albricias	Similarity to #29
32	438-451	Justo and overview of town	Similarity to #17 and all

Beyond these general associations of the sections, more specific associations can be noted between the individual sections. Système is experienced over syntagme in this general level because the associations are not spatial, i.e. the associations are not necessarily found between sections that precede or follow one another. The novel has little development of lineal sequence, and if a sequential ordering were attempted, it might be concluded that the work is "poorly" constructed. Considering the work in terms of syntagme, for example, the second section would be more logically placed with the narration of Leopoldo's past immediately following the end of the first section, thus providing association through space and sequential order. The fifth section, dealing with Ticora and Rosita, does not fit into spatial sequence. In a more general sense, it could be noted that sections 5, 6, and 7 could appear in any order without altering the development of the novel. Section 11 would create a syntagmatic relationship by having the first part deal with Cabo Romelio after section 8, and the second part deal with Vicente following section 9. Perhaps the most exemplary case of the lack of spatial relationship is section 32 in which Justo appears after having had no significant presence since section 13, and in this last section provides both a visual overview and resumé of certain themes. It would only be a slight exaggeration

to state that in a general sense spatial association is of no importance and the thirty-two sections of Las causas supremas could appear in any order. Such a possibility would eliminate the slight plot development discussed, but would not significantly alter the experience of the novel because these actions are of little importance. As will be more apparent later in this study, action is more significant as movement in itself.

Closer analysis of one individual section is likewise indicative of the novel's development on the plane of système. Section 3 begins with a dialogue between Leopoldo and Encarnación at their room. They talk about the weather (it is raining), then turn to the theme of their adolescent son Justo, who still urinates in bed. Once this association is made, and the focus turns to Justo (a process entailing one-half page), it remains on him for the remainder of the section. Justo steps outside, and after some brief introspection, observes his mutilated hand ("Miró su pedazo de mano" p. 40). At this point the narrative focus appears to change completely: the next paragraph begins with "Por un 24 de junio el pueblo estaba de fiesta" (p. 40). Thereafter follows a page and one-half description of the town and its festivities. Segundo enters, and they compete to determine which of the two is more macho, using firecrackers as the deciding factor. Justo's hand is wounded with an explosion of a firecracker. The next paragraph begins "El recuerdo de aquella noche se quedó en el rostro de Justo", thus associating the disparate anecdote of the town's festivity with the original situation of Justo observing his hand. Then, the narrator employs a similar type of association to change the focus

to Carmen two paragraphs later: "Carmen era para él tan sagrado como su mano. Aparte de lo sagrado, lo único que verdaderamente atraía sus pensamientos, sus sentidos, sus pasos" (p. 42). As this paragraph is developed, it changes to Justo as narrator in the last sentence, a short sentence of interior monologue:

Carmen era para él algo tan sagrado como su mano. Aparte de lo sagrado, lo único que verdaderamente atraía sus pensamientos, sus sentidos, sus pasos. Si hubiese decidido el conflicto en el momento adecuado, es decir, en aquellos domingos cuando después de la misa se encontraban para ir a comprar figuras de mil, otro hubiera sido el resultado. Espero que el cabo Romelio se hiciera presente.  
(my emphasis, p. 42)

This final interior monologue, then, associates the narrative to the next subject, Cabo Romelio (we have gone from hand, to Carmen, to Cabo Romelio, in progressive association), since the next paragraph begins: "Este llegó y sin detenerse en ninguna consideración, le envió a Carmen una carta con su hoja de vida, le puso una cita, y ella concurreó puntual, muy sobresaliente, los nervios amarrados con el fin de controlar inteligentemente la situación" (p. 42). With this, and no further explanation, the narrative shifts directly into a past dialogue between Cabo Romelio and Carmen:

--Quiero que seas mi novia para que sea mi esposa para que seas la madre de mis hijos y el sueño en mi carrera militar.  
Y Carmen: "Quiero ser tu novia para ser tu esposa, para ser la madre de tus hijos, mariscal compañero y general de tu copiosa y bendecida carrera militar, ¡mi ángel!" (p. 43)

Justo had overheard these promises, as is explained in the next paragraph:

¡Besáronse! El pacto cumplido, y las orejas de Justo como brasas pegadas a la cabeza. Noches largas y tediosas con el toro de su desgracia lanzando cornadas contra su corazón. (p. 43)



This observation, in turn, causes Justo's reaction to the pact between the two, an extensive interior monologue of some two and one-half pages. He recounts the history of his longings for Carmen, his suffering as he observed her from a distance, and his disillusion with her choice of the Cabo Romelio. At the conclusion of the monologue, the narrative returns to the original situation (Justo standing in the rain by the house) with a series of minor details that lead the focus back again to the house:

Desde lo alto de un almendro cayó un pájaro. Chocó con las ramas y batió sus alas desesperadamente, tropezando con las últimas hojas, antes de salvar el techo de la casa como una vibración alucinante de aire. (my emphasis, p. 46)

This association with the house returns the focus to the original point of departure, Leopoldo and Encarnación in the house commenting upon Justo. After the paragraph quoted above, the chapter ends as follows:

--Díle que se entre, o le va a dar un catarro--  
murmuró Encarnación a su marido, quien soplab  
el carbón de la plancha por un rotito posterior.  
--Nadie lo mandó que se saliera-- paladeó un  
poco de ceniza que escapó de la plancha.  
--Le va a dar catarro, lo que no hay ni vainas--  
repitió ella. (p. 46)

The lack of spatial relationship between these elements of the section-- the house, the fiesta in the town, Cabo and Encarnación, Justo's long monologue-- might suggest that these levels of narration would not fit together in a chapter, but the chapter is unified through associations. Many of the chapters function in this manner, on the plane of systeme, both because they have several levels not connected by space or logical sequence, and because they are unified through association.

Another facet of Sánchez's fiction within the realm of système is the tendency toward variations. Variations on the histoire can be as significant in the novel's communication as the progressive development of it. An examination of individual narrative sections shows this tendency toward elaborative variation of anecdotes. Section 16 begins with a bored Doctor Rosas at home with his wife. They quarrel over their daughter's behavior, and Rosas crassly reprimands her. For the first time in her life, she confronts him directly: "Todos estos años no existen. Todo lo que recuerdo es que cada noche has venido a echarme a mi izquierda, desde que olías a trago o a mujer barata, hasta ahora que hueles a diablo. Ya nadie te soporta". Bothered by this immediate situation, and apparently by his life in general, he suffers insomnia and takes a type of aspirin, a Mejoral, for relief. He arises early in the morning and goes to Luis Fermín's drugstore. He asks for three more Mejorales that he takes with water. After some conversation, Tronera enters. Soon afterwards, Rosas asks for another Mejoral, relating life in the town to the fact that Fermín had given him an Anacin instead of a Mejoral:

--Este pueblo me va a matar con tanto cabrón lunático. Estos últimos días han sido un infierno, han sido una mierda de días. Parece que todo el mundo anda con las patas para el cielo. Mire usted. Le he pedido un maldito Mejoral y me sirve un Anacin. (p. 221)

The next question concerns how the Mejoral is to be taken:

Lo que más sorprendió a Luis Fermín fue la calma con que tomó la pasta de Mejoral que él creía era, y que el alcalde consideró Anacin, para introducirla en la boca y empezar a chuparla como si se tratara de un dulce, antes de pedir con la misma benevolencia un vasado

de agua con agua lleno de agua.  
 --¿Un vasado de agua con agua?  
 --Pues claro hombre, no será un vasado de meados.  
 (p. 221)

This dialogue completes what might be called the "basic anecdote". Instead of the next sequence following the development of this anecdote, however, we have a second variation of the same action, as the narrator explains:

Segunda versión sobre la pasta de Mejoral que doctor Rosas acababa de pedir con posterioridad al enfrentamiento con Tronera, y la protesta del primero ante la equivocación del boticario Luis Fermín, quien absolutamente convencido, había cometido la equivocación de ofrecerle un sobre de Anacín... (p. 222)

In the second version there is only a slight variation of the mayor's proclamation before taking the Mejoral:

--¡Este pueblo me va a matar con tanto cabrón lunático! Estos últimos días han sido más mierda que otra cosa. Parece que todo el mundo se ha propuesto andar con las patas arriba. Mire por ejemplo y no discuta. Le he pedido un maldito Mejoral y me sirvió un Anacín como gran cosa... (p. 223; see quote from p. 221 to compare the two versions)

It is followed by a variation on the water problem:

--Un vasado de agua con agua para pasar la pastilla...  
 --¿Un vasado de agua con agua?  
 --¡Pues claro, hombre, no será un vasado de meados del presidente de la república! (p. 223)

Then follows the third variation of this banal event:

Tercera versión según la cual (pido licencia señores para contarles la historia de un bacilo que movía muy bien las caderas, mientras un jurado de conciencia estudiaba las dimensiones de una línea envolvente, recurrente en tres puntos e intangible) el boticario Luis Fermín, antiguo campeón de ciclismo, entregó al alcalde del municipio un sobre de Anacín... (p. 223)

In this more brief third variation he simply asks for the Mejoral

("Dame otro Mejoral que este desgraciado me ha hecho doler la santa cabeza"), and there is no variation on the water problem this time. Finally, the narrator offers the last variation:

Cuarta versión voluntaria para voluntarios y sin pedir licencia. Cuarta versión libre y rechazable para mayores de veintiún años todo niño paga boleto, no hay entrada de gancho, hoy no fío mañana sí. Cuarta versión para ver quien tiene más fresca de sabueso, o así se temple el cobre, o del avión nace el calor, o córtame el pelo peluquero porque me fastidia la grasa que impide a las manos su presunción, o no hay mal que por bien no venga, o no hay venganza por pequeña que no tenga vena y pena. (p. 224)

Rather than a true variation on the Mejoral incident, it is more a variation on the previous variation, as is evidenced by the use of "y sin pedir licencia" as in the third. After this paragraph the narrative continues in a more sequential fashion again, continuing the story-line with a comment by the druggist to re-initiate the conversation: "--Pues sí doctor --soltó el boticario de imprevisto --¿y cómo sigue el asunto de la virgen?" (p. 225).

As a generality, it could be stated that all action of the novel is experienced more as a variation than essential manifestation or realization. Human relationships, for example, are expressed as (triangular) variations rather than the meaningful one-to-one relationships desired. One triangular relationship is developed among Leopoldo, Encarnación and Modesto. In terms of theme, it is a variation on the macho theme, since it is machismo that motivates Modesto and machismo motivates Leopoldo's revenge. Carmen forms one side of a triangular relationship with Cabo Romelio and Justo. Taking this formulation one step further, one can note that the individual relationships between each of them

seem to be variations on stereotypes-- especially the one between Cabo Romelio and Carmen. For example, when Romelio says to her, "Quiero que seas mi novia para que seas mi esposa, para que seas la madre de mis hijos y el sueño en mi carrera militar" (p. 43), it has the effect of a platitude rather than as authentic sentiment. Justo's lamentations have a similarly false ring. Vicente's unrealized relationship with Clemencia has as its variation his affair with the maid. The narrator describes Vicente as follows: "En el fondo estaba enamorado y no sabía de qué. Así era. Enamorado del amor en la vida, en su destino demasiado quebrado y señalado" (p. 275). His obsession with Clemencia and sexual interest in the maid are, in this sense, the expression of his general spiritual state. The relationships of all three men of the Agualimpia family-- Leopoldo, Vicente, and Justo-- are slightly different variations on the theme of frustration within a family, and in a more general sense, of the futility of life in this town. Variations rather than full developments or realizations are the rule.

Other specific anecdotes are experienced more as variations than resolutions of a problem. The basketball game, perhaps the major "event" for the town, is ostensibly a competition between the police and students. In the novel, however, it is a variation of the triangle composed of Romelio, Carmen and Justo, since the two males play on opposing teams and the game is their confrontation. Toward the end of the novel the commission confronts Rosas with the problem of the disaster facing the town, the probable flood. Rosas' initial reaction is "Y todas las historias

son tristes". Then he complacently relates a story about his daughter. Finally, there is his "undertaking". But rather than the undertaking called for in the face of disaster, the variation of the "undertaking" is a long and absurd scene in which he leads an attempt to catch a rat that has entered the office during their conversation. In this case the variation converts a problem into a trivial circumventing of the basic situation, so producing an episode that approaches the grotesque.

The importance of association and variation describe the experience of the novel on the plane of systeme. Herein lies a fundamental difference between the fiction of Sánchez and that of someone like Alvarez Gardeazábal of his generation. (We will note in Alvarez Gardeazábal's work the exact placement of the sequence in space.) The tendency toward systeme, however, is not an exclusive right of Sánchez. Some predecessors along this line are Cepeda Samudio and, to a more limited extent, Rojas Herazo. In later fiction this tendency is found in the fiction of Aguilera Garramuño, whose work will be discussed in the last chapter. A consideration of narration (the narrative situation for Barthes, as for Genette) points to factors that distinguish Sánchez from the preceding generation and that make his art especially different from that of other Colombians.

The basic position of the narrator in this novel is outside of the story and outside of the text. He does not penetrate the characters psychologically. Occasionally characters within the

novel narrate sections in the form of interior monologues. In terms of Percy Lubbock's dichotomy between "showing" and "telling", the narrator does have the tendency to enter the narrative directly to "tell".<sup>7</sup> In contrast, the narrator's "showing" is highly mimetic. Barthes points out that these considerations of "representation" and "point of view" can be described in terms of the "code of the narrator".<sup>8</sup>

As a point of departure it should be noted that the basic code for representation is that of the contemporary novel in general: besides the rights of the conventional omniscient narrator, the novel includes the interior character analysis common in contemporary fiction. By means of these interiorization techniques there is analysis of specific characters, with special focus on Leopoldo, Vicente, Justo, Cabo Romelio, Modesto and Tronera. In the first section the narrator penetrates the town as a whole (very briefly) while they are in church, and focuses particularly on Leopoldo's frustration as head of the family. Later he is observed closely as he reacts to Modesto's having taken advantage of his wife, and is seen through an interior monologue when in jail after attacking Modesto. In a flashback in the second section, we see Leopoldo's youth and his brother's fanciful schemes to make them rich. Section 7 relates some of Leopoldo's youthful plans. Vicente is described externally in his wanderings and amorous conquests, and internally as he thinks about Clemencia. Through interiorization we see his seduction of the maid as a replacement for Clemencia. In the same way, Justo is seen as he acts in the town and his interior monologue not only reveals his feelings toward

Carmen, but also provides a type of summary of the experience of life in the town by means of an extensive narrative at the end of the novel. Besides being the seducer of Encarnación, Modesto's interiorizations reveal his preoccupations with finding a permanent livelihood and with his "art"-- the band he is trying to form. A notable section (#22, pp. 316-323) describes Tronera: he is first seen externally, the narrator describing how his marriage plans are frustrated because his girl friend is of a higher social class. When a funeral procession passes by there is another associative process, and an extensive interiorization in the form of a flashback narrates an anecdote in which Tronera had to cut the fingernails and hair of the corpse of his mother in preparation for her funeral. The narrator reveals the relationship between Doctor Rosas and Albricias in detail and, in the particularly effective penultimate section of the novel, uses interior monologues in parentheses after dialogue, for psychological analysis. Regarding the narrator's characterization, then, the novel fits within the conventions of the contemporary novel.

In contrast, that part of the narrative in which the narrator's position is outside of the story is at times quite traditional in the descriptive scenes. The narrator often finishes sections, for example, with descriptions that are highly expressive, or what might be called "good writing" in a traditional sense. This sense of being highly expressive is created by means of the use of metaphoric language. In this case metaphoric or "poetic" language is particularly notable because these narratives appear at the ends of sections and because they contrast with other



less traditional narrative codes. For example, approximately midway in the novel one of the sections ends with the following two paragraphs describing Vicente:

Quedó clavado como hierro en un solo puesto y cayó de rodillas con las manos sobre los ojos. El silencio de las cosas muertas, de los silencios siempre rebotados de espantos, de objetos e insectos latentes en el reverso del mundo, se deshojó sobre el asteroide senil de sus adentros como un rompimiento de resortes.

En los ojos abiertos se prendía la humedad y una eterna noche sin climas, donde los orines se desplazaban dejando huellas densas y apócrifas. Un remado de sueño y pesadilla. Un grito más tarde.

(p. 277)

The use of metaphoric language such as "clavado como hierro en un solo puesto", "el silencio de las cosas muertas", and "como un rompimiento de resortes" is particularly exemplary of traditional writing, and recalls the writers of the previous generation, such as Rojas Herazo. The final short phrase "Un grito más tarde" ends the section with the type of understatement a writer like Hemingway might employ. The section that describes the committee's attempt to confront the disaster (section 27) ends as follows:

Detonando entre sueños burbujas verdes, manos e invocaciones en el atardecer, todos los días se levantan del suelo paladas de vapor que crecen junto a los árboles partidos, partiendo va en camino el trueno que en el aire deja una estela de incredulidad repitiéndose en su significado, memorias del tiempo, se ensombrece la tierra. (p. 396)

Phrases such as "invocaciones en el atardecer", "todos los días se levantan del suelo paladas de vapor", and "memorias del tiempo" are testimony of the narrator's apparent faith in the traditional expressive capacity of language (a faith that is not constant in the novel). Once more, the final "se ensombrece la tierra" creates a conventional fade-out to end the section.

In the code established thus far, then, the narrator exercises conventions of "telling": he describes the characters in detail and evokes scenes poetically. In contrast, at times he reverts to an extreme mimeticism. It involves a minimal transformation by the narrator. For example, we note a tendency toward mimetic enumeration (instead of the summary involved with "telling"): "Molesto con el resultado buscó otro billete, otros billetes, más billetes, todos los billetes, todos los bosillos, todas las monedas..."(p.36). When Carmen rejects Justo, he watches her depart and attempts to catch her at the door: "La puerta cerróse, con la misma violencia que él había empleado en la de su casa. ¡Plasss!" (p. 182). The "¡Plasss!" at the end is indicative of this tendency to use language at its most mimetic level, emphasized by the triple "s". The narrator describes a character attempting to count hands for orders in the local bar, El Bramadero:

Este contaba con la mano, uno dos, tres, cuatro digamos cinco. Seis, siete, ocho, diez, quince, digamos veinte, tres y cuatro ocho, digamos diez. Sumaba: trece mas siete, veinte, mas cuatro (¡un momento!), decía bueno, cuatro más...(parece que no oyeran) siete mas trece, veintiocho, digamos treinta para redondear esta cuenta. (p. 336)

Now the tendency is more toward "showing", and to an extreme, a change from the previous code of "telling". In another case of enumeration, the narrator imitates everything Leopoldo says to Encarnación: "Leopoldo regresó de la cocina después de patear el lecho todavía tibio de su sobrino, y corrió en busca de Encarnación para decirle vieja sinvergüenza, ambiciosa, traidora, pecadora, penitente, víbora" (p. 339). The enumeration of adjectives

tives is more mimetic than transforming. In an episode between Romelio and Carmen the narrator refers to Romelio as follows:

El cabo reencuentra su pasado bajo un ceibo donde las balas le cruzaban por encima de la cabeza, según sus palabras, era plomo en balas que le enviaba alguien desde el otro lado, pum pum disparadera, campana, concierto, desconcierto, balazas disputándose un palmo de ventajas. (p. 344)

Here the mimeticism is found in the repetition of "pum". In the continuation of this episode, the two are looking for a word in the dictionary, and as they repeat "b" thumbing through it, the narrator describes the scene as follows: "Bee, bee, bee, hasta que se fueron perdiendo en la geometría dispareja del diálogo..." (p. 345). When Albricias is described in her final phlegmatic state, the narrator comments: "Glug glug fue todo lo que pudo hacer sonar a través de las grietas de su carne estallada..." (p. 438). The narrator makes a burlesque scene of an episode in which the Gabo Romelio escapes from the hospital, describing it step by step and mimetically:

Gabo Romelio inseguro de lo que debía hacer, se acopló como una mula herida en un pie, retrocedió alzando las manos, diciendo en voz baja: "Mierdita, qué será todo esto, será que me están espantando, mierdita", hasta que chocó contra una pared que su contacto amenazó con venirse abajo. El de la campanita siguió avanzando ahora sin hacerla sonar, pero exhibiendo una sonrisa diabólica que le iba de oreja a oreja. Como por arte de magia en ese momento le salió un pajarito de la boca que hizo cluc cluc cluc cluc. "Debe ser mi reloj de carne y hueso", meditó el cabo espichado... Para ganar tiempo empezó a trotar sobre una sola pierna. (p. 179)

The inclusion of the exact words the character thinks ("mierda..."), and the repetition of the cluc operate in conjunction with the final sentence to create the burlesque scene. Another extreme

case of "showing" has been employed, and in this example is humorous because of it.

Similarly, at times the narrator interrupts the flow of his "telling" in order to show a scene mimetically. This procedure is technically a switch in the narrator's code. The flashbacks often function in this manner; such is the case of the flashback discussed concerning the fiesta in the town during which Justo wounded his hand-- instead of simply telling what happened, the narrator shows it through a flashback. Likewise, the transcription in detail of the chasing of the rat marks a subtle change in codes: we move from the telling of a significant event in the novel (a "nudo" for Barthes) to a detailed narration of a catálisis, or filler of little importance.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, in a scene that takes place at the Agualimpías' home, Modesto sits next to Encarnación and she offers him a cup of coffee. The narrator states: "Recibió una tazada de café casi hirviendo y se colocó a un lado de ella" (p. 196). To continue with the established code of narrating this situation, the procedure should be the transcription of the dialogue that follows her giving him the coffee: "--Este invierno se me está haciendo muy sospechoso-- dijo Encarnación meditabunda-- estoy pensando algo que me da miedo decir" (p. 196). Before she says this, however, we have the intercalation of the following paragraph:

Vicente no estaba, tampoco Justo. Las vasijas seguían rebotándose bajo las goteras en la sala. Las gallinas perdían sus plumas y los deseos de comer. La mejor de ellas tenía el rabo completamente pelado, pero seguía poniendo su huevo diario, como si no le interesara la anormalidad. Permanecía arrimada a las paredes de la cocina tratando de ocultar el defecto clavando el rabo en la tierra. Por la

mitad del patio un canal, dos más allá, el agua regada, corriendo a fuerza con un variable destino, agua de dentro para afuera, de afuera para adentro. Se desplazaba de un solar a otro violando todas las propiedades.  
(p. 196)

The first sentence, "Vicente no estaba, tampoco Justo" does continue the line of the main code, the story of the interaction between Modesto and Encarnación, adding the detail that they are alone. The following sentence is transitional in changing the code: "Las vasijas seguían rebotándose bajo las goteras en la sala". The use of the verb "seguían" maintains the focus on the situation described, but on the other hand, it is a lead-in to a change in the code, which will focus on external details (and we have the detail of the "vasijas" here). In the next sentence we have the other code: "Las gallinas perdían sus plumas y los deseos de comer". And finally, detailed focus is placed on the one chicken (we are now completely away from the code of story-telling-- Modesto-Encarnación): "La mejor de ellas tenía el rabo completamente pelado..." (p. 196).

Although on this level of representation we have noted the tendency toward switching codes, in considering the position of the narrator in relationship to the story and the reader, the function of Sánchez's code breaking becomes more evident. Here we witness the narrator's unique role in relationship to the narrative, and the special problem of language in the writing of Sánchez.

Despite the narrator's established omniscience, there is a breaking of this fundamental narrative code when this established relationship with the characters is questioned. At times his position in relationship to the story is questioned through doubt as to his complete and "omniscient" knowledge of the matters at hand, and at other times his position is questioned more through tone, which can be more conversational than would be expected from a narrator extraneous to the story.

Beginning with the problem of omniscience, we have the following scene in which the priest Ticora's helper Rosita seduces him:

Rosita acaballada, no sobre un caballo, sino encima del estómago de la reverencia, le metió los dedos en las costillas y el otro empezó a reír como un pedazo de lija restregado contra una pared de concreto, y quizás le decía: "Oh no, por caridad de Dios estate quieta, no me hagas males hazme tamales, oh oh por Dios dejame que tengo dolor de cabeza y de páncreas, me estoy riendo oh, jo jo jo", alguna cosa parecida, pero entre risas, resultaba muy difícil determinar su significado, eso no es muy importante. (my emphasis, p. 207)

The first "quizás" questions the narrator's usual omniscience, and the words following the dialogue actually play with the narrator's supposed omniscience, suggesting he was not able to hear over the noise. Similarly, the narrator relates the following anecdote in which Leopoldo is suffering among the worst days after Modesto's seduction of his wife:

Tomó una piedra dura fangosa con la que intentó derribar la puerta, con el pésimo resultado de que se le fragmentó entre las manos, con el agua que caía, no era polvo sino mascadura de piedradura y la puerta siguió cerrada, hasta que se aprestó a emplear todo su cuerpo aunque se le partiera la cabeza, y ocurrió que... por mucha

temeridad que demostrara y agallas para decir so puta, so embarcadora, culipronta, por mas que seguía gritando su mujer Encarnación era puta como los cascos de mula, alebrestada, malparida, y no se entendía bien cuántas cosas mas...ocurrió. (my emphasis, p. 338)

Three steps can be noted in relationship to the problem of omniscience. First, the general established context is of omniscience. Second, we have a slight variation of it in the use of what has been called a mimetic code, enumerating exactly a long series of words the character said, such as "so puta", instead of using some type of resumé technique. Finally, the breaking of the code with "y no se entendía bien cuántas cosas más".

In one section that studies Tronera in detail, the narrator follows his thought processes. An indicator of this penetration is a statement such as "Tronera sabe qué es eso", and the fact that his thoughts lead to a mental process that is a flashback to the time his mother died. The narrator breaks his code, however, at one point in the section:

El jaramango germinaba en el recodo de los corredores, o aparecía sobre éstos, reducido a una muestra rastrillada de tono amarillo que la mollizna terminaba borrando en las horas de la tarde. Con su trompeta de lata bajo el brazo. No lo pregunté. Puede que lleve la trompeta, o puede que sea la bocina que acostumbra a usar para las anunciaciones del señor Carlos Renta, Ltda. (my emphasis, p. 316)

The sentence "No lo pregunté" is the transitional sentence of the code, being the first indicator of a change in the narrator's position. The verb "puede" implies the doubt that changes the code from the omniscience that characterizes the remainder of

the section.

At other times the code is broken through changes in tone, rather than the levels of knowledge outlined above. A conversational tone can contrast with the narrator's technical position outside of the text. Early in the novel, for example, the narrator describes Tronera as follows: "Tronera abría una boca así de grande" (my emphasis, p. 48). A subtle change at the end of the following paragraph changes from the "literary" code (narrator outside) to an oral one:

Desde una serranía boliviana traía la imagen de una virgen que al parecer ofrecía toda clase de milagros. Un molde no mas grande que los sesenta centímetros, en el cual los agobiados encontraban consuelo para sus vidas. El obispo de La Paz la había bendecido y todo. (my emphasis, p. 60)

The last two words "y todo" mark the change. In discussing the Cabo Romelio, the narrator interjects a short phrase in an oral tone: "El cabo Romelio hay que decirlo se esforzaba en hacerlo con mucha voluntad" (my emphasis, p. 100). Similarly, the narrator alters his code in describing Modesto:

Modesto cantó sentado en la mitad de la calle, el repertorio que le obsequiaría a su tío esa noche. Eran melodías de su propia inventiva, algunas, todas, unas pocas que se sabía a ciencia cierta, porque tenía una manera particular de interpretarlas que impedía un reconocimiento justo de ellas. Se desprendía por algunas tonalidades, que se trataba de canciones conocidas, pero hay que decirlo con justicia, bastante deformadas. (my emphasis, p. 166)

The narrator alters his normal omniscient relationship to the characters by placing himself at their level and commenting on them directly, communicating his attitude toward them, or at



times even ridiculing them. The following passage deals with Rómulo, Doctor Rosas' secretary:

La ira le encendió las mejillas: soy una  
trompa untada de qué...soy un intestino arrastrado  
por...soy una araña negra y venenosa que vive de...  
soy un vampiro chupa sangre que de noche hace...  
soy la mosca de los basureros que un día se para  
sobre el pan, y al otro en... ¡NO! Qué va. Ninguna  
cosa de esas. El es el secretario del doctor Rosas,  
segunda persona en jaraquía poder y gobierno.  
(pp. 27-28)

There is a three-step process: the narrative begins in the words of the omniscient narrator, switches to a brief interior monologue narrated by Rómulo, who is then interrupted by a protest from the omniscient narrator-- "¡NO! Qué va"-- interrupting not only the interior monologue, but also the position of the narrator outside of the story.

The narrator's subjective attitude toward Clemencia is evident: "su hija Clemencia quien es tan fea como escobero" (p. 51). Later in the same section the narrator reveals his boredom with Clemencia and prefers to talk about Vicente, although he changes his opinion about this too:

Resulta agotador hablar de sus primeros pasos,  
que es mejor seguir con lo de Vicente, aunque tal  
vez no tenga el mismo interés.  
No, Clemencia es un ser abominable, pero no  
más abominable que cualquier otro ser humano,  
cualquiera que sea. (p. 52)

Although not as opinionated about Carmen, his relative lack of omniscience is nevertheless evident: "Torciendo la cabeza, veo a Carmen asimétrica, desencajada de la realidad. Quizás lo está" (p. 85). When Modesto tries to gather the funds to buy a barber chair for his latest enterprise, the narrator states

that Modesto went to Leopoldo, and then his reaction to these matters: "Recurrió a su tío Leopoldo. Le opuso muchos reparos. Inteligentemente" (p. 327).

The factor of narration that distinguishes Sánchez from many novelists of the period of this study is his consciousness of language. For Sánchez, language has become over-used and almost meaningless; signifiers have lost their communicative function to become at times mere space-fillers. Language becomes important as the expression of a monotonous and decadent society. At times this attitude toward language is communicated connotatively; at other times the narrator shows his consciousness of language more directly through metalanguage.<sup>10</sup>

If we understand the proverb as the most appropriate expression of worn out language and its signifiers practically devoid of a communicative signified, then Sánchez's attitude toward language becomes evident. The characters frequently use proverbs or clichés. Sánchez ridicules their use by characters and also within his own narration. The narrator emphasizes Tronera's monotonous existence by using the proverb to describe it:

Hoy (Tronera) tiene que decir que una señora está resuelta a vender los aperos de un caballo, en perfecto estado, en la dirección. Que dos palas y hoces con poco uso las pueden adquirir en la molida. Que sigue la peregrinación de los fieles cristianos al santuario de la Virgen De Las Rocas traída de Bolivia por extraño poder del altruismo que de esta manera quiso favorecer esto. Que se quede sin comprobar, sin estrenar de segunda mano, que lo bueno conocido es mejor que lo malo por conocer, que el tiempo es apto para el recogimiento, y así de esquina en esquina. (p. 316)

The repetition of "que" at the beginning of each clause produces the monotonous effect that is the experience of Tronera's banal job. The final step in expressing such emptiness is the paraphrasing of the cliché "que lo bueno conocido es mejor que lo malo por conocer, que el tiempo es apto para el recogimiento".

In a section that deals with Leopoldo, the narrator has him enter the Bramadero, and then he steps into the narrative for the following paragraph:

La fortuna es como la sandía, se descubre a mitad del camino, cuando la lengua del perro va lamiendo las estrias de la muerte, la fortuna, para no despenarse, es igual que un beso al amanecer en las asentadoras, no puede ser. Si no puede ser, la fortuna es tener sin tener, o aspirar sin aspirar, no llorar, ser feliz, de eso se habla, porque la fortuna es la felicidad, según opinan los favorecidos, por tanto, la felicidad no tiene cara, ni cuerpo, es sólo una palabra, Modesto no, sino Leopoldo, su tío con el jaez en las verijas dando coces como un potro resabiado y calculando con las jarras del corazón la hora de los pies, etc. (p. 334)

The narrator opens the paragraph with a series of clichés such as "la fortuna es como la sandía". Then he manipulates these clichés with a series of infinitives, adding complication to the meaningless. Any significant meaning that might be deduced from this play with language is questionable, and this attitude is more explicit at the end of the paragraph with the insertion of "etc".

In one anecdote the priest speaks disparagingly of the mayor's government: "Su administración está corrupta desde las raíces, hasta las pobres ramas --afirmó el cura con resolución".

The narrator paraphrases the mayor's reaction:

Pero no estaba corrupta según contradijo el alcalde, argumentando que la rama judicial

y la rama ejecutiva, tenían un caracter diferente, tanto en la aplicación de la ley, como en la autonomía para pronunciarse sobre los acontecimientos. Una cosa era el molino, y otra el molinero. (p. 334)

The emptiness of language is expressed in two ways. First, the narrator paraphrases the "official" government language that Rosas uses in his defense, speaking of the "rama judicial" and the "rama ejecutiva" instead of answering the accusation directly-- as it was stated. Then he recurs to the proverb "Una cosa era el molino, y otra el molinero". In the first case he uses overstatement to avoid direct communication, while in the second he uses understatement. Eventually the conversation ends with the use of a proverb as the final evasion:

--La injusticia es la madre de todos los vicios--  
afirmó el cura cruzando una pierna que dejaba al descubierto las ligas negras de sus medias deshinchadas.  
--Sí padre pero no guarde ese diezmo que más vale pájaro en mano, y pasemos a conversar de otra cosa--  
pasar a conversar de otras cosas era preguntarle por el estado de su salud y los problemas de su ministerio.

The problems are thus "resolved" by means of clichés. With the conclusions drawn through proverbs, the phrase "pasemos a conversar de otra cosa" is in effect gratuitous: the conversation had already reached its conclusion.

When the maid decides to begin living outside the house of Doctor Rosas and Albricias, the latter advises her, using the following clichés: "Después será tarde, acuérdate de mí. Dice el refrán, siembra para recoger y no tires las semillas al trillado por donde cruza el caminante. Arroja la semilla en tierra que ha sido revolcada por el arado" (p. 414). Indicative of the communication problem of the town, the maid

already knows this proverb: "--Lo sé mi señora, porque se lo he escuchado en diversas oportunidades al padre Ticora" (p. 414)

At times the narrator parodies the language of the characters as a way of underlining the minimal communicative level of their expression. Continuing the conversation discussed above between the priest and the mayor, Doctor Rosas, we note that their dialogue becomes a parody of a meaningful act of communication between two people. The role of the narrator makes it a parody. After the mayor explains about the "rama judicial" and "rama ejecutiva", the priest states: "--Lo grave es que fue rota y yo tengo mi propio concepto". The narrator then states: "tenía el propio concepto sobre la interrelación..." imitating the priest's words. Doctor Rosas answers "--Yo no sé de esas cosas padre", followed by the narrator's parody "no sabía de esas cosas el alcalde Rosas". With each repetition the parody becomes more acute: the mayor finishes his next answer "ya que así me parece justo" and the narrator reiterates "Le pareció justo al doctor Rosas". Then the parody is extended one more step, with the narrator imitating the priest's words twice: "He venido más bien a reclamar con todo rigor y a que Ud se pronuncie abiertamente sobre ciertos acontecimientos que me inquietan --le inquietaban al cura Ticora, decía me inquietaba,..." (p. 360). Rather than communication it is a parody of a conversation.

Similarly, an episode involving the Cabo Romelio and Carmen becomes a parody of a love scene because of the language. Romelio speaks to Carmen:

No es que te quiera, es que no me quieres,  
es que tú quisieras, no es precisamente eso lo

que, porque si tú me quisieras...te quiero pero  
no puedo, sí puedes si me quieres, pero no te  
quiero así, y se estaban diciendo de querer tantas  
cosas que al final daban por saldado el incidente...

(p. 342)

The narrator does not have the function as in the priest-mayor dialogue, but we experience a similar language problem. The verb "querer" becomes meaningless in terms of expressing feelings, and rather than the expression of them, the incident becomes a parody.

When Albricias explains to the maid that it will be necessary for her to be near home at all hours of the day, the maid's response is paraphrased and transformed by the narrator. It reads like a parody of the evasive answer:

La mucama le diría, sí mi señora, comprendo la consternación está por verse y de veras siento en mi corazón pero llorar no puedo, es cierto que una se va acostumbrando a ciertas familiaridades, reposiciones inevitables, como el perfume o la santificación, pero el mundo ofrece este paso mucho, que tarde o temprano tenemos que aceptar, en el nombre del padre y de los sentimientos, pero en el fondo yo ando confundida con el amor que me ofrece un muchacho muy querido y buena persona y Ud comprenderá mi senora que para tan poco camino, menos cuerda, jugando el destino se encuentra la fortuna.

(p. 411)

The transformation becomes apparent both in the length of the sentence in contrast to the short interchange of words that precedes it, and in the vocabulary. Phrases like "reposiciones inevitables" and possibly even "jugando el destino se encuentra la fortuna" are not typical of the maid's language. They are the narrator's transformation of a dialogue in which words are excessive and communication is minimal. Similar to the dialogue between the priest and the mayor, it is experienced more as a parody of a dialogue, both in content and style.

By taking a banal conversation and transforming it into elegant language the narrator creates a similar parody from a dialogue between a policeman and Cabo Romelio:

El cabo, como ocurre frecuentemente en estos casos, le dijo primero cabrón. Le confesó que no entendía a cabalidad qué deseaba significarle con con aquello del no pago completo del arma, si por una parte los mismos hechos anteriores no se repetirán, ante todo porque no estaba resuelto a tolerarlo, y en segundo término, en ningún momento tenía pensado robarselo. En unos días se lo devolvería, cuando se hiciera a una escuadra automática de unos dieciocho tiros. (p. 240)

Since the Cabo does not speak so eloquently in his dialogue, the humor arises from the narrator's transformation within the context of the banal situation.

Whereas the narrator's attitude toward language of the characters tends to be experienced as parody, at other times his consciousness of language is more explicit. His explicit metalanguage suggests that language has lost its value through overuse, or that it simply is not appropriate for expression. In a scene in which Ticora seduces Rosita, she says to him: "--Ay padre, Ud acaricia muy duro", and the narrator explains: "La queja de Rosita sólo estimulaba los instintos, la ferocidad, la lujuria, las pretensiones, las inclinaciones, para llamar de alguna manera su actitud..." (my emphasis, p. 63). First, the narrator has expressed the inadequacy of language in his search for the appropriate noun, enumerating five of them. Then he changes to metalanguage as he comments on his own language and the necessity of having to say something: "para llamar de alguna manera su actitud". The first part of the sentence, the enumera-

tion of nouns, is an example of the language process in the novel: the narrator often feels the necessity of using several words to compensate for their lack of expression. In a reference to one character, the narrator states: "se fue durmiendo al arrullo de las aguas cristalinas de un pozo, durmiéndose con el pellejo regado de arena bajo la luz de sol (impenetrable mirada del sol) en el silencio" (p. 37). The insertion of the extra words in parentheses seems to respond to the same impulse noted above in the enumeration of nouns-- a search for a more expressive mode of communication within the limits of language. In continuing the anecdote about Agustín the narrator states: "El último hijo que engendrara lo condenaba también a la cama, por no decir muerte". Just as "llamar" signals the change of codes to meta-language in the example above, "decir" has the same function here. The narrator uses the euphemism "cama", and then comments on his own language that has avoided direct communication, a common problem in the town, as we have seen. In describing Clemencia the narrator states: "pero la imagen de Clemencia espantosamente espantable, aparatosamente operática y acromática, para colocar una palabra más, le entró por las meras verijas como una aguja capotera, enviándolo de cabeza al cielo" (my emphasis, p. 51). In this case the search for expression is carried out through association: thus, "espantable" is suggested through sound by the "espantosamente" that precedes it, and the esdrújula "acromática" is a variation on the preceding esdrújula "operática". The phrase "para colocar una palabra más" is the conscious metalanguage that seems necessary for Sánchez after the use of such a language



process. In a later description of Clemencia the narrator explains: "Clemencia no tiene por supuesto la culpa de ser así, ni haber nacido hija de un personaje tan notorio como el doctor Rosas. Sobra hacer esta aclaración, como sobra también decir que sus méritos corporales eran lastimosos" (p. 52). The "Sobra hacer..." is metalanguage, and in accordance with the narrator's attitude toward language, it could be noted that almost any "aclaración" for Sánchez would be excessive (sobra), since apparently so little is of importance.

The problem of the inadequacy of language becomes humorous in a narrative section that describes Ticora. It begins, "Puede ocurrir, pudo ocurrir que el 3 de abril cuando el reloj anunciaba las dos y treinta minutos de la tarde, el cura Ticora se le escondiera a Rómulo..." (p. 193). The variation of "puede ocurrir" with "pudo ocurrir" suggests the lack of precision of the former. In the second paragraph the narrator affirms this in his meta-commentary: "Se dice que puede ocurrir, o pudo ocurrir, porque se trata de una situación francamente clandestina, tan soterrada que ni los mismos astros podrían significarla". Later in the same section the narrator finds he cannot encounter the exact way to "signify" the situation between Encarnación and Leopoldo, and uses the same combination once more: "Puede ocurrir, pudo ocurrir que el 3 de abril cuando el reloj anunciaba las tres y treinta minutos de la tarde, Encarnación la esposa de Leopoldo Agualimpia..." (p. 195). Later in the same section the narrator reiterates the verb "suponer" with an effect similar to the "poder" above. The paragraph begins "Se supone que en ese momento

Encarnación lo llevó tomado por la mano..." and six lines afterwards the paragraph ends "Así, luciría un rostro agraciado que le facilitaría conseguir muchas novias, y casarse con una de ellas si así lo deseaba, como era de suponerlo (my emphasis, p. 197).

In addition to the function of metalanguage in commenting on the language of the novel, it also reflects certain attitudes of the narrator. The general attitude communicated by metalanguage corresponds to the basic themes of the work. For Barthes, language as such is operating within the realm of the connotative function of metalanguage.<sup>11</sup> Just as life is seen as monotonous and no more than a game in this town-- game in the sense of action with no transcendent meaning-- the narrator communicates this attitude through language. Life is a series of insignificant variations on the level of action in the novel, and the language is likewise variations, but is not capable of expressing or penetrating essences. The narrator's attitude in accordance with the pervading emptiness of life in the town is appreciated in many of his statements on the level of metalanguage, such as "Resulta agotador hablar de sus primeros pasos, que es mejor seguir con Vicente". The narrator reveals his indifference toward narration in transcribing Leopoldo's dialogue: "No lo sabías. Bla, bla, bla, bla, bla, etc." (p. 127). He demonstrates his attitude toward the Church when he comments parenthetically on the use of a capital "D" for "Dios": "Clemencia seguía desarrollándose con sus piernas siempre delgadas, dejando a un lado los vestidos que la hipertrofia le subía hasta

encima de la rodilla, semblanza que las religiosas despreciaban por obscenas y poco gratas a los ojos de Dios (con mayúscula por favor)"(p. 435). His metalanguage, then, corresponds to the experience of the novel in terms of its basic plot and language.

Compared to the two most significant novels of 1967, Cien años de soledad and En noviembre llega el arzobispo, both by writers of the previous generation, Las causas supremas marks a shift toward an emphasis on language, not just as a vehicle of expression, but as a phenomenon in itself. For Rojas Herazo, language is adequate as a means of expression and the writer's confidence in language is experienced by means of his punctilious manipulation of it for specific effects. As far as the transcendence of regionalism is concerned, it is part of the experience of this work, but now the act of transformation is also significant. Looking back to the humor of García Márquez and forward to that of Alvarez Gardeazábal, we find little in common with Sánchez: instead of the humorous incongruencies created through the process often called "exaggeration" or commonly related to "magical-realism", humor is created more through language.

In many ways Las causas supremas is a novel of variations whose unity is found in associations. The basic structure, described as operating on the plane of système, is a series of variations related through associations, and the individual sections find their unity through internal associative processes (such as

the case of Justo and his injured hand). The actual anecdote of the novel also emphasizes variations rather than significant events-- the case of the Mejoral being the illustration par excellence-- and the development of the plot is a relatively minor factor in the novel. At the level of the narrative situation, the constant changing of codes is indicative of the variations in the novel's mode of representation, alternating from "telling" to an extreme mimeticism. The narrator's consciousness of language and awareness of the emptiness of traditional rhetoric causes him to search for variations in expression, even though his basic attitude seems to suggest that any attempt to capture the essence of language-- or anything else-- will be futile. In this sense theme and technique function concomitantly to create an experience of life as a game-- there is movement and change in experience, but it has no meaning beyond this change.

## CHAPTER III

## COLA DE ZORRO (1970)

Fanny Buitrago's second novel, Cola de zorro, shares many of the attitudes observed in Sánchez's novel, and, in general, attitudes that this generation of writers have in common. As in Sánchez's Las causas supremas, characters suffer a certain lack of direction, and their existences are for the most part boring. Buitrago is also similar to another member of the generation, Alvarez Gardezábal (to be discussed in the next chapter), in the expression of a dominating tradition that maintains the status quo. Her work differs from much Colombian fiction since Cien años de soledad in the lack of a humorous attitude toward the reality she creates. Humor is a significant factor in works by García Márquez, Sánchez, Alvarez Gardezábal, and Aguilera Garramuño, although it is clear they use different techniques in its presentation. In each of these novels techniques that produce humor are directly related to the transformation of regionalism. In Buitrago's novel, however, the novelization of place (or region) is even less significant in the experience than in the case of Las causas supremas. Buitrago, rather, transforms reality through a process most aptly described as the novelization of a concept.<sup>1</sup> As has been pointed out in a study of recent fiction of this type: "In novels of this kind, the quality of the reader's experience frequently depends on the extent to which individual characterization is sacrificed in order to use devices that novelize the concept or leave a general mood, a vague notion".<sup>2</sup> In the case of Cola de zorro, the reader's experience does

depend on individual characterization and the sacrifice of it.

The concept under consideration is the family-- its "heredity" and traditions. (In the experience of this particular novel the idea of "heredity" becomes quite similar to what we would normally call "heritage".) A sentence that essentializes the novel's anecdote is "A family disintegrates". Paradoxically, a concept that describes the novel's total experience, rather than just the anecdote, would be "A family perpetuates itself". In saying "family" we are not speaking of a novel about a family in the usual sense, either as an immediate family or as an extended family. Rather, the reader gradually develops an awareness of a large number of characters who are related through a complex network, either by blood, marriage, adoption, or in some cases, even well established friendship. (For a visual image of this "network", see chart on page 72.) The novel is a study of the human relationships within this family, or clan. The relationships themselves are more significant to the novel than are the human beings described as individuals. This fact explains why Cola de zorro is a novel of concept rather than a novel of character or plot.

The book is divided into three parts: "Ana", "Enmanuel" (sic), and "Malinda". The three parts relate the story of approximately three generations of the Reyes-Centeno family. Each of the three sections focuses on a limited segment of the family, with occasional references to members that are emphasized in other sections. Part I takes place almost entirely in Bogotá and in a time period that could be called a recent past, perhaps within the last fifteen to twenty years. It has eleven chapters and deals with Ana González

who, having married Lucas Reyes Reyes, becomes part of the influential Reyes family. Ana's life is described during two time periods. During the first, a "present" which opens the novel, Ana is married to Lucas and associates with his friends. The other time period is during an epoch approximately six years before this "present". This second is important because it relates the activities of the revolutionary Benito Viana Reyes who apparently dies in a plane crash. In reality, he had landed the plane and exploded it afterwards. Before meeting Lucas, Ana was Benito's lover. Morelia, Ana's sister, was also Benito's lover. At the end of Part I, which takes place in the "present", Ana visits an apartment occupied by some political activists (Ana is neither actively nor intellectually engaged in revolution) and they are all killed by the police. Of the eleven chapters in this Part I, two deal with time and place outside the story described above. The second deals with Claudia Viana, who marries Manuel el viejo, who is three times her age. Besides having one son by Manuel, she takes as an adopted son a boy who has been raised by the community and is called Bernabé. Thus, Bernabé takes on Claudia's name and becomes Benito Viana Reyes (p. 23). The seventh chapter is narrated by a daughter of Manuel el viejo. She is not identified. Her narration describes the modernization process that the region is undergoing, the rebellious Salgado family of the same region, and more of the story of Benito Viana Reyes (Bernabé).

Part II, "Enmanuel", takes place in Opalo, a small town "within seeing distance" of San Miguel del Viento on the Atlantic Coast. It is the same location as in Chapters 2 and 7 of the first part. In

terms of time, it takes place after Part I (except sections in which characters relate past events). Enmanuel is supposedly the son of Narcisa and an unknown father. It becomes apparent in this chapter, however, that in reality he is the son of Evelyn-Evelyn West and Benito Viana Reyes. After landing the plane in the area, Benito lived with Evelyn-Evelyn West. Besides Enmanuel, this pair had another son, Giovel. Enmanuel has returned to Opalo to seek revenge on behalf of his dead brother Giovel, who has been killed by Esaú Centeno. Esaú Centeno is the "father" of the town both because he is its leading figure and also because he has fathered many of its inhabitants. He engendered fourteen daughters by his wife Ana María Thamar. Enmanuel does confront Esaú, who is shot by Evelyn-Evelyn during the encounter. Evelyn-Evelyn is the daughter of Ebenezer West, who had come to the region in order to interview the guerrilla Guadalupe Salgado. Unable to secure the interview, he eventually organizes a whisky operation in the area. He fathered Evelyn-Evelyn by an unnamed "islaña" who died soon after Evelyn-Evelyn's birth. Following Esaú's death, Enmanuel becomes the new leader and hero of the town. At the end of the chapter, the army, having learned of Esaú's death, moves into the town. Since there are very few people and no resistance, they leave, disappointed for not having found any revolutionaries.

Part III, "Malinda", is narrated for the most part by Lisa Reyes West, the daughter of Lucas Reyes and Evelyn-Evelyn, who marry after Ana's death and before Evelyn-Evelyn returned to the coast. The subject of Part III is Malinda, the daughter of Claudia Viana Reyes and Diego Cabo. Lisa has been Malinda's friend from



childhood. Besides the personal story of their relationship, Lisa tells about her own relationship with Rodrigo Viana, which eventually leads to her marrying him. Lisa also tells about the presidential bid and political career of Diego Cabo, who was a political activist with Benito Viana Reyes. At the end of the novel, Diego Cabo is assassinated. Lisa realizes it was a mistake to have married Rodrigo, and Malinda runs off with Rodrigo.

The following cast and chart may be useful in identifying the main characters:

Lucas Reyes Reyes: the main figure of the family in Part I. Brother of Claudia Viana Reyes. He marries Ana González. After Ana's death, he marries Evelyn-Evelyn West.

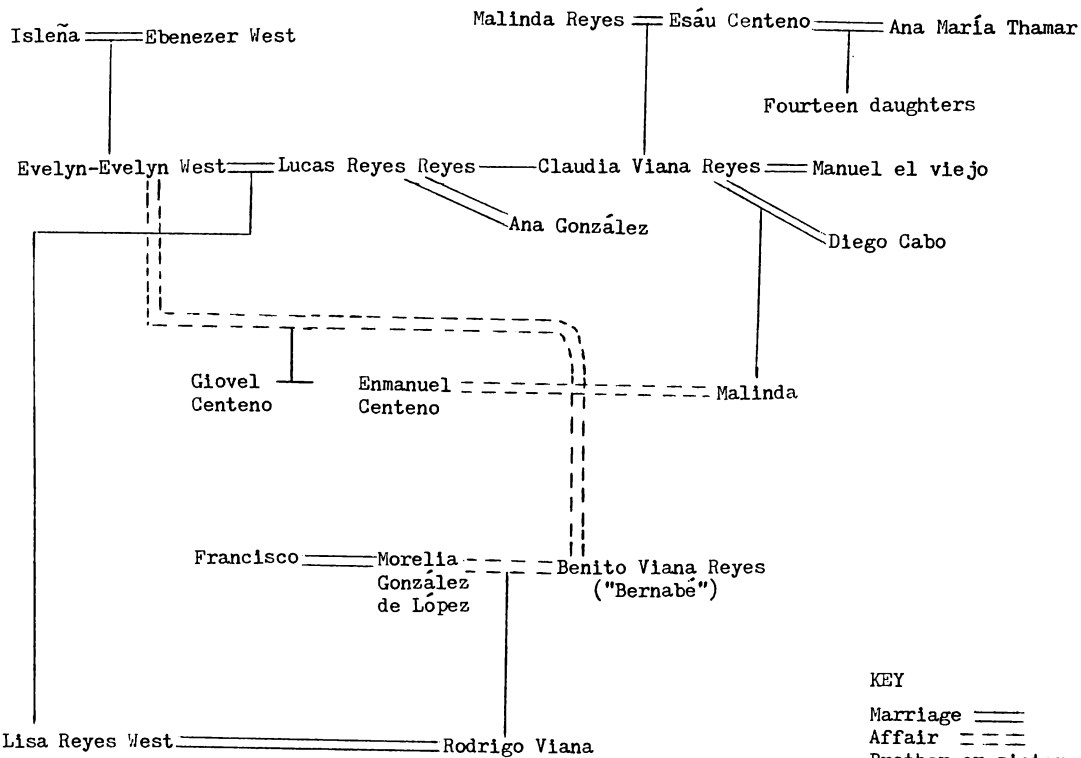
Ana González: of humble background, she is the first wife of Lucas Reyes Reyes. She had previously been a lover of Benito Viana Reyes, the guerrilla leader. She is erroneously identified as a revolutionary by the police, and is killed at the end of Part I.

Morelia González: Ana's sister. She is married to Francisco, but at the same time has an affair with Benito Viana Reyes.

Benito Viana Reyes: of unknown origin, he was raised in Opalo by the community in general and called "Bernabé". After being adopted by Claudia Viana Reyes, he takes the name Benito Viana Reyes as a young child. At the age of 11 he leaves Opalo, just as the local soothsayer had said he was destined to do. He becomes a guerrilla leader during a period that would correspond approximately to "la violencia" in Colombia. He is apprehended by the police and jailed. He escapes, steals an airplane, and according to newspaper accounts, dies in a crash. In reality, he landed the plane and exploded it later. He subsequently has a secret affair with Evelyn-Evelyn West, fathering Emmanuel and Giovel. His relatives in Bogotá believe him to be dead, and he becomes a hero figure.

Claudia Viana Reyes: marries Manuel el viejo in Opalo. She is very young and he is three times her age. She has one son by Manuel el viejo. She adopts and raises Benito Viana Reyes (Bernabé). Later she goes to Bogotá and marries Diego Cabo. Her daughter with Diego Cabo is "Malinda", the central figure in Part III.

Malinda: the daughter of Claudia Viana Reyes and Diego Cabo. She spends a large part of her life being "lost" (Part III). She has an affair with Emmanuel in Bogotá, and at the very end of the novel runs off with Rodrigo Viana, Lisa Reyes West's husband.



KEY

Marriage = = =

Affair = = =

Brother or sister —

Son or daughter |

Diego Cabo: when young he is a political activist and comrade of Benito Viana Reyes (Part I). Later (Part III) he marries Claudia Viana Reyes and becomes involved in institutional politics. He becomes a popular presidential candidate for the left, but is assassinated.

Esau Centeno: the "father" of Opalo. He has fourteen daughters by Ana María Thamar. Being the dominant figure in the town, he kills his potential rival to power, Giovel Centeno. After a ten-year absence, Enmanuel returns to Opalo to avenge the death of his brother Giovel. Esau is killed in an encounter, although it is Evelyn-Evelyn who actually shoots Esau.

Enmanuel and Giovel Centeno: they are named "Centeno" because Narcisa (a Centeno) claims to be their mother. In reality, they are the sons of Evelyn-Evelyn West. Enmanuel has an affair with Malinda and another woman concurrently in Bogotá (Part III).

Lisa Reyes West: daughter of Evelyn-Evelyn West and Lucas Reyes. She is a friend of Malinda from childhood. She marries Rodrigo Viana, but becomes disillusioned with the marriage. At the end she loses Rodrigo to Malinda and consequently invites Enmanuel (Malinda's lover) to her house.

Evelyn-Evelyn West: the daughter of Ebenezer West and an "islaña". In the region of Opalo she becomes the lover of Benito Viana Reyes after he lands there in his stolen airplane. Later she moves to Bogotá, where she becomes the wife of Lucas Reyes Reyes.

The novel's structure in three parts provides for three experiences of the concept "A family perpetuates itself". Directly related to the family is the problem of human relationships, since the entire question of perpetuation depends on the relationships among people. Each of these parts of the basic structure provides for different levels of analysis and understanding of the family: different levels among the three individual parts, and different levels within the parts themselves. Each one provides an entire story of the particular segment of the family on which it focuses and thus could stand as an individual narrative unit. Each part, however, joins the other two in such a way that each enriches the experience of the other, adding new dimensions to what we know of the family and expanding the concept of what it is and what it implies.

In the first part, "Ana", the concept of the family is experienced in two ways. First, a concept of what the family means is conveyed through a contrast that is developed between Ana (as an element outside the family and different from it) and the family itself. Second, the variation in narrative point of view provides a diachronic study of what the concept of family implies, in addition to providing a broader description on a synchronic dimension. Variation in narrative point of view is also the source of a certain element of mystery.

Technically, the contrast between Ana and the people with whom she comes into contact in Part I is effected through interiorization devices that clearly differentiate her from the rest of the group. She is different from the others in two ways: first, the reader knows Ana more intimately than he knows the other characters; second, because of this knowledge, the reader appreciates her as being distinctly different from the rest. In the first chapter Ana is contrasted with Lucas. A transformation of reality is effected in the opening paragraphs through techniques that change the narrative to a level of fantasy. A style that evokes the mood of a fairy tale controls the reader's appreciation of Ana's inner self and distinguishes her particular reality from the reality of the other characters. The first step in this evocation is a quote at the top of the first page of the chapter from El cerro de los elfos by Hans Christian Anderson:

El anciano rey de los elfos había hecho pulir su corona de oro con un yeso molido: era un yeso extra, y para un rey de los elfos es muy difícil procurarse un yeso extra. En el dormitorio, las cortinas estaban corridas y sujetas con baba de culebra. Esto puede dar una idea

del ruido y de la algarabía que allí había habido. (p. 11)

In the opening paragraphs, the plane of reality suggested by this quote is related to the novel's anecdote through several allusions to the Día de San Juan. Near the beginning of the first paragraph the narrator observes: "Como todos los años, al aproximarse el Día de San Juan, el ambiente comienza a filtrar ansiedad contenida y Ana se convierte en una extraña" (p. 11). From the beginning, Ana is in this way related to an imaginary world. Vague references are made to Benito, but the reader does not know who Benito is. Ana's uncomfortable feeling suggested in the first paragraph is supported by the opening lines of the second paragraph: "Aunque llovió parte de la noche y es tarde ya, casi el medio día, Ana despierta sudando". Her apparently unstable psychic state is described as related to her attempt to understand the unknown Benito. This effort is also associated with her anguish: "Comprender se disuelve en miedo, ansiedad, dolor de cabeza" (p. 11). At the end of this description of Ana, which has associated three basic elements (Hans Christian Anderson, fantasy/Benito/anguish), there is a short interior monologue by Ana which provides a resumé of her present condition: "De la soledad es el motivo. Un poco de esfuerzo y seré una alcohólica más" (p. 12).

Contrasting with the intimacy of this interiorization of Ana that opens the chapter (the first two paragraphs), the characterization of Lucas is exterior in its technique. As a person he is quite stable, also contrasting with Ana in this respect. In these first two paragraphs in reference to Ana, there is only one mention of Lucas. This allusion to him begins to create the dichotomy between the two: "La alcoba muestra el orden implacable exigido por

Lucas" (p. 11). The reader has observed Ana as a character moved by intangible feelings and memories; Lucas demands "orden implacable". We first see Lucas act in the chapter through Ana's perception, and once more the characterization suggests his methodicalness: "Saboreando el agrídulce de la pócima, Ana se concentra en los sonidos de la planta baja. El tappp-tappp-ppp rítmico, estripitoso, de la máquina de Lucas se agolpea en el último peldaño de la escalera, como si un enjambre de moscas zumbara sin concierto" (p. 12). The rhythm of his typewriter seems to suggest the orderliness of his life. Later in the first paragraph, there is a description of Lucas and a dialogue with Ana that clearly defines the contrast between Ana and Lucas, between the outsider and the member of the family. In the paragraph that begins with the reference to his typing, the narrator refers first to Lucas's strictness about diet and nutritional matters: "Cuestión de balanceo dietético. Lucas se muestra particularmente estricto en ese punto, más, mucho más que en otros aspectos. 'Verduras, frutas, proteínas, el mínimo de harinas, pescado dos veces por semana". His characterization is in accordance with the order in the room and the rhythm of his typewriter. Then, Lucas uses a kind of verbal violence, clearly defining the difference between himself and Ana, something the reader has already experienced in other ways: "Hasta un niño lo sabe. ¿Qué clase de educación te dieron en tu casa?"(p. 12). Obviously, Lucas feels there is a difference between his "casa" and hers.

The contrast between Ana and the other characters is developed throughout the first part, and this is the primary technique that the narrator uses in developing the concept of the family.

In the third chapter, the narrator's attitude toward the characters (the "family") and his direct explanation of their feelings, motives, and intellectual capacities once more create a dichotomy between them and Ana. In this chapter, Manuel directs a play about Benito, and afterwards there is a meeting at Manuel's house. In the description of the meeting, the narrator first describes it dispassionately: "Las reuniones y fiestas de Manuel constituían un éxito total" (p. 28). In the following sentence a more definite attitude is expressed: "Eran suficientes las personas, en el mundillo intelectual y político de la ciudad, que darían cualquier cosa por ser invitados a casa de los Viana" (p. 28). The statement suggests the social rather than ostensibly intellectual function of these meetings. More significantly, the use of the word "mundillo" suggests a negative attitude on the part of the narrator. In the same paragraph there is a contrast with Ana, who does not seem to fit into the group: "Ana no era importante, ni tocaba instrumentos musicales, no sabía imitar ni cantar ópera, y se negaba a dejarse pintorretear cuando jugaban a drácula, tampoco figuraba en las crónicas sociales, la madre de Lucas la rechazaba como nuera". It is important to note not only that Ana is different from the others; since she is different, she is not considered "important"-- clearly an observation made from the standpoint of the people. Besides this difference, the development of the contrast between Ana and the others continues to indicate the superficiality of the latter, in support of what had been suggested by "mundillo". Ana is incapable only of these more superficial or outward expressions. She is knowledgeable about theatre, for example, and the narrator explains she has a good sense

for setting a play on stage, for recognizing the real quality of a play if it is present, for using stage effects, and for making scenery significant (p. 29). In view of the fact that Ana is capable of recognizing these aspects of theatre, and whereas her deep pre-occupation with Benito has been observed, the description of the others' experience of the play creates a dichotomy between Ana and them: "Las mismas personas que, seis años antes, hubiesen pagado por ver a Benito en la cárcel aplaudieron entusiasmadas" (p. 29). The final image comparing Ana and the others creates another view of the dichotomy: Ana is in the background, quiet and withdrawn as in the opening page of the novel, and Manuel, director of the play, is the center of public attention, but falsely so:

Procurando pasar desapercibida, segura de que no podría conservar la calma, Ana entró de nuevo en el palco. Manuel se enjugaba el sudor con un pañuelo de opal seda, acosado por libretas de autógrafos, bombillas de flash, y absurdas exclamaciones. (p. 33)

The narrator's adjective "absurdas" leaves no doubt as to the nature of those with whom Ana is contrasted. The fourth chapter, which takes place during the period when Benito was alive and having an affair with Morelia (six years before the opening page), combines theme and technique to create the concept of the family once more by contrasting it with Ana. Ana visits the house of Manuel Viana. The description of her within the atmosphere of the family provides the contrast. In the opening pages, the physical space contrasts with Ana. The brief opening description of Manuel Viana provides Ana's first perception of him as she arrives at the house:

La bata rojo-damasco ondeó, suavemente, sin rozar los objetos, como independiente del hombre que la vestía, colocándose a un costado de la



chimenea de cerámica y piedra. (p. 34)

Each of the five elements in this short description is functional in creating an effect that characterizes the family and contrasts it with Ana: 1) the elegance and aristocracy suggested by the color of "La bata rojo-damasco", a sign of aristocracy, the hyphen itself being a signifier of sophistication (neither the working class nor Ana can indulge in hyphenated colors); 2) the essence of the family described by "suavemente", an adverb that is not associated with Ana; 3) "sin rozar los objetos" provides a visual contrast between the color of the robe and the neutral "objetos" and also suggests his suaveness in the sense that his movement here is refined and smooth; 4) "como independiente del hombre que la vestía" suggests the superficiality of the scene: this almost cannot be a part of him, being too perfect and smooth to be human; 5) the use of the objectifying verb in "colocándose a un costado" which dehumanizes him (in contrast to the human and sensitive Ana), and the use of the "cerámica and piedra" which associates with "rojo-damasco" and "suavemente" as signs of ostentatious aristocracy. Following this detailed sentence describing Manuel, there is a change in focus, accompanied by a change in style, moving from the decadentist description above to nature: "Afuera llovía" (p. 34). Then there is a contrast with Ana: "Ana flaqueaba, difusa en la penumbra". In contrast with the sureness and suaveness of Manuel, who can "colocarse" among his precious objects, Ana can only "flaquear". In contrast with the visual sharpness of the image of Manuel and his house, Ana is "difusa" in this atmosphere. The raindrops that drip off her blue raincoat (no hyphenated colors) are "azul incierto",

reflecting Ana's psychic state. A feeling of her distance from the group is understood when no one invites her to remove this raincoat. The narrator employs the previously mentioned ceramics to further characterize Manuel, and then utilizes Ana's raincoat to make a statement about Ana's presence in the house: "El crujir de hule, encerado y sin pliegues, contra el tramo desnudo de sus antebrazos, tornaba más absurda su presencia en casa de los Viana" (p. 35).

Later in the chapter, Ana leaves the living room and the family in order to be alone. Given time for reflection, she feels consciously alien to the house. This feeling relates directly to the delicate objects described in the opening image of Manuel as contrasted to Ana's natural wholeness: "Estar en aquella casa inmensa la hacía sentirse como una hormiga prisionera en una jofaina de porcelana. Armazón respirando vejez, hálito de objetos que pueden derrumbarse de un momento a otro y permanecen en pie fatigados de terca hermosura, sostenidos por innumerables manos que los palparon, claveteados en sombras orgullosas de sus encajes y sus armaduras y sus retratos encastillados en el tiempo" (my emphasis, p. 36). In addition to the object-filled atmosphere and the dehumanization, the ambience is now also integrated diachronically: the presence of the family and what it represents is perceived as a projection of the past. In terms of human relationships in this chapter, the contrast between Ana and the rest is effected by the clear difference between Ana's uncomfortable feeling among these people and their superficially ingratiating manner of handling themselves. In this particular case, their being ingratiating seems superficial in terms of human relationships, just as the ceramics

have seemed superficial. Ana apparently recognizes this and is afraid of its possible consequences: "--Ana-- dijo Manuel suavísimo, usando esa suavidad que Ana termería desde ese día--" (p. 38). Chapter 6 provides a similar development of the idea of the family through the vehicle of Ana as the contrasting element. It returns to the original present of the opening page. Recalling the verbal violence of Lucas's previous statement, "¿Qué clase de educación te dieron en tu casa?", the chapter emphasizes the family's values through the presence of Ana. The narrator describes Ana at home with Lucas, her cosmetics running and her physical appearance unkempt. The narrator states: "Lucas odiaba verla sin arreglo. Para evitarlo se levantaba primero. Lucas odiaba cualquier detalle que significara convivencia, rutina, entre dos" (p. 44). Although stated directly, it recalls the image of Manuel wearing an elegant robe in his decadentist atmosphere: in both cases it signifies an evasion of "rutina", a constant in the family. More subtle than Lucas's original verbal violence, however, is his later deprecation of Ana, which is expressed in two ways. First, he asks her opinion of his decoration of the house, and after she assents, he notes: "Espero que sí, amor. Generalmente no te preocupas nada y eso no está bien. ¿Sabes la hora que es?" (p. 45). The obvious implication is that he is imaginative and creative and she is not. Then he explains to her how he had been reading an article in which a scientist postulates that excessive sleep limits the intellect and shortens the life-span. Lucas suggests that Ana should therefore sleep less. Ana answers: "--Leeré ese artículo-- prometió débilmente". Like the scene at Manuel's house, Ana takes a passive role when confronted by the family. In

the last chapter of Part I Ana is still portrayed as fundamentally an outsider, despite being Lucas's wife. The narrator begins the chapter by noting that Lucas's guests tend to be less noisy than Manuel's, and that it is a group of "cerrada exclusividad, conociéndose por años" (p. 75). Ana is still only present in the group as an outsider: "Ana estaba admitida en él, únicamente, por vivir en la casa donde se efectuaban las reuniones de carácter". She is an observer, not a participant: "Durante seis años Ana había visto bullir y progresar las actividades sentimentales y literarias del grupo" (my emphasis, p. 75). At the end of this chapter and Part I Ana and her revolutionary companions are killed. In terms of the novel's structure Ana has been a device. Despite the title of "Ana" in Part I, she is not highly significant as a character in the novel as a whole. Rather, the focus has concentrated on the family and the continuous references to Benito. The temporal boundaries of Part I have been defined by Benito: the novel opens on the Día de San Juan, when he supposedly died, and the chapters have the temporal framework of being either six years after his death or else during the time immediately preceding the death. As a structural device Ana provides for an experience of the concept of what this family is, and in the end, provides one level of experience of the family perpetuating itself. If we essentialize what happens in the first part it might be possible to state, for example, "Ana dies", but this would only be at the level of the action. More importantly, we would essentialize it in relationship to the concept "A family perpetuates itself": we have experienced the family's nature and traditions through contrasts with Ana; although Ana dies, the family

continues.

A second factor in the structure of Part I is the expansion of the experience of the family through various narrative points of view and different temporal and spatial limits, in addition to the focus on Ana. The latter has been effected primarily through an omniscient narrator outside the story, and with occasional use of interior monologues by Ana. To some extent, her point-of-view provides a contrast with the exterior view of the family. On the other hand, the use of other points-of-view provides a more generalized public view of the concept in question, what constitutes the family. It is the level of experience farthest away from Ana's perception. Thus, Ana's fantasy oriented dreaming of six years before is supported by the intercalation of sections of newspaper stories that provide the public view of what she has been remembering. The fifth chapter, titled "Colombia aplica la ley de seguridad", is a newspaper account of the arrest of Benito Viana Reyes and his group, corresponding to the period during the six years before the present. Before this journalistic expositional section, the reader has a limited idea of Benito, since he is only referred to in certain unclear contexts. The opening passage in which Ana remembers him on the Día de San Juan, for example, does suggest that Benito is for some reason significant in the story, but it is not known why. In Chapter 3 it is learned that he has been involved in revolutionary activity. The newspaper account in Chapter 5, however, is the method Buitrago uses to supply an explanation of his story and the people involved with him. The latter include Victor Romero, Diego Cabo (who will be an important character in Part III), Ignacio

Cervantes, Edilberto Estrada and, supposedly, Morelia González de López. Already knowing Morelia from her conversations with Ana, the reader understands that in reality she has no political motives, but rather is emotionally involved with Benito. The fact that she is identified as a revolutionary puts other aspects of the official public view in doubt too. At the end of this newspaper account in Chapter 5, a caption to the picture included in this account explains relationships (the actual picture does not appear in our text, but only in the newspaper). Here it is learned that Claudia Reyes is Benito's mother, and that Lucas Reyes is Claudia's brother, for example. Two other sections with newspaper pieces function in this manner, establishing relationships that would be difficult for the narrator to explain in the context of the story (in addition to a certain mystery element that will be discussed later). They also broaden experience. Chapter 9 expands experience on two levels through newspaper accounts. First, it tells of the guerrilla activities of Guadalupe Salgado in the region of San Miguel del Viento. In the first series of sections the newspapers tell of his activities and give the military's version of his extermination. The military account involves their heroic conquering of the revolutionary forces, a different version from what actually happens in Part II. The other newspaper account in Chapter 9 continues the story of Benito beyond the earlier accounts. The last chapter of Part I, Chapter 11, includes two sections from newspapers. The first tells how Benito escapes from jail and steals a small airplane. The mystery arises from the technique of using a newspaper for information. The newspaper version is as follows:

Debido al exceso de neblina, la avioneta fue confundida por los guerrilleros con un aparato del ejército y baleada desde abajo, estrellándose cerca de la población de Opalo, resultando mortalmente herido el agresor. Esta versión, sostenida por el capitán Arrieta y el mecánico Paez, presenta alguna confusión que, sin duda, se aclarará más adelante. (p. 78)

Then the narrator explains directly that there is some doubt concerning the newspaper version: "No existía duda, el capitán Arrieta callaba parte de la verdad" (p. 79). Although the reader suspects that the newspaper account has excluded some of the details, and the narrator has supported this suspicion, Part I establishes a mystery that is not resolved. The reader does ascertain that Benito did not in reality die in the plane crash: when Benito's accomplices die in the apartment raid at the end of Part I, he escapes. The fact that the ending of Part I involves Ana's death and Benito's escape creates an odd change in the reader's experience of the rarefied fantasizing of Ana in the opening section of the novel-- the Día de San Juan was special in a way that might not have been anticipated.

The two chapters that appear somewhat different from the rest of the first part (Chapters 2 and 7) are in reality providing the diachronic corollary-- historical dimension of experience-- to the life of the family in the other chapters. Chapter 2, which takes place in Opalo, deals with Bernabé. The chapter is in effect functioning directly within the development of the chapters that immediately precede and follow it. This function is apparent once the chapter is understood within the context of the concept (perpetuation, Benito) and not in terms of the ostensible focus of Part I, Ana. Chapters 1 and 2 provide opposite ends of the spectrum in the

Benito part of the family: in Chapter 1 the feelings that linger over Benito after his death are experienced, since it is his memory that affects Ana on the Día de San Juan. On the other end of the spectrum, the second chapter deals with his origins. If the entire Part I is understood as focusing on Benito, then Chapter 7 does also integrate functionally into Part I: it is a continuation of Chapter 2, dealing with Benito's childhood and the forces that form his personality until the age of eleven when he leaves Opalo. (When saying "focusing" here, it should be noted that technically the focalisation is indeed on Ana. The main subject, or "focus" in this sense, is Benito in terms of developing what he represents as one part of the family.)<sup>3</sup>

The structure of Part I provides several levels of experience of this family: Part I introduces a large part of the family; Benito, one of its important members, is analyzed in detailed (Part I could have been titled "Benito"); Part I creates certain questions (what happened to Benito?); it analyzes the family through the presence of Ana. Part I could stand alone as an independent narrative unit. On the action level it tells the story of Ana ("Ana dies")-- with her characterization in the opening pages and her death at the end. The concept of the family perpetuating itself is communicated through Benito, who does carry on, escaping on the last page. We find suggestions of perpetuation on other levels, such as the characterization of Lucas Reyes and Manuel Viana.

Part II functions within the total structure of the novel in the same way that Chapters 2 and 7 of Part I function in Part I. Taken on the line of action ("Ana dies"), it appears to be



anomalous to the development of the novel. Since Parts I and III take place in Bogotá and with similar groups of people in a more recent past, the change in Part II might seem abrupt. Narrative unity, however, is found in the concept. The expansion of the basic sentence: "A family perpetuates itself", as in Chapters 2 and 7 of Part I, is diachronic. Like Ana in Part I, the title character "Enmanuel" functions as a device for communicating the diachronic level of experience. There is also a continuation of and to some extent resolution of the mystery element-- Benito's story-- narrated in this part.

Part II begins with a quotation from Frederic Brown, Noche de brujas:

Escalera arriba un hombre vi.  
 Un hombrecito que no estaba allí.  
 Hoy tampoco lo encontré.  
 ¡Eh qué lindo si se fue! (p. 87)

The suggestion of a missing person who disappears is continued in the opening line of the chapter, a quote from the mother ("La madre"-- Ana María Thamar), who says "--Un hombre se detuvo en nuestro pueblo y dejó su semen olvidado". At this point the omniscient narrator outside the story takes control of the narrative, making this comment by the mother stand out. It has several implications. Most importantly, it relates directly to the problem of the novel as the development of the family, this being the "semen". Part II is a narration about this "semen" in several ways. First, on the action level, what takes place involves Enmanuel's returning to the town to defend his "semen" by avenging the death of his brother Giovel. This is his purpose in the chapter. There are, however, other suggestions of the importance of "semen" in other ways. The person from whom

Enmanuel wants revenge, Esaú, is characterized primarily as the progenitor of them all. Solving the mystery about Benito makes the confrontation between Enmanuel and Esaú an encounter between two important family lines, one representing revolution and the other tradition. It becomes such because Enmanuel, it is now understood, is Benito's "semen". This relationship becomes apparent through two chapters. In Evelyn-Evelyn's story in Chapter 9, she mentions briefly a man she met whose name she did not know ("--Nunca supe su nombre" p. 27), to which Thamar responds "Madre dice que Enmanuel viene del mismo padre". Then, in Chapter 13, Narcisa tells her story of the time when a young man with grandiose ideals and a machine gun landed in a plane in the area and stayed with Evelyn-Evelyn. The two lines in confrontation are Benito-rebellion and Esaú-tradition. Although Benito is not physically present in Part II (just as he was not physically present in Part I, but only in the background), the novel finds its unity in the development of ideas about family that are related to him.

Seen in more detail, the structure of Part II involves this main line of confrontation (Benito versus Esaú), and other minor lines related to the concept of family. Chapters 1 and 2 deal with Enmanuel's return and provide background for his eventual revenge. Chapter 3 is narrated by Thamar. She tells of Esaú setting the bounty for Giovel's member and of Giovel's being murdered. Two symbols remain: (1) his member, an obvious sign of Esaú's ending of the "semen", and (2) a tree, a symbol of Giovel's perpetuation in the town. The tree was planted in Giovel's honor upon his death, and a tatoo appeared on it magically. Certain narrative

sections create a strong feeling of the tradition in the Esaú family line. This sense is particularly strong in Chapter 6 when "mother" Ana María Thamar tells of her having fourteen daughters by Esaú:

Tuve catorce hijas. Esaú no me perdonó, no me perdonará, se negará a perdonarme en el momento de la muerte. Odiará creer que mi vientre se cerró a los óvulos machos y le devolvió todo el terror que por su cópula sentía. Catorce. Hijas todas. Y luego esos nietos fantoches, vagabundos, que dilapidan la fortuna de Esau, a quienes mortifica restaurar las redes y pintar los lanchones. Los bisnietos, producto de uniones entre tíos y sobrinas, primos hermanos, primos segundos, primos y más primos, en los que la briosa estampa de los Centeno comienza a degenerarse. (p. 110)

On the other side of the confrontation, the resolution of the mystery of Benito's disappearance and the revelation that he is Enmanuel's father create the necessary strong family tradition of another sort-- rebellion. The actual confrontation takes place in Chapter 8, and in accordance with the conflict described up to this point in terms of tradition, it is described as being as much a conflict between traditions as between men: "Ronñas de machos a quienes Dios hizo depositarios de la tradición, las mujeres y la tierra". Since it is a confrontation of intangibles as much as of physical differences, the tree that represents a continuation of Giovel is attacked. Showing the power of these intangibles, the narrator notes that during the confrontation "Sentían tras ellos las carcajadas de Giovel Centeno" (p. 124). After Esaú's death, the point emphasized by the narrator is the "sangre nueva" to which he refers at the beginning of the following chapter. The encounter involves not merely the conquest of one man by another, but of one family line over another. In the last two chapters of Part II the confrontation between Enmanuel (Benito, revolution, change) and Esaú (tradition, status quo) is

related to the government, as was done in Part I by having Benito oppose the government as a guerrillero. The government has been informed that the "hombre de bien", Esaú, has been killed and the soldiers come to the town to exterminate any subversive forces. Thus an association is made between Esaú's traditions and the government's maintaining order.

Like the first two parts, Part III functions as an elaboration of the questions already defined within the concept of the family. If not seen in this way, the question of narrative unity would arise again, since the main character of the third part, Malinda, has hardly been mentioned up to this point in the novel. The method of elaboration in terms of structure is similar to that used in the previous sections: variation in narrative point of view and changes in time and place to penetrate more broadly the reality described. In terms of place, the action occurs in the atmosphere introduced in Part I, the Bogotá of the elite. In time, however, it is more recent than the "recent past" of Part I. The narrator of Part III, for example, Lisa Reyes West, is the daughter of Lucas Reyes of Part I (husband of Ana) and Evelyn-Evelyn West. Since she is in her late teens or early twenties while narrating Part III, it can be safely assumed that the narration takes place some twenty years after Part I. References to President Johnson and the war in Vietnam also place Part II in the mid-sixties. (This would fix Part I in the period of roughly the beginning of "la violencia", the late forties or early fifties.) Malinda is the daughter, then, of the generation that produced the violence of Part I, and her father, Diego Cabo, was part of the group originally arrested with

Benito. Malinda's mother is Claudia Viana. Claudia had adopted Benito when she was the very young wife of Manuel el viejo, on the coast.

The principal device in the communication of the experience of the family in Part III is the variation of narrative point of view. The use of Lisa Reyes West as narrator has two functions. First, it provides a close view of a member of the family, Malinda, by employing a narrator who has been an intimate friend of Malinda since childhood. Her role is similar to that of Ana in Part I. Second, despite the fact that the narrator is within the story, her narrative is not an introspective study of herself, but rather focuses continuously on Malinda.

The manipulation of narrative point of view in the first chapter of Part III makes it an engaging experience with Malinda and the family. Like the first two parts, the first chapter begins with a quotation and like the first part, it is of fantasy literature, in this case from Alicia en el país de las maravillas:

--¿Qué clase de gente vive por estos lugares?  
 --Por allí-- dijo el Gato levantando la pata derecha--  
 vive un Sombrero; y en esa otra dirección vive una  
 Liebre Marceña. Puedes visitarlos a los dos. Uno y  
 otro están locos.  
 --Pero es que yo no quiero alternar con gente loca--  
 repuso Alicia.  
 --¡Ah!, eso no lo puedes tú evitar-- dijo el Gato--  
 aquí todos estamos locos. Yo soy loco. Tú eres  
 loca. (p. 171)

The passage provides a first perspective into the subject of insanity, a theme of Part III. From the point of view of Lisa within the story, it is suggested that Malinda might be becoming insane at the end of the novel; however, the limits placed upon her as a participating (rather than omniscient) narrator make such observations

purely conjecture. Providing still another view of insanity, narrations by Malinda and an omniscient narrator near the end of the novel support Lisa's conjecture.

This opening chapter can be divided into three parts according to the narrative points of view employed. The first part (the first two pages) is narrated by an unidentified narrator who can later be identified as Lisa. In the first paragraph she observes a picture. In the second paragraph she associates this picture with Malinda, beginning the paragraph by noting that "De niña Malinda pasaba horas enteras contemplándolo" (p. 171). This statement leads to observations by the narrator about Malinda in what we assume is her present state. She notes that Malinda is not the same, for example, as she used to be, but rather is another Malinda ("Pero Malinda ha dejado de ser Malinda" p. 171). Later in this part (the first two pages) the narrator states: "es el momento de rehacerla" (p. 172). This "remaking" will be the process of the remainder of the chapter and of Part III. In the second section of the chapter (another two pages), an omniscient narrator begins this "remaking" by beginning to relate the youths of Lisa and Malinda. The story deals with them in elementary school. Then the narrative returns to the narrator within the story (Lisa) who tells of when they (the two girls) were accompanied by Lucas, who later died. In the last sentence, the narrator reveals that Lucas was her father, the first indication of her identity. Since the second section had dealt with Malinda and Lisa, the reader can already begin to conjecture as to the identity of the narrator. Chapter 2 should be considered a continuation of the first and third parts of Chapter 1, with Lisa

narrating their adolescent years. In the numerous narratives by Lisa that follow, each primarily describing Malinda, we note, in resumé, her progressive development toward emotional instability, a searching for some meaning in life, and a growing interest in the fantasy world-- such as her interest in Lewis Carroll. At this point her sanity is questionable.

A significant change in point of view occurs in Chapter 6, which is narrated by an omniscient narrator outside the story. This chapter also functions as the one historical analysis in Part III. Like similar historical segments in the first two parts, this chapter might appear out of place. The narrative suddenly moves to colonial times and describes Malinda Sandoval. She emigrates from Spain and marries Inigo Reyes, who, appropriately enough, is killed in the Independence movement. In this way, he functions as did Benito, Emmanuel, and to some extent Diego Cabo. With regard to the problem of perpetuation, it is notable that after this chapter, in Chapter 10, Diego Cabo protests to Malinda about her political cartoons, saying "Ya veremos si permito que de mi casa, la casa de un mártir de la Patria, Inigo Reyes, salgan tales disparates" (p. 221). The fact that Diego Cabo makes such a statement is testimony to the perpetuation through Inigo, and makes Chapter 6 functional within the novel. (It should be noted, however, that the same feeling would have been developed through this chapter even if Diego Cabo had not actually verbalized it.)

The mystery involving Benito in the first two parts is solved before Part III. However, a mystery element is still present in Part III, now contained within the problem of the narrator who par-

ticipates in the story. Her identity is not known at first, and only well into Part III can it be clearly established.

Although each of the three parts in the novel could stand alone as narrative units, they do share constants in the development of the principal concept to which they relate-- the family and its perpetuation-- and they have certain structural elements in common: focus on a specific character, diachronic studies in each part, and changes in time and space. Thus, they enhance each other and this enhancement creates a progressively more complete experience of what the concept of the family means in this fictional world. For example, by the end of the third part, we clearly appreciate the characters' actions as the fulfillment of roles the characters have prescribed for them as members of the family. We also perceive that the family will continually be both a subversive and traditional force in society. These two themes-- atavism, and subversion versus tradition-- require more detailed consideration in the description of Buitrago's transformation of reality.

The novel as an expansion of the basic sentence "A family perpetuates itself" is supported and communicated through the creation of, function of, and nature of the characters in the novel. Characterization is more important in this novel than action or language, for example. It is important to note, however, that although the process of characterization is significant in the novel, the people as well-rounded human beings are not. They are created through techniques that emphasize their function within the novel



as elements that develop the concept rather than their function as individuals. This quality indicates a fundamental difference between what has been identified as the "small screen novel" and the novelization of a concept, such as in Cola de zorro.<sup>4</sup> Characters are elements in the novelization of a concept.

The three principal techniques of characterization are (1) explanations and revelations about the characters by the omniscient narrator outside the story, (2) what the characters say about each other in the dialogues, and (3) what the characters reveal about themselves in their own narrations through either interior monologues (Ana) or straight narrative (Lisa Reyes West). Although there is perhaps little revealed about the novel in making such a statement (since these three techniques are novelistic conventions), further discussion will clarify its significance for this particular novel. It can be noted that what the narrator says about the characters refers specifically to the main point: he explains them as parts of the family concept, and what the characters do is almost entirely related in some way to other characters. It is significant that the characters not only talk about each other, but this talking is their principal activity.

The narrator tends to explain the characters immediately upon their introduction into the novel, and to explain their relationships to other characters. Once this procedure is completed, many characters have no other function in the novel. In one part of the following paragraph, the narrator analyzes characters:

(Benito) Quería que Morelia fraguara motivos, hechos valederos, actuaciones notables en su favor. No estaba satisfecho de llevar una mujer irreflexiva, enamorada, era eso. Necesitaba convertir un hecho oscuro, --

probablemente vivido por otras mujeres en esa hora y ese minuto-- en algo único, sublime, envuelto en un pegajoso halo de renunciamento y altruismo. Benito tenía fe en la humanidad, la amaba, y dadas las circunstancias esta fe se volcaba en Francisco. No era el fin de un matrimonio. (p. 27)

First, the narrator explains what Benito desires in Morelia. Then he explains how Benito wishes to have the relationship, and how it can be adjusted. Following that, he explains Benito's beliefs (his faith in humanity) and how they affect Francisco. Similarly, the narrator directly explains the character of and relationship between Lucas and Ana: "Lucas odiaba cualquier detalle que significara convivencia, rutina, entre dos" (p. 45). Later in the same chapter the narrator directly explains the relationship between Lucas and other members of the family. First, he deals with Lucas's mother Malinda Reyes: "Lo que más la distanciaba de Lucas era su exagerado sentido de la propiedad". Moving on to Rosamunda, the narrator explains her relationship to Ana in the following paragraph: "Su primer pijama azul fue el regalo de bodas de Rosamunda. En los comienzos la relación entre las dos no pasó de una serie de monosílabos, dichos al entrar o salir de la alcoba de convaleciente que ocupaba Morelia" (my emphasis, p. 47). Later in the same paragraph the narrator explains the relationship between Rosamunda and Claudia: "Llevaba con Claudia unas relaciones amistosas, subrayadas a cada paso con un querida, muñeca, tesoro, al parecer por respeto a la influencia que tuviera en el viejo Manuel Viana o porque en verdad la quería" (p. 47). Later the narrator explains Rosamunda's relationship with Manuel: "Dispensaba a Manuel una consecuencia blanda, que se dispensa a un hermano menor, bufonesco y desquiciado, que no dejaba de ser un apoyo simpático" (p. 48). When the group

meets at Lucas's house, in Part I, Chapter 11, the narrator systematically and succinctly explains each character and relationship with others in the group. He introduces Elby as follows: "Elby, protagonista de una comentada relación con Lucas, superada, no dejaba pasar ocasión sin comentar sus incidencias: platina cabellera desgajándose por un cuello agarzado, delgadísima animalidad sostenida con masajes y baños turcos, lentes de contacto variando tonalidades verde-azules en las pupilas grisáceas, extremidades hombrunas responsables de su fama escultórica, vulgaridad en las palabras;" (p. 75). The last part of the description explains Elby's relationship to Ana: "Ana conocía el proceso sufrido a través de los amantes, pero no había tomado una taza de café a solas con ella" (p. 75). With Elby thus disposed of, the narrator moves to Miguel Díaz, characterized and analyzed briefly by noting that he writes novels and uses his wife (relationship) as a backdrop: "Por cada Elby que nacía, segura convicción, nacían cinco Miguel Díaz. El escritor de novelas comprometidas, tan bello que pervertía mirarlo, pederastía de frutos arios, casado con una antioqueña fea que le servía de pantalla..." (p. 75). In this manner the narrator continues explaining the group, providing brief analyses of the characters and relationships, rather than actually developing such characters and relationships. In Part II the narrator uses a resumé technique to explain Evelyn-Evelyn's character and her relationship with Lucas:

Provinciana atezada de sal y resolana, que se enfrentó al recibimiento de Malinda Reyes, la dejó disponer de su persona, y asistió al milagro metamorfoseante de los billetes manoseados: modistas, peluqueros, manicuras, dentistas, profesores de baile, atildadeas expertas en glamour,

históricos eruditos en lenguaje y dicción. Inexperta cenicienta, creada por Malinda Reyes y Helena Rubenstein, lanzada al sumidero de las boites y los clubes sociales, a quien un año después Lucas Reyes desposó en una iglesia de tercer orden, empapado hasta los oídos de ginebra y crema de menta... (p. 129)

It should also be noted that this characterization and explanation of relationship in one paragraph is the only characterization of Evelyn-Evelyn in this entire section, even though the section covers a major part of her life.

It is important to note that such characterizations are the main subject of the dialogue, again pointing to a novel in which relationships among people are paramount. In the first dialogue of the novel (after Ana disposes of the maid in a short conversation), Ana talks with Morelia. The theme of the discussion is Morelia's relationship with Benito (this is a flashback to the six years before). When Ana goes to Manuel Viana's house, her immediate theme of conversation with him is once more the relationship between Morelia and Benito. The suave Manuel takes little interest in the question that is bothering Ana, and when Ana forces the subject upon him, he answers "¿Qué puedo pensar?", to which she states "Tiene que pensar, siempre se piensa". Manuel's response is appropriate in terms of what has been discussed concerning characterization: "¿Tengo que pensar necesariamente en él?". The possibility of not thinking about people would not have occurred to Ana. As this dialogue expands to include other members of the family present at the house, its direction is exclusively that of defining relationships. First, it takes the form of defining the relationships among those present, with Manuel speaking on behalf of Ana and his friendship with her in order that she be accepted in the circle. Manuel says "no es mi

amiga, es mi cuñada. Es casi de la familia" (p. 38). Once these immediate relationships are disposed with, characters and relationship outside the immediate presence are defined. Claudia explains:

Benito no es un Viana es un Reyes --al exhalarse Claudia perdía la fragilidad que le confería un aire de perpetua adolescente y un algo viejo salía a la superficie, opacando sus ojos amarillos...--Los Viana son tiranos pero débiles de espíritu. Se aferran a la gente hasta que acaban con ella. No tienen clase, niña. El viejo Manuel Viana no la tenía...;Murió de rabia como un perro!...ni tampoco mi hijo mayor, ni nadie de ese apellido. ¡Son débiles y yo odio la debilidad! (p. 39)

Returning to Ana and Lucas in the present in Chapter 6, it is noted that their dialogue involves fundamentally their own relationship, with Lucas pointing out how she had taken from his mother her beloved son: "Le robaste a su hijo querido-- Lucas la miró entre irónico y divertido. Hay que comprenderla" (p. 46). In Part II when Enmanuel arrives at San Miguel del Viento, the subject of the conversation is immediately other people. The first line of the first chapter in Part II refers to another person as a point of departure: "Un hombre se detuvo en nuestro pueblo y dejó su semen olvidado" (p. 87). After this opening sentence, through a dialogue between her and a girl, we learn of the supernatural powers of the venerable Cipriana Morales. Following this dialogue, they discuss Enmanuel, with the mother affirming her belief that Enmanuel will return that day, as he promised ten years before, in order to carry out his revenge. The next four chapters (chapters 2-6) are basically an ongoing dialogue between Enmanuel and Tamar, during a considerable amount of which Tamar relates past events, especially telling the story of another character, Giovel. It is her way of defining relationships that

provides the background to the conflict that is to take place between Enmanuel and Esaú. Chapter 3, for example, is an entire narration by Tamar in which she tells Giovel's story; it contains Giovel's main characterization. All information about him is communicated by a narrator within the story. Part III, narrated by Lisa, is basically a characterization of herself and Malinda. It is a study of her relationship with Malinda, and Malinda's relationship with others. Thus, Lisa's characterization of her is, to a large extent, a process of defining relationships. (Again, the supposition is in accordance with the novelization of a concept, that relationships define the person.) In the opening chapter, Lisa's characterization of Malinda tends to objectify her, emphasizing her person as a functional abstraction rather than a human being: "Pero Malinda ha dejado de ser Malinda. No exactamente. Lo que de ella quedaba" (p. 171). Throughout this third part, Lisa emphasizes in her characterization the importance of relationships in the formation of character. Thus, in the first chapter she says: "Las circunstancias forzándose a ser copia una de la otra" (p. 175). Similarly, Lisa explains Rodrigo analytically for his characterization, as if he were an object, and does so consciously: "Me es difícil viviseccionarlo, porque lo amo, y mi amor es el producto de una diaria rutina en amar. Intentaré hacerlo. Aunque este desmembramiento suyo esté deformado por mi benevolencia" (p. 206). Lisa likewise analyzes Lucas in a characterization process that deals with him as an object within a novel of ideas: "Lo que de él quedaba se desvanecería como los fuegos fatuos de una noche lunada" (p. 221). As the novel reaches its end, the state-

ments by characters might be considered descriptions of how characters function in the novel, and at the same time, they show how the characterization works. For example, Lisa states near the end, after she has been more alienated from Malinda, and is losing the relationship with her husband, that she is in fear of not finding "asilo en persona viviente" (p. 238). Besides being a statement about her condition, it also seems to be a statement about a basic thesis of the novel: the possibility of finding "asilo" in human relationships is seemingly the only possibility of identity or meaning in life. Similarly suggestive of a possible thesis, given what has been experienced in terms of the family and character, is Rodrigo's evaluation of family in one of the final pages of the novel:

Hay demasiado semen de los Reyes regado por todas partes, demasiado semen de los Viana también. A cada paso nos atajarán esas cópulas convertidas en personas. Se esgrimirán en jueces, codiciarán lo nuestro. Pasar de largo, Lisa, de largo. (p. 250)

Leaving now the question of characterization, and turning to character, one of the fundamental problems is identity. Ana's opening memories are an attempt to establish in her mind the identity of Benito. The narrator explains Ana's search for Benito's identity in the opening page, as she remembers and attempts to define his identity in the attitude of others:

Y ella trata de ubicarlo, en la actitud de los otros, revisando la caótica y mutilada profusión de sus versos, adjudicándole ademanes, rostros precisos, intentando descubrir una clave que le permita llegar a él (o a lo que había sido) y comprenderlo. (p. 11)

From this point Benito's identity is experienced in several indirect ways that have been discussed: through the structure (varying

points of view, the use of Ana as a vehicle, and as the point of departure in the paragraph quoted above), and through the dialogues of other characters in which they characterize Benito. In a more general sense, his identity is established throughout the other parts as a member of the family, and because his line is perpetuated through others. Thus, the reader is still experiencing the nature of Benito's identity in Part II. Just as Ana is attempting to understand and perceive an identity for Benito after his death, in Part II a similar concept of identity is developed for Giovel. In this case, however, Giovel's identity does transcend time, since his whole identity is established by his intangible influence that pervades the town. Enmanuel perceives his identity from the moment he arrives: "Pero Enmanuel quería recorrer las calles como hacía de niño: a buscar la presencia de su hermano en las esquinas" (p. 90). One inhabitant states this directly: "Giovel sigue entre nosotros" (p. 100). As Enmanuel remains in the town, his perception of this identity becomes more evident. The recognition of it becomes a burden: "Estoy cansado de ahuyentar la carga de Giovel Centeno" (p. 136).

The diachronic lines of development emphasize identity as being part of family tradition. Chapter 7 of Part I communicates this feeling in describing Benito's destined role of leaving the town. In Part III the problem of identity as being the fulfillment of tradition, or a specific "place" predestined in the family line, is evident. Just as Enmanuel perceives the identity of Giovel in Part II, Lisa in Part III perceives Malinda's identity in the context of a continuation of traditional pattern. When contemplating Malinda, Lisa thinks of her in terms of this tradition:



Al pensar en las mujeres que llevaron el nombre de Malinda-- imaginando beldades brías, miriñaques, juanetes, lutos, frustraciones y redondas letras cinceladas en lápidas mortuorias-- sentía una lástima especial por ellas y sus vidas llegaron a parecerme malos ensayos, bocetos femeninos a trazos débiles. Encaminados a fundirse en una forja única. Diferente a cada mujer anterior. A la vez. Espejo de lo que fueron las otras. (p. 184)

The concept of identity is supported by the diachronic lines, in this particular case by the Malinda Sandoval of Chapter 6 which relates the story of the first Malinda during colonial times. Here structure is associated with characterization and supports the idea of the novel as the elaboration of a concept. Malinda is the perpetuation of a series of Malindas. The narrator supplies the complete history of the Malindas, these being Malinda Sol, Malinda Rita, Malinda Concepción Faustina, Malinda Dorotea, and Malinda Beatriz (p. 202). Similar to Ana seeking the identity of Benito through her evocations on the Día de San Juan, Malinda searches for some meaning in her own life in thinking about Lucas. The narrator states: "A veces (Malinda) lo evocaba, sin nombrarlo, refiriéndose a ese, él, o era. Daba una ínfima parte de su sentimiento, para no sentirse totalmente absorbida por él, buscándole significación en otras vidas" (p. 203). Her search reaches a kind of conclusion when, one day, she encounters Emmanuel by chance on the street. After that her identity is altered (as always) by the relationship: "A partir de ese momento lo solitario y lo hechizado terminó para mí. Otra manera de realidad en un cuarto sin hendiduras de luz" (p. 244).

Characterization techniques increase the significance of character, identity and relationships in the novel. To a certain

extent, identity is established through a concept related to family tradition. That is, one functions in a specific role in the family because one is destined to do so (one is a "Malinda"). On the other hand, identity seems to be malleable and determined by exterior forces. One factor these two ideas have in common is the importance of relationships. Relationships evolve, change, develop and are annulled, as are people.

In considering the expansion of the sentence "A family perpetuates itself", certain factors are constantly changing the basic experience of "perpetuation" throughout the novel. These factors are the novel's dynamism. For critics such as Barthes, Butor, Brushwood and Sukenick who consider experience of primary importance in art (rather than, for example, ideology or psychology, which in some works might be tangential to experience), dynamism is the basis of artistic experience, being the vitalization, and constant revitalization of that experience.<sup>5</sup>

In terms of technique, the discussion of structure and characterization has defined, to some extent, the nature of the changing experience of the novel. Through structure, three different but similar elaborations of the concept of a family perpetuating itself are noted, each adding to and thus changing the experience of the previous part. The use of different narrators and different space and time variations expand upon the events related. In characterization there is change in the reader's perception of characters in accordance with the human relationships they have, these being a primary

factor in the change of character. For many characters this change is not experiential-- the reader does not experience change and revitalization of these characters, but rather change is observed through explanations by the narrator. In other cases, such as with Ana and Malinda, who dominate entire sections, and who are characterized through interiorization techniques, this change is experiential for the reader and thus functions as a dynamic factor in the novel. The same procedure applies to Benito, whom we experience less directly than the two women, but whose changes are constantly altering our perception of reality. In this sense, dynamism is related to the transformation of reality.

Considering the novel's dynamism in a more general way, it could be stated that the expansion of the concept "A family perpetuates itself" involves constant opposition between perpetuation and subversion. The dynamic quality of perpetuation versus subversion can also be expressed in a similar concept such as tradition versus change, or inertness versus movement.

The dynamism in Part I is created through an interplay between perpetuation versus subversion, on the one hand, and inertia versus movement, on the other. There is nearly an exact alternation of chapters with respect to these two opposing elements. In general, the narration dealing with Ana, Bogotá, and the elite underlines inertia, whereas narration away from Bogotá and with the focus on Benito and related activities suggests movement and vitality. Chapter 1 is relatively static: Ana remembers, she converses with Lucas, and the basic situation is established within a relatively motionless context. Chapter 2 provides movement: Benito is vita-

lized through the chapter in Opalo that narrates his childhood (this "movement" could also be related directly to "subversion"). Chapter III, dealing with Benito and the "mundillo intelectual", is once more relatively static. The group is practically inert and the experience of the chapter corresponds to this condition. Chapter 4 begins in the static Bogotá of the "present" (Ana), but focuses on Benito's activities, with both this narrative and Benito's actions interrupting the inertia of Bogotá and the present. Chapter 6 is static, returning to the present and conversation among Ana, Lucas and the others of the group. In Chapter 7 movement is provided through a return to Benito, this being the narration of his adolescence and background in Opalo. Chapter 8 is static, as Chapter 1 is, with Ana contemplating the Día de San Juan and Benito. Chapter 9 provides movement in the newspaper report of the subversive activities of Guadalupe Salgado. Chapter 10, like the newspaper chapter preceding it, is movement, dealing with the six years before-- a dialogue between Ana and Morelia concerning Benito and the escape of Benito. Chapter 11, the last of Part I, is basically static, concerning the group in another tertulia, but it also brings in Benito's dramatic action of airplane theft. In resumé, the alternation by chapter between inertia and movement is exact if we consider the newspaper chapters as additions to the chapters they precede or follow:

Ch 1	Ana and Lucas (present)	Static
Ch 2	Bernabé, Opalo	Movement (subversion)
Ch 3	The group, play (present)	Static
Ch 4	Benito, 6 years before	Movement (subversion)

Ch 5	Newspaper, Benito	Movement (subversion)
Ch 6	Ana and Lucas (present)	Static
Ch 7	Bernabé, Opalo	Movement (subversion)
Ch 8	Ana and Lucas (present)	Static
Ch 9	Newspaper, Guadalupe Salgado	Movement (subversion)
Ch 10	Six years before	Movement (subversion)
Ch 11	Ana and group; Benito's escape	Static-Movement (subv)

In Part II, no clearly evident dichotomy can be noted among individual chapters. In general, this second part of the novel emphasizes perpetuation over subversion, tradition over change, and inertia over movement. This is the case until the end of Part II. The opening chapters emphasize the long family traditions, and all actions seem predetermined. Enmanuel returns the day he has promised to do so, for example, after a ten-year absence, and Thamar seems confident of this return. The dialogue also underlines the family tradition that has been perpetuated by Esaú. Traditions seem to linger on, as in the case of Glovel-- the potentially subversive element now dead. Only at the end of Part II does subversion predominate over perpetuation, this being with Esaú's death: Glovel's spirit and its defender, Enmanuel, upset the status quo. These observations about the individual chapters in Part II do not imply that, in terms of the reader's experience of the entire novel, Part II is static. On the contrary, Part II provides a revitalization of Part I, creating, for example, a completely different view of the line of Benito.

Part III can be described as two narrative lines of development that provide change in experience. One line involves the

development of Malinda and her relationship with others; the other concerns the development of Diego Gabo's political campaign. Both lines involve problems of perpetuation versus subversion and inertia versus movement. In the development of Malinda's line, the first two chapters function as an introduction. The first chapter is relatively static, alluding to the present situation in the vague terms already discussed ("Pero Malinda ha dejado de ser Malinda"). Chapter 2 provides movement through her development. As she becomes more unstable emotionally, she appears inert, incapable of movement. Chapter 5 expresses this characterization of her through the technique of employing a paragraph as a chapter, thus communicating her condition. The entire chapter reads as follows:

Y el ejercicio fatigante de no saber qué deseaba.  
 Y presentirse a la manera de los pájaros. Cada  
 vez el deseo de la fuga. Ansiosa de los otros  
 seres y otras distancias y otros ámbitos que se  
 le dieran. El final en trampas, barrotes y jaulas.  
 (p. 198)

It shows a lack of vitality both in the narrative and in Malinda. The opening sentence, the brevity of the chapter, and the hopelessness expressed all emphasize her inertia. It also suggests her desire to transcend her limitations: the last sentence, which refers to "trampas", "barrotes" and "jaulas" communicates the stifling effect of tradition on Malinda. This feeling is supported by the following chapter, which deals with Malinda Sandoval in colonial times. One way in which Malinda expresses her rebellion (subversion, change, movement) against the tradition and the perpetuation of it is her progressive escape into the fantasy world. Also, like other members of the family, she seeks meaning in life through relationships for the sake of relationships, as in the case

of her new-found love, Enmanuel. She shares Enmanuel with another woman, stressing the relationship itself, and not the intimacy.

The second narrative line in Part III, concerning Diego, is less significant and involves his acquisition and loss of power. Like the other members of the family who express perpetuation through political or quasi-political power, Diego Cabo has a special capacity for attracting people by his mere presence (as is also noted by Lisa in Chapter 3). Malinda becomes progressively distanced from her father Diego because of her own subversion of tradition. Malinda does not support his political views: "Ahora papá es otra persona, sucia de manos que lo ajan en los periódicos, sucia de voces que lo desmenuzan en sus ocios. Como un asesino" (p. 241). Cabo uses a leftist political position to maintain the status quo and perpetuate his family's domination of society. In the last chapter Diego Cabo is shot and the result is chaos in the city. Thus, at the end of the novel, the processes of the novel (perpetuation versus subversion, tradition versus change, and inertia versus movement) have not culminated. Rather, they simply end. This condition suggests that Malinda will continue finding relationships that will alter her life (as she does with Rodrigo on the last page), and that another member of the family will perpetuate Cabo's search for power.

The concept "A family perpetuates itself" is experienced and enriched through structure, characterization and dynamism. Through structure, the perpetuation is experienced on numerous levels, making

Buitrago's communication a general concept, in effect, rather than a statement about a select group of people. As a concept it seems to have wider implications concerning Colombian society, and possibly concerning society and human relationships in general. Structure transforms the concept into a broader reality, suggesting the possibility that the family may be considered a metaphor for Colombian reality. The influence of tradition in both the family and Colombian society supports such an idea and at the same time makes the novel's experience similar to the manner in which tradition is expressed by other Colombian novelists of the period, especially Alvarez Gardeazábal, in whose novels tradition also pervades all levels of human interaction. Characterization likewise suggests that this reality in Cola de zorro is more a metaphor than an exposition of real people in real conflict; characters appear more as functional abstractions than human individuals in order to communicate an experience concerning human relationships and the effects of character on them. The expansion of the sentence "A family perpetuates itself" is made experience through dynamism that contrasts this perpetuation with other factors-- subversion, change, movement. This dynamism makes the experience of the novel similar to the concept it is suggesting throughout its pages.



## CHAPTER IV

## EL BAZAR DE LOS IDIOTAS (1974)

El bazar de los idiotas, the fourth novel by Gustavo Alvarez Gardezabal, relates a bizarre story focusing on a pair of miracle producing adolescents in a small town called Tuluá. The experience of the novel, however, transcends the preeminently anecdotal nature of the content and a mimetic description of life and customs of Tuluá. In this sense the novel is typical of the contemporary Spanish-American novel in which invention predominates over mimeticism.<sup>1</sup> The humor and magical quality of some of the events of the novel recall to some extent the presence of these two elements in García Márquez's Cien años de soledad. These factors and the marked regional base also suggest the possibility of discussing the "magical-realism" often related to works that use a "real" point of departure to relate seemingly "magical" events.<sup>2</sup> The essence of invention in El bazar de los idiotas, however, lies in the use of specific narrative techniques that transform the experience of reality. These procedures effect variations on the narrative associated with the traditional regionalist novel, creating a transformation of regionalism, but notably different from the transformations already studied in Rojas Herazo and Sánchez.

By utilizing Gérard Genette's concept of the nuclear verb, the novel is an expansion of the basic sentence "Two masturbating idiots become heroes in Tuluá."<sup>3</sup> The verb essentializes what happens in the story. The use of the verb "become" emphasizes the importance of the process of becoming rather than the fait accompli,

suggesting likewise the importance of inventiveness (the elaboration of this becoming) as fundamental to the novel. A cursory overview of the expansion of this nuclear verb and its sentence provides a summary of the histoire, the anecdote before it is transformed into plot.<sup>4</sup> The point of departure in this "becoming" is the relating of the events that lead to the idiots' birth. Tuluá's priest, Father Severo Tascón, cohabitates with Manuela Barona, despite protest from the local women's religious organization. Their offspring, Marcyanita, suffers a degree of ostracism but does eventually marry Nemesio Rodríguez, who fathers two idiots, Bartolomé and Ramón Lucio. Becoming heroes involves their discovery of the fact that, despite their mental deficiencies and inability to cope with life in normal terms, through masturbation they can cure illnesses. As their fame grows in the process of becoming heroes, so does the economy of the surrounding area, which becomes a tourist center. A significant aspect of their becoming involves the people they cure in order to attain this popularity-- a gallery of types ranging from a paralyzed ex-beauty queen to a homosexual suffering from "sickness of the soul" after losing his lover. The idiots attain the "hero" status in their becoming when their feats achieve such fame that national and foreign experts converge upon Tuluá. Their process of becoming ends on the last page of the novel when they die assassinated by their bastard half brother. It should be noted that the "in Tuluá" portion of the nuclear verb is significant: the place and people living in the place of the idiots are important to the experience of the novel. The essence of Alvarez Gardeazábal's inventive transformation

of this nuclear verb is evidenced by considering Genette's categories of the grammar of the verb: temps, mode and voix.<sup>5</sup>

Fundamental to the experience of the expansion of the verb in El bazar de los idiotas is the basic structure as an element of transformation. It manipulates time and anecdote in a way that does not correspond to a mimetic description of the spatial and temporal boundaries it covers. For Genette, an inquiry into the novel's basic organization, which I call "structure", involves the examination of temps-- order, duration and frequency. Two concomitant opposing structural tendencies effect the transformation of the perception of reality at this most basic level: (1) a tendency toward short-story technique in which individual chapters function as entities within themselves, and within these entities individual sequences function as units (this characteristic underlines the anecdotal nature of the novel); (2) a tendency toward overall cohesion in which the manipulation of temps creates structural unity.

The first tendency, the formation of entities and then sequences within these anecdotes, is apparent by considering the individual chapters as units. In this sense the novel should be seen as a series of anecdotes. The even-numbered chapters, those in which individuals are characterized, correspond most closely to a closed system or short-story technique. The first chapter is special in this respect because its circular structure clearly defines its closed system. The first two and one-half pages are narrated from a temporal position that creates an initial analepse.<sup>6</sup> From a position of "today" he comments briefly on the past events that are to take place in the novel. These events are seen as part of a

cycle which, after these two and one-half pages of introduction, the narrator begins as follows: "El ciclo que hoy apenas parece cerrarse, había comenzado desde el día en que el padre Severo Tascón, recién ordenado en la catedral de Popayán, llegó a Tuluá y se alojó en la casa de doña Manuela Barona y no en la casa cural, como había sido la costumbre de todos los párrocos anteriores" (my emphasis).<sup>7</sup> The beginning of the cycle related in the remainder of Chapter I involves the cohabitation of Tascón with Manuela, the protests by Paulina Sarmiento and her group, the appearance of a mysterious mare, and the departure of Tascón. After these anecdotes the chapter is closed by the narrator at the end within the same analepse-creating present with which he began: "Este momento había estado previendo desde el instante en que subió a la cama de Manuela Barona y en Tuluá el viento y la Historia se detuvieron para abrir un boquete que sólo hoy, muchísimos años después, parece cerrarse definitivamente" (my emphasis, p. 29). The structural makeup of the chapter created through this temporal indicator further promotes the sense of wholeness and independence of the chapter.

Of the even-numbered characterization chapters, all function similarly in their short-story technique. In almost every case the chapters are complete systems which close with a reference that relates them to the rest of the novel. Chapter II, the story of Andrés, opens with his arrival in Tuluá and from that point the chapter has two sections. A first part relates in detail his spider and lizard show in Tuluá, which culminates in his being bitten by the spider and the futile efforts of national and foreign experts to cure him. He is mentioned, but not further developed in detail

in the remainder of the novel. The system of this entity is as follows: (1) introduction to Andrés; (2) the series of anecdotal details (his show); (3) the attempts to cure him. His story reaches its logical conclusion as he apparently nears death. The chapter ends "Fue en ese momento cuando alguien decidió llevarlo ante los idiotas" (p. 42). When he appears again it will be in the context of the idiots' rise to fame, their becoming.

The next chapter of this type, Chapter IV, characterizes Isaac Nessim. The chapter also has two parts, the first describing his past and a second more anecdotal. The first part is more detailed than Andrés' chapter, covering a longer period of time and emphasizing the solitude and personal difficulties Nessim always faced. This remote past relates directly to his story: Isaac Nessim is a rare case of misanthropy in the view of the citizens of Tuluá and is a known homosexual. His problem occupies relatively little of the chapter: the last two pages tell of his loss of Lubyn González because of venereal disease. Isaac is unable to recover from his loss, although he finds a substitute in Lieutenant Caravallí. Just as Andrés' physical ailment becomes increasingly worse, Isaac Nessim becomes more depressed about this "sickness of his soul". When he reaches the point at which there is no more hope (and thus no more logical development of the anecdote) the chapter ends "Fue por esos días cuando comenzó a pensar en ir adonde los idiotas" (p. 79). His story will later be slightly more developed than in the case of Andrés (in Chapter XVII), but again the chapter can stand as an independent unit.

Tille Uribe and her parrot, Carlos, provide the anecdotal material

for Chapter VI, which is developed in accordance with the pattern already established, but also has the precise circular structure noted in Chapter I. As in the two chapters described above, the beginning characterizes Tille Uribe by describing her past (as the spoiled child of doctor Tomás Uribe) and then develops to the more recent past, which involves the sickness of Carlos. A detailed description of the futile attempts to cure him reaches a low point at the end of the chapter when her last hope, Andrés, will not be able to help her. A circular structure makes the chapter an entity. The opening paragraphs of the chapter function as an introduction outside the circle. The first two pages (opening three paragraphs) introduce Tille Uribe. In the third paragraph her father demands that she learn to pattern her eating habits in an adult manner. She rebels, eating the same meals given to Carlos. The end of the chapter refers back to the original demand that she eat like an adult, thus completing the circle: "Tille Uribe se miró al espejo de sus veinte años, obligada por el doctor Tomás a comer como los demás" (p. 115).

Chapter VIII, about Inesita González, corresponds more closely to the systems of Chapter II and Chapter IV. The first part describes the institutional beauty contests in Valle, and her election as regional winner. Therein follow the preparations for her trip to Cartagena and the publicity that seemingly will assure her election as national beauty queen. When she becomes paralyzed and no one can cure her, the story has reached its apparent end. Again, it is integrated into the main story line (the idiots' becoming) through the last paragraph when she is invited to visit

Marcianita Barona fifteen years later: "Inesita, en su silla de ruedas, llegó entonces ante los idiotas" (p. 157).

Chapter X follows the established pattern: the opening pages introduce Nina Pérez as the civic example of Tuluá and emphasizes her most recognizable physical trait, her obeseness. It also relates her deafness and the inability of all the doctors to cure her. Again, the chapter ends with her deciding to try the idiots.

Chapter XII is also a closed entity; however, it differs from the other chapters in the way that it is related to the overall structure of the novel. Most of the chapter characterizes Chuchú through her past rather than by anecdote: it tells of her intense piety, her continuous praying, and her devotion to church activities. One brief anecdote at the end of the chapter involves an incident when she inadvertently sees the phalluses of some boys who purposely offend her. She tortures herself in repentance. The reference to the idiots at the end of the chapter, rather than being a suggestion of visiting them, is the hope that their miracle-making will come to an end so that she may once more gain the esteem previously held among the people as the intermediary between God and his angels.

Chapter XIV concerns Nemesio Jojoa, son of Nemesio Rodríguez and Rocío Jojoa. It narrates the explosions that Nemesio and his grandfather ignite in churches and the accident in which the grandfather loses his hands. Thus, Nemesio decides to take him to the idiots.

The mare from Chapter I returns in Chapter XVI. This section begins with the appearance of the mare and ends with an unexplained

explosion-- which is later identified as the explosion that kills the idiots. Structurally, the chapter is cyclical; it begins and ends with the barking of dogs who sense something supernatural in the mare.

In the odd-numbered chapters the close correspondence to a closed system and what has been identified as a short-story technique is not as apparent. These chapters, however, like the characterization chapters, do have a strong anecdotal base, making the anecdotal sequence an important factor in the experience of the novel. Considered in detail, the novel can be seen as a series of 86 narrative sequences:

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Sequence</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Page &amp; Paragraph</u>
1	1	Tascon's arrival & cohabitation	9,3 - 10,1
	2	Paulina's first attempts	10,2 - 11,1
	3	Paulina's second attempt	11,2 - 12,1
	4	Plans of Paulina & her group	12,2 - 13,1
	5	Paulina's first failure	13,2 - 15,2
	6	Paulina's failure in poisoning	15,3 - 17,2
	7	Manuela's solitude	17,3 - 19,1
	8	Mare's appearance	19,2 - 24,2
	9	The last of mare	24,3 - 25,1
	10	Tascon's departure	25,2 - 28,3
2	11	Andrés in seminary	30,1 - 31,1
	12	Exam, hypnosis	31,2 - 32,2
	13	Mountain climbing	32,2 - 33,1
	14	His show, spider bite	33,2 - 42,1



<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Sequence</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Page &amp; Paragraph</u>
3	15	Marcianita's birth	43,1 - 46,1
	16	Attempts to destroy Marcianita	46,2 - 47,2
	17	Marcianita's exposure to world	48,1 - 49,1
	18	Marcianita as plague	49,2 - 50,3
	19	Marcianita's youth, witchcraft	50,4 - 53,1
	20	" " in school, quarrel with Pérez	53,2 - 56,1
	21	Activities and whims of Marcianita	56,2 - 64,1
	22	Bazaar, Marcianita meets Inesita	64,2 - 67,1
4	23	Introduction to Isaac Nessim	68,1 - 69,1
	24	Nessim's strange ways	69,2 - 71,1
	25	His past, remote and recent	72,2 - 74,2
	26	Attempts to blackmail Nessim	74,3 - 75,1
	27	Loss of Lubyn, "sickness of soul"	75,2 - 79,1
5	28	Marcianita's bazaar	80,1 - 83,1
	29	Trunk of riches arrives	83,2 - 85,1
	30	Marcianita's moral principles	85,2 - 88,1
	31	Romance of Nemesio & Marcianita	88,2 - 99,1
	32	Continuation of bazaar	99,2 - 101,1
	33	Manuela dies	101,2 - 104,2
6	34	Introduction to Tille Uribe	105,1 - 106,1
	35	Tille's spoiled childhood	106,1 - 107,1
	36	The parrot Carlos	107,2 - 108,1
	37	Tille's failure in school	108,2 - 109,1
	38	Carlos becomes sick, cures fail	109,2 - 115,1

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Sequence</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Page &amp; Paragraph</u>
7	39	Marcianita's marriage	116 - 117,2
	40	Quarrels, Marcianita & Nemesio	117,3 - 118,1
	41	Burial of Manuela	118,2 - 121,2
	42	Pregnancy of Marcianita	121,3 - 122,1
	43	Nemesio's affair with Rocío Jojoa	122,2 - 123,2
	44	Marcianita's pregnancy, 1st birth	123,2 - 128,1
	45	The idiots	128,2 - 131,1
	46	Marcianita's second pregnancy	131,1 - 141,1
	47	Nemesio with Rocío Jojoa	141,2 - 142,2
	48	Results of idiots, end marriage	142,1 - 146,1
8	49	Inesita's election	147 - 150,2
	50	Money plans for Cartagena	150,3 - 151,1
	51	Bazaar pictures, publicity	151,2 - 152,1
	52	The bazaar	152,2 - 154,1
	53	Inesita becomes paralyzed	154,2 - 156,2
	54	Inesita 15 years later	156,3 - 157,1
9	55	Definite end of marriage	158 - 167,1
	56	Marcianita's new life	167,2 - 168,2
	57	The idiots, their discovery	168,3 - 181,3
10	58	Nina Pérez, her obesity	182 - 186,1
	59	Nina sick, loses hearing	186,2 - 191,1
11	60	Idiots' first miracle, D. Hayer	192 - 196,1
	61	Idiots cure Inesita González	196,2 - 207,1
	62	Publicity over idiots	207,2 - 214,1

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Sequence</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Page &amp; Paragraph</u>
12	63	Introduction to Chuchú	215 - 220,1
	64	Chuchú made friar	220 - 221,1
	65	The lewd boys	221,2 - 223,1
	66	Chuchú's reactions	223,1 - 223,3
13	67	Idiots cure Andrés, and results	224 - 229,2
	68	Idiots cure Carlos, and results	229,3 - 238,1
	69	More miracles, church	238,2 - 244,1
14	70	Introduction to Nemesio Jojoa	245 - 247,1
	71	Nemesio's explosion in Buga	247,2 - 248,2
	72	Explodes church in Palmira	248,3 - 251,1
	73	Grandfather to go to idiots	251,2 - 253,1
15	74	Commercialism in Tuluá	253,2 - 259,1
	75	Idiots and their masturbation	259,2 - 260,2
	76	Sale of magical objects	260,3 - 262,1
	77	Case of Cordoba	262,1 - 265,2
	78	Sick converge upon Tuluá	265,3 - 267,1
	79	Polemics concerning idiots	267,2 - 275,1
	80	Marcianita & idiots new life	274,2 - 275,1
	81	Commercialism and more attacks	275,2 - 277,1
16	82	Appearance of mare	278 - 283
17	83	Nessim's death	284 - 291,3
	84	Conflicts over idiots	291,4 - 296,1
	85	Success & unity in Tuluá	296,2 - 302,1
	86	Jojoa's assassination of idiots	302 - 303,2

The effect of the individual chapter and the individual sequence as an independent unit is emphasized also through the repetition of the same information in different sequences. (For Genette a problem of frequency.)<sup>8</sup> For example, Andrés's complete story is related in Chapter II up to the point of announcing he will visit the idiots. In Chapter XIII, however, the information about Andrés is repeated. He could almost function in this chapter without the previous characterization in Chapter II:

Como el hermano Andrés era figura nacional, escritor de casi todos los periódicos, alpinista coronador de cuanta nevada existe en Colombia, la noticia de que la araña Metropolis le había picado y no se conseguía el antídoto especial ni en el primer día, ni en el segundo, que de todo el mundo acudían ayudas para salvarlo, que el emperador del Japón enviaba expertos en picaduras de ofidios, que él se encontraba en estado cateléptico para resistir el paso del veneno, todo y mucho más que los periodistas inventaron, terminaron por hacer olvidar casi por completo a Marcianita y sus idiotas. (pp. 224-225)

A similar type of reiteration occurs to a lesser degree with the other characters. Information is often repeated in the form of the epithet or short phrases describing the character. Nemesio Rodríguez carries several epithets, all of which emphasize his masculinity as an officer in the army and builder of the Ferrocarril del Pacífico. The first epithet to appear with his name is "Nemesio Rodríguez, capitán de la guerra, ingeniero de la Escuela de Minas de Medellín y constructor del Ferrocarril del Pacífico" (p. 80), and there are several variations. Another example of reiteration is Toño González, Inesita's brother. He appears or is mentioned only a few times, but in three chapters an allusion is made to his having studied in Switzerland: (1) "pero Toño, su hermano, que había estudiado en Suiza..." (p. 155, Chapter VIII); (2) "Toño González

había estudiado en Suiza y le serviría como informante de la calidad y caracter de los médicos con la franqueza y honradez de todo padrino de matrimonio..." (p. 195, Chapter XI); (3) "Desde Suiza le escribieron a Toño, el hermano de Inesita, médico graduado allá" (p. 259, Chapter XV). In this case the reiteration is particularly evident because the information is the only thing known about him.

Whereas each of these factors discussed-- the chapter as an individual unit, the sequence, and reiteration-- contribute to the episodic experience of El bazar de los idiotas, a second structural factor unifies these anecdotes. In Genette's terms, these factors make récit from histoire. The main factors involved in this unity are the manipulation of elements that Genette calls temps and the presence of certain constant elements.

The overall structure is based on a manipulation of temps in the sense that the events of the novel are the completion of a cycle in the past which is recounted as an analepse. The opening two and one-half pages establish this present that is maintained as a point of reference throughout the novel. These beginning pages function as a retrospective overview of all the events that will take place in the novel, alluding to Marcianita's birth, the commercialism that will predominate in Tuluá, Marcianita's marriage to Nemesio Rodríguez, Paulina Sarmiento's campaign against Manuela, the appearance of the mare, and the months of Manuela's pregnancy with Marcianita. With this overview completed, the narrative begins as a movement that has already been completed "today": "El ciclo que hoy apenas parece cerrarse..." (my emphasis, p. 9). From this sentence the entire

novel is a continuation of this cycle, and is technically an analepse. After the initial reference in Chapter I, the sense of analepse is not created again until approximately midway in the narrative. At the end of Nina Pérez's story (Chapter X) the present of today is suggested by mentioning that she had gone to the idiots "yesterday": "sólo ayer, previendo que todo podía finalizar mañana, acudió a los idiotas" (p. 191). The temporal distance between the major events of the novel and the present is more specific than "today" at the beginning of Chapter XIII, in which the action is described in terms of only a few hours in the past:

...en las calles de Tuluá cuadraron los primeros siete buses de los muchísimos que en peregrinaciones llegaron ininterrumpidamente desde ese día, ocasionando una congestión de tráfico y un despliegue sin antecedentes de capacidades comerciales y turísticos de Tuluá, hasta el punto que mañana, cuando acaso todo esto haya cesado, muchos irán a ver finalizado no el período de las vacas gordas, sino la única posibilidad de subsistencia. (my emphasis, p. 255)

In the same chapter the narrator compares the events being described with the present-day situation: "Sólo ahora, a meses de la noticia que Inesita dio con una ingenuidad asombrosa, la moda ha cesado un poco y los masturbantes ya no gritan tanto" (p. 260). The mare of Chapter XVI reappears the day before the established present. The first sentence of the chapter, in which the barking dogs announce the arrival of the mare, begins as follows: "Desde las siete de la noche de ayer los perros ladraron tanto como en la madrugada aquella en que Isaac Nessim confundió su protesta con una advertencia de terremoto" (p. 278). The end of the chapter relates the final explosion as having happened only a few minutes before the present of the narration. The first sentence of the last paragraph

of this chapter reads as follows: "Hace unos minutos, cuando el gran estallido llenó de histeria a los peregrinos..."(my emphasis, p. 283). In the last chapter there are several references that point to this present time, referring to the events of "yesterday", "today", and "tomorrow". When the explosion occurs on the last pages the cycle that "today" had begun in the first chapter has been completed in the same "today" with which it began. Thus, this use of analepse for the basic narrative-- by means of the references mentioned above-- maintains a sense of order and unity in what would otherwise be chaotic. Another effect of the analepse is that the progressively increasing number of them toward the end creates a strong feeling of bringing everything to an end.

Another unifying element in the structure is the presence of the mare. It makes three key appearances in the novel, these being at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of the work. During the first chapter, before the birth of Marcianita, the mare appears in the central plaza, the Parque Boyacá. It eludes Jesús Sarmiento's group of fifty men intent on catching it. This elusive supernatural quality associates it with the devil for the people of Tuluá. Manuela is particularly attracted to it, staring in awe as the cowboys unsuccessfully pursue. The mare leaves Tuluá (not to be seen again for many years) after leaving a pile of feces on Manuela's doorstep. In its first appearance, then, it is related to the supernatural and to Manuela's pregnancy with Marcianita.

In the second appearance Manuela is on her deathbed (Chapter V) when the mare leaves a hoofprint on her forehead. With that she does die, and all efforts to remove the stamp from her head are useless.

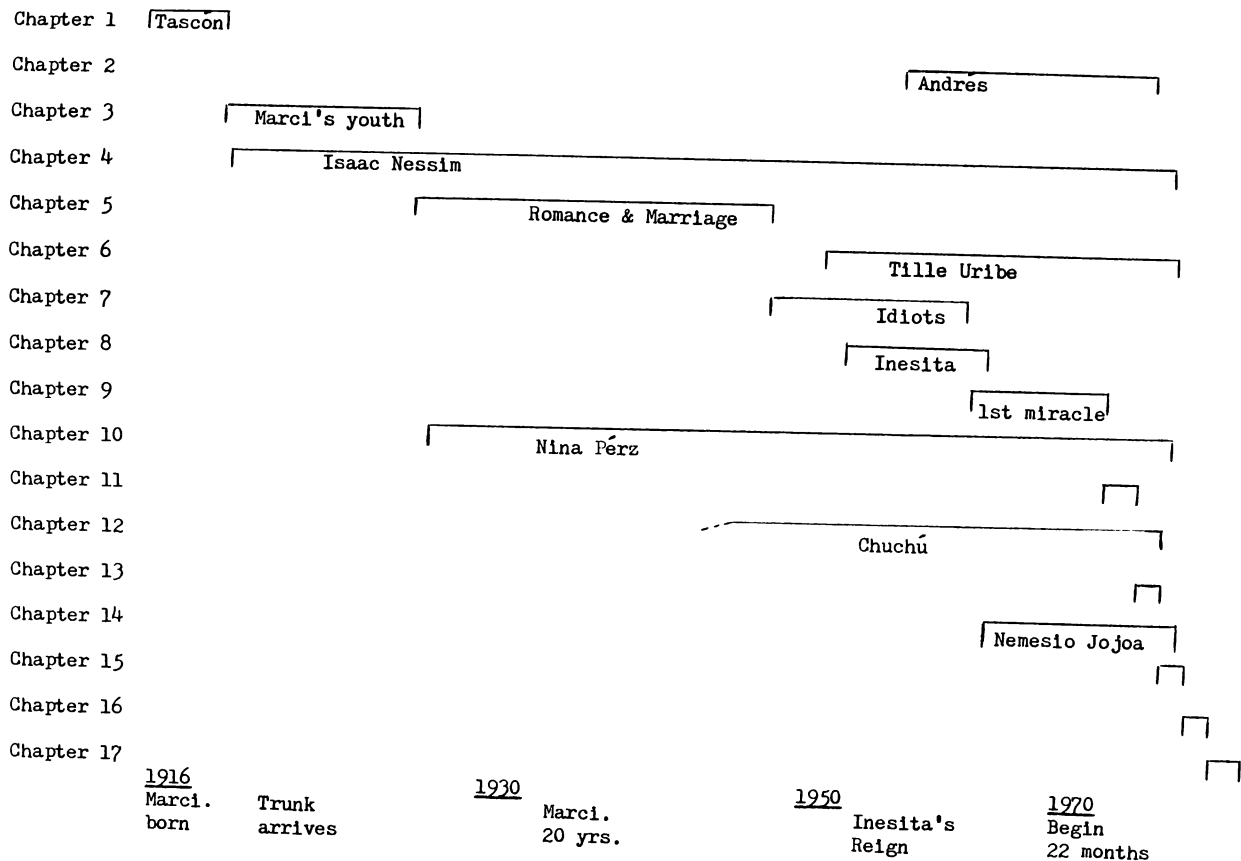
Now the relationship between the mare and the key events in the family history (birth, death) is more evident.

The third key event for the family, its termination with the death of the idiots, also occurs in the presence of the mare, this being the penultimate chapter of the novel. As in its original appearance, the animal passes through Tuluá elusively. One of Jesús Sarmiento's helpers from Chapter I recognizes it. Again they cannot capture it. When the mare rests at Marcianita's house the sadness on its face seems to be announcing an end. Another omniscient animal in the same chapter is Tille Uribe's parrot that chatters incessantly "se va, se va, se va", "se va la lancha". The mare departs with the explosion which, as we learn in the following chapter, assassinates the idiots. Chapter II concerning Andrés's exhibition, for example, describes not only the present situation, but also functions as prolepsis: "El bazar se llenó de bote en bote, acaso como un presagio de lo que iba a ser Tuluá unos días después" (p. 34). In the next chapter when Paulina Sarmiento's group attempts to prevent Marcianita's birth, Blanquita Lozano is mentioned in the following context: "Se pararon en la puerta y aunque misiá Blanquita Lozano, la única amiga que Marcianita Barona iba a tener en Tuluá por muchos años, intentó entrar, ellas la atajaron" (my emphasis, p. 44). The use of prolepsis is relatively common procedure in the text.<sup>10</sup>

Beyond this basic organization of the expansion of the nuclear verb, a more detailed examination of Genette's temps reveals certain aspects of Alvarez Gardeazábal's transformation of reality. As has been suggested with the use of analepsis and prolepsis, the novel does



not correspond to a strictly lineal development of histoire. In terms of chronology, histoire covers a span of approximately 58 years, from 1915 to 1973. The cohabitation of Father Tascón and Manuela occurs in the years 1915-1916 (Chapter I). The second chapter tells of Andrés from approximately the mid-fifties to 1973. Chapter III deals with Marcianita from 1916 to the 1930's. Chapter IV has the broadest temporal scope of all, this being the story of Isaac Nessim from 1917 to 1972. Marcianita's later youth, romance and eventual marriage to Nemesio Rodríguez of Chapter V corresponds approximately to the years from the 1930's to the early 1950's. The remainder of the chapters correspond in various ways to the years from approximately the 1950's to the present of about 1973. The two exceptions are the chapters of Nina Pérez and Chuchú, the former covering these years, but also moving back to the 1920's and school with Luisita Tascón, and the latter also probably moving back in time beyond the 1950's (depending on her age, which is unknown). The chart which follows reconstructs the chronology of Tuluá to the extent that it is possible from the information provided in the novel. By following the vertical list of chapters on the left one can visualize the reader's experience of the récit. By following the horizontal chronology along the bottom of the page one can visualize the histoire.



A factor in the temps of the nuclear verb is the portée, or the distance between the present and a variation from this present.<sup>11</sup> In Chapter I the portée is extensive, with the period between the Tascón-Manuela affair and the present being approximately 57 years (see chart). In Chapter II the portée is negligible, with Andrés's story being carried to the near present. In Chapter III the portée is again significant, covering from the mid-1930's to the present. From here it is possible to follow the established pattern in the portée: whereas the even-numbered chapters use no significant portée, in the odd-numbered characterization chapters the portée becomes progressively smaller in each chapter. From Chapter X (this being after the first miracle) there is no significant distinction in portée between the two types of chapters. Thus, after the point at which the idiots actually have the status of heroes, the focus of the novel changes from "becoming" (the process) to "become" (the present fact), and the past ("becoming") is no longer developed as an interruption, i.e. through the presence of portée.

The time span actually covered within the portée, or amplitude, is relatively short in Chapter I, being about a year.<sup>12</sup> The amplitude of Chapter II is a little over 15 years, covering from the mid-fifties to the present. The amplitude of the chapters ranges from a few days to about fifty years. A certain pattern emerges in the amplitude: time is condensed more in the early and later parts of the novel, and is expanded in the middle sections (see chart). In terms of the nuclear verb, then, its amplitude is smaller as the background to "becoming" is being delineated and also when "becoming" has been manifested, and the expansion of the nuclear verb is more extensive during the process

of becoming.

Portée and amplitude point out the novel's lack of mimetic quality. The experience of the novel does not correspond to his-toire but to the transformation of it. Perhaps more importantly, one primary feature of the inventive process in Alvarez Gardeazábal is the tendency toward variation of portée and amplitude emphasizing invention in terms of a certain lack of equilibrium in the narrative. This lack of equilibrium in the transformation process is particularly appreciated by considering briefly, for example, the contrast between the detail used in the anecdote of Andrés's spider show and the novel's comparatively broad temporal scope. The narrator's description creates a humorous effect, using detail in a situation where it would not normally be expected. He describes each step in his show, and the animals:

Abrió la tercera caja y sin haberse prevenido, ni la gente haberle oído explicación alguna, una araña amarilla, con patas que parecían orugas de tractor buldozer, se quedó en la mitad del gobelino verde mirando desafiante al público. (p. 36)

A similar effect is created through the narrator's description of Marcianita's armadillos, adding detail to the psychological penetration of the armadillos:

Primero, los amaestró. Se estuvo días, semanas enteras, enseñándoles a caminar manejados por una cadena fina que les amarraba alrededor del estómago escamoso. Les fastidió sentirse manejados, y cada vez que ella los hurgaba con la cadena, abrían hueco rápidamente. (p. 59)

The temporal span of the entire analepse of the basic anecdote (some fifty years), and more specifically, the amplitude of Andrés's chapter, indicate the experience of the inventive process in this case. In

Genette's terms, the imaginative experience has been created through a lack of congruence between histoire (anecdote of a spider) and récit (the presentation of the spider in the actual text).

Final remarks concerning the expansion of the nuclear verb and the novel's basic structure are appropriate. As the highly anecdotal nature of the novel suggests, "becoming" and the elaboration of it are as important as the act itself, if not more so. The two structural tendencies, one emphasizing the independent narrative unit, and the other the novelization of these units, create a certain lack of equilibrium in the expansion process, transporting histoire beyond the limits of mimeticism. The consideration of temps in the nuclear verb in terms of prolepse, analepse, portée and amplitude indicates the rupture with objective chronology and the importance of the manipulation of these temporal factors in the inventive process. The use of cyclical structure through the manipulation of time, and the use of the "present" as a point of departure create a distance from the events at hand, instead of the closeness to the reality that the traditional regionalist novel depended upon for its nostalgic effects. In order to consider in detail the function of distance and the narrator in the transformation of the nuclear verb it will be necessary to turn attention away from temps and to narration, or the basic narrative situation.<sup>13</sup>

According to traditional concepts of "point of view", the basic narrative situation in El bazar de los idiotas is fundamentally third-person omniscient. Genette, however, points out that technically all

narrators are "first-person", and resolves the "narrative point of view" question by distinguishing between who is seeing (mode) and who is speaking (voix).<sup>14</sup> It should be noted that, in general, mode deals with the regulation of information in the narrative and voix deals with the question of the speaker-- how he stands in relationship to the story and to the narrataire, or implied reader. It can be noted that in terms of mode, in El bazar de los idiotas the focus is basically external to the events described (focalisation externe) and that in terms of voix the speaker normally stands outside the story, i.e. is not one of the characters. The novel could be defined in terms of its mode and voix, then, as extradiégétique-hétérodiégétique: a narrator in first degree who tells a story from which he is generally absent.<sup>15</sup>

The manner in which the narrative information is regulated, the mode, is a fundamental part of the experience of the invention and humor of Alvarez Gardeazábal. Focalisation externe is the most apt description of the mode because in general the narrator does not penetrate the characters psychologically. The novel is by no means one of profound interior analysis along the lines of what has been noted in En noviembre llega el arzobispo, or even of the sections of interior analysis in Las causas supremas and Cola de zorro. The narrator does have the capacity, however, to penetrate the characters' thoughts and feelings, often using words like "entendió" and "sintió" in brief descriptions rather than extensive analysis. One source of the novel's inventive humor is the rupture with its narrative code, that is, moving a step beyond this basic mode noted above. The narrator has the characters "decide"

things, for example, that would not normally be decisions, or at least referred to as such. This technique is used at least three times in the opening chapter. First, Marcianita "decides" to be born (appear between her mother's legs):

Las cosas, sin embargo, son muy distintas y deberán serlo porque el destino rige a Marcianita Barona desde cuando un 31 de octubre, de hace muchos años, decidió aparecer por entre las piernas de su madre, y Tuluá, los coros angélicos de cielo y tierra...  
(my emphasis, p. 8)

Paulina Sarmiento "decides" to die:

Ella lo supo bien, y entonces acudió a sus argucias, que la convirtieron muy pronto en una mujer riquísima, pero la enviciaron tanto a la vida y al dinero que apenas hace un año decidió morir, trepada todavía en la yipeta inglesa de la guerra de Leticia que le compró a Tito Uribe. (my emphasis, p. 11)

He creates a similarly humorous effect in the following use of the verb "decide":

Todas pensaron en la ingeniosa posibilidad que les brindarían a las lenguas del pueblo si las veían salir de la casa de alguno de los curanderos del barrio de las putas, expertos en hacer vomitar hasta un tornillo a quien decidiera embarazarse. (my emphasis, p. 13)

This breaking of the narrative code recalls the incongruencies already noted involving the use of time (detail within the general context). In another case the narrator uses "to decide" in a way that combines both these techniques. In telling Isaac Nessim's story in very general terms (the longest amplitude of any chapter in the novel) he includes the detail that Nessim "decided" to disembark in Buenaventura and enter Colombia.

When the focalisation moves nearer to that of the perception of the characters than strictly focalisation externe, the effect

is ironic. When Paulina Sarmiento leads her group in the campaign against Marcianita, the narrator describes them as follows:

Eran la vanguardia de la salvación de Tuluá y no iban a quedarse en mitad del camino permitiendo la ayuda misericordiosa a la reencarnación demoníaca. (p. 44)

The narrator's use of the term "reencarnación demoníaca" corresponds more closely to the perception of the group than that of the narrator in his usual focalisation externe. At other times this use of language reflects more the pettiness of the inhabitants of Tuluá. The narrator compares Inesita González with the other candidates using a language that humorously reflects Tuluá: "Las otras candidatas resultaban un relleno" (p. 149). Later in the same chapter he describes Inesita's publicity as follows: "Las fotos de El Espectador salieron más claras, pero la literatura de El Tiempo estaba mejor" (p. 153). In his description of the commercialism of Tuluá he states: "Los precios de venta variaban según la cara de tonto de incurable que le veían al comprador" (p. 255). Similarly, his reference to the journalist Pangloss and the articles deprecating the idiots read as follows: "Inicialmente ni el periódico ni los lectores le pararon bolas..." (p. 270).

In a similar manner, he alters the novel's basic mode through a complete inversion of the normal terms of language, using a commercial language to describe the workings of the church and the language of the church to describe the activities of the idiots. In reference to the church, the members are called "clients"; "Los que primero sintieron la baja de clientela fueron los padres redentoristas de Buga" (p. 241). The rise of the idiots' fame causes changes in the church's business:



La venta de reliquias, del aceite del hermano champagnat, del agua del Guadalajara, de los fragmentos del jabón que la india usaba cuando encontró tres siglos atrás la imagen milagrosa lavando ropa en el frío, todos los rosarios de chambibe que resultaron ser de lágrimas de San Pedro, absolutamente todo el elenco milagrero, dejó de venderse. Por primera vez desde el día en que comenzaron a construir la basilica y el convento, el padre guardián tuvo necesidad de gastar dinero de la caja fuerte y mermar los envíos de estampillas para las misiones y de dineros para la casa madre en Burgos. (p. 243)

The language used in reference to the idiots tends to be ecclesiastical. The people that come to be cured are referred to as "peregrinos" who make their "peregrinación". At other times they are the "multitud". When the idiots cure, a "luz" appears which is also referred to as a "resplandor". When Isaac Nessim goes to the idiots, the description uses the language of the church for its ironic effect:

Brotaba la fe de sus manos puntiagudas, de su cara esquemática. Marchó lentamente hasta pasar por debajo del balcón. Miró a los idiotas como a la gloria eterna, como hubiera mirado a sus padres si ellos volvieran de ese más allá que un día se los tragó. (p. 290)

Other factors of mode involve focalisation on characters (characterization), on space ("spatialization"?) and on time ("temporalization"?).<sup>16</sup> In accordance with the novel's focalisation externe, not conducive to the creation of "profound" characters, since the focus is primarily exterior rather than interior, relatively few characters are introduced into the novel via the convention of an initial introductory descriptive characterization, followed by character development. The focus on the characters is substantially limited by the very procedure of creating them. The only character whose development is somewhat conventional is Marcianita, whom we

see from birth, through her youth, and until the present. Her description, however, is only schematic in the later years. Even her most complete characterization chapters cover a period of many years, as has been discussed. Less traditional still are the characterizations of Andrés, whose past as a seminary student is described when he first appears, and of Isaac Nessim, whose past from 1917 is explained, and of Tille Uribe, whose characterization is even more limited. Thinking in terms of the nuclear verb with reference to mode, the emphasis is more on limitation than expansion of the verb as far as the creation of character is concerned.

Most of the characters enter and function within the novel as if they were known entities, an extremely limited focalisation (externe). The principal characters (those who have characterization chapters) are even introduced in the novel as such in some cases. Inesita, whose characterization is effected in Chapter VII, is mentioned briefly in four previous chapters and these references leave the reader relatively uninformed as to her identity. She is first mentioned briefly in Andrés's chapter as follows: "Tanto ellos como Tuluá lo recordaban desde los días del reinado de Inesita González, cuando hizo gran espectáculo con sus arañas amaestradas y sus lagartijas de dos colas" (p. 31). Inesita's second appearance in the novel occurs in the next chapter: she is identified as Marcianita's only friend, but no description of her beyond the fact of the friendship is provided. Nina Pérez, who has Chapter X for characterization, is presented similarly, being mentioned briefly in six different chapters before her characterization chapter. She enters the novel in Chapter III as the child that assaults Marcianita in school. Chuchú

is mentioned once briefly before her characterization in Chapter XII: "Pensó en acudir a Chuchú para que ella, favorecida de Dios, la uniera al carro de la esperanza, pero la llegada del hermano Andrés a la función de beneficio en el colegio de los hermanos maristas, la hizo olvidar de esta intersección" (p. 113).

The limited focus on characters is more evident with the minor characters. There are over 100 characters in the novel and in many cases their presence and function are quite limited. Several characters enter the novel once, as is the case of Tito Uribe (Chapter I), Misía María Mora (Chapter I), Nicolás Lozano (Chapter I), Agoberto Potes (Chapter I), Hermano Tobías (Chapter II), Madre Leocadia (Chapter III), Jaime Pérez (Chapter III), Doctor Simeón Jiménez (Chapter III), Tránsito Girón (Chapter IV), Alvaro Heneo (Chapter IV), Oscar Arias (Chapter IV), Bernardo Cardona (Chapter V), Don Carlos Materón (Chapter V), doña Laura Garcés (Chapter VI), Ramona (Chapter VI), doña Laura Valencia (Chapter VII), Lucho Bermúdez (Chapter VIII), misía Maruja (Chapter XI), padre Saavedra (Chapter XII), Enrique Uribe (Chapter XIII), padre Fieria (Chapter XIV), padre Gómez (Chapter XV), Pacho Montalvo (Chapter XVI), and Alvaro Pachón (Chapter XVI). Other characters appear more than once, but as in the initial appearance of the main characters, the brief entrances reveal little or nothing about them. The three chapters in which someone like Doctor González is present, for example, reveal a minimal about him. He is referred to in Chapter I in terms of owning one of the three houses in Tuluá that have electric lights, and has no other function in the chapter. The limited focus emphasizes his function as an element in Tuluá, not

as a human being. Luisita Tascón appears in five different chapters, but we learn nothing of her, other than that she is the schoolteacher who benevolently allowed Marcianita to attend her school. Again, the character functions only as a small piece in a large mosaic, but not as a person. Aminta appears in five chapters, but functions specifically as the owner of a house, never acquiring full dimension as a human being. The characters are not situated synchronically or diachronically within Tuluá, as in the traditional novel, but rather function as components. Characters accumulate in the novel as their function requires: as more of the story of Tuluá is related, more characters enter, with new characters introduced in virtually every chapter until the very end of the novel. Both in the limits prescribed by the novel's focalisation and in their limited function (which is to some extent a problem of focalisation), the characters do not correspond to the molds of the traditional mimetic novel.

The idiots themselves are not mentioned in the novel until the end of Chapter II when it is noted that Andrés will have to visit them to be cured. There is a similar note at the end of Chapter IV, Isaac Nessim's chapter. It is not until Chapter VII, approximately midway in the novel, that one of the idiots, Ramón Lucio, makes his distinctly inauspicious appearance. At birth he is hardly human: "Al final, el doctor Tomás, untado de mierda hasta el cuello, pudo sacar de esta tempestad diarreica una criatura de género masculino, más parecida a una rata que al hijo que Nemesio Rodríguez esperaba" (p. 127). From his characterization throughout the novel, the focus on the idiots is especially on the external, emphasizing their physical aberrations and crudities consistently: after a month

Ramón Lucio has grown a centimeter and shows obvious signs of retardation; he drinks abnormally from his mother; he stares fixedly at bright colors and appears to be deaf; he eats and urinates excessively; at Bartolomé's birth the only description tells of his "cabeza de huevo" and his "cara de sapo enfermo"; with age they emit a unique guttural sound as a distinguishing feature; they dirty their clothes with an abnormally high frequency; their movements are always described as being mechanical; Bartolomé is often described with a grotesque saliva running from his mouth; they have a minimal ability to perceive physical sensations (again, the mechanical, external); the description of their discovery of their sex organs and masturbation treats their bodies in a mechanical way; the description of their method of curing through miracles emphasizes the physical; its crude description of their sex organs; and finally, even their death underlines the purely physical, describing their dismembered bodies as objects: "Pedazos de carne de Ramón Lucio, aporrearon los rostros de quienes rodeaban al anarquista" (p. 303). An effect of this external focus of the crude physicality of the pair is the contrast it creates with the spirituality of the church. Since the church functions as the idiots' rival, the ironic contrast between the physicality of the new miracle-makers and the spirituality of the traditional ones is evident. Other effects will become evident in the discussion of voix.

The "in Tuluá" part of the basic sentence, the physical space, and the focalisation of it is similar to the creation of character. The physical space included in its total focus is primarily involved with Tuluá, but also includes the nearby towns of Buga, Palmira, Pasto,

Cartago, and Cali. The spatial focus of the novel, Tuluá, is never created through a complete description to situate the novel in Tuluá. Technically, it is a form of paralipse, the limiting of information.<sup>17</sup> Similar to characterization, the focus is limited. When describing the physical center of the novel's action, the Riveras' house, home of the idiots, the narrator describes it more as if the reader were already acquainted with the physical space than as a truly situating description: "La casa de los Rivera, en el camino del Picacho, luego de la curva de las Ruices" (p. 84). Later he describes a road nearby: "la carretera que llevaba a la cabaña de Toño González, paso por la acequia de las patisucias, donde habitualmente han lavado ropa las mujeres del barrio de Morales" (p. 222). Rocío Jojoa's house is situated as follows: "A la salida de Tuluá, por la carretera de las Playas" (p. 123). It should be noted that the "carretera de las Playas" has not been mentioned previously. The composite picture of Tuluá with the accumulated effect of these references is fragmented at best. We know it has a Boyacá Park, the Bar Central, the San Antonio Hospital, the Farfán Airport, and many specific homes, including La Rivera. But it should be noted that none of these individual elements are ever described in any detail and they are never situated within Tuluá in such a way that a reader not acquainted with Tuluá would be able to envision it. To some extent, the spatialization creates a clear regional base, but this base itself suggests a possible social comment: the narrator's limited vision of Tuluá, corresponding approximately to that of an inhabitant of the town, reflects the pettiness of their vision.

Focalisation as it relates to time also underlines these limi-

tations. Often a present situation is described through a comparison with a past event, but the past event on which the comparison is based is unknown to the reader. In describing Manuela in the first chapter the narrator notes: "La convirtió en la prisionera que temió ser desde el lejano día en que su padre murió víctima de una tuberculosis galopante" (p. 17). In reference to Doctor Tomás the narrator states: "Tuvo éste que mirarlo con la cara que acaso lo miró el general Uribe al darle el parte de derrota final a manos del general Reyes, para poder entender" (p. 137). The limitation of the vision is experienced in these cases because of the fact that the narrator can communicate only within the diachronic limits of Tuluá, even though the expressive content of such metaphorical equations with time is minimal. In other cases the references are made to the past, but they are events we have witnessed in the novel. At the end of Tille Uribe's chapter the narrator states: "Tille Uribe se miró al espejo y en el fondo de su casa pecosa volvió a llorar como en el lejano día de sus veinte años, obligada por el doctor Tomás a comer como los demás" (p. 115). In this case the reference recalls the beginning of the chapter. Focalisation creates a closed system whose boundaries are the region of Tuluá, both on a diachronic and synchronic plane.

References to future time create the experience of cyclical time and suggest the importance of destiny in Tuluá's mentality. In this sense the passage of time signifies the completion of a destiny to which the inhabitants of Tuluá seemed to be confined. In this way limitations are prescribed by time. As has been explained, the entire narrative corresponds to a cycle which is already completed

at the beginning of the novel. The mare suggests a condemnation, as does Marcianita's birth: Paulina proclaims that Tuluá will be condemned for seven generations if Marcianita is born and that the mare is the devil. Destiny is fulfilled when Marcianita does bring the supernatural to Tuluá in the form of the idiots. Other important events of the novel are the fulfillment of destiny: when Marcianita says good-bye to Nemesio Rodríguez it is the completion of a cycle (p. 166); a premonition convinces Inesita to visit the idiots, and the premonition is fulfilled (p. 201); "destiny" seemed to prescribe that Nina Pérez would pass by after Inesita's miraculous curing (p. 206); destiny prescribed the end of the idiots with the assassination (p. 224). Other less important details are also seen as the fulfillment of destiny: Nina Pérez is destined to be fat (p. 182); Tille Uribe is condemned to die of cancer (p. 233); Marcianita Barona is in permanent communication with destiny (p. 232). The people of Tuluá seemingly cannot overcome the limitations set for them because all action is the fulfillment of the destiny of which they are aware.

Mode involves the breaking of traditional regionalism as has been evidenced in the description of the focalisation externe in terms of character, space and time. Besides this fact, it is important to note that the experience is consistent with the feature we have noted in the novel's basic structure and temps, i.e. a fundamental incongruency. An obvious example in terms of focalisation of character is the case of Nemesio Jojoa: he does not actually appear until almost the end of the novel, but his presence is of utmost importance, since he assassinates the idiots. According to



traditional ideas of récit and its characterization, one might logically conclude that he is not sufficiently developed or motivated to play such a vital and destructive role, but in the experience of this novel the assassination is the final step in a series of incongruencies, irrational acts and lack of logic in character presentation and action. Other facets of the experience of the novel's focalisation become evident when considering voix.

The basic position of the narrator in El bazar de los idiotas is outside of the story and as he relates the story he often addresses the implied reader as if this reader were already somewhat knowledgeable about certain aspects of Tuluá. The question of these two relationships-- between the narrator and the story, and between the narrator and the implied reader-- are for Genette the fundamental problems of voix.<sup>18</sup> For the sake of clarification, certain generalizations can be made about this position as a point of departure: the temporal position of the narrator in relationship to the story is fundamentally ultérieure as in the classic story, i.e. the narrator tells the story that has already happened in the past.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, it has already been noted in the discussion of analepse that, although the main part of the histoire is related from this position, the opening, the end, and certain interruptions are narrated from a temporal position of simultanée, i.e. this "today" during which the events of Tuluá are being unraveled. As a narrator that stands fundamentally outside of the story, his position is technically heterodiegétique, although we can note variations from this position.<sup>20</sup>

One basic function of the narrator in the novel is his fonction testimoniale.<sup>21</sup> As the witness who, from his position of "today" tells the idiots' story in Tuluá, this function is obvious from the previous discussion of the novel's structure. The fonction narrative (which relates the histoire) is also significant, as has been pointed out in the discussion of the overall importance of histoire in El bazar de los idiotas, fundamental to the experience.<sup>22</sup> On the surface, the possibility of discussing a fonction de régie of the narrator in this novel seems out of question. For Genette this narrator functions primarily as an organizer of the text and his discourse is usually metalinguistic, as in the classical tales such as The Decameron. Although the narrator in El bazar de los idiotas clearly does not function as in The Decameron, his role as organizer and his meta-language are significant.

The narrator functions as an organizer because he is the only source of memory of the events of Tuluá and subsequently, their organizer. The narrator notes from the beginning of the novel that the lack of understanding of the events that have occurred in Tuluá results from a problem of memory: Tuluá has forgotten about Father Tascón and the origins of the idiots' cult. The narrator's task is, thus, remembering and rewriting Tuluá's forgotten history. Tuluá's reality is determined as much by the way it is remembered (or forgotten) as by the facts of objective history. The narrator's act of organizing and narrating is to an extent a denunciation of modernity and its technology because it is this modernity that causes Tuluá to forget its real past:

Con él, Tuluá ha identificado memoria y de civilización que ha ido llegando en grandes oleajes,

todavía cree o piensa en el fondo de Marcianita Barona, aunque ahora último la milagrería les ha hecho olvidar todo lo que podría explicar la historia viva que agobia sus calles. (p. 120)

This "civilization" has conveniently caused Tuluá to forget Marcianita's past, and as such is typical of Tuluá's memory: things are forgotten when it seems convenient. When Marcianita holds her bazaar outside the church, the priest and people conveniently forget she was never baptized (even though she had been anathematized by the church). When Marcianita is young, the people have already forgotten her origins and Father Tascón. Since Isaac Nessim is an unpopular and ostracized figure in Tuluá, his benevolent contributions (a rarity) have been forgotten. Nemesio forgets about Marcianita's German measles when she is pregnant with her second son. He also conveniently forgets the promise to his doctor not to father any more children after the birth of the first idiot. Andrés suffers his disaster with the Metropolus spider because he forgets its history as a killer. What Nina Pérez says is not easily forgotten (p. 185) and her loquaciousness causes the deluge of people to come to Tuluá. With the exception of Marcianita, the people of Tuluá are manipulated and are unable to distinguish between objective historical reality and reality as it is remembered; only the narrator's memory and organizing of historical reality have saved the story from being lost.<sup>24</sup>

The narrator's discourse does approximate metalanguage in certain instances when he discusses this distortion of history. The very fact that he addresses himself overtly to the problem of distortion, and the fact that distortion itself is Tuluá's story, places such discourse on the level of metalanguage. Within the

narrative, for example, the narrator comments on the exaggeration of this fictional world in his description of the masturbation among the youth:

Los curas en sus sermones, los obispos en sus pastorales, los médicos por la televisión, los padres de familia en los almuerzos, los directores de los colegios, los profesores, todos los que podían hablar, hicieron campana para mermar la oleada. Los peligros de las masturbaciones fueron sacados a la luz. Se llegó a exagerar tanto que se dijo que la masturbación era muchísimo más peligrosa que la marihuana, que no hace daño a nadie. Sólo ahora, a meses de la noticia que Inesita dio con una ingenuidad asombrosa, la moda ha cesado un poco y los masturbantes ya no gritan tanto. (my emphasis, p. 260)

When the idiots rise to national fame the narrator comments: "Los de la revista Siete Días no inventaron más mentiras porque verdaderamente no pudieron" (p. 228). The experience of the novel is to a certain extent a study of the phenomenon of exaggeration, including direct comments by the narrator himself, in what thus might be called a metalanguage.

The relationship between the narrator and the narrataire, or implied reader, is significant in the novel in terms of the creation of humor, and subsequently, in the novel's denunciation. On the one hand, the focalisation as it has been discussed places the narrataire in a position of testimonial observer of Tuluá similar to the position of the narrator. On the other hand, this distance is fundamental to the functioning of humor.

Technically speaking, the focalisation places the reader at approximately the same distanced-witness position of the narrator through the use of communication acts that assume a certain acquaintance with Tuluá. Most of the characters enter and function within the novel as if they were entities known by the narrataire since,

as has been discussed, the focalisation of character often operates on this basis. As such, the reader experiences the characters as he might in the position of an objective observer of the histoire that the narrator, through his organizing, has made récit: the reader sees many of them only once, and perhaps again if and when such character becomes more involved. The same experience is more self-evident in spatialization: the reader receives an occasional limited amount of information, regulated on the supposition that the narrataire has some acquaintance with this space. With time, the narrator's metaphorical equations are supposed to communicate by having the narrataire recall previous events in Tuluá that have not occurred in the novel.

This position of the narrataire is functional in the creation of humor. The focalisation externe on the idiots, making them appear mechanical through emphasis on the exterior and physical, describing one of the situations that Bergson has pointed out as a condition for the humorous situation: the insensibility of the observer in relationship to the objects or persons observed.<sup>25</sup> In relationship to the specific case of the idiots, it is revealing to note that Bergson also emphasizes the importance of the physical when combined with the moral in the creation of humor.<sup>26</sup> Such is the effect of the characterization of the idiots: they acquire a certain sainthood in Tuluá and are consistently compared to the church (the "moral"), being the heroes to whom the people faithfully make pilgrimages. The humor is experienced, then, in that part of the characterization that emphasizes their spirituality within a physical context, or vice-versa.

The narrator in El bazar de los idiotas does not perform a fonction idéologique if we see such a function as being a direct communication act between the narrator and the narrataire.<sup>27</sup> Rather, the novel's denunciation becomes apparent through the situations created. The only technical device involved is the initial position of narrataire-observer and not narrataire-participant. The universal appeal of this denunciation is found within the context of its comment on middle-class society and its technology. Goldmann maintains that the predominant ideology of the middle class is rationalism.<sup>28</sup> If we choose not to accept this generality, it might be stated that the maintenance of the status quo (middle class or other) is dependent upon the predominance of the rational and one of its corollaries, order. Without defining the novel as "anti-bourgeois" or "anti-status quo", it can be noted that anti-rationalism predominates. Bourgeois technology is totally ineffective in the novel: when Andrés is bitten, the local specialists, and the Japanese experts, fail to cure him; when Inesita is paralyzed, both national doctors and specialists from Boston can do nothing for her. The irrationality of the idiots' methodology humorously underlines technology's failures. It is noteworthy that their first miracle is performed on a Swiss, a symbol of technology. Other irrational elements make up the experience of Tuluá, such as Marcianita's birthdate (October 31), the mare, and the magical effects of mare milk on the idiots. The columnist Pangloss deprecates the idiots in his "rationalist column", but after the idiots carbonize the edition of the newspaper in which his explanation appears, he ceases activity for a month. Others oppose the idiots with "vigor racionalista" (p. 267).

Other observable actions reflect a social comment. It is notable that of the plethora of characters appearing in the novel, the number of admirable human beings is quite limited. It also becomes apparent that there are no admirable male figures in the novel, with the exception of Isaac Nessim, the homosexual. This irony becomes acute when it is taken into account that the characterizations of the true male figures emphasize their supposed masculinity. This is particularly the case with Nemesio Rodríguez because the various epithets he carries underline his masculine accomplishments: having built the railroad and having been captain in the army, for example. The narrator similarly ridicules Lieutenant Caravalí's machismo through the juxtaposition of "policía", "hombre", and "macho": "A las mujeres (Isaac) no las trató más que para venderlas mercancía. Caravalí, en cambio, las había tratado como policía, como hombre y como macho" (p. 288). The other masculine figures, Jesús Sarmiento, Andrés, Bernardo Cardona and Pangloss, appear as fools. Similar observations can be made about the actions of the church hierarchy and about the questionable motives of the zealous Paulina Sarmiento. The social comment concerning the government and its institutions is evidenced primarily through what the government does not do. The most direct comment in relation to the government is the fact that in the fifty-year story of Tuluá the government is surprisingly absent. The government does not affect daily life in Tuluá. There is, then, a notable fonction idéologique of the narrator, for his position, and his positioning of the narrataire, do communicate a clear message.

A consideration of the expansion of the nuclear verb "Two masturbating idiots become heroes in Tuluá" suggests that the basis for Alvarez Gardeazábal's inventive process lies in the development of the verb through incongruencies, or what has also been noted as a certain lack of equilibrium in the narrative-- in summary: incongruencies, anomalies and distortion. The incongruence of "masturbating idiots" in juxtaposition with "heroes" is the expression of this inventive process in its most basic form. From this basic expression the reader experiences a strong emphasis on the anecdote, which develops the basic anomaly of the nuclear verb on several levels of experience. The structure, or organization of the anecdotal material, creates an anomaly between short-story, sequential tendencies in contrast with the work's overall precise structure. In developing this structure the verb "becoming" is significant because of the incongruent elaboration of this "becoming". Thus, the narrator's pure invention may take precedence over developing the story-line, as in the case of the spider episode. The methods of manipulating time made apparent by contrasting histoire and récit indicate that, besides rupturing pure chronology, the incongruency between historical time and récit time emphasize invention over mimeticism. In terms of the narrative situation, or narration, the narrator's focus on Tuluá creates humorous distortions through the use of language not totally congruent with its context-- again, the detail of "to decide" within a much larger con-



text-- or by completely inverting the normal relationship between signifier and signified, as in the case of the commercial and ecclesiastic language. The position of the narrator in relationship to the story and the reader indicates the role of the narrator as the organizer and the one who has remembered within a context in which all has been forgotten. The distance that the narrator and narrataire share from the actions observed permits the dispassionate observation of the incongruencies of social procedures, implying a denunciation of such relationships.<sup>29</sup>

## CHAPTER V

## EL OTOÑO DEL PATRIARCA (1975)

The appearance of El otoño del patriarca in 1975 marks the completion of a cycle in the Colombian novel since 1967, the original point of departure in this study, Cien años de soledad. Since the appearance of the latter and En noviembre llega el arzobispo in the same year, the Colombian novel has been observed in its process of development that is progressively more distant from the type of regionalism that characterized those two novels. This movement has been apparent, although in different ways, in Las causas supremas, Cola de zorro, and El bazar de los idiotas. With the publication of El otoño del patriarca the change is complete in the sense that the regional base in itself is an even less significant aspect of the experience of the novel. The work employs as its physical base the Caribbean region in general without defining a specific country. The novel's basic theme, power, extends beyond national or regional boundaries. The elaboration of the theme of power through narrative technique is evident through an analysis of the novel's structure; the theme of power in relationship to the experience of this particular dictator can be elucidated through a consideration of his experience of women and the mother archetype.

The most fundamental and basic anecdote of the novel could be reduced to the sentence "A corpse is found". This simple anecdote (or histoire as Genette would have it) is used as a point of departure (the frame) for the actual story telling, or

the complete récit.<sup>1</sup> It is the basic anecdote with which each chapter of the novel begins, describing the discovery of the General in the presidential palace. The story of the novel, however, goes beyond the mere discovery of his body: it relates the General's entire life by transforming this basic anecdote of the framework into a more complete biographical revelation. The complete anecdote could be reduced to the simple sentence "A General dies", or, even more specifically, "A General lives and dies" (depending on whether or not we wish to define his "living" as a continuous process of dying, a point that could be defended textually).

The novel's structure can be described as a system of progressive apertures. The work consists of six narrative sections (I will call them "chapters") and each of these sections corresponds to this system of progressive apertures. That is, the first chapter involves an aperture, as does the second, and each of the following chapters. The qualifier "progressive" is included because the apertures occur at a progressively earlier point in each of the six chapters. In the first chapter, for example, the aperture occurs relatively late in the chapter, in the second chapter it occurs earlier than in the first, and so forth. These apertures may be described as occurring in each of the six chapters on four levels. It must be noted, however, that I am describing each level separately for the clarity of analysis. In the novel's experience these levels occur simultaneously. The four levels of aperture are (1) the opening of the original situation, (2) the opening of the sentence, (3) the opening of narrative point of

view, (4) the opening of a "seen" reality.

At the level of the original situation, the first chapter establishes this basic situation with the discovery of the General's corpse in the presidential palace. In this first scene an unidentified narrator within the story describes some vultures entering the presidential palace. With this sign, the narrator notes, he and some of his accomplices dare enter the premises. Upon entering, the narrative describes the physical surroundings observed, for the most part decaying objects in the palace. After two and one-half pages describing the physical surroundings, this narrator provides the first description of the General's body, an image that reoccurs in the novel:

...y allí lo vimos a él, con el uniforme de lienzo sin insignias, las polainas, la espuela de oro en el talón izquierdo, más viejo que todos los hombres y todos los animales viejos de la tierra y del agua, y estaba tirado en el suelo, bocabajo, con el brazo derecho doblado bajo la cabeza para que le sirviera de almohada, como había dormido noche tras noche durante todas las noches de su larguísima vida de déspota solitario.<sup>2</sup>

At approximately this point the narration changes from exclusively a description of the immediate surroundings (the original situation) to pure récit. In the sentence following the above description of the General's corpse, the narrator changes the focus from description to strictly the telling of the story:

Sólo cuando lo volteamos para verle la cara comprendimos que era imposible reconocerlo aunque no hubiera estado carcomido de gallinazos, porque ninguno de nosotros lo había visto nunca... (p. 8)

By noting that none of them had ever actually seen the General, the narrator has changed from a description of the physical sur-

roundings to relating past circumstances. This is the point that may be identified as the "aperture" in the narrative-- an opening of the original scene into a broader story.<sup>3</sup>

Each of the five remaining chapters uses the establishment of the original situation as described above and an aperture into the level of pure récit. In the second chapter the narrator begins to integrate the elements of the story almost immediately upon beginning the description of the original situation in the presidential palace. The first sentence reads as follows:

La segunda vez que lo encontraron carcomido por los gallinazos en la misma oficina, con la misma ropa y en la misma posición, ninguno de nosotros era bastante viejo para recordar lo que ocurrió la primera vez, pero sabíamos que ninguna evidencia de su muerte era terminante, pues siempre había otra verdad detrás de la verdad. (p. 46)

The sentence may be divided into three parts. The first part, to the word "posición", relates to the original situation, the corpse. The second part, from "ninguno" to "primera vez", functions as récit, referring to the events in the preceding chapter concerning the General's "first death". In the third sentence the narrative opens to pure récit, referring to the life of the General rather than the immediate physical situation or what the reader already knows. The next sentence continues the narrative by proceeding with récit: "Ni siquiera los menos prudentes nos conformábamos con las apariencias..."(p. 46). By the second page of this chapter, however, the narrator has returned to the original situation, using a short sentence that refers to it, just as the beginning of the chapters use short sentences: "Tampoco el escrutinio meticuloso de la casa aportó ningún elemento válido para

establecer su identidad" (p. 48). Then the narrator describes more of the physical surroundings, Bendición Alvarado's room. After approximately two and one half pages there is a complete opening, changing the focus from the original situation to telling the General's story: "Al contrario de la ropa, las descripciones de sus historiadores le quedaban grandes..." (p. 50). From this point in the chapter there is no more description of the physical surroundings, and the narrative opens exclusively to pure récit, telling the General's story. By the third chapter the transformation from the revelation of details concerning the original situation to récit occurs earlier, and the original situation is less important than in the two previous chapters (again, stressing the "progressive" nature of this structure).

The first sentence refers to the cadaver:

Así lo encontraron en las vísperas de su otoño, cuando el cadáver era en realidad el de Patricio Aragonés, y así volvimos a encontrarlo muchos años más tarde en una época de tantas incertidumbres que nadie podía rendirse a la evidencia de que fuera suyo aquel cuerpo senil carcomido de gallinazos y plagado de parásito de fondo de mar. (p. 89)

In this first sentence there is one reference with a scope beyond the original situation: "en una época de incertidumbres". The second sentence refers to the physical (his hand), and from this point the direction of the sentence is toward the past. By the third sentence (still on the first page of the chapter), there are no references to the immediate physical surroundings, and the chapter has opened to pure récit. The fourth sentence (first and second page) contains no reference to the immediate sur-

roundings either, and its subject is an ambassador who had had contact with the General. The fifth sentence (second, third and fourth page) uses no reference to the physical environment, and employs the mention of the corpses only as a point of departure for the relating of the story: "Era difícil admitir que aquel anciano irreparable fuera el único saldo de un hombre cuyo poder había sido tan grande que..." (p. 92). These two sentences can be identified as the point of the definitive opening of the chapter from the original situation to récit. There are no more references to the original situation, and the opening has occurred on the second page of the chapter. The first "Era difícil admitir" occurs earlier than the aperture in the previous chapters and the original situation has become less important, being used more strictly as a point of departure.

The first sentence of Chapter IV functions as pure récit, making no reference to the original situation:

Había sorteado tantos escollos de desórdenes telúricos, tantos eclipses aciagos, tantas bolas de candela en el cielo, que parecía imposible que alguien de nuestro tiempo confiara todavía en pronósticos de barajas referidos a su destino.

(p. 130)

The second sentence does refer to the corpse, and then continues beyond this original situation to relate popular opinion concerning the General:

Sin embargo, mientras se adelantaban los trámites para componer y embalsamar el cuerpo, hasta los menos cándidos esperábamos sin confesarlo el cumplimiento de predicciones antiguas, como que el día de su muerte el lodo de los cenegales había de regresar por sus afluentes hasta las cabeceras, que había de llover sangre... (p. 129)

The third sentence (still first page) makes no reference to the

original situation or the corpse, but continues relating the story of the rumors and versions about his life. At this point on the first page the opening takes place from the original situation to pure récit.

In the fifth chapter the first sentence refers specifically to the original situation:

Poco antes del anochecer, cuando acabamos de sacar los cascarrones podridos de las vacas y pusimos un poco de arreglo en aquel desorden de fábula, aún no habíamos conseguido que el cadáver se pareciera a la imagen de su leyenda. (p. 169)

The second sentence also refers to this original situation, with the narrator explaining the attempts they made to prepare the General's corpse. The third sentence serves as a bridge between the relating of the original situation and the opening to récit. It remains to some extent within the framework of the original situation, but extends the immediate present (the specificity of the corpse) by relating the meeting of officials in the nearby "salón de consejo" in which they begin to decide upon the division of power:

Mientras tanto, en el salón del consejo de gobierno invocábamos la unión de todos contra el despotismo de siglos para repartirse por partes iguales el botín de su poder, pues todos...  
(p. 169)

The "salón de consejo" is not precisely within the scope of the "original situation" as it has been defined, and thus serves as a physical bridge between this situation and the telling of the General's story. The fourth sentence moves to the actual opening of the narrative:

Nos encontrábamos inermes ante esa evidencia,



comprometidos con un cuerpo pestilente que no éramos capaces de sustituir en el mundo porque él se había negado en sus instancias seniles a tomar ninguna determinación sobre el destino de la patria después de él, había resistido con una terquedad de viejo a cuantas sugerencias se le hicieron desde que el gobierno... (my emphasis, p. 170)

The beginning of the sentence mentions the "cuerpo pestilente". Then, however, the sentence begins to describe what the General had done (refusing to make any provisions for what was to happen after his death) previous to this basic situation, and this is the point of opening in the narrative: the story continues as récit and there are no more references to the original situation.

In the last chapter, the sixth, the aperture occurs on the first page. Several parts of the sentence refer to the original situation: "Ahí estaba, pues, como si hubiera sido él aunque no lo fuera, acostado en la mesa de banquetes..."; "mas temible muerto que vivo con el guante de raso relleno de algodón sobre el pecho blindado...". Toward the end of the first page the narrator changes the focus to a previous discussion, which, in turn, leads to the opening of the narrative to récit: "discutíamos palabra por palabra el boletín final con la noticia que nadie se atrevía..." (p. 219)

The noted apertures that function as the point at which a basic anecdote is transformed into pure récit are corroborated technically by the use of the progressive opening of the length of the sentence.<sup>4</sup> This is the second level of aperture. The sentences lengthen at approximately the same point in each of the

chapters as the noted point at which the transformation from the original situation to récit occurs. In each chapter the beginning sentences are what might be called a normal length, and are then expanded in length as the chapter continues. The progressive nature of this development of the sentence is demonstrated by the fact that each chapter has fewer sentences: Chapter I has 31 sentences; Chapter II has 24 sentences; Chapter III has 19 sentences; Chapter IV has 18 sentences; Chapter V has 15 sentences; and finally, Chapter VI has only one sentence.

The opening from the original situation into story-telling corresponds to the opening of the length of the sentence. In Chapter I the sentences on the first page are of an approximate "normal" length, that is, of 8, 8, and 5 lines in the text. The fourth sentence (ending the first page and beginning the second) is expanded to 21 lines. Throughout the next seven pages (to page 12) the length of the sentence varies, but remains approximately within the limits of the sentences on the first two pages, ranging from a few lines in length to a full page (35 lines in the text). Then, on page 12, the first significant opening of the length of the sentence appears, with the sentence on pages 12 and 13 being 64 lines in length. From this point sentence length becomes progressively longer, or at the least tends to remain at the length of the longer sentence (about a page or slightly more). Whereas it has already been noted that the opening from the original situation to story-telling occurs on pages 9 and 10, it is closely followed by the extension of sentence length. The two principal steps in the lengthening of the sentence in Chapter I

on the first page (from 8 lines to 21 lines), and the final extension to 64 lines. The longest sentence in Chapter I is 112 lines, this occurring on two occasions (pages 30-34 and pages 42-46).

In Chapter II the change in sentence length is abrupt. On the first two pages the sentences tend to be relatively short. As in the first chapter, the first sentence is 8 lines. The second sentence is the longest in these beginning pages, being 30 lines (slightly less than a page), and the remainder of the sentences on the first two pages range from 3 lines to 21 lines. At approximately the same point at which the narrative changed its focus from the original situation to récit, the sentence length begins to expand to a length of one page or more. The change to récit has been noted on page 50. On page 50 we also have the first expansion of the sentence, with the sentence on pages 50-51 being 35 lines, or a full page, in length. From this point the narrative opens (both in its focus and in sentence length), and the remaining sentences of the chapter tend to be longer than a page rather than shorter than a page. Extending sentence length beyond that noted in Chapter I, the narrative opens after 5 pages to a sentence of 338 lines (about 9 pages), the longest sentence of the first two chapters.

In Chapter III the progressive nature of the openings of sentence length is more evident. The first three sentences of the chapter are of the typical length of the beginning sentences in the chapters, being of 7, 7, and 8 lines. Then in the fourth sentence the first reference is provided that moves away from the

original situation and toward relating the story ("El embajador Palmerston, uno de los últimos..." p. 89). This first opening into the General's story is also the first expansion of sentence length, with this sentence at the end of the first page and the beginning of the next being 28 lines in length. The change has occurred earlier than in the first two chapters (underlining again the "progressive" nature of the structure). From this point the sentences remain lengthy (usually over a page) and the beginning of the third page of the chapter contains a sentence of 208 lines, the longest sentence of the chapter.

Chapter IV has only two sentences of normal length at the beginning. They are of 5 and 10 lines, respectively. By the third sentence the narrative has opened its focus to beyond the immediate situation of observing the General's corpse ("Era imposible no creerlo, si los pocos periódicos... p. 129), and the sentence length opens quickly to 49 lines in a sentence that begins at the middle of the first page. From this point all the sentences in the remainder of the chapter (except two) are at least a page in length (over 35 lines), and the last sentence is the most extensive, being 187 lines long.

In Chapter V only the first sentence is of normal length (5 lines) before the opening occurs. The second sentence expands immediately to 22 lines, with the third being 17 and the fourth being 34 lines. These sentences relate to the original situation, while at the same time some story-telling is carried out. Besides describing the corpse, the narrator explains the events such as the change of power and the dealings that are taking place as a

result of the General's death. Thus, there is some movement away from the "original situation" when in the third sentence the narrator mentions the meeting in the "salón de consejo". By the second page of the chapter the opening is the most abrupt experienced to this point in the novel in terms of sentence length. On the one hand, it is the opening to the story ("Tuvo razón, pues en nuestra época no había nadie que pusiera en duda la legitimidad de su historia..."), and on the other, it opens to a sentence of 268 lines in length. The remainder of the sentences that tell the General's story in this chapter are almost all over 100 lines in length. In this respect we note the difference, for example, from the first two chapters.

The last chapter begins "Ahí estaba, pues como si hubiera..." (p. 219), a reference to the corpse and the immediate situation. Within this same sentence the chapter opens to récit on the first page ("discutíamos"). The opening in terms of sentence length reaches the extreme; the entire chapter is one sentence of 1825 lines. This change is abrupt, but in accordance with the progressive nature as it has been discussed. Although more extreme than in the previous chapters, it is a logical step in the development, because sentences have been becoming progressively longer in each chapter, and also because in Chapter V there is only one sentence (the first) of what may be considered "normal" length. The progressive and precise manner of handling the sentence length in correspondence with the opening of the story helps to define the narrative system that García Márquez constructs in this novel. The third level of aperture, also corresponding to the first

two, is the opening of narrative point of view.<sup>5</sup> In each chapter the point of view in which the novel begins is limited (corresponding to the original situation and the shorter sentences), and then opens to other points of view, in some cases to multiple points of view within the same sentence. This variation of narrative point of view, functioning through the aperture as a point of departure, has various effects and is a key to the experience of the novel.

An unidentified narrator within the story recounts the beginning pages of the first chapter. He and other unidentified accomplices enter the presidential palace to discover the rotting corpse. For this reason I shall identify this narrator as the "narrator-discoverer". Thus, these pages are narrated in the first-person plural ("vimos"). The very first sentence does not identify this narrator as necessarily within the story, and it could technically be told by a narrator outside the story:

Durante el fin de semana los gallinazos se metieron por los balcones de la casa presidencial, destrozaron a picotazos las mallas de alambre de las ventanas y removieron con sus alas el tiempo estancado en el interior, y en la madrugada del lunes la ciudad despertó de su letargo de siglos con una tibia y tierna brisa de muerto grande y de podrida grandeza. (p. 5)

From the beginning of the next sentence the position of the narrator within the story is evident: "Sólo entonces nos atrevimos a entrar..." (p. 5). For approximately the next three pages the narrative remains within the scope of this narrator within the story who, along with some others, enters the palace. By the fourth page, however, this narrative begins to open to other speakers. The first change occurs on page 9. Here the narrator

inside the story is relating details about the physical environment, but suddenly the narrative changes to one word that comes from another speaker: "... y una tarde de enero habíamos visto una vaca contemplando el crepúsculo desde el balcón presidencial, imáginese, una vaca en el balcón de la patria, qué cosa más inicua, qué país de mierda, pero se hicieron tantas conjeturas de cómo era posible que una vaca llegara hasta un balcón si todo el mundo sabía que las vacas no se trepaban..." (p. 9). The "imáginese" interrupts the original narrator's account. The phrase "qué país de mierda" is a phrase from the General's voice, not corresponding to the narrator's language (and, as we note later, corresponding to the General's attitude about the country). This point in the narrative, noted here as the opening of point of view (transcending the limits of the narrator-discoverer) occurs in the same sentence already discussed as the one that changes from the original situation to pure récit. After this first opening of the point of view beyond the limits of the narrator-discoverer, there are no more openings of first-person narrators (or "dialoguers") for two pages. On page 12 there is a similar use of short interruptions in the sentence by different characters. From this point in the chapter the limits of knowledge have been opened and the use of other speakers is frequent. Later in the chapter, as the sentences lengthen, the extension of the communications by other speakers is extended. Thus, Patricio Aragonés speaks directly to the General for 16 lines in one of the longer variations from the basic narrator, and the General himself has an extensive monologue of approximately a half page

when he decides to take complete control of the government after an assassination attempt (pages 35-36). This monologue by the General takes place, appropriately enough, at a point in the chapter in which sentence length has been totally opened: it appears in a sentence of 106 lines (which follows the longest sentence of the chapter, 112 lines). The extreme limits of "opening" in the chapter take place in an approximate concomitant position in the chapter.

The second chapter begins once more with a relatively "closed" narrative point of view of the narrator-discoverer. The first change in this point of view, an expansion beyond the limitations of this narrator, occurs in the same place that has been identified as the aperture on the other two levels, on the fourth and fifth pages of the chapter (pages 50-51). Here, the narrator changes his scope from a more general knowledge to the specific words of the General. The key sentence begins as follows (I quote it through the first change in point of view):

Esta certidumbre parecía válida inclusive para él, pues se sabía que era un hombre sin padre como los déspotas más ilustres de la historia, que el único pariente que se le conoció y tal vez el único que tuvo fue su madre de mi alma Bendición Alvarado a quien los textos escolares... (my emphasis, p. 51)

The "se sabía" is exemplary of the level of communication I have identified as general knowledge-- that which everybody knows. Later in this sentence the first opening beyond the limits of this narrator and general knowledge is evidenced with the word "mi", either the words of the General or the narrator's imitation of his words. There are three other instances in this sentence that express a point of view beyond general knowledge. First, the



narrator states: "... a quien él proclamó por decreto matriarca de la patria con el argumento simple de que madre no hay sino una, la mfa, una rara mujer de origen incierto..." (my emphasis, p. 51). Later in the same sentence there is the first longer opening of point of view in the chapter in the voice of the General's mother: "ni podía soportar que había dicho en una fiesta diplomática que estoy cansada de rogarle a Dios que tumben a mi hijo, porque esto de vivir en la casa presidencial es como estar a toda hora con la luz prendida, señor, y lo había dicho con la misma verdad natural con que un día de la patria..." (p. 51). At the end of the sentence there is another change to the words of the mother: "... y le gritó que ya que vas a pasar por ahí aprovecha para devolver estas botellas en la tienda de la esquina, pobre madre..." (p. 33). While the emphasized words are the mother's, the last two words are the General's. From this point in Chapter II the narrative has been opened in terms of point of view, and the voices continue to vary as the chapter proceeds, also becoming more frequent and lengthy.

In accordance with the progressive nature of the structure as I am describing it, the openings in point of view occur at an earlier point in the third chapter than in the first two. The narrator-discoverer who begins the chapter has complete control of the narrative for only the first page. It has been noted that in the fourth sentence the chapter opens in sentence length (28 lines) and into telling the story beyond the original situation: "El embajador Palmerston, uno de los últimos diplomáticos que le presentó las cartas credenciales, contaba en sus memorias..." (p. 89). It is also this fourth sentence that opens the narrative to

speakers other than the narrator-discoverer, this occurring on the second page of the chapter and in the words of Palmerston: "... me dio razón de nada en alcabalas y oficinas y tuve que valerme de los leprosos y los paralíticos que ya habían invadido las primeras habitaciones..." (p. 90). Palmerston's voice continues for 18 lines: at this point in the novel the opening of point of view not only occurs earlier than in the previous chapters, but now there is an extensive opening from the beginning of the chapter. (We have noted that the initial openings were only short phrases before-- "mi madre Bendición Alvarado"). The sentence ends with the words of the General: "... y diciendo con una voz de despertar dormidos que escuche ese tropel de mulos que viene por allá, escuche mi querido Stetson, es el mar que vuelve... (my emphasis, p. 90). The sixth sentence, the longest of the chapter (207 lines), contains numerous changes in point of view, providing the perspective of unidentified people who were close to the General in the presidential palace, of Dionisio Iguarán, an extended monologue by one of the General's lovers (pages 95-96), and of an old lady who tells his future and how he will die.

The fourth chapter is structured quite similarly to the third, has approximately the same number of sentences, and does not change significantly the procedure noted in Chapter III. The chapter opens in length in the third sentence, this being 49 lines. With the fourth sentence, of 40 lines, the sentences begin to open the point of view, with short phrases in the voices of characters rather than the narrator-discoverer. Thus, on the third page of the chapter (page 131) a character says "adios" to the General,

and later in the same sentence we note the short phrase "... al pasar con un pañuelo blanco, adiós mi general, adiós, pero él no oía, no oía nada desde los lutos crepusculares..." (my emphasis, p. 131). From this point in the chapter, the "opening" sentence, it continues with at least short interruptions of the narration of the narrator-discoverer. This chapter contains one of the few extensive monologues or dialogues in which the General is the speaker. This expansion of point of view through the General's voice appears in approximately the same place in the chapter as the most extensive expansion of the sentence length in the chapter. (This sentence appears near the end of the chapter, a point at which the sentences have been extended, and contains 149 lines, the third longest sentence of the chapter.)

The opening of point of view, occurring on the second page, takes place at a point slightly earlier in Chapter V than in Chapter IV. The opening to pure récit has been noted in the fourth sentence ("Nos encontrábamos inermes ante esa evidencia...") and this is the point at which the point of view opens beyond the narrator-discoverer: "... le planteábamos la urgencia de ordenar su herencia, pues decía que pensar en el mundo después de uno mismo era algo tan cenizo como la propia muerte, qué cara jo, si al cabo cuando yo muera volverán los políticos a repartirse esta vaina como en los tiempos de los godos, ya lo verán, decía..." (my emphasis, pp. 170-171). As this sentence continues, there are additional words from the General. This chapter also contains another of the rare, long monologues by the General himself (13 lines on pages 201-202). It is significant in both the

theme and structure: (1) the subject of this monologue is his "mar", an object very important to the General's power, as will be explained in more detail later, (2) as in the extensive monologue in the previous chapter, it occurs near the end of the chapter where the length of the sentences is extended, and in the second longest sentence of the chapter (214 lines).

The last chapter carries the progressive nature of the structure to its extreme by opening to pure récit on the first page and extending the sentence to cover the entire chapter. The use of varied narrative voices also takes place earlier than before, beginning immediately after the first page of the chapter: "... un teniente que iba de puerta en puerta ordenando cerrar las pocas tiendas que empezaban a abrirse en la calle del comercio, hoy es feriado nacional, gritaba..." (my emphasis, p. 220). Other brief changes in narrative voice follow on the same page and immediately thereafter. In this chapter a monologue by the General is of some 20 lines, interrupted briefly by another dialogue (pages 234-235). This section attempts to justify his power and success as dictator. The variety of narrative voices present in this one-sentence chapter makes this chapter the most complex yet. These voices appear more frequently and are more extensive than in the previous chapters. At the beginning of the chapter the first extensive change in point of view is in the words of an adolescent girl he seduces, an act described by her in a monologue of 27 lines (page 222). The second monologue is by another of his lovers on the following page. It also describes the General's sexual desires through the point of view of a woman, a monologue

of 19 lines (p. 223). After this, and throughout the chapter, there are numerous short dialogues by the General: "ni de vainas mi querido Stevenson, todo menos el mar" (p. 224); "que me cago en el rey de Londres, primero muertos que vendidos" (p. 225); "mi querido Baxter, primero muerto que sin mar" (p. 225); "contigo en los establos, mi niña, con tus teticas de corozo y tu cosita de almeja" (p. 225). The next speaker is another adolescent girl who reveals in detail to the General her recruitment as one of his prostitutes (pages 226-227). Without discussing all the speakers of the remainder of this chapter in detail, they are: the General (numerous monologues and dialogues); José Ignacio Saenz de la Barra; unidentified officials close to the General (p. 248); unidentified citizenry (p. 251); el comandante Kitchener (p. 254); el cónsul Macdonnal (p. 254); Bendición Alvarado (p. 255); el embajador Kipling (p. 257). It also has been pointed out that these changes in speakers take place on every page of this chapter after the first.

One function of this use of point of view is to provide a more complete characterization of the General, which, in turn, is responsible for humorous effects in this characterization. One common technique is the use of emphasis on the General's omnipotence (usually the "exterior" view of the General) in contrast with his fundamental simplicity (usually the "interior" view of him). In terms of power, it is expressed from the first page as something intangible but perceived by all under the General's rule:

Fue como penetrar en el ámbito de otra época, porque el aire era mas tenue en los pozos de escombros de la

vasta guarida del poder, y el silencio era más antiguo,  
y las cosas eran arduamente visibles en la luz decrepita.  
(p. 5)

A similar expression of the generalized perception of the General's power is suggested when the narrator-discoverer states: "...y sin embargo sabíamos que él estaba ahí, lo sabíamos porque el mundo seguía, la vida seguía..." (p. 9). Later, the narrator-discoverer reveals the generalized perception of his power by professing to believe in the General's power to order the trees to give fruit:

... el poder no era todavía el légamo sin orilla  
de la plenitud del otoño sino un torrente de fiebre  
que velamos brotar ante nuestros ojos de sus manantiales  
primarios, de modo que bastaba con que él señalara con el  
dedo a los árboles que debían dar frutos y a los animales  
que debían crecer y a los hombres que debían prosperar...  
(p. 93)

As this passage suggests both in its content and style, in the "exterior" and distanced view the General is a God-like figure. He makes a similarly God-like gesture to control nature and restore order after a storm (narrated from the point of view of the citizenry "we"):

...vimos los ojos tristes, los labios mustios, la  
mano pensativa que hacía señales de cruces de bendición  
para que cesaran las lluvias y brillara el sol, y de-  
volvió la vida a las gallinas ahogadas, y ordenó que  
bajaran las aguas y las aguas bajaron. (p. 104)

Similarly, later in the same chapter he orders that the direction of the flow of a river be reversed and his order is fulfilled (p. 109).

The inside view of the General and his power supports this God-like characterization, and also creates humor by showing the pettiness of his conception of power (in contrast with the grandiosity of the God-figure), and his paranoia and puerility. Once

the first chapter has opened beyond the generalized view, an omniscient narrator reveals the General's God-like understanding of his capacity to decide "destiny": "Antes, durante la ocupación de los infantes de marina, se encerraba en la oficina para decidir el destino de la patria..." (p. 12). When he justifies the assassination of officials who betray him, he does so with a God-like expression of being their creator: "me sirven para aumentar el gasto de leche y a la hora de las vainas se cagan en el plato en que acaban de comer, yo que los parí a todos, carajo, me los saqué de las costillas..." (my emphasis, p. 116). When there is an attempted coup, the General perceives it as an attempt to replace him as God: "... y todavía querían más, carajo, querían ser yo, malparidos..." (p. 124). Similarly, he scolds other potential traitors in a God-like manner: "... tú a quien saqué de la nada, tú a quien puse a dormir en cama de oro después de haberte encontrado por los suelos, tú a quien salvé la vida, tú a quien compré por más dinero que a cualquiera, todos ustedes, hijos de la mala madre..." (p. 154). When he agrees to pay a bill his wife has incurred with local merchants, their perception of him is of a God figure: "Era tanto como decir que le cobrara a Dios, porque nadie sabía desde entonces, si él existía a ciencia cierta..." (p. 185)

In contrast with this God-like power he manipulates both in the view of the citizenry and in his own self-esteem, the inside view often emphasizes his pettiness and puerility. Throughout the novel the General carefully and repetitively locks his elaborate combination of "los tres aldabas, los tres cerrojos, los tres pestillos" in his room, underlining his extreme paranoia.

In contrast with his God-like sureness, his confidant Rodrigo de Aguilar is the only person "authorized" to defeat him in dominoes (p. 17). His simplicity contrasts with his grandiosity. The simplicity is that part of his characterization not revealed by the narrator-discoverer. The General is revealed as such after the point of view has opened to other speakers beyond the voice of the citizenry. In the first chapter, after the narrative opens beyond the narrator-discoverer, an omniscient narrator explains that the General watches over the milking of cows daily in order to measure the exact amount of milk that the presidential carts are to carry to the city, providing a humorous contrast with the grandiose figure seen by the citizenry, and even with the interior view of himself as a God-figure. When the General decides to locate his love, Manuela Sánchez, his search for her resembles an adolescent experience: he searches for her in the neighborhood, nervously asks different people for directions to the home of the girl he describes, and after introducing himself to her mother, waits anxiously in the living room while her mother knits.

His characterization as a child-figure takes place from the beginning of the novel when he is described as a "niño decrepito" (p. 13). At one point he returns home with packages and excitedly opens and plays with his live siren in an aquarium, a wind-up angel, and a giant shell, commenting "qué vainas tan berracas, madre ya ve qué bueno es no ser pobre" (p. 55). In general, the relationship between the mother and son tends to be a mother-child relationship. For example, she nags him about his health and tells him that he must stay at home for dinner one evening: "te estás volviendo



tísico de tanto pensar sin alimentarte bien, quédate a comer esta noche, le suplicó, tratando de seducirlo con la tentación de la gallina estrangulada que sostenía con ambas manos para que no se le escapara en los estertores de la agonía, y él dijo que está bien, madre, me quedo" (p. 105). The mother-child relationship is apparent when she gives her final instructions from her death-bed:

... que no desplumaran a los pavorreales para hacer sombreros, sí madre, decía él, y le daba una mano de creolina por todo el cuerpo, que no obliguen a cantar a los pájaros en las fiestas, sí madre, y la volvía en la sábana de dormir, que saquen las gallinas de los nidos cuando esté tronando para que no empollen basiliscos, sí madre... (p. 137)

After his mother's death he marries Leticia Nazareno and she assumes the mother role. As such she teaches him to read and write, and the important factor is the infantile methodology she uses for him: he recites songs like "el tilo en la tuna el lilo en la tina el bonete nítido" for pronunciation practice, and must recite "con jota se escribe jengibre jofaina y jinete".

The technique of contrasting the exterior and interior views of the General is particularly effective in certain passages in which a particular anecdote changes from the exterior to the interior view within one sentence. For example, an attempted assassination is foiled by the General when, as the potential assassin holds him at gunpoint, the General confronts him and screams: "atrévete cabrón, atrévete", and when the assassin hesitates, the General attacks him, calls his guards, and orders the victim tortured. After the narration of this anecdote by an omniscient narrator (with occasional interjections by the General), the story is completed by providing

at the very end of the sentence the interior view (that those who saw him act were not aware of): "... desapareció en la sala de audiencias como un relámpago fugitivo hacia los aposentos privados, entró en el dormitorio, cerró las tres aldabas, los tres pestillos, los tres cerrojos, y se quitó con la punta de los dedos los pantalones que llevaba ensopados de mierda" (my emphasis, p. 123). Until the narrator reveals the General's reactions in the last three words, the reader's view has been exterior and similar to the people observing the General's actions. The last three words provide the interior contrasting characterization of the General and thus creates humor. A similar technique is employed when Leticia Nazareno seduces the General. After the long process of the seduction, the narrator continues:

... aturcido por las ansias de sus riñones, la ristra de petardos de sus tripas, el desgarramiento de muerte del tentáculo tierno que le arrancó de cuajo las entrañas y lo convirtió en un animal degollado cuyos tumbos agónicos salpicaba las sábanas nevadas con una materia ardiente y agria que pervirtió en su memoria el aire de vidrio líquido de la tarde de lluvias radiantes del mosquitero, pues era mierda, general, su propia mierda. (p. 168)

The point of view is technically the General's in the first part of the quote: he is sitting in the "materia ardiente" unaware of his exact situation. The reader is at this point equally limited. Then there is a change in scope and the reader, like the General, becomes aware that he is sitting in his own feces. The effect of the anecdote is achieved through the change in point of view at the end, revealing the General's character more completely.

The fourth, and final, level of aperture is the opening to a "seen" reality. Or it could be stated that this fourth

level is an opening of the dimensions of reality in the novel. Each chapter begins within defined limits of reality-- that which can be seen. Then, the chapters open to beyond what can be seen. The reader experiences this manipulation of visible and invisible reality in conjunction with the other three levels of aperture discussed.

In the first scene of the novel vultures are entering the presidential palace. The first suggestion that the General is dead is thus provided by visual means. From this sentence and throughout the novel, it becomes apparent that only that which is seen may be believed: the General, the citizenry and the reader learn to believe only what they can see. This problem of visible and invisible reality is fundamental to the main theme of the novel-- the General's power-- and to the reader's experience. After the description of the vultures, the overtly visible sign of death, the narrator-discoverer emphasizes the importance of what he can see: "... y las cosas eran arduamente visibles en la luz decrepita" (my emphasis, p. 5).<sup>6</sup> He follows with an elaboration of his realm of the visible:

A lo largo del primer patio, cuyas baldosas habían cedido a la presión subterránea de la maleza, vimos el retén en desorden de la guardia fugitiva... vimos el galpón en penumbra... vimos en el centro del patio la alberca... vimos en el fondo la antigua caballeriza de los virreyes transformada en cochera, y vimos entre las camelias y las parimposas... (my emphasis, pp. 5-6)

After this enumeration they move to another patio and the narrator-discoverer describes the physical surroundings. They enter the "casa civil" and then the narrator-discoverer reiterates once more what they can see:

... y desde el primer vestíbulo hasta los dormitorios privados vimos las oficinas y las salas impávidas... vimos las oficinas... vimos cuadros heroicos... vimos un comedor comido por las vacas... vimos abandonada... vimos jaulas de pájaros colgadas por todas partes... y vimos por las ventanas... vimos los cráteres muertos...  
(my emphasis, p. 7)

The final use of the verb "ver" at the beginning of the chapter takes place when they discover the General's corpse: "... y allí vimos a él, con el uniforme de lienzo sin insignias, las polainas, la espuela de oro en el talón izquierdo..." (p. 8). Appropriately, upon describing this visible image of the General, the narrator opens to beyond what this narrator can see-- the point of aperture in the chapter. In the next sentence after the description of the General, for example, the conjugated verbs are "comprender" ("comprendimos" p. 8), and "saber" ("sabíamos" on pp. 8 and 9). The narrative changes from what can be seen to what is understood, to what is known, and to what has been related ("alguien había contado que..." p. 8).

The first sentence of the second chapter has as its actual theme the problem of the visible versus illusion, thus discussing the experience of living under the General's power and the process elaborated by the novel's structure:

La segunda vez que lo encontraron carcomido por los gallinazos en la misma oficina, con la misma ropa y en la misma posición, ninguno de nosotros era bastante viejo para recordar lo que ocurrió la primera vez, pero sabíamos que ninguna evidencia de su muerte era terminante, pues siempre había otra verdad detrás de la verdad. Ni siquiera los menos prudentes nos conformábamos con las apariencias...  
(p. 47)

After the discussion of this theme, the narrator-discoverer once more describes the experience of entering the palace by

relating exclusively what he sees: "... vimos un sillón de mimbre mordisqueado por las vacas... vimos estuches de pinturas de agua... vimos una tinaja..." (my emphasis, p. 48). Then he describes what is seen in Leticia Nazareno's bedroom (p. 48). When they enter the General's bedroom the actual verb employed is "encontrar" ("encontramos" p. 49), rather than "ver", but the emphasis remains on the tangible. At this point in the chapter the focus changes from what is actually seen to that which has been said: "Ambos uniformes eran demasiado pequeños para el cadáver, pero no por eso descartamos la posibilidad de que fueran suyos pues también se dijo en un tiempo que él había seguido creciendo hasta los cien años..." (p. 49). The "se dijo" communicates generalized belief rather than the visible. The next sentence communicates official written versions about the General ("los textos oficiales... lo referían como un patriarca..." p. 50). Along these same lines, the sentence that follows these two describes what is thought about him, again in general terms: "Aunque todo rastro de su origen había desaparecido de los textos, se pensaba que era un hombre..." (p. 50). The change from the visible to the generalized dimension of reality (in this case, the characterization of the General) indicates the aperture in the chapter.

By the third chapter the opening occurs earlier, taking place on the first page of the chapter (as has been noted on the other three levels of aperture). The verb "ver" is not employed, but, as has been noted in the previous chapter, the use of the verb "encontrar" functions similarly, indicating something that is definitely tangible. The narrator-discoverer

describes the General they find in the first sentence of the chapter: "... y así volvimos a encontrarlo muchos años más tarde en una época de tantas incertidumbres que nadie podía rendirse a la evidencia de que fuera suyo aquel cuerpo senil carcomido de gallinazos y plagado de parásitos de fondo de mar" (p. 90). The second sentence also describes the strictly visible:

En la mano amercillada por la putrefacción no quedaba entonces ningún indicio de que hubiera estado alguna vez en el pecho por los desaires de una doncella improbable de los tiempos del ruido, ni habíamos encontrado rastro alguno de su vida que pudiera conducirnos al establecimiento inequívoco de su identidad. (my emphasis, p. 89)

The next sentence changes the focus from the visible; the narrator explains what it seemed like ("No nos parecía insólito..."), and what they doubted ("había motivos para dudar"). By the last sentence of the first page, the communication is based more on general knowledge ("contaba"). From this point in the chapter there is no further focus on the visible observations of the narrator-discoverer. The aperture takes place at the same point noted in the other levels of this chapter.

The first sentence of the fifth chapter refers to the problem of the visible General versus the invisible General, the latter being the one that has been imagined, the one that has been created through general knowledge, i.e. "se dice", "se contaba", etc:

Poco antes del anochecer, cuando acabamos de sacar los cascarones podridos de las vacas y pusimos un poco de arreglo en aquel desorden de fábula, aun no habíamos conseguido que el cadáver se pareciera a la imagen de su leyenda.

(p. 169)

In this particular case the narrator-discoverer is in the presence of the visible General, but an attempt is being made to change him

so he will correspond to the reality that has superseded the real and tangible-- his legend. The second sentence involves the actual physical process through which they attempt to reconcile these two realities. The theme of the visible versus the invisible reality is abandoned by the third sentence and the chapter opens beyond this problem to a meeting of officials after the General's death.

As has been observed in previous chapters, the last chapter uses as its point of departure the theme of the visible General versus the popular legend. The first words of the first line emphasize his visual image: "Ahí estaba, pues, como si hubiera sido él aunque no lo fuera..." (p. 219). At this point the theme of the visible versus the invisible has become problematical: it appears to be the General even if it is not, and it is impossible to make any definitive statement concerning the matter. Later in the first page there is another direct reference to the problem of the visible versus the invisible General, in this case affirming the importance of the visible within this fictional world:

... con el fragoroso uniforme de gala y las polainas de charol y la única espuela de oro que encontramos en la casa y los diez soles tristes de general del universo que le impusieron a última hora para darle una jerarquía mayor que la de la muerte, tan inmediato y visible en su nueva identidad póstuma que por primera vez se podía creer sin duda alguna en su existencia real... (my emphasis, p. 219)

By this last chapter the characterization of the General only affirms the observation made concerning the reiteration of the verb "ver" in the beginning chapters of the novel: only the visible offers the possibility of being believable, although it certainly

does not guarantee credibility. Toward the end of the first page the narrator explains the action: "...en el salón contigo del consejo de gobierno discutíamos palabra por palabra el boletín final con la noticia que nadie se atrevía a creer..." (p. 219). The actual subject of their discussion is beyond the immediately tangible and visible, but nevertheless the problem being discussed is reality versus illusion concerning the General: they cannot believe ("no se atrevían a creer" p. 219) that he is dead. At approximately this point, however, the chapter opens beyond both the visible and the theme of the visible versus invisible General; the immediate focus is on what is heard ("cuando nos despertó el ruido" p. 219) and on the next page the narrative focusses on other characters (based on what they have seen or heard).

This fourth level of the novel's basic structure is fundamental not only because the novel's experience is based largely on the manipulation of the visible and the invisible, but also because the General controls power and the image he projects in terms of the extent to which he manipulates what is visible. Thus, there is a correlation between characterization and character and also between theme and technique. When the General actually sees his own death (that of his double) in the first chapter, the experience changes him profoundly. This experience is described through the repetition of the verb "ver":

... contemplando el cortejo que desfilaba en torno de su cadáver, y por un instante olvidó los propósitos turbios de la farsa y se sintió ultrajado y disminuido por la inclemencia de la muerte ante la majestad del poder, vio la vida sin él, vio con una cierta autoridad, vio con una quietud... vio a un anciano que le hizo un saludo... vio un hombre enlutado... vio una colegiala que le puso una flor, vio una vendedora... (my emphasis, p. 32)



As the reiteration suggests, the profundity of the experience is based on the fact that he sees death. Just as death becomes a reality for the General after seeing it, he confides only in reality as he can see it, and becomes a victim of the circumstances he has created through his power. When he falls in love with Manuela Sánchez, he attempts to attract her with the visible manifestations of his power: "... pues sólo sabía manifestar sus anhelos más íntimos con símbolos visibles de su poder descomunal..." (p. 79). Logically, the maximum gift for his maximum love, then, is the most impressive visual spectacle possible. Thus, the most valuable gift for Manuela Sánchez is a comet he presents to her:

... yo te traigo el regalo más grande del universo, un prodigio del cielo que va a pasar esta noche a las once cero seis para que tú lo veas, reina, sólo para que tú lo veas, y era el cometa. (p. 82)

The manipulation of power is determined by his ability to control the visible and the invisible. After a potential assassin fails to kill the General, the latter not only orders him put to death, but more significantly in the context of the General's understanding of the importance of the visible, he orders that the different parts of the assassin's body be exhibited throughout the country, thus providing a visible manifestation of the consequences of questioning the General's power. When he feels the necessity of exerting maximum control over his power, he must visibly observe its functioning. This explains, for example, the General's humorous desire to oversee the milking of his cows each morning. On the other hand, when his power is threatened by the church (it denies his mother sainthood), the General takes

direct control of the situation, declares "civil sainthood" for his mother, and, given the seriousness of the situation, visibly oversees the functioning of his orders:

... y él mandaba, que restaura las carreras de sacos y él mandaba, de acuerdo, y aparecía en los ranchos más míseros a explicar cómo debían echarse las gallinas en los nidos y cómo se castraban los terneros, pues no se había conformado con la comprobación personal de las minuciosas actas de inventarios de los bienes de la iglesia sino que dirigió las ceremonias formales de expropiación para que no quedara ningún resquicio entre su voluntad y los actos cumplidos... (p. 161)

He must see the important orders fulfilled. In one description of the General, he is described as most content and placated when he has a complete view of his kingdom through his window. He feels in complete control of his power when he can observe it:

... tenía a la derecha una ventana grande y abierta, también con mallas metálicas, a través de la cual se veía la ciudad entera y todo el cielo sin nubes ni pájaros hasta el otro lado del mar, y yo sentí un grande alivio porque él se mostraba menos consciente de su poder... (p. 188)

Similarly, he considers himself less responsible for events he does not see. Thus, he feels no compunction in ordering the assassination of two thousand children because he does not observe the actual massacre, and the brutal workings of Saenz de la Barra are of relatively little consequence to the General because they are covert. Being aware of the importance of the visible, one of the General's officials suggests that Saenz might be stopped if there were some way the General could be made to see the events taking place:

... que cada vez que se enteraban de un nuevo acto de barbarie suspiraban para adentro si el general lo supiera, si pudiéramos hacérselo saber,

si hubiera una manera de verlo, y él ordenó a quien se lo había contado que no olvidara nunca que de verdad yo no sé nada, ni he visto nada, ni he hablado de estas cosas con nadie, y así recobraba el sosiego... (my emphasis, p. 233)

The question of the visible and the invisible and its relation to the novel's main theme, power, is elaborated through the presence of the sea ("mar") in the novel. As the General's maximum visible object, his "best view", the "mar" is his most treasured possession. The "mar" is first mentioned in the first chapter when, after a reiteration of "ver", the narrator-discoverer terminates a sentence on the third page of the novel as follows: "vimos los cráteres muertos de ásperas cenizas de luna de la llanura sin término donde había estado el mar" (p. 7). Early in the novel a reference to the "mar" seems inexplicable. Within the context of the entire novel and the General's concept of power, however, it is understood that since the General conceives of his "mar" as being lost, it is naturally perceived as such by the citizenry that is totally indoctrinated and engulfed in his power. In the first chapter the "mar" also becomes closely associated with his window, and from this point his window and his "mar" are inseparable in the novel. Technically, the close association of the two is established from the beginning with the use of the preposition "de": "oyó por la ventana abierta del mar los tambores lejanos y las taitas tristes..." (my emphasis, p. 25). Later in the same chapter there is another association of the window to the "mar": "... alguien le iba mostrando con el dedo en la vitrina del mar..." (p. 43). On the same page there is a full-page enumeration of what the General observes from his window to the "mar": "...había

visto su hospital de tísicos... había visto el mercado infernal... había visto las vacas... había visto el agosto..." (p. 43). Also in this chapter, after the General reestablishes absolute control of the country (after his "first" death), and subsequently feels secure once more in his position, he opens his windows to the "mar": "... y se derribaron tantas paredes para aumentar el mundo y se abrieron tantas ventanas para ver el mar..." (p. 41). From this point in the novel the "mar" and the window (or "su mar" and "su ventana" in the possessive) represent his maximum values, so that whenever he finds himself in difficulties he goes to his window. When he condemns some political prisoners to death, international pressure is put upon him to annul the order. In such moments of crisis, he contemplates from his window: "... de acuerdo, dijo él, contemplando desde la ventana del dormitorio la hoguera nocturna en la ensenada del puerto mientras los dos condenados a muerte empezaban a vivir la noche de sus vísperas..." (p. 206). As he gradually loses control of his power he goes to the window more often. At the end of Chapter V, decrepit and in his one-hundredth year of power, he goes to his window and watches the sea through his window, seemingly observing his own loss of power: "...iba viendo al pasar el mismo mar por las ventanas..." (p. 216). By this point the image of the "mar" suggests power.

His window, his "mar" and his power become so intimately associated that the General insists upon maintaining possession of his window and "mar" as persistently as he does in maintaining his power. As he is in the process of losing his power, he is

adamant about not losing his "mar". In one of his long dialogues to an ambassador, the General defends his position concerning the "mar":

...tratando de explicarle que podía llevarse todo lo que quisiera menos el mar de mis ventanas, imagínese, qué haría yo solo en esta casa tan grande si no pudiera verlo ahora como siempre a esta hora como una ciénaga en llamas, qué haría sin los vientos de diciembre que se meten ladrando por los vidrios rotos... y no crea usted que lo hice por el patriotismo que dice el diccionario, ni por espíritu de aventura, ni menos porque me importaran un carajo los principios federalistas que Dios tenga en su santo reino, no mi querido Wilson, todo eso lo hice por conocer el mar,... (p. 201)

He has a similar response for Ambassador Stevenson: "todo menos el mar" (p. 224). When another ambassador attempts to make a deal, the General refuses again and contemplates: "... madre mía Bendición Alvarado mira qué gringos tan bárbaros, cómo es posible que sólo piensen en el mar para comérselo..." (p. 243). The sign that the General has lost his power is the selling of his "mar" at the end of the novel:

... les concedí el derecho de disfrutar de nuestros mares territoriales en la forma en que lo consideren conveniente a los intereses de la humanidad y la paz entre los pueblos, en el entendimiento de que dicha cesión comprendía no sólo las aguas físicas visibles desde la ventana de su dormitorio hasta el horizonte sino todo cuanto se entiende por mar en el sentido más amplio, o sea la fauna y la flora propias de dichas aguas... (p. 249)

The General has lost his maximum view and everything that had significance in his life: "... se llevaron todo cuanto había sido la razón de mis guerras y el motivo de su poder..." (p. 249)

The four levels of the novel's basic structure as it has been described are functional in the elaboration of the novel's themes. The opening of the original situation into pure récit

provides a complex characterization of the General not limited by traditional subordination of the narration to the requirements of space and time. The latter are subordinate, in El otoño del patriarca, to the act of narrating itself. The opening of the sentence supports this first opening technically, and is a specific device that provides for a progressively more elaborate récit. The opening of point of view provides for a multiplicity of visions of the General and thus is significant not only in the complexity and completeness of the characterization of him, but also in establishing the novel's tone-- the humor that is important to the experience of the novel. On the final level, the opening of a seen reality into a confluence of the visible and invisible makes the experience of the novel similar to the principal theme it elaborates: the illusion and reality of power. To a considerable extent, the universalization of this theme through narrative technique make it experience for the reader.

The theme of power can also be appreciated universally because of its close relationship to the mother archetype. This archetype serves to define the characterization, character, and actions of the General. Eric Neumann has proposed that "... man possesses an inner, though primarily unconscious, experience of woman...".<sup>7</sup> Neumann maintains that the mother archetype, being constantly present in the human psyche, is expressed in the images he creates, such as writing.

The predominant female character in the novel is the mother-

figure herself, the General's mother. His mother is first mentioned in the novel after one of the General's unsuccessful attempts at making love. The narrator notes that, after this failure, the General finds consolation in his sureness that he is loved by the citizenry of his country: "... cantaba, tan seguro del amor de su pueblo en aquellos octubres sin malos presagios que colgaba una hamaca en el patio de la mansión de los suburbios donde vivía su madre Bendición Alvarado y hacía siesta a la sombra de los tamarindos... la patria es lo mejor que se ha inventado, madre, suspiraba..." (p. 22). In this anecdote we note first the General's failure with the woman. We also observe his first reaction to this failure-- the creation of a certain illusion of love based on his position of power in the country. And we note the reference to his mother: she is first mentioned in the context of his failure at love and the security he finds in his country (as he explains while lying securely in his hammock near his mother). She is also established in the first chapter as the person to whom the General laments when faced with difficulties: "... pensando madre mía Bendición Alvarado si supieras que ya no puedo con el mundo, que quisiera largarme para no sé dónde, madre, lejos de tanto entuerto..." (p. 25). After establishing this basic relationship with his mother in the first chapter, the General uses her name in numerous other instances in which he encounters the necessity of imploring her seemingly absolute power. This "absolute power" suggests the God-figure she thus becomes in the characterization (or, as Neumann calls it, the Mother-Goddess). When he is in need of the boldness to approach Manuela Sánchez's house, for example,

he says a type of prayer to his mother as God-figure:

... una casa de pobre tan diferente de Manuela Sanchez en la poltrona de los virreyes que costaba trabajo creer que fuera ésa, pero era ésa, madre mía Bendición Alvarado de mis entrañas, dame tu fuerza para entrar, madre...(my emphasis, p. 76)

The importance of this type of prayer in this particular instance is appreciated through the importance of Manuela Sánchez to his life. Besides not being able to control love with his power, he cannot control death, and he becomes obsessed with the predicted death of his wife Leticia Nazareno. In this situation the General once more prays to his mother in a biblical-like language:

... los despedía con señales de conjuro desde un balcón interior rogando madre mía Bendición Alvarado protégelos, haz que las balas reboten en su corpiño, amansa el laudano, madre, endereza los pensamientos torcidos... (p. 198)

After the assassination of his wife and son, his mother is again characterized through him as a God-like figure: "... pero permaneció en la hamaca sin traslucir ni una luz de su malicia rogando madre mía Bendición Alvarado dame vida para este desquite, no me sueltes de tu mano, madre, inspírame..." (p. 204). Such sup-  
plications are common in the novel.

As has been suggested earlier, his mother is characterized as a mother-figure by emphasizing the General as a son, even when he is an adult. For example, when the General attempts to seduce the maids, his mother makes birds sing so that her son's actions are hidden, and the maids defend themselves by threatening to report him to his mother as if he were a small child:

... pero su madre lo sentía correteando a las sirvientas en la penumbra de los dormitorios, y era tanta su pena que alborataba a los pájaros



en las jaulas para que nadie se diera cuenta de las penurias del hijo, los hacía cantar a la fuerza para que los vecinos no sintieran los ruidos del asalto, el probio del forcejeo, las amenazas reprimidas de que se quede quieto mi general o se lo digo a su mamá...

(p. 53)

After the death of his mother, when he is married to Leticia Nazareno, the relationship remains fundamentally the same, only with Leticia Nazareno now fulfilling the role of mother-figure. When she first seduces him, she orders him with a mother-like authority: "...le indicaba con voz de madre en la oscuridad que te agarres fuerte de mis hombros..." (p. 165). While with Leticia in this scene, the General again uses his prayer-like supplication to his mother, and he himself even formulates an analogy between Leticia and his mother: "...y él hacía lo que ella indicaba con una obediencia pueril pensando madre mía Bendición Alvarado cómo carajo harán las mujeres para hacer las cosas como si las estuvieran inventando..." (p. 165). Here he equates Leticia's movements with his mother's actions. When Leticia is educating her son, she handles the General in exactly the same manner. She even cleans and scolds him as such: "...y le daba nalgadas de madre tierna por tu mal comportamiento con el ministro de Holanda, plas, plas..." (my emphasis, p. 176). Several such anecdotes tend to make the General and his son equals both in their character and in their relationship to Leticia as the mother-figure.

Except for the General's dependency upon his mother or mother-figure, he is afraid of women. Taking into consideration the fundamental puerility in his characterization, his relationship with his mother, and his fear of women, these factors correspond

exactly to what Neumann proposes is a fundamental archetype:

Here the profoundest experience of life combines with human anxiety to form an archetypal unity. A male immature in his development, who experiences himself only as male and phallic, perceives the feminine as a castrator, a murderer of the phallus. The projection of his own masculine desire and, on a still deeper level, of his own trend toward urobian incest, toward voluptuous self-dissolution in the primordial Feminine and Motherly, intensifies the terrible character of the Feminine. (p. 171)

The first suggestion of the General's perception of this "terrible character of the Feminine" is noted in the first chapter when the General seduces one of his concubines without undressing her or himself. He accosts one of his maids "sin desvestirla ni desvestirse turbado por las ansias de fugarse de la gloria inasible de este martes nevado de mierdas verdes de animales dormidos..." (p. 114). In accordance with the General's evaluation of the visible and this always distanced intimacy, he chooses Leticia Nazareno as his wife from a line of nude women he assembles for observation. Two distant looks at her suffice for him to make this decision. Some of the General's failures with women are revealed from the feminine point of view. One of these women takes the role of the consoling mother-figure after he fails at love-making:

...y se soltó a llorar con unas lágrimas de orfán caliente de huérfano grande y solo, llorando con una aflicción tan honda que no sólo sentí lástima por él sino por todos los hombres del mundo y empecé a rascarle la cabeza con la yema de los dedos y a consolarlo con que no era para tanto general...(p. 100)

The characterization also relates the General's life and actions to imagery associated with the mother-figure as vessel imagery. For Neumann, such imagery represents the archetype of the

mother-vessel. In defining the actual symbolism of the feminine archetype, Neumann points out the importance of the symbol of the vessel:

This central symbol is the vessel. From the very beginning down to the late stages of development we find this archetypal symbol as essence of the feminine. The basic symbolic equation woman-body-vessel corresponds to what is perhaps mankind's--man's as well as woman's-- most elementary experience of the Feminine. (p. 39)

Neumann adds: "For obvious reasons woman is experienced as the vessel par excellence" (p. 42).

The General's close relationship with his mother emphasizes the tendency to maintain contact with the vessel Neumann calls the "original paradise"-- the mother's womb. Besides his mother, a significant vessel image is his house and more specifically, his room within the house. When he is found dead in this room he is positioned "tirado en el suelo, con el brazo derecho doblado para que le sirviera de almohada". This is not precisely a fetal position ( the ideal position for his return to his original paradise), but the reiteration of his returning to this position makes it his own ideal position. It is even described as his position since the day he was born:

...y se vio tirado en el suelo como había dormido todas las noches de la vida desde su nacimiento, con el uniforme de lienzo sin insignias, las polainas, la espuela de oro, el brazo derecho doblado bajo la cabeza para que le sirviera de almohada... (my emphasis, p. 87)

Throughout the novel this becomes the General's natural position-- sleeping this way, hiding this way, and finally dying in this position. Besides the suggestion of returning to the original paradise

through this position, his room becomes a womb-like vessel. He creates his completely secure enclosure by carefully locking his elaborate set of locks. When the General's corpse is discovered in this room, the description of it uses womb imagery. The palace has "carcomidos muros de piedra fortificada", suggesting the living quality of the walls of his womb. The description of his rotting corpse suggests the beginnings of life and rebirth: "... aquel cuerpo senil carcomido de gallinazos y plagado de parásito de fondo de mar" (p. 89). The sea parasites suggest the origins of life. The position in which the General lies, the imagery surrounding him (the house and his womb-enclosure), and the description of his body suggest birth and a return to the original paradise of the womb. This return to the mother-figure has been the direction of the General's actions throughout the novel.

The characterization of the General's mother also situates her within this archetypal role representing the General's original paradise. Although the General perceives even his closest friends only within the functioning of his power, he dedicates himself completely and unselfishly to his mother when she is dying: "... y él comprendió que era la muerte y se encerró a ocuparse de su madre con una abnegación de madre, se quedó a pudrirse con ella para que nadie la viera cocinándose en su caldo de larvas..." (p. 135). Death with her would be the ideal death as a return to the womb. The original takeover of the government by the General also emphasizes womb imagery. His mother takes control within the chaotic situation and begins organizing within this disorder.

Significantly within the context of womb imagery, in the process of establishing the General's power and security within a still undefined world (the chaos), his mother Bendición Alvarado creates in essence another womb for him:

... pero no había siquiera un petate donde acostarse a sudar una calentura, de modo que su madre Bendición Alvarado arrancó una cortina para envolverme y lo dejó acostado en un rincón de la escalera principal mientras ella barrió con la escoba de ramas verdes... (my emphasis, p. 255)

Technically, emphasis is placed on the key word here, "envolver", by changing from third to first person narrator.

The General's relationship with and experience of women relates directly to the theme of power. His vessel, or paradise (his house and room) come to represent the security of power, so that his maintaining of this security depends upon his remaining within the realm of vessel imagery-- nearness to his mother, the curtain he is wrapped in, his room, and finally the return to the original paradise by dying. His house is often referred to as the "casa del poder", and at the end of the novel the General realizes that his paradise, the house, has been his power: "...temblaba de fiebre sentado en las escaleras pensando sin amor madre mía Bendición Alvarado de modo que ésta era toda la vaina, carajo, de modo que el poder era aquella casa..." (p. 256). The novel's characterization places emphasis on the figure of the General, and through the elaboration of the themes of power and women, both the General and these themes are elucidated and closely related.

The structure of El otoño del patriarca transforms the simple

sentence "A corpse is found" on four basic levels. These four levels make the novel's structure dynamic by its very precise nature, creating concomitant change on different levels on a progressive basis. Dynamism is defined by the novel's structure and is the factor that makes each chapter of the novel necessarily an enriching experience by continuously opening new dimensions of reality. It is a truism that each novel "creates its own system"; nevertheless in El otoño del patriarca García Márquez has created a narrative system which is unique and absolutely functional. The detailed consideration of this system is an essential step in the analysis of the work's complex effects. It is also one step beyond much of the process of the Colombian novel that has been described in the post-1967 period. Whereas the generation of writers that follows García Márquez has extended the limits of traditional narration, this tendency has been to an extent reaction rather than pure creation. Such has been the tendency noted in Héctor Sánchez, Albalucía Angel, and more recently Aguilera Garramuño, for example. Although specific narrative techniques and themes observed in this novel do not make it an entire innovation within the trajectory of the recent Colombian novel, the complete narrative system it builds makes it perhaps one of the few works that fulfills the possibilities that the recent Colombian novel has offered.

## CHAPTER VI

## TRAJECTORY OF THE COLOMBIAN NOVEL (1967-1975):

## OVERVIEW AND CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the novelistic production of 1967 and of four significant novels published after this date has provided a detailed understanding of a limited number of specific works of the 1967-1975 period. From the novels of 1967-- En noviembre llega el arzobispo, El espejo sombrío and La infancia legendaria de Ramiro Cruz-- through the later works of this period-- Las causas supremas, Cola de zorro, El bazar de los idiotas and El otoño del patriarca-- notable general tendencies in the contemporary Colombian novel are also evident. Three such tendencies can be identified. First, novelists like Héctor Sánchez in Las causas supremas break with traditional novelistic conventions in both structure and language. Structure corresponds to systeme rather than syntagme, i.e. narrative unity is found through associations rather than sequential order through space as in the traditional novel. The writer also becomes more conscious of language, which is appreciated in the increasingly frequent use of metalanguage and the conversion of language itself from medium into theme. Second, novelists like Fanny Buitrago in Cola de zorro novelize a concept, and the experience of such novels becomes somewhat intellectualized. (The particular concept developed by Buitrago in this novel, the importance of family and tradition, is such a common theme in the contemporary Colombian novel that it too

could be considered a general tendency exemplified in her work.) Third, novelists like Gabriel García Márquez, Héctor Rojas Herazo, and Gustavo Alvarez Gardeazábal use specific narrative techniques to transcend the evident regionalism of their works, creating a more universal experience. The novels of these authors give evidence of an identifiable technical precision. This precision in the creation of entire narrative systems contrasts with the first tendency noted. Certainly these three general tendencies are not mutually exclusive; all three of them could be observed in one specific novel. Nevertheless, these factors do provide a basis for discussing the trajectory of the Colombian novel from 1967 to 1975 on a year by year basis.

Two important novels of 1968, Mateo el flautista by Alberto Duque López and Mi capitán Fabián Sicachá by Flor Romero de Nohra, occupy places on opposite ends of the spectrum in technique, the former being innovative and the latter being traditional. The imaginative Mateo el flautista is one of the best examples, during the period of this study, of the tendency of novelization explored by Héctor Sánchez-- structure based on systeme and an awareness of language. The novel is structured according to two variations on the basic subject of a person named Mateo. The two versions of Mateo's story are narrated by a woman named Ana Magdalena, Mateo's wife, and his brother Juan Sebastián. Practically the only affirmation the reader can make about the actual content of Mateo el flautista is to note that the novel's subject is Mateo. The reason is that there is a definite possibility that Mateo never did exist and is only a pretext for the variations. This pos-



sibility is explicitly suggested in the last pages of the novel. The most important theme is creation itself, and it is evidenced in several ways. Besides the fact that the novel's structure is based on a pretext in order to facilitate imaginative invention, other aspects emphasize creation for the sake of creation. The narrator includes child-like figures of the characters to accompany the text. The narrator Ana Magdalena formulates a concept through word creation and juxtaposition: "...en Puerto nada ni nadie sería jamás-nunca-nunquedad-alguedad más importante que tú".<sup>1</sup> Stick-figure drawings of the characters demonstrate a kind of creative playfulness appreciated also in the joining of words: "enfrentedelaclaseylosbancos" (p. 43). It is also notable that this jazz-like structure provides two variations on a flute player, Mateo, who plays jazz in the streets. The reader is actively involved in the creative process in this novel. At one point, for example, Ana offers the reader the option of believing or not believing one of her anecdotes. The entire novel becomes, in essence, a similar option.

Flor Romero de Nohra demands a minimal participation of the reader. In Mi capitán Fabián Sicachá her message is set forth quite clearly: revolutionaries and ex-revolutionaries are not accommodated by Colombia's bourgeoisie. This is the conclusion the novel's protagonist, Fabián Sicachá, and his wife reach when they unsuccessfully attempt to establish themselves in the middle class after participating in guerrilla activities. In approximately the first half of the novel Fabián Sicachá is not actually present as a character, but functions as a mythical

figure. His fiancée searches for him in rural Colombia and is eventually jailed because of the suspicion she arouses in a small town. Many of the narrative sections in this first half of the novel are narrated by her. An omniscient narrator relates the military's attempts to exterminate Fabián. In both cases-- the fiancée's story and the military story-- the distance from Fabián as a real person makes him a mythical and hero figure. In the second half the fiancée is reunited with him and he is a very real person. They marry and decide to raise a family, but each time they seek employment or undertake a business venture, their revolutionary past causes failure. Colombian society systematically excludes them. Although the novel's theme is ostensibly revolutionary, its non-engaging narrative techniques make it a less revolutionary experience than Mateo el flautista. It is clearly a product of guerrilla mythification or "cheísmo" of the late sixties. Within the general tendencies of the Colombian novel suggested, its clear exposition of ideas places it closest to the line exemplified by Buitrago's novel.

The novelistic production of 1969, the year of Las causas supremas, offers a wide range of books in terms of the generations represented. On the one hand, two members of the most recent generation produced their first works: José Stevenson published Los años de la asfixia and Benhur Sánchez Suárez wrote La solterona. Héctor Sánchez published Las maniobras. Of the older generation, Eduardo Caballero Calderón published Caín, almost an afterthought to his total work.

Sánchez's Las maniobras features many of the tendencies

noted in Las causas supremas. The apparently fragmentary structure finds its unity within the plane of systeme (associations), and there is an overt consciousness of language. The anecdote describes the life of Rafael Perdomo. It contains frequent side-tracks of anecdotal material only tangentially related to-- associated with-- the description of Rafael's life. This biographical description tells of his observations of an increasingly absurd world around him, of his losing his wife and job, of his love affair, and, finally, of his renouncing society in order to dig a hole in a mine forever. Anecdotal material not directly involved with this story includes short narratives by an unidentified first-person narrator who offers solutions to the world's problems, an imaginary war between two gorillas, and a bullfight that evolves into a riot. As an example of the novel's structure, the gorilla episode develops from an associative process using as a point of departure Rafael's banana and water breakfast. Another excellent example of this type of procedure occurs when Rafael says "al fin y al cabo", and the word "cabo" recalls his "Cabo Romelio", which in turn leads to an extended narration about his army days. Thus, operation on the plane of systeme is one appropriate method of describing a plot that, while somewhat chronological, is nevertheless developed more through association than through logical sequence.

As in Las causas supremas, the omniscient narrator in this novel comments about his own language and characters in the novel. A fundamentally critical attitude is appreciated primarily, however, through the situations created in the novel. The humor is funda-

mentally situational. For example, in one episode a fire takes place, which leads to the following series of events: firemen arrive, followed by army tanks, then come an official to inaugurate the event, an American specialist, employees from the health department, and finally a beauty queen to reign over it all. These humorous situations and Rafael Perdomo's circumstance create an overall experience of an absurd world in Las maniobras.

José Stevenson creates the vision of a similar world in Los años de la asfixia, but the attitude toward it is more sober. The factor that makes this novel successful is the precise structure. It has four parts. The first and last parts are titled "1959" and the second and third are "1954" and "1950" respectively. The protagonist, Víctor, narrates the two 1959 parts. He is a character in the 1950 and 1954 years, narrated by an omniscient narrator. In the first 1959 section we see Víctor in New York; in the second, we find him at a party. The 1950 chapter describes Víctor and his friends in their last year of high school, and the 1954 part describes the same group as students in the university. Two factors make this structure functional in conveying the novel's themes. The first involves the relationship between Víctor and a friend, Armando, during their university years. This relationship contributes to defining the importance of those years, the early 1950's, in Víctor's life. While in the university, Víctor's generation rebelled against a corrupt society. Armando becomes a symbol of the generation's ideals when he is killed in a demonstration. The 1959 chapters at the beginning and end of the novel provide an insight into Víctor's inner

feelings as a member of this generation. He suffers a guilty conscience as a member of the bourgeoisie against which he has formerly protested. He finds difficulty in reconciling this contradiction. While in New York (1959) Víctor looks into a mirror contemplatively and perceives Armando: "Lo miro bien: es mi amigo Armando. Lo miro bien: Armando ya no es un niño: es un hombre. Armando soy yo. Yo estoy en Nueva York".<sup>2</sup> As a member of this generation, Víctor is aware of the fact that he is a continuation of something of which Armando was a part. Víctor's presence in New York, among the images of modern bourgeois society par excellence, has forced him to come to grips with his betrayal of his generation's ideals.

The second procedure that conveys this theme of corrupted ideals is the communication of Víctor's feeling about his generation during the university years. Each of the two chapters of these early years (1950 and 1954) contains interior monologues by Víctor. At the end of these chapters, the interiorization by Víctor takes the form of a "tú" in which he addresses thoughts to himself. Thus, he reproaches himself for his lack of social awareness: "Y tú sin darte cuenta" (p. 70). Víctor attempts to reconcile for himself their frivolous actions with the serious problems the generation faced as a potentially vital force in society. These two factors make the novel an examination of a generation and a society, rather than merely a relating of a series of youthful adventures (which constitutes much of the actual anecdote).

Beyond this structure, Los años de la asfixia is not subtle.

The idea of a stultifying society oppressing the young generation is expressed directly by Víctor and the omniscient narrator. It is also expressed directly and frequently in the dialogue. For example, characters often make observations such as "este país está perdido". The narrator explains the atmosphere of "asfixia" that predominates. The quality of life during these years is also communicated through the banality of the group's activities. It is one of those novels that asks the reader to question whether novels about banality must be banal. Stevenson denounces this banal society, but also condemns his own generation for its betrayal of the commitment to change it.

On the surface, the thematics of Héctor Sánchez and José Stevenson appear to have little in common with the first novel by Benhur Sánchez Suárez, La solterona. It is an interior study of an aging spinster, Rosario. The basic attitude about life communicated in this novel, however, relates it quite closely to these other writers. Existence is again banal, and it is a particularly tedious banality. As for action, very little happens in the novel: Rosario occasionally answers the telephone, and entertains a couple of visitors informally. At the end she leaves home to go to church and walks off into the dark. The novel is not an engaging experience because, as a psychological study of a character, Rosario is not, for the most part, psychologically interesting. In the early parts of the work the study is interesting because the narrator establishes an ambiguity between what Rosario imagines and what she experiences. The greater portion of the novel, however, consists of recounting her memories of a

past that is as boring as her present. As in the case of the novels of Sánchez, Stevenson-- and also in Collazo's later novel-- Sánchez Suárez portrays a stultified character. One significant difference lies in the fact that Rosario is not necessarily stultified by the effects of society. There are only two places in the novel in which it is suggested that Rosario's circumstance may be understood as a phenomenon of class awareness, rather than a matter of personal choice. In one the omniscient narrator states the following about Rosario: "Es su espíritu burgués el que se revela". At another point Rosario accuses her sister Clara of being responsible for her condition: "¡Clara! Te has metido en la cabeza los pensamientos burgueses, los sentimientos oligárguicos de tu esposo, ya no te importan las personas pobres como yo".<sup>3</sup> In résumé, it is a psychological study narrated principally by an omniscient narrator (with some interior monologue), whose significance lies especially in its portrayal of one more protagonist stultified by a banal environment.

Paradoxically, during the same year the young Sánchez Suárez published this study of an aging lady, Caballero Calderón, a much older writer, published a novel about guerrilleros, Caín. Actually, only the second half of the work has guerrilleros in it. In the first half, approximately, it develops along the lines of the "small screen" novel and deals with the relationships among three characters. To some extent this development involves a classical love triangle: Martín kills his brother Abel because Abel has an affair with Martín's wife, Margarita. Caballero Calderón opens the novel after Abel's death and develops the

triangle of relationships among the three by means of flashbacks and dialogue. In the present time, there is a conflict between Martín and Margarita: she did love Abel and is married to Martín only because of social obligation. As the relationships are revealed, it becomes apparent that the triangle includes nuances beyond these overt conflicts. Martín in fact had admired his brother Abel. Before marrying Margarita, Martín hated her because she attracted Abel away from him. This study of three characters becomes a novel of action in the second half of the novel. After Abel's corpse is discovered, Martín flees with Margarita and joins revolutionary guerrilleros in order to avoid military authorities. The remainder of the novel is primarily a matter of strategical moves on the part of the two parties. Like Mi capitán Fabián Sicachá, the novel's positive aspects (in Caín, the development of character in the first half) are somewhat negated by the attempts to incorporate themes in vogue in the late sixties (cheísmo). Whereas the younger generation of writers shows more preoccupation with their own past-- the years of "la violencia" of the fifties-- the older Flor Romero de Nohra and Caballero Calderón novelize the immediate concerns of Colombia at the time during which they write the novels, and with questionable success.

The year 1970 has significance in the trajectory of the Colombian novel only because it marks the publication of Albalucía Angel's first work, Los girasoles en invierno. It deals with a young woman's experiences in Europe. It is less important as literary experience than as a predecessor to Angel's later work. The two types of chapters employed describe the novel's two foci.



Odd-numbered chapters are an interior revelation of the protagonist, who transcribes her thoughts and feelings while sitting in a Paris cafe. The even-numbered chapters take place in Italy and Greece, and an omniscient narrator describes the same protagonist and her group of friends as they travel through Europe. In the first type of chapters, the novel shows tendencies toward language play and writing as an intellectual game, although neither of these factors could be judged successfully developed. The travel chapters are a contemporary version of the well-known story of the Latin American discovering Europe. In the context of this study, an awareness of the possibilities of creation with language is the most important aspect of this novel. Angel's actual ability with language at this point in her career is not impressive, especially when she insists upon using metaphors such as "Miró el pueblecito que parecía más bien un dibujo de Klee".<sup>4</sup> Similarly, she notes "la ronda de noctámbulos que entra al edificio parece una película de Fellini" (p. 29).

The novels of 1971 fit well within the established tendencies of the Colombian novel already discussed. Alvarez Gardeazábal's first novel, La tara del papa, combines two of these tendencies, and Viaje a la claridad by Soto Aparicio is similar in many respects to El espejo sombrío of 1967. They provide continuity in the trajectory of the Colombian novel.

La tara del papa is about predominating tradition and thus falls in line with this important theme in the Colombian novel as discussed with respect to Buitrago. The other main tendency this novel incorporates is transcendent regionalism;

it is the first of four novels situated in Tuluá. An account of the anecdote describes the problem of family tradition. The young protagonist, an unnamed male of the Uribe family, tells his own story in a series of narrative sections interspersed with segments by other characters and by an omniscient narrator. As an adolescent his "tara" appears to be a sexual abnormality: while in a seminary he becomes obsessed with one of the priests. In the latter part of the novel he becomes a local candidate for election as a Liberal. Then arises the real problem of the tara-- the fact that he belongs to a tradition of a family of Conservatives and he is attempting to deny this tradition. In the end he fails: the violence of the Conservatives predominates over his attempted upsetting of tradition because he is assassinated by them.

As has been noted in the analysis of El bazar de los idiotas and El otoño del patriarca, the novels of transcendent regionalism tend to use elaborate narrative systems created around the regional base. In La tara del papa the narrative system is defined by a precise circular structure. The protagonist's father starts the circle with his death at the beginning of the novel; it ends with the death of the protagonist. The circle contributes to the communication of the novel's theme: the tradition of the Uribe family did not terminate with the death of the omnipotent Papa Uribe at the beginning of the novel, and with the protagonist's death at the end it is understood that tradition will continue to predominate. The reality created by Alvarez Gardeazábal is diametrically opposed to the vision of Colombian society novelized by Stevenson and Sánchez Suárez, who offer an interpretation of

society from a more or less doctrinaire Marxist standpoint which relies on an awareness of class struggle. For Alvarez Gardeazábal, as for Buitrago, reality is not explicable in such totally rational terms.

Soto Aparicio's Viaje a la claridad creates experience through the same narrative procedures observed in El espejo sombrío. As in the earlier novel, it is an interior study using the protagonist's immediate thought processes and flashbacks to bring into being a character and the background to her particular circumstance. The immediate situation involves a young woman waiting to give birth. The anticipation of the birth is the source of tension within this immediate circumstance. On the basis of Proustian progressive association, her thought process lead to the past. This past develops another tension over the length of the novel: she becomes increasingly aware of her step-father's sexual interest in her, and this awareness develops into paranoia. At the end she is raped by him.

The dynamism is produced by the changing psychological state of the protagonist. The first chapter is particularly effective because it creates an engaging experience for the reader: the protagonist's fear and tension are experienced, but the reader has no basis for understanding why she feels these emotions. From this point her immediate situation becomes progressively more defined, and her past also functions in creating an understanding of her changing psychological state. Viaje a la claridad is representative of Soto Aparicio's fiction during the period of this study: it exemplifies a mature knowl-

edge of the craft of fiction, but the novel itself is mediocre as experience. Since the first chapter in this novel is notably more successful than the remainder, one is tempted to speculate that perhaps a key to the uneven quality of his fiction might be an excess in quantity of literary production.

The novels of 1972, like those of 1967, and the novels of 1975 to be discussed, mark a high point in the Colombian novel during the years of this study. The most important contribution of the year is Alvarez Gardeazábal's Dabeiba. The supporting novels are Alvarez Gardeazábal's Cóndores no entierran todos los días, Jesús Zárate's La cárcel, and Albalucía Angel's Dos veces Alicia.

Dabeiba, like many of the transcendent regionalist novels, creates a complete narrative system. In this case the function of the system is to effect an inventive series of characterizations. It could be stated that only two significant events occur in Dabeiba. The first is a thunder-like sound (bataclán) that all the inhabitants of Dabeiba hear early one morning. The second is the imminent flood that the inhabitants of Dabeiba are awaiting at the end of the novel. These are the significant events as far as action is concerned. They function as a pretext for the characterization of a bizarre group of individuals that inhabit Dabeiba. For example, in the first chapter the omniscient narrator describes in detail what each of the characters of Dabeiba is doing during the hours before the bataclán. Here the characterizations are brief and only tentative-- the narrator communicates for the most part what is generally believed about them ("dizque"

or "se dice", and so on). As the narration changes from character to character, it also briefly describes some of their respective pasts. In the chapters that follow, the pretexts used to further elaborate the characterization are: (1) the characters during the exact moment of the bataclán, (2) the characters immediately after the bataclán, (3) the characters waiting for the inevitable flood. As these characterizations are developed, the narrator becomes more affirmative in his suppositions, describing the characters beyond the general knowledge of the first chapter. The detail with which the narrator portrays the characters within the general context of the two events-- the bataclán and the flood-- creates a correspondence between the narrator's vision and the pettiness of the people of Dabeiba. This pettiness prevents them from evacuating Dabeiba before the disaster, so providing a correspondence of theme and technique.

Cóndores no entierran todos los días functions less as a total narrative system. It is a conventional story about a local tyrant in Tuluá, El Cóndor, who terrorizes the area during the epoch of "la violencia". An omniscient narrator relates the entire story in chronological order, and it is the least universal of Alvarez Gardeazábal's regionalist works. The theme of power might be considered universal, even though the circumstance involved is quite specific and attached to a particular time and place. The anecdote, the predominating factor in the experience, associates the work most closely with the novels that focus on tradition: at the end, El Cóndor, symbol of the Conservative tradition, is killed, but it is understood that the tradition he

represents will prevail.

Jesús Zárate's La cárcel also develops a clear story-line, but the experience is considerably intellectualized by the first-person narrator-protagonist. The protagonist has been unjustly held in jail for three years. The situation is unjust for him as an individual because he has committed no crime; it is unjust for the group because of the unbearable conditions in the jail. The lack of justice eventually leads to rebellion by the group and the murder of the jail's director by the protagonist. An important factor beyond the anecdote is the presence of metalanguage. One character, Mister Albán, comments upon the protagonist's writing while the two are in jail, and this writing is the story we are reading. At one point Mister Albán suggests that the protagonist's writing is superficial. The tone here is not playful, but sober, and thus provides a self-criticism within the story. The novel's main theme, human liberty, is verbalized to a large extent through dialogues between the protagonist and the other inmates, thus providing a metalanguage of the themes developed in the anecdote. La cárcel is also pretentious in the same way that Soto Aparicio's recent novels tend to be, proclaiming its own universality and merit within the trajectory of the Colombian novel.

Albalucía Angel does not tell a story in Dos veces Alicia. Its development by means of associations places it within the plane of systeme, as in the works of Héctor Sánchez. It is the product of a similar impulse toward freely imaginative writing that has been observed in Mateo el flautista. One important difference from this novel is that Angel does not invent a pre-

text to provide unity for her vivid imagination. The only unifying factor is the narrator herself as she relates what she imagines and perceives around her. She is adamant in establishing her right to do this imagining, and invites the reader to do so with her. The basic situation presents a woman in England who meets occasionally with her friends, some of whom may be real or imaginary. For example, on one page she offers, then negates, four successive names for herself. Besides a certain activation of the reader, another element that Dos veces Alicia adds to Angel's first novel, Los girasoles en invierno, is an awareness of the act of creation, occasionally commenting on her text as she develops it. The novel fits within the tendencies employed by Sánchez in terms of structure, and the vague notions it communicates about imagination relate it to the novelization of a concept noted in the discussion of Buitrago.

The novels of 1973 reveal a continuity within the work of writers already discussed in this study. Jesús Zárate, Héctor Sánchez, and Benhur Sánchez Suárez published novels whose basic characteristics do not depart radically from their previous work. Another novelist whose previous work antedates this study, Manuel Mejía Vallejo, published Aire de tango, justly awarded the Premio Bienal de Novela as the best novel of the year.

Zárate remains within the framework of the traditional novel in El cartero. By means of a Kafkaesque turn of events, the protagonist's humdrum life is disrupted. The catalyst for these events is a letter that arrives at the home of this lethargic and reclusive protagonist. He had previously read in his horoscope

that he would receive it. The relationship with the horoscope could be a matter of coincidence. Such is the case of the events in the entire novel. They acquire a special significance for him because he insists upon finding a rational explanation for each turn of events in his life. In effect, this continuous speculation questions the rationality of the society in which he lives. This society becomes complicated and horrifying. Although quite traditional in terms of narrative technique, this work is a special case in the contemporary Colombian novel. It is a study of the individual within modern technological society rather than exclusively within the context of human relationships. Here the individual stands alone in relationship to society: he is not the product of a tradition. The solitary protagonist searches for his identity, and it is not to be found through relationships with others (as in Buitrago), nor through heredity or heritage (as in Buitrago, Alvarez Gardeazábal and Rojas Herazo). The nature of this search within the modern world is the universalizing factor.

The two novels of 1973 by Héctor Sánchez and Benhur Sánchez also provide continuity rather than innovation. The experience of La noche de tu piel by Benhur Sánchez Suárez is preeminently intellectual, and even ideological. As such, it relates to the tendencies marked by Buitrago's conceptualization and José Stevenson's intellectualization. The technical deficiencies in La noche de tu piel make it inferior to his first novel, La solterona. The technical problems involve the improper use of first-person narration in which the protagonist explains



matters to himself that he would not be expected to say. In other cases, he explains the novel's themes to the reader. For example, the narrator-protagonist explains to himself that his situation in the city is as undesirable as it was in the country, a fact that is evident from what takes place in the novel. The work is formally divided into two parts. In Part One, the black protagonist describes his immediate poverty-stricken situation in the city while he also remembers his past in the country. In Part Two, an omniscient narrator tells of an armed rebellion against the protagonist's exploiter in the country. It is evident that for Sánchez Suárez the important point is that the protagonist reached a certain social awareness and rebelled. In this case, the novelization of ideas has a prescriptive function.

In Los desheredados Héctor Sánchez relates an anecdote similar to his two previous novels, but now minimizes the metalanguage. Although one critic has found this novel deficient in structure, it must be understood as another novelistic form on the plane of systeme. It relates a story about a small town, but the order of events is of no significance. It involves the arrival of the railroad to this town and communicates the suffering of the people that inhabit it. Much more so than in Las causas supremas or Las maniobras, the story-telling predominates over a consciousness of the act of creating itself. The attitude communicated through this story is similar to that noted in Sánchez's two previous novels. Just as the protagonist in Las maniobras dedicates himself to digging a hole in order to negate the world, one character's comment is typical of life as it is seen in this town:

"La vida es la peor cochinada que puede ocurrirle al hombre".<sup>6</sup>

The story itself opens in a basic present and moves back in time to cover a twenty to forty year period. This was the epoch when the railroad construction began in the town. The concept of time is significant in Sánchez's work for the first time and this concept is within the framework that has been so notable in the Colombian novel: the present is conceived as the sum of events in a futile and frustrating past for each of the characters. At times this past is appreciated through the memory of the characters; at others through direct explanation by the omniscient narrator. The novel is controlled by a third-person omniscient narrator, and Los desheredados represents a general movement in Sánchez's work toward traditional narrative.

Manuel Mejía Vallejo's Aire de tango portrays the past in a significantly different way from the majority of the novels discussed. It views the past with nostalgia. The present is not a continuation or reflection of the past, but a cheap reproduction of what it was at its best. The entire novel is a first-person narration in an oral style, a jargon of lower-class subculture of the tango in a specific neighborhood in Medellín. The narrator tells about the life of a tango singer of this neighborhood, Jairo. This story mythifies Jairo. Jairo, in turn, had lead a life that was a mythification of another tango singer, the famous Carlos Gardel. Employing a technique more common in the writing of the younger novelists, Mejía Vallejo develops the story on the plane of systeme: unity is found in the series of associations among the lives of Jairo, Gardel, and the

narrator, the third member of the cult. These associations appear in no logical sequence, and include items such as Gardel's letters and quotations from newspapers. The universal factor of the novel transcends nostalgia: there is a creative impulse underlying this obsession with Jairo and Gardel. For example, the narrator imagines things about Gardel, just as Jairo did. The novel is thus an inventive recreation of a particular epoch and place, and the structure along the lines of systeme supports this creative impulse, providing the element of freedom appropriate to it.

The year of El bazar de los idiotas, 1974, produced only one other novel worthy of mention, Puerto Silencio by Fernando Soto Aparicio. It continues the trends noted in El espejo sombrío and Viaje a la claridad, although it is the least sophisticated of the three and represents a rather unfortunate movement toward commercial literature. The basic structure provides the possibility for an engaging experience: it consists of thirty-four narrative sections subtitled according to women who live at Puerto Silencio, an hacienda owned by the most important of the women, Pastora Santos. The novel is not the gallery of voices that its structure might suggest. There are a few segments narrated in first-person, but not by the woman named in the subtitle. The first-person and third-person narrators talk about the women for whom the segments are titled. These women are daughters of Pastora Santos, or relatives or employees at Puerto Silencio. The novel, therefore, tells many stories, of which Pastora's is the most fully developed. As in the two novels already mentioned,

Soto Aparicio creates a special psychological case in the immediate present, and then analyzes this case through a development of past circumstances. Pastora Santos is a bitter and hateful woman who rules everyone living at Puerto Silencio, including her husband, with an iron hand. Her past is narrated most directly in a series of segments that appear irregularly throughout the novel and show her development from childhood, in a chronological fashion. Soto demonstrates that a girl who was a social outcast and lonely as a young child, and who became obsessed with masturbation from age seven, develops into a man-hater and excessively dominating adult. The characterization of the other women functions as part of the portrayal of Pastora, and also recounts petty love stories and intrigues among the people at Puerto Silencio. Soto's novels tend to be moralistic, and such is the case here: Pastora is poisoned at the end, and the other totally negative personality suffers the loss of her husband and arrest by the police when she attempts to flee with money stolen from Puerto Silencio.

A fundamental contention underlying this study is the vitality of a Colombian novelistic tradition that not only includes the fiction of García Márquez, but also the continuity and innovation of his generation and the most recent one. The novels of 1975 support this contention. Besides the continuity and innovation in the work of García Márquez provided by El otoño del patriarca and in the work of an older writer, Augusto Morales-Pino, by La agonía de la abuela y el Chevrolet azul y blanco, continuity in the production of the younger writers is found in the

finest work by Albalucía Angel and Benhur Sánchez Suárez with the publication of Estaba la pájara pinta sentada en el verde limón and El cadáver respectively. Besides this, a new vitality is appreciated in 1975 with the first novels of Marco Tulio Aguilera Garramuño, Néstor Gustavo Díaz and Oscar Collazos.

Morales-Pino's La agonía de la abuela y el Chevrolet azul y blanco is not as purely inventive as the lengthy title might suggest. In reality, it is quite traditional except for one structural factor, the use of two temporal planes. Even so, it is completely narrated by an omniscient voice. The subject is an aging grandmother. On one temporal plane she is present at a family reunion; the other tells her past. These two planes appear alternately in the text and the segments of the past are placed in parentheses. At the beginning it appears to be an entirely traditional work, and excessively so: the narrator systematically characterizes each member of the family present at the reunion, explaining their personalities and feelings. Once these initial pages perform this introductory function, the reader has a more active role in the novel. Within the two temporal planes, the novel operates on four levels of reality. (There are two levels for each temporal plane.) In the present the narrator deals with the reunion itself, for the most part a rather insignificant conversation among relatives. The second level of reality in this present is perceived through the television set that is operating during this conversation. For example, commercials announce the latest products of modern technology, and the characters comment about these commodities. Here the television and the com-

modities are overt symbols of modernity. The modernity of the present is particularly apparent-- and significant-- when juxtaposed with the second temporal plane. It takes place during an epoch when the grandmother was a young lady and modernity was only beginning to become apparent in Bogotá. The two levels of reality in this temporal plane are (1) the presence of the grandmother at a concert in Bogotá, and (2) her memories of other activities important to her life during this epoch. The experience of the novel is based on the contrast between the modernity of the present plane, in which she is an ignored anachronism at the family reunion, and the noble aristocracy and intimate feelings and aspirations that were part of her past. Thus, when in the last sentence it is revealed that the grandmother has died while sitting in the corner, it is a tragic event for the reader, who sympathizes with her; for the family the death is of relatively little importance. As in many novels discussed, the past and tradition define the individual. In this case the past is apparent only to the reader and tragically ignored by the characters.

Estaba la pájara pinta sentada en el verde limón is the first novel by Albalucía Angel dealing with a strictly Colombian reality. Within the trend of the novels that find unity in système, the associations made in this study of "la violencia" are more important than logical sequence. The novel opens with a quotation from a politician's speech in which he alludes to "...este laberinto de hechos, hombres y juicios...". This "labyrinth" is an accurate description of the reader's experience of the novel. The labyrinth consists of twenty-seven unnumbered and untitled narrative segments.

The opening sections intercalate a minute by minute historical account of the events leading up to the assassination of Jorge Eliécer Gaitán in 1948, with the characters' subjective perception of these events. The assassination is the point of departure for a chaotic situation that progressively worsens with the passage of time, developed along two narrative lines in alternating chapters. The odd-numbered chapters are more extensive in length (20-25 pages) and relate the disorder which develops from mere vandalism to a more organized rural violence, and then to student unrest and a more ideologically oriented disruption. The opening sections of the shorter, even-numbered chapters (5-8 pages) focus on a girls' Catholic school, some of the members of which will later participate and are killed in the political chaos. Later these short chapters, which describe the youth of Ana, Tina and Julieta, are more varied: we see a journalist who writes notes to himself while in jail; we observe guerrilla leader Teófilo Rojas write his diary in jail; we see the torture of dissidents.

The effect of a circular structure is created by establishing in the opening section (it precedes the chapters described above) certain motifs which are developed and returned to at the end. This section begins with a woman narrator who is in bed and is contemplating images of the past, these being mainly related to creation. The imagery is vague, but we see her preoccupation with the past: "Yo no me creo la historia que ellos cuentan, que se la traguen los pendejos...". So the narrator's search is related to her search for the real past (not the one the "pendejos" believe), and it takes on sexual overtones from the beginning:

"otra vez mi sexo descubierto y penetrarás en él, como buscando ¿Qué buscabas?". The search moves back in time to the past in order to "terminar de una vez con este cosmos inflamado de imágenes sin lógica". At the end of the novel the innocent school-girl of the beginning is with the revolutionary Lorenzo, and the sexual imagery once more relates the search for an authentic past to creation and the sexual act. Again the past is perceived as particles of disorder. This imagery does not express hope or rebirth, but instead emphasizes impotence. Impotence is also a recurring theme in the anecdote. Along with the novels of Alvarez Gardeazábal, this work by Albalucía Angel is among the most successful novels dealing with "la violencia", during the period covered by this study.

Like La noche de tu piel, El cadáver by Benhur Sánchez Suárez is overtly ideological. It calls for a sense of class consciousness on the part of the proletariat. It deals with a storekeeper and a tailor who live in a decaying town whose inhabitants have not had the courage to initiate change. They recognize the need for change, but have been incapable of formulating a manner of carrying it out. At the end of the novel the storekeeper arrives at a decision, takes a revolver, and leaves to join the ranks of the guerrilleros. In narrative segments in second person ("tú") the reader appreciates the storekeeper's conscience and understands his sense of guilt because of the man's inability to make a firm decision concerning his condition. Other narrative segments in interior monologue and third-person develop the characterization of the two persons and of the general circumstance of the town.



In the first use of a clearly Cortázar-type technique since Mateo el flautista, the novel offers the reader, at certain points, a choice between reading or eliminating certain sections. At one point in the narrative at which the reader is normally offered a choice, the narrator informs him that he must read a section, parodying the previous sections giving the option. The frivolous tone and the function of these supposed choices do not correspond well with the overall sober and even didactic tone of the novel.

Crónica de tiempo muerto by Oscar Collazos, like El cadáver, is an intellectual experience and overtly anti-bourgeoisie. The narrator-protagonist, whose travels range from Colombia to Europe, finds bourgeois consumer society lacking in authentic values. Like several novels noted in this study, the opening section is particularly effective, and notably more so than the remainder of the novel. In these opening narrative segments the narrator captures the spirit of the generation: he describes a group of college-age youths at a party and the style communicates an atmosphere of decadence. The sense of being stultified both as individuals and as a generation is communicated. Although bourgeois society is the general problem, Colombia itself is important in the sense that the Colombian protagonist feels a certain lack of authentic roots.

Two novels that point to a bright future for the Colombian novel are Breve historia de todas las cosas by Marco Tulio Aguilera Garramuño and La loba maquillada by Néstor Gustavo Díaz. Both are inventive, humorous novels, with regionalist settings. Breve historia de todas las cosas deals with a narrator named Mateo Albán who,

from jail, tells the story of a town in Costa Rica by means of twenty-five narrative segments that might be called chapters. Although it tells the story of the town from its original foundation through its subsequent development, the tone is not epic, but playful. As is often the case in novels of this generation, there is an awareness of creation within the text. In this particular novel, the narrator dedicates a considerable portion of some chapters to describing his own creative situation, and includes even auto-criticism and discussion of his work with characters in the novel. Thus, certain chapters focus primarily on the narrator and the creative act itself, while others deal more directly with the history of the town he is describing. Like the early novels of Sánchez, Angel, and Duque López, the writer's fascination with creativity involves play with words. And just as the novels of this generation have rebelled against traditional novel forms, Aguilera's novel systematically questions the conventions of fiction of the realist-naturalist tradition by means of its nonconventional structure and metalanguage. Mateo, for example, defends the non-traditional characterization techniques he employs. In terms of the Colombian tradition of transcendent regionalism, this work's satirical tone can be seen within the similar tendency noted in El bazar de los idiotas. A point has now been reached at which serious political and philosophical themes are given fictional life by means of satiric distance.

Néstor Gustavo Díaz's first novel, La loba maquillada, uses a small town in Risaralda as its regional base. The two main characters are a prostitute and a homosexual. The fact that these

two characters are among the most respected figures in the community provides an indication of the function of characterization in this novel. The work is a satire of a decadent and perverse society. As the narrator describes the prostitute's corruption in intimate detail, on the one hand, and her respected place in society on the other, the satire becomes more acute. She is the virtual owner and mayor of the town. Like Alvarez Gardeazábal, Díaz employs a particular town as the basis for a detailed system of characterization. Beyond these two main characters, he describes the decadence of a wide range of this society. The narrator communicates this information as general knowledge ("dicen que"), often using a language that humorously parodies the town. There is a certain awareness of creation within the work, as the narrator pauses on occasion to situate the order of events in his narration, or even to comment about the characters directly. As a member of the community, however, he has established his right to do so. Late in the novel he reveals his identity and explains the source of his intimate knowledge of the town: he was a waiter at the principal hotel, a common meeting place for the local aristocracy. The inventive and humorous qualities of these first novels by Aguilera Garramuño and Díaz point toward a more artistically successful method of questioning society than the conceptual and even didactic tendencies of Collazos and Sánchez Suárez.

Of the three primary tendencies in the contemporary Colombian novel (1-- novelization on the plane of système, 2-- the novelization

of a concept, and 3-- the transcendence of regionalism), the production from 1967 to 1975 particularly emphasizes the first and third. The first tendency, the open structure of systeme, seems especially attractive to the young writers. Novels in which imagination is an important aspect often can be described along the lines of systeme. Besides Sánchez's Las causas supremas, his even more imaginative Las maniobras operates on this basis. In the case of Mateo el flautista, this open form is within the trend of the "open novel" in Spanish-American fiction in which the reader has an active role in the creative process. Albalucía Angel's novels also function along the lines of this type of fiction. Language itself as a subject of the work is often present, and language thus functions as more than a vehicle of communication. The writers break with tradition by questioning the communication medium through which tradition is perpetuated, language. This is evident in Breve historia de todas las cosas: the novelist's invention of a narrative structure within the plane of systeme corresponds to his invention of language. He overtly defends these rights concerning both the novel's organization and its language.

As far as the second tendency is concerned, Cola de zorro is not an entirely isolated case of the novelization of a concept, but this characteristic is not as common as the other two in the recent Colombian novel. Albalucía Angel creates a novel about a vague concept of imagination. However, in Cola de zorro the development of a concept is underlined by the fact that reading the novel is an intellectual experience. This kind of experience is similar to, though not quite the same as, noveli-

zation of a concept. It is more common, in the recent Colombian novel, than emphasis on a concept as the experience of a work. Among the older writers-- like Soto Aparicio and Zárate-- this intellectualization appears in the form of rational explanations within their works concerning literary matters. It is experienced as a rational, rather than esthetic, reaction to the state of fiction in Colombia at the time they write their novels. Among the younger writers-- Stevenson, Sánchez Suárez and Collazos-- the intellectualization in their works is a reaction to the immediate circumstance of society. Since this phenomenon is a case of the writers' political commitment, it is likely that the esthetic problems that arise because of the directness of their message are not of importance to the authors themselves. It can be a problem for the contemporary reader, however, who is accustomed to the transformation of reality in literary experience, rather than the explanation of it.

Of the three trends outlined, the novels of most consistent universal merit are those within the third, transcendent regionalism. Cien años de soledad and En noviembre llega el arzobispo mark the culmination of a type of transcendent regionalism that has its origins in the earlier Faulknerian writings of these two coastal writers. Novelists continue to employ a regional base to construct elaborate narrative systems, creating universal experience. In line with this tradition are Dabeiba, El bazar de los idiotas, El otoño del patriarca, Breve historia de todas las cosas and La loba maquillada. El bazar de los idiotas fabricates a narrative system around Tuluá, creating a system of characterization through

the manipulation of time elements. At this point in the trajectory of the transcendent regionalist novel, however, we note the presence of elements that satirize this very tradition. As has been discussed in the study, El bazar de los idiotas is a study of the phenomenon of exaggeration itself and of an anonymous town that becomes internationally famous, thus recalling Macondo in a satiric fashion. The study of El otoño del patriarca also reveals a complete and precise narrative system that uses the Caribbean region as its base. Both Breve historia de todas las cosas and La loba maquillada focus on a small town and once more are fundamentally satirical. Aguilera Garramuño even mentions García Márquez in his novel, overtly suggesting the literary tradition being parodied.

Beyond these general tendencies, more specific themes and techniques have become apparent during the process of this study. As Brushwood has already noted, Proustian and Faulknerian techniques are particularly evident in the Colombian novel.<sup>7</sup> A common method by which recent narratives incorporate the past is through Proustian progressive association. Two novels of 1967, En noviembre llega el arzobispo and El espejo sombrío use this technique to narrate the past. This technique was also noted in the analysis of Las causas supremas, and could be observed in a large number of novels during the years of this study. As far as Faulknerian techniques are concerned, transcendent regionalism could be called Colombian Faulknerism. The function of the past in many novels studied is similar to its function in Faulkner's novels: the flashback serves to illuminate something about a character, or

to portray him more fully. It is possible that this type of characterization may be explained by the broad similarity between the South of the United States and Colombia: both are highly traditional societies for which the past continues to be significant in understanding the present; it is also likely that the actual writings of Faulkner have affected the writing techniques in Colombia. Such influence seems to be the case of the coastal writers, for example, whose work features the use of fragmentation, changing narrative voice, and the structures common in Faulkner. Faulknerian techniques are so common in the recent Colombian novel that it is entirely possible that the writers of the younger generation may employ them without ever having read Faulkner.

The analysis of individual works has also shown a marked tendency toward short-story technique. In Las causas supremas the individual stories are somewhat disparate, and there are sections in which the narrator invents variations of stories, emphasizing story-telling for its own sake. Cola de zorro can be considered three individual stories according to the three formal division of the work. As discussed, the chapters stand as individual entities in El bazar de los idiotas, and there are notable individual narrative sequences within these chapters. One could speculate that this tendency might be attributed to the fact that young writers in Colombia often publish short stories before writing novels. Whatever the explanation for this tendency might be, it is notable that the experience of the recent Colombian novel tends to be preeminently oriented to anecdote and story-telling, rather than, for example, full-length psychological studies

or the development of ideas. As a generality, it can thus be stated that García Márquez is indeed representative of the Colombian novelist, a writer oriented toward story-telling, as opposed to the fiction of Julio Cortázar, for example.

When considering the actual narrative content-- the signified rather than the signifier-- or themes, the recent Colombian novel focuses especially on three fundamental institutions. These are the family, the church, and the military. The family is the most important of the three. It becomes a metaphor for reality in the Colombian novel. As such, the past that explains present circumstance is often related not only to tradition, but to family tradition. From 1967, in El espejo sombrío, the problem the protagonist faces is based on the fact that he has become obsessed with family blood lines, and is therefore unable to accept his wife because she is the daughter of his father's murderer, even though the woman is not herself in any way responsible. Such is the case for all the characters in Cola de zorro, who find themselves entirely incapable of finding an individual identity beyond the role to which they have been destined by heredity (or, in reality, heritage). The family as a metaphor for reality is particularly apparent when one considers the number of novels that relate family histories. El bazar de los idiotas is the story of a family and all the events in it are understood by both the reader and the characters as the fulfillment of a family destiny. The characters suffer tragedies for the same reason in La tara del papa and Cóndores no entierran todos los días. In accordance with the parodies of traditions in the most recent



novels, El otoño del patriarca may be considered a satire of the family tradition by means of the portrayal of a brutal dictator who is dominated by his mother. As an archetypal mother-figure, she functions as the family head par excellence.

The institutions of the church and the military appear as repressive forces in the Colombian novel. In En noviembre llega el arzobispo, the hope that the church represents for Cedrón's inhabitants becomes a grotesque farce. In the novels of Héctor Sánchez the representatives of the church are for the most part hypocrites. Although Soto Aparicio offers Christian solutions to the problems facing some of his protagonists, he does not necessarily support the church as an institution. El bazar de los idiotas satirizes the church most systematically, creating parallels between the actions of the church and the actions of the two heroes. Although the military appears as a repressive force in a wide range of novels, the national government itself is surprisingly absent. This fact seems to suggest, once more, that the actual circumstance and potential change are not determined by immediate government policy, but by the factors of tradition and other uncontrollable forces. The epoch of "la violencia", for example, is not experienced as a preeminently political struggle. To the contrary, it is the result of irrational forces and conflicting traditions.

Several factors point to the vitality of the Colombian novel since 1967, thus supporting the positive observations concerning the state of Colombian fiction made that year in the studies by Madrid-Malo and Pedersen. Besides the engaging ex-

periences analyzed and described in the process of this study, it is notable that the writing of the younger generation has developed considerably even during the brief span of time from 1967 to 1975. Alvarez Gardeazábal's first two novels are surpassed in quality by Dabeiba and El bazar de los idiotas, demonstrating a marked development in his writing ability. Each work by Fanny Buitrago and Albalucía Angel shows a marked improvement over the previous work. Benhur Sánchez Suárez's most recent novel is the most technically sophisticated work thus far in his career. The development of these writers, the general trajectory of the Colombian novel from 1967 to 1975, and the novelistic production of the year 1975 are three significant factors that point to the growth and promise of the Colombian novel.

## FOOTNOTES

## FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER I

<sup>1</sup>For a discussion of traditional versus transcendent regionalism, see John S. Brushwood, The Spanish-American Novel: A Twentieth Century Survey (Austin/London: University of Texas Press, 1975) pp. 334-335.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 43

<sup>4</sup>Fernando Alegría describes it as such in Historia de la novela hispanoamericana (México: De Andrea, 1965) pp. 170-174.

<sup>5</sup>Brushwood, op. cit., pp. 64-65.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 200-201.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 234.

<sup>8</sup>See Seymour Menton, "Respirando el verano, Fuente Colombiana de Cien años de soledad," Revista Iberoamericana, 91 (abril-junio 1975), 203-217.

<sup>9</sup>Brushwood, op. cit., p. 235.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 289.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 288.

<sup>12</sup>Néstor Madrid-Malo, "Estado actual de la novela en Colombia," Inter-American Review of Bibliography, 17, no. 1 (January-March 1967), 82.

<sup>13</sup>Carl Pederson, "Main Trends in the Contemporary Colombian

Novel," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Southern California 1971, p. 385.

<sup>14</sup>El Tiempo (Bogotá), 16 July 1967 (page number not available).

<sup>15</sup>Ebel Botero Escobar, in a generally laudatory article on this novel, describes the structure as fundamentally chaotic. See "La gran bestia, el sin-madre y el amatista; intimidades de la novela de Rojas Herazo," Boletín Cultural y Bibliográfico, 10, no. 11 (1967), 127-136.

<sup>16</sup>Héctor Rojas Herazo, En noviembre llega el arzobispo (Bogotá: Lerner, 1967) p. 26. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and are noted in the text.

<sup>17</sup>The six characters are Celia (pp. 68-73), Auristela (pp. 111-116), Father Escardó (pp. 124-138), Eladio Finol (pp. 150-156), Delina (pp. 159-166), and Vitelia (pp. 167-180).

<sup>18</sup>Another parallel involves the relationship between the function of the archbishop and the function of Mendieta. They both are mentioned in the novel for the first time in the same narrative segment (pp. 25-27). They function as antagonistic characters, representing good and bad respectively. The archbishop is always mentioned as the only hope for the people of Cedrón. Mendieta appears in the context of his powerfully negative influence. In a conversation between señora Delina and Don Demetrio at the beginning of the novel, Delina and Demetrio discuss Mendieta and the archbishop. First they note that Mendieta's ill health is just reward for the life he has led in

Cedrón. Then the anecdote ends on a more optimistic note when the future visit of the archbishop is mentioned: "¿Sabes una cosa? Auristela me dijo anoche que en noviembre llega el arzobispo" (p. 27). After numerous optimistic references to the archbishop, he finally does appear (pp. 302-311) and the hope he had inspired disappears. He is an embodiment of the basic contrast between spirituality and vulgarity established in the introductory part of the novel. His spirituality has its basis in his being the most highly respected representative of the church that the people of Cedrón have seen. His most salient characteristic, however, is his physical ugliness: "El arzobispo, ayudado por el sacerdote y uno de los caballeros de Jesús, empezó a erguirse con ceremoniosa dificultad. Manejar semejante cuerpo, con sus buenos kilos de sobrepeso y a semejante edad, era una proeza" (p. 311). He is also vulgar:

El arzobispo buscó con sumo cuidado, al tacto, la parte mas abullonada del espaldar. Al hacerlo, sintió un alfiletazo en el vientre y acentuando su gesto de abandono, abrió las nalgas para permitir el paso a una aliviadora ventosidad. (p. 309)

The idea of this archbishop as the "hope" thus becomes clearly ironic in such passages. The point at which the archbishop leaves the town appears in juxtaposition with a segment important for Mendieta. This segment opens with a panoramic vision of the town and moves toward a focus on Mendieta with the entire town (thus supporting technically the action and themes of the novel as they have been developed). Maintaining the parallel, this is the last segment in which Mendieta appears alive and it follows the last segment dealing with the archbishop.

<sup>19</sup>Fernando Soto Aparicio, El espejo sombrío (Barcelona: Ediciones Marte, 1967) p. 10. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and are noted in the text.

<sup>20</sup>Mario Arrubla, La infancia legendaria de Ramiro Cruz (Medellín: Editorial Lealón, 1975) p. 11. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and are noted in the text.

#### FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER II

<sup>1</sup>See John S. Brushwood, The Spanish-American Novel: A Twentieth Century Survey (Austin/London: University of Texas Press, 1975). Chapter 17 identifies one characteristic of recent fiction as being "an interest in having both reader and author himself observe the author in the act of creating fiction" (p. 267). Of particular interest with respect to the novel in question is Chapter 19, pages 312-314, which discuss novels of this type. Brushwood begins the section as follows: "Although there is no way to prove such a hypothesis, it seems likely that the novelist's interest in seeing himself writing bears some relationship to the attack on conventionality and to the importance of humor". As we will note, the "attack on conventionality and the importance of humor" are key to the experience of Las causas supremas.

<sup>2</sup>See Raymond D. Souza, "Language versus Structure in the Contemporary Spanish-American Novel," Hispania, LII, no. 4 (December 1969), 833-839.

<sup>3</sup>Gérard Genette defines histoire as the signified or nar-

rative content. It is the anecdote at its most simple level. The signifier is the récit, or the transformed anecdote as it actually appears in the text. Figures III (Paris: Seuil, 1972) p. 72.

<sup>4</sup>See Genette's introduction to "Discours du récit" in Figures III for an application and discussion of the concept of the nuclear verb.

<sup>5</sup>For Barthes' description of a novel's basic organization, see Roland Barthes, "Introducción al análisis estructural de los relatos" in Análisis estructural del relato (Buenos Aires: Tiempo Contemporáneo, 1970), published originally in French as L'analyse structurale du récit, Communications No. 8. My discussion of système and syntagme is based on "Part III: Syntagm and System" in Roland Barthes' Elements of Semiology (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970). These two concepts can be understood by means of the chart on page 63, part of which I reproduce as follows:

	<u>Système</u>	<u>Syntagme</u>
Garment System	Set of pieces, parts or details which cannot be worn at the same time on the same part of the body and whose variation corresponds to a change in the meaning of the clothing: toque, bonnet, hood, etc.	Juxtaposition in the same type of dress of different element: skirt, blouse, jacket.
Furniture System	Set of "stylistic" varieties of a single piece of furniture (a bed).	Juxtaposition of the different pieces of furniture in the same space: bed, wardrobe, table, etc.
Architecture System	Variations in a style of a single element in a building, various types of roof, balcony, hall, etc.	Sequence of the details at the level of the whole building.

With the above in mind, I would propose the following analogy in literature:

Novel System	Set of variations on a single theme, anecdote, character, etc. (Joyce, Proust, Cortazar, Sainz, Massiani, Sánchez).	Sequence of details in action, character development, plot, etc. (Balzac, Flaubert, Azuela, García Márquez, Alvarez Gardezabal).
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This system is not totally my invention. In this chapter, Barthes points out that for Jakobson, Russian lyrical songs, the works of Romanticism and Symbolism, surrealist painting and the films of Charlie Chaplin belong to systeme, while heroic epics, narratives of the Realist school and films by Griffith belong to syntagme.

<sup>6</sup>Cien años de soledad, like other novels for which sequence and the spatial relationship of the narrative sections are of fundamental importance, would function on the plane of syntagme (see footnote #5 above).

<sup>7</sup>See Percy Lubbock, The Craft of Fiction (New York: Viking Press, 1957).

<sup>8</sup>See the fourth section of "Introducción al análisis estructural de los relatos", titled "La Narración". Barthes states: "De hecho, el problema no consiste en analizar introspectivamente los motivos del narrador ni los efectos que la narración produce sobre el lector; sino en describir el código a través del cual se otorga significado al narrador y al lector a lo largo del relato mismo". Análisis estructural del relato, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup>Barthes, Análisis estructural del relato.

<sup>10</sup>See Part IV: Denotation and Connotation in Elements of Semiology.



<sup>11</sup>The connotative function of metalanguage is discussed in section 3 of Part IV: Denotation and Connotation: "we deal here with a complex ensemble, where language, at its denotated level, is a metalanguage, but where this metalanguage is in its turn caught up in a process of connotation". Elements of Semiology, pp. 92-93.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER III

<sup>1</sup>See the discussion of the novelization of a concept by John S. Brushwood in The Spanish-American Novel: A Twentieth Century Survey (Austin/London: University of Texas Press, 1975) pp. 314-15.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 315.

<sup>3</sup>Gérard Genette, Figures III (Paris: Seuil, 1970).

<sup>4</sup>Brushwood discusses the problem of the small-screen novel, the novelization of a concept, and the question of human relationships as follows: "At times, readers may wonder if novels like Obsesivos días circulares are replacing small-screen novels that illuminate problems of human relationships. The concepts that become the principal communication of some novels may be a substitute for the anguished protagonist of the existentialist tradition. There are many novels in which problems of human relationships are fundamental to the story and more apparent than in Sainz's novel, for example" (The Spanish-American Novel p. 315). My observations on Cola de zorro and the characterization seem to support this suggestion.

<sup>5</sup>Brushwood states: "dynamism...is the very essence of creativity" in "Social Content of Literature and the Arts" in Investigaciones Contemporáneas sobre historia de México (Austin/London: University of Texas Press, 1971) pp. 715-718. He defines dynamism in The Spanish-American Novel as follows: "I use it in connection with the factors in a novel that vitalize the experience, transforming the anecdotal base of the work of fiction and sustaining the process of growth and change throughout the novel" p. xiii. For Barthes see Essais Critique (Paris: Seuil, 1964) in which he defines the novel as a system of information in movement. Butor, in Essais sur le roman, suggests that the novel is a continuous voyage. John Kronik comments on these two observations by Barthes and Butor: "Estas designaciones, que estoy dispuesto a aceptar, suponen que el arte literario encierra un dinamismo inherente por estar construido a base de una sucesión de signos o palabras" ("Estructuras dinámicas en Nazarín", Anales Galdosianos, IX). Ronald Sukenick states: "We have to learn to think about a novel as a concrete structure rather than an allegory, existing in the realm of experience rather than of discursive meaning and available to multiple interpretations or none, depending on how you feel about it-- like the way that girl pressed against you in the subway. Novels are experiences to respond to, not problems to be figured out, and it would be interesting if criticism could begin to expand its stock of responses to the experience of fiction" ("The Tradition of Fiction" in Surfiction, edited by Raymond Federman. Chicago: Swallow Press, 1975, p. 40). Federman's volume is a series of essays about contemporary fiction

and the criticism of it.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

<sup>1</sup>See the discussion of the reaffirmation of the right of invention in the Spanish-American novel in Chapter 12, "The Years of the Reaffirmation of Fiction", by John S. Brushwood in The Spanish American Novel: A Twentieth Century Survey (Austin/London: University of Texas Press, 1975).

<sup>2</sup>Germán Darío Carrillo suggests this definition of magical realism in La narrativa de Gabriel García Márquez (Madrid: Editorial Castalia, 1975). Other discussions on the subject include Angel Flores "Magical-Realism in Spanish-American Fiction," Hispania, XXXVIII (1955), 157-192; Luis Leal "El realismo mágico en la literatura hispanoamericana," Cuadernos Americanos, no. 4 (julio-agosto 1967), 230-235; and Enrique Anderson-Imbert "Magical Realism in Spanish-American Fiction," The International Fiction Review, II, no. 1 (January 1975), 1-8.

<sup>3</sup>All references to Genette in this chapter deal specifically with the ideas developed in a 200 page analysis of Proust's A la Recherche du temps perdu titled "Discours du récit" which appears in Figures III (Paris: Seuil, 1972). In the introduction Genette suggests the possibility of considering a story on the basis of the expansion of a verb. For example, Genette notes that in the Odyssey the verb would be "Ulysses returns to Ithaca" and for Recherche "Marcel becomes a writer".

<sup>4</sup>Genette defines histoire as the signified or narrative

content ("le signifié ou contenu narratif" p. 72). It is the anecdote at its most simple level. The signifier is the récit, or the transformed anecdote as it actually appears in the text.

<sup>5</sup>Once the idea of the nuclear verb is accepted, it is possible to analyze the discourse of a narrative according to the categories of the grammar of the verb ("Ceci nous autorise peut-être à organiser, ou du moins à formuler des problèmes d'analyse du discours narratif selon des catégories empruntées à la grammaire du verbe" p. 75). The three most general categories of this analysis are temps, mode and voix (pp. 75-76). Temps studies the relationship between the basic anecdote and the real discourse as it appears in the text (où s'exprime le rapport entre le temps de l'histoire e celui du discours" p. 74). Mode deals with the problem of "representation" in the narrative; the forms and degrees of regulating the information of the text (p. 75). Voix deals with the relationship between verbal action and its subject (p. 76). "Discours du récit" has five chapters. The first three chapters deal with the problems of temps: ordre, duration, and frequence. The fourth deals with mode and the fifth voix, two terms to be defined more precisely in terms of literary analysis later in this study.

<sup>6</sup>Analepse is defined as moving back in time from the "present" of the narrative. ("tout évocation après coup d'un événement antérieur au point de l'histoire ou l'on se trouve" p. 82).

<sup>7</sup>Gustavo Alvarez Gardeazábal, El bazar de los idiotas (Bogotá: Plaza y Janés, 1974) p. 7. Subsequent quotations are from this

edition and are noted in the text.

<sup>8</sup>Frequency, in its most simple terms, considers the relationship between how many times something happens and how many times it actually appears in the text.

<sup>9</sup>Prolepse is moving forward in time ("toute manoeuvre narrative consistant à raconter ou évoquer d'avance un événement ultérieur" p. 82).

<sup>10</sup>Other examples can be found on pages 49, 52, 66, 85, 92, 101, 119, 121, and 227.

<sup>11</sup>"Une anachronie peut se porter, dans le passé ou dans l'avenir, plus ou moins loin du moment "présent", c'est-à-dire du moment de l'histoire où le récit s'est interrompu pour lui faire place: nous appellerons portée de l'anachronie cette distance temporelle" (p. 89).

<sup>12</sup>Amplitude is a measurement of the length of the portée: "Elle (portée) peut aussi couvrir elle-même un durée d'histoire plus ou moins longue: c'est ce que nous appellerons son amplitude" (p. 89).

<sup>13</sup>Narration is defined as the narrative situation in the introduction, and used as such later in the text: ("l'act narratif producteur et, par extension, l'ensemble de la situation réelle ou fictive dans laquelle il prend place" (p. 72).

<sup>14</sup>Since narration is the basic narrative situation, it involves what has traditionally been called "narrative point of view". Genette divides this general problem into two problems:

who is seeing and who is speaking. It should be noted, however, that such a statement is a simplification in the sense that Genette is not merely attempting to establish identities (who), but rather, expands the "seeing" as one problem to be analyzed in detail, and the "speaking" as another. He establishes the basic dichotomy as follows:

Toutefois, la plupart des travaux théoriques sur ce sujet souffrent à mon sens d'une fâcheuse confusion entre ce que j'appelle ici mode et voix, c'est-à-dire entre la question quel est le personnage dont le point de vue oriente la perspective narrative? et cette question tout autre: qui est le narrateur?-- ou, pour parler plus vite, entre la question qui voit? et la question qui parle? (p. 203, all emphases are Genette's)

Genette agrees with Brooks and Warren's idea of distinguishing between "focus of narration" and "point of view". Genette points to the confusion of Stanzel's system, however, for not having made the distinction between what is really point of view and the other problem, the position of the narrator as present or absent from the story. Genette demonstrates the same confusion in Friedman's eight-point system.

<sup>15</sup>The definition of the novel as "extradiégétique-hétéro-diégétique" is considering two problems of voix. The first problem is the narrative level: a first-degree level is a case in which the narrator within the story tells the story (and from here, of course, we enter the possibilities of metafiction, which Genette calls "meta-diégétique" in level). The second problem is the position of the narrator as being present or absent from the story, from the action itself. There are four basic possibilities: 1) extradiégétique-hétérodiégétique: (Homer), narrator in

narrator in first degree who tells a story from which he is absent; 2) extradiégétique-homodiégétique; (Gil Blas) narrator in first degree who tells his own story; 3) intradiégétique-hétérodiégétique (Scheherazade), narrator in second degree who tells stories from which she is generally absent; 4) intradiégétique-homodiégétique (Ulysses in Books IX-XII), narrator in second degree who tells his own story.

<sup>16</sup>These are my terms, not Genette's. I have chosen to invent them because I think they are important factors in this particular novel.

<sup>17</sup>Paralipse is defined as limiting information. In the classical use of this technique, the narrator holds back information purposely (p. 211).

<sup>18</sup>The last section of "Discours du récit", the analysis of voix, is divided into three parts. The first two parts consider the relationship between the narrator and the story. First, temps de la narration, or the relationship in terms of time (where does the narrator stand temporally in relationship to the action-- before, after, or simultaneous). Second, niveau narratif, the already discussed degrees (see footnote #14). The third, personne, deals with the relationship between the narrator, the narrataire and the story (p. 227).

<sup>19</sup>Genette offers three general possibilities for the relationship of the narrator and the story in terms of time:

- 1) ultérieure (the classical position of the story in the past);
- 2) antérieure (predictive story, generally in the future);

3) simultanée (story in the present of the action).

<sup>20</sup>There are certain indications of what Genette would call alterations from this basic question. The narrator says things like tal vez and dizque or dicen que that make him part of the story in the sense that he must have heard these things.

<sup>21</sup>Genette delineates five basic functions of the narrator: fonction narrative, 2) fonction de régie, 3) fonction de communication, 4) fonction testimoniale, 5) fonction idéologique. In the case of having a fonction testimoniale, the narrator observes and indicates the sources of his information or the degree of precision of his memories (p. 262).

<sup>22</sup>Genette defines the fonction narrative as the one that concerns histoire (p. 261).

<sup>23</sup>See Genette, pp. 261-262.

<sup>24</sup>The exception is Marcianita, who does remember. Just as the narrator organizes and controls the narrative (having remembered), Marcianita seemingly is in control of Tuluá as the one person who does remember. The miracles that result in Tuluá's disaster are Marcianita's revenge. Whereas the people of Tuluá are often confused, easily persuaded, and forgetful, Marcianita is always conscious of the reality that surrounds her. Before she is born she has her origins stamped on her memory, as the narrator explains:

En ese momento doña Manuela se sentó en su silla de mimbres y meciéndose suavemente fue entrando en el tétrico estado en que nadie la vio, pero que ella jamás olvidó y grabó



bien en la mente de su hija por nacer para que pasados los años, olvidadas las circunstancias, ella y sola ella, pudiera darse el lujo que hoy tal vez está dando. (p. 27)

<sup>25</sup>See Henri Bergson, La risa (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1962) p. 13.

<sup>26</sup>Bergson states: "Es cómico todo incidente que atrae nuestra atención sobre la parte física de una persona cuando nos ocupábamos de su aspecto moral". La risa, p. 44.

<sup>27</sup>Genette's example of the fonction idéologique is the narrator in Balzac who enters directly into the narrative to moralize (p. 263).

<sup>28</sup>See the introduction to Pour une sociologie du roman by Lucien Goldmann. (In Spanish, Para una sociología de la novela, Madrid: Editorial Ciencia Nueva, 1967.)

<sup>29</sup>The highly anecdotal content of El bazar de los idiotas is an important factor, in my opinion, of the applicability of an organization such as Genette's for textual analysis, since such an organization is to a large extent (although not exclusively) based on conventional narrative traditions (i.e. up to Flaubert). It is important to note, however, that the analysis of El bazar de los idiotas has been based not only on an application of his principles, but also to a certain extent using these principles as a point of departure. This fact seems to be an observation on both the experience of El bazar de los idiotas and the usefulness of a system such as "Discours du récit". We note, for example, that the presence of a narrateur de règle is important

to the experience of El bazar de los idiotas, both in terms of the novel's structural unity and even as a theme (of memory), but not in the "true" sense of the classical narrateur de régie that Genette describes. The same holds true for paralepse and paralipse. When the narrator provides more information than is necessary, Genette defines this as paralepse. His example is the classical paralepse of the nineteenth century narrator who explains what the reader could probably deduce. Alvarez Gardeazábal does use paralepse, but the experience is different, such as in the case of providing more detail than is necessary, for humorous effects. Genette uses paralipse, on the other hand, for the classical technique of withholding information. Alvarez Gardeazábal does use paralipse in this classical sense (we do not know why, for example, everyone must go to the idiots, until relatively late in the novel), but much more significantly, he also limits information about Tuluá in order to create the special relationship discussed between the narrator, narrataire and the story.

#### FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER V

<sup>1</sup>Genette defines histoire as the signified or narrative content ("le signifié ou contenu narratif" p. 72). It is the anecdote at its most simple level. The signifier is the récit, or the transformed anecdote as it actually appears in the text. Figures III (Paris: Seuil, 1972).

<sup>2</sup>Gabriel García Márquez, El otoño del patriarca (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1975) p. 8. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and are noted in the text.

<sup>3</sup>I use the terms "aperture" and "opening" identically in this chapter. I have defined the structure as a system of "progressive apertures", and will often use the term "opening" in the description of this structure.

<sup>4</sup>José Miguel Oviedo points out the fact that the sentences become progressively more lengthy in "García Márquez: La novela como taumaturgia," The American Hispanist, I, no. 2 (October 1975), 4-9.

<sup>5</sup>Seymour Menton establishes the importance of narrative point of view in "Ver para no creer: El otoño del patriarca," Caribe, I, no. 1 (primavera 1976), 7-27.

<sup>6</sup>Menton notes the importance of "ver" in the article cited above.

<sup>7</sup>Eric Neumann, The Great Mother (New York: Pantheon Books Inc., 1955) p. 24. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and are noted in the text.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

<sup>1</sup>Alberto Duque López, Mateo el flautista (Bogotá: Lerner, 1968) p. 28. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and are noted in the text.

<sup>2</sup>José Stevenson, Los años de la asfixia (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1969) p. 20. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and are noted in the text.

<sup>3</sup>Benhur Sánchez Suárez, La solterona (Neiva: Imprenta

Departamental, 1969) p. 109.

<sup>4</sup>Albalucía Angel, Los girasoles en invierno (Bogotá: Editorial Linotipia Bolívar, 1970) p. 163. Subsequent quotations are from this edition and are noted in the text.

<sup>5</sup>See the review of this novel by Isis Quinteros in Chasqui, (May 1975), 70-74.

<sup>6</sup>Héctor Sánchez, Las maniobras (México: Joaquín Mortiz, 1969) p. 78.

<sup>7</sup>See the Conclusion to The Spanish-American Novel: A Twentieth Century Survey by John S. Brushwood (Austin/London: University of Texas Press, 1975).

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