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**GENDER DIFFERENCES IN
CONTEMPORARY LATIN
AMERICAN NARRATIVE:**

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF
MALE AUTHORS AND FEMALE
AUTHORS.**

by
Verónica Vázquez García

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of

the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

April 23, 1989

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The undersigned recommend to the Faculty of Graduate
Studies and Research acceptance of the thesis

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Submitted by Verónica Vázquez García, B.A.

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
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Thesis Supervisor

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This thesis compares four of the most popular novels produced by members of the Boom of Latin American literature with four novels produced during the same period of time by women who are not considered to be part of the Boom. The novels are analyzed from a feminist poststructuralist perspective. Support is found for the hypothesis that even though the Boom novelists manifestly create a progressive Latin American identity, they also reproduce patriarchal assumptions by silencing women's voices in their novels. In contrast, women writers show signs of an emerging female consciousness and open spaces for the women's voices which are being silenced in male authors' texts.

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CHAPTER I

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.- Poststructuralist theory and feminist practice

The perspective of this study is poststructuralism. In this section, language and literature will be defined from this point of view. For this purpose, Chris Weedon's account of feminist poststructuralism will be used.

A basic assumption of poststructuralism is that meaning is constituted within language rather than reflected by language. Ferdinand de Saussure originally set forth this conception of language. For him language is an abstract system of chains of signs;

Each sign is made up of a signifier (sound or written image) and a signified (meaning). The two components of the sign are related to each other in an arbitrary way and there is therefore no natural connection between the sound image and the concept it identifies. The meaning of signs is not intrinsic, but relational. Each sign derives its meaning from its difference from all the other signs in the language chain (Weedon, 1987: 23).

Saussure believes that, rather than reflecting social reality, language constitutes social reality for us. There are no universally shared concepts reflecting a fixed reality, but rather meanings that vary not only from culture to culture and language to language, but also between different discourses within a particular language. This idea of language allows us to think of it as a social product in which meanings can constantly be challenged and changed.

Foucault, a major poststructuralist theorist, developed a theory of discourse. For Foucault discourses are also historically and socially produced. They are "ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere in such knowledges and the relations between them" (Ibid: 109). Subjectivity is thus constructed by various discursive practices, which in turn are always part of a wider network of power relations, often with institutional bases. This idea of subjectivity being constructed by discursive practices and meanings that are historically produced implies that subjectivity is a social product and can also be subject to change.

Thus, analyzing how discursive practices are structured and what power relations they produce and reproduce becomes a central task of poststructuralism. This analysis can highlight the possible places where resistance can be exercised and alternative meanings and discourses can challenge the dominant ones. For feminism, this analysis seeks to understand and transform the dominant meanings of patriarchy and the discursive practices through which power over women is exercised.

From a poststructuralist perspective, patriarchy can be considered a discourse that has been produced in particular historical circumstances. Patriarchy embodies a set of social meanings given to biological sexual difference, which lead to institutionalized definitions of women's nature and social role. Qualities such as patience, sensitivity and self-sacrifice are seen as "naturally" feminine and thus help justify the division of labour as well as women's oppression. Feminist poststructuralism attempts to deconstruct the meaning of traditional femininity based on biological sexual difference to expose it as

a social construction that can be changed.

The example that Weedon gives to illustrate the use of poststructuralism for feminist purposes is that of literary criticism:

Fiction offers access to the discourses constituting gender and the meaning of women's lives at the time of writing as framed by the conventions of the literary discourses of the period and read through the concerns of the present day (Ibid: 137).

Hence, discourses about femininity that prevailed in different times in history and worked as forms of power over women through various institutions can be pointed out, as well as alternative ways of seeing gender. Common-sense ideas of femininity, women's bodies and women's tasks can be seen as historical constructions that are either reproduced or challenged in literary texts.

2.- Patriarchal thought and the silencing of woman's voice

According to Hélène Cixous, Western philosophy and literary thought have always been caught up in an "endless series of hierarchical binary oppositions that always in the end come back to the fundamental 'couple' of male/female", where "the 'feminine' side is always seen as the negative, powerless instance" (Toril Moi, 1985: 104). "Feminine" is associated with nature as opposed to culture, emotions as opposed to head, Pathos as opposed to Logos, passivity as opposed to activity, and so on. The "couple" becomes a "general battlefield" where one term acquires meaning by destroying the other. "In the end, victory is equated with activity and defeat with passivity; under patriarchy, the

male is always the victor" (Ibid: 105). Equating femininity with passivity leaves the woman with no positive space. "Either woman is passive or she does not exist" (Cixous quoted by Moi, Idem). Hence, the binary oppositions described by Cixous are patriarchal because they lead to the collusion of logocentrism with phallogentrism "in an effort to oppress and silence women" (Idem).

Similarly, Luce Irigaray believes woman constitutes the silent ground on which Western philosophical discourse is erected. An underlying assumption of this discourse is "the necessity of postulating a subject that is capable of reflecting on its own being" (Ibid: 132). In this sense, Western philosophical discourse "is incapable of representing femininity/woman other than as the negative of its own reflection" (Idem). The thinking man cannot think outside a specular structure as a subject who contemplates himself. Within this logic of the "same":

woman is not only the Other, as Simone de Beauvoir discovered, but is quite specifically man's Other: his negative or mirror-image. This is why patriarchal discourse situates woman outside representation: she is absence, negativity, the dark continent, or at best a lesser man. In patriarchal culture the feminine as such ... is repressed; it returns only in its "acceptable" form as man's specularized Other (Ibid: 133-34).

Western philosophical discourse not only denies the woman's subjectivity, but also makes the woman an object "of representation, of discourse, of desire..." (Irigaray quoted by Smart, 1988: 11). The phallus as "le sens dernier de tout discours, l'étalon de la vérité et de la propriété, notanmant du sexe, le signifiant et/ou le signifié ultime de tout

désir..." (Irigaray quoted by Claudine Potvin, 1984: 65) gives identity to women who cannot act as "speaking" subjects. In capitalist and patriarchal societies, women become commodities whose prices "ne leur vient plus de leur forme naturelle, leur corps, de leur langage, mais de ce qu'elles mirent du besoin-désir d'échanges entre hommes" (Ibid: 66). Women "passent toujours d'un homme à un autre, d'un group d'hommes à un autre group d'hommes," since "la force de travail est donc toujours supposée masculine, et les 'produits' font l'objet d'usage et de transactions entre les seuls hommes" (Ibid: 67). More specifically, women's transactions take place between two men: the father and the husband. "Comme une merchandise passant d'un propriétaire à l'autre, possible monnaie d'échange entre l'un et l'autre" (Idem).

3.- Quebec's literary tradition and the patriarchal triangle

Patricia Smart emphasizes this idea of a woman being exchanged by two men in her study of Quebec's literary tradition. Smart describes Quebecois society as a "disguised patriarchy" where women are expected to support the family in their traditional role of "reproducing mothers." Smart argues that this role is an ideological construct created by a male hierarchy influenced by the Catholic Church and pre-revolutionary France,

hiérarchie dans laquelle le pouvoir se transmettait en lignée directe de Dieu le Père au Roi de France au père de famille, et ensuite au fils aîné - l'épouse et les plus jeunes de la famille étant relégués au statut d'"autres" (1988: 30).

The ideological construct of the reproducing mother results from a cultural system

marked by what Smart calls "l'asymetrie entre le masculin et le féminin," where the feminine is silenced and subordinated to the masculine order. Hence it is defined from a masculine perspective.

The asymmetry between masculine and feminine is perpetuated through what Smart calls the patriarchal triangle and defines as two men (the father and the "prétendant") exchanging a woman treated as an object. In this exchange both men and women are assigned particular roles by the "Father's Law." The patriarchal triangle works as an ideological construct rooted not only in the familial and cultural specificity of Quebecois society, but also in a more widespread structure in Western culture by which the father's name is transmitted, as well as the sexual division of labour.

Both men and women write within the "Father's House," which Smart uses as "une métaphore de la culture et de ses structures de représentation idéologiques, artistiques et langagières." As shown by Irigaray and Cixous, the Father's House is erected on "une Autre-réifiée, une femme-objet construit de reflet et de support à la subjectivité masculine" (Ibid: 22).

Within the Father's House, the patriarchal triangle is internalized at an individual level by men and women in different ways. The son internalizes it in the form of the Oedipus complex, "'son histoire à lui' devant nécessairement passer par la possession de la femme-objet et donc par l'impossibilité de 'son histoire à elle'" (Ibid: 33). The Father's Law is "all-powerful" for the son, whose only way to tell his story is by silencing hers. Smart calls the consequence of this a tragic male literary tradition of Quebec, where violence is exercised against women. The models of women as the

"reproducing mother" (mère reproductrice), who supports the family or as the "terrifying mother" (mère monstreuse) who threatens male identity, can be easily found in this tradition. According to Smart female characters in Quebec's male literary tradition are

idéalisées ou méprisées (mais toujours silencieux), parlant à travers toute "l'altérité" que les écrivains masculins semblent sentir le besoin de dompter afin de s'assurer de leur propre identité scripturaire (Ibid: 21).

The daughter's position in the Father's House is even worse than the son's. She has no place in the Father's House except as "l'objet silencieux et immobile qui soutient l'édifice" (Ibid: 34). Thus, in the Father's House a woman's writing becomes subversive because it breaks the silence (i.e. by constituting women as subjects). Female narrators are more likely to break the patriarchal triangle when they situate themselves as subjects in the Father's House.

Women's cultural production is distinguished by the process of women becoming subjects in their social reality. Smart found that Quebec had a "subversive" feminine literary tradition, distinguished by attempts to break the silence to which the woman is condemned within the Father's House. It is "subversive" because

des que "l'objet" commence à se percevoir comme un sujet, ce sont les fondements mêmes de la maison qui sont ébranlés. Ayant un rapport différent à la Loi du Père et à l'origine maternelle que leurs frères littéraires, les femmes - qu'elles le veuillent ou non - sont une présence qui dérange l'ordre de la maison paternelle (Ibid: 23).

4.- Latin American literary tradition and the patriarchal triangle

The models of the patriarchal triangle and disguised patriarchy will be used to study a period of Latin American narrative - from the late 1950s to the 1970s - called "the Boom." The Boom is considered the first set of literary works to shape Latin American cultural identity. Most members of the Boom - all men - had a progressive attitude toward Latin American political and economic independence. They elaborated on the role of the intellectual in the liberation of Latin America and claimed that they were using literature to fight social injustice. However, it is hypothesized that male Latin American writers are caught in the patriarchal triangle and can tell "son histoire à lui" only by silencing "son histoire à elle." Consequently, the models of the "reproducing mother" and the "terrifying mother" are likely to be found in their texts. Women are not only used as stereotypes whose only role is to explain the central story of a male character, but they also appear as threats to male identity or as the source of it. In Smart's words, they are "idéalisées or méprisées," "mais toujours silencieux." Hence, the progressiveness of the Boom's account of the Latin American cultural identity is problematic because of the absence of female voices. In their attitude toward women, Boom writers were not progressive.

This thesis will compare four Boom writers with four Latin American women writers from the same period who were not considered to belong to the Boom. It is hypothesized that the women's voices that are silenced in male writers' work appear in the work of

female writers. Women constitute themselves as subject-narrators through their writings and make women's experiences a valuable contribution to the construction of a truly progressive Latin American identity.

5.-Methodology

To explore the construction of gender in the literature produced both by the Boom and by women writers of the same period from a feminist perspective four of the most representative novels of the Boom will be compared with four novels by women. This thesis is not an exhaustive study of a whole period of Latin American literature. In fact, it only refers to the Latin American Spanish-speaking world. The selected works are only a small sample of the literary works that were claimed to be defining not only the literary canons, but also the cultural identity of a whole continent. In this sense, selecting the four Boom novels was straightforward; they have consistently been defined as major works. The four Boom writers have been widely acknowledged and studied and are usually included in anthologies. They are considered to have contributed significantly to the Latin American literary tradition and most critics define them as the most representative writers of the Boom.

However, the situation of the women writers is more problematic. Their works were usually only acknowledged nationally. Women writers were writing independently and did not constitute a group with similar literary and political views like the Boom. They also were not considered to have started a literary movement. It was difficult to decide which women writers are the most "representative" of the Latin American literary

tradition. In chapter two the criteria for selecting these eight authors and novels will be elaborated.

The section on each writer is divided into five subsections. The first deals with biographical data. The second provides information about the works produced by the writer and his or her degree of popularity at national, Latin American and international levels. The third subsection discusses the writer's views on the function of literature and the role of Latin American intellectuals. This subsection will show the homogeneity among the Boom writers regarding their ideas about literature and political commitment. There is not the same homogeneity among the women writers, so in this subsection their experiences as women writers will be discussed. The fourth subsection introduces the purpose and hypothesis of the study and presents previous readings of the novels being discussed. Because of the lack of material on the women writers I am presenting a broad, general reading of their works. Subsection five analyzes the selected novels. Each novel will be examined for evidence of a disguised patriarchy and evidence of a woman's voice. This fifth subsection will present the result of these readings.

Literary texts can be read in different ways. Each reading is undertaken within a particular interpretative frame. Readers construct divergent interpretations of the same novel, depending on their background, knowledge and previous experiences. As Marjorie L. De Vault puts it, interpretation of literary texts is

a collective activity: varying interpretations do not simply depend on individual insights but rather emerge as groups with particular interests acquire voices in discourses about similar texts and collectively develop and learn new interpretative frames (1990: 890).

Reading a text from a feminist perspective means being outside the dominant cultural frame and challenging claims to universal meaning, as well as the criteria of the literary establishment.

This thesis considers these novels as the products of individual writers but more importantly, as the products of particular societies at a specific historical time. The hypothesis of this study is that the works of the Boom novelists reproduce patriarchal assumptions even though they were manifestly creating a progressive Latin American identity. However, the less well-known women writers of the same period show signs of an emerging female consciousness.

CHAPTER II

THE NOVELISTS

1.- A definition of the Boom of Latin American literature

Raúl Silva Cáceres classifies 20th century Latin American writers on a generational basis. The first generation, the founders of contemporary Latin American literature, consists of writers who were born at the beginning of this century and who achieved literary maturity by the 1950s. The most important ones are Jorge Luis Borges (1899), Miguel Angel Asturias (1899) and Alejo Carpentier (1904). The second group includes those born during the first world war and who also published during the 1950s. They are Juan Carlos Onetti (1919), José Lezama Lima (1912), Julio Cortázar (1914) and Juan Rulfo (1919). The third group were born in the late 1920s and early 1930s and had already published important works during the 1950s. However, their major works were published during the 1960s and 1970s. Silva considers Gabriel García Márquez (1928), Carlos Fuentes (1928) and Mario Vargas Llosa (1935) the most prolific of this generation. Indeed, they were quite prolific when Silva said this - 1969 - and they still are. According to Silva, the major characteristic of this last group is that they learned from the creativity and traditions of the previous groups while concomitantly having

considerable influence on them (Silva, 1971: 17).

José Donoso defines the Boom of Latin American literature from the point of view of the works produced, rather than from the writers. So, the Boom is a group of novels published during the 1960s that merited "international attention" (1972: 7). The Boom "will not leave behind a skeleton of theories but, instead, maybe a half dozen novels that have not been eclipsed" (Ibid: 102).

However, Donoso has trouble deciding which writers belong to the Boom, because it became "so overpopulated that its boundaries are impossible to fix or define" (Ibid: 108). There are, he states, four names that "unquestionably form the gratin, the very core of the Boom" (Ibid: 111). They are Julio Cortázar, Carlos Fuentes, Gabriel García Márquez and Mario Vargas Llosa. Yet, "this core that includes only four names could not, certainly, fill an entire literary decade for a continent" (Idem). Thus, to give the Boom greater solidity, Donoso identifies Juan Rulfo, Alejo Carpentier, Jorge Luis Borges, Juan Carlos Onetti and José Lezama Lima as belonging to the "proto-Boom." These writers do not fit in the Boom because of their age and orientation, but are "indisputably great writers" (Idem). Similarly, Donoso calls writers with "solid reputations" and "acclaimed translations," "the Body of the Boom." These writers are known throughout the Spanish-speaking world. They are Augusto Roa Bastos, Manuel Puig, Salvador Garmendia, David Viñas, Carlos Martínez Moreno, Mario Benedetti, Vicente Leñero, Rosario Castellanos, Jorge Edwards, Enrique Lafourcade, Augusto Monterroso, Jorge Ibarguengoitia and Adrián González de León. Finally, the "sub-Boom" are writers of "identical nationality who do not realize the international breath open to

the Latin American novel today and who, because they are compatriots and are so weighed down with envy that they feel nothing for a novelist from another country, remain mentally provincial, even though they may live in France, let us say" (Ibid: 113-114).

For Donoso, the Boom was marked by a strong sense of solidarity among Latin American intellectuals. Most wrote about Latin America, yet they all wanted to be internationally known and looked for a wide international audience. Carlos Fuentes was the first to handle his works through literary agents, the first to have friendships with important writers of Europe and North America, the first to be considered as a first-rank novelist by North American critics, the first to realize the magnitude of what was happening in the Latin American novel of his generation, and the first to make it known. Similarly, in 1962 Mario Vargas Llosa got a prize from a Barcelona publishing house for "The Time of the Hero", which "caused the whole continent to talk" (Ibid: 60). For the first time a Latin American novel was massively published; One Hundred Years of Solitude became a bestseller in the United States. It is a book about which "everyone talks but not everyone reads" (Time magazine quoted by Donoso: 62). Much literature was being produced in Latin America and gladly welcomed not only in the Spanish-speaking world, but also in other cultural circles.

Two of the writers that Donoso calls the "gratin" of the Boom refer to it in different ways. For Julio Cortázar, the main source of the Boom was not the writers or the editors but Latin American readers, who gradually "became aware of their own identity." In Cortázar's view, the Boom represented "a great support for the present and future cause

of socialism," whose success in Latin America was "inevitable" and not far away (Cortázar quoted by Angel Rama, 1982 :244 My transl.). Vargas Llosa, on the other hand, believes that the Boom was a "historical accident," since it never was "a literary movement linked by aesthetic, political or moral ideals" (Vargas Llosa quoted by Rama, Ibid: 245 My transl.). His definition of the Boom mostly refers to the individual creativity of each of the writers.

The Boom can be defined as a particular period of Latin American literature - from the late 1950s to the 1970s - when narrative works became more popular in the Spanish-speaking world than ever before. These works were believed to be shaping the cultural identity of Latin America. They were written by progressive, left-wing intellectuals who claimed that they were using literature to fight social injustice. The Boom writers were the first commercially successful writers in Latin American literature. Their works were translated into foreign languages and were read in other parts of the world.

2.- Social sources of the Boom

Three conditions allowed the Boom to occur. One is that publishing houses in Latin America and Spain were willing to publish new works. Their reasons for doing so were cultural rather than commercial. This meant that editors took the risk of publishing unknown authors if the selection committee considered the work of literary value. Secondly, the post war period of economic development in Latin America provided a subject matter for the writers and an audience for their work. Finally, the Cuban

Revolution served as a cohesive left-wing ideological framework which brought together most Latin American writers of the time.

2.1.- Editorial policies

One source of the Boom's "explosion" was the existence of publishing houses that selected books of literary rather than commercial value. Miguel Angel Asturias argues that the Boom was a mere product of publicity. However, this idea is difficult to support, since many novels were written and published simultaneously, with no real contact among the writers:

In the space of two years (1962-64) I read Hopscotch, Sobre Heroes y Tumbas (About Heroes and Tombs), The Time of the Hero, The Death of Artemio Cruz, Pedro Páramo and The Burning Plain, The Winners and the short stories of Cortázar, The Shipyard by Onetti; and just a little earlier I had read The Lost Steps, Where the Air is Clear, and all that Borges had published up until then. After my departure from Chile for Mexico in 1965, the first thing I did abroad was to read No one writes to the Colonel by Gabriel García Márquez. No publicity apparatus, not even the most perfect, would have been able to produce these coincidences; and it is only because of poor publicity and distribution that, in spite of The Time of the Hero's having received a prize in 1962, I obtained the book only at the end of 1964 (Donoso, op.cit: 70).

In fact, One Hundred Years of Solitude was the only novel of the Boom that was commercially successful. This success however, was not immediate. As for other Boom writers, their success was mainly literary and confined to an educated elite which was slowly growing. Thus, rather than being a product of publicity, Boom writers were

a product of a particular social and cultural milieu common to some Latin American countries during these decades.

However, the existence of new publishing houses did play a very important role in promoting the Boom writers. Angel Rama calls them "cultural" publishing houses because they were open to innovative literary production. He mentions the following as being among the most important ones:

In Buenos Aires, Losada, Emecé, Sudamericana, Compañía General Fabril Editora and some smaller ones such as Jorge Alvarez, La Flor, Galerna, etc.; in Mexico City, Fondo de Cultura Económica, Era, Joaquín Mortiz; in Chile, Nacimiento and Zigzag; in Uruguay, Alfa and Arca; in Caracas, Monte Avila; in Barcelona, Seix Barral, Lumen, Anagrama, etc. The major ones are Fabril Editora, Sudamericana, Losada, Fondo de Cultura, Seix Barral and Joaquín Mortiz, whose catalogues during the sixties showed a shift from the usual foreign material to a high percentage of national or Latin American production (op. cit.:249. My transl.).

These publishing houses often organized literary contests. Several writers who now have solid reputations were "discovered" through these contests:

Losada discovered Roa Bastos (Hijo del Hombre), Fabril Editora discovered Onetti (El Astillero) and Sudamericana discovered Moyano. Yet, the most successful Editorial was Seix Barral whose prize revealed since 1962 --when it was awarded to La ciudad y los perros by Mario Vargas Llosa - a tendency in Latin American narrative with texts as important as Tres Tristes Tigres by Cabrera Infante, Cambio de Piel by Carlos Fuentes and finally El obsceno pájaro de la noche by José Donoso (Idem, my transl.).

The fact that qualified judges selected the works to be published increased the readership for them. So, books were being produced and were being bought by a growing audience. An analysis of the economic development that took place in most Latin American countries after the second world war will help explain this emergence of new readers.

2.2.- The post-war period of economic development in Latin America

According to Carlos Fuentes, the access of Latin American societies to what he calls "Modernity" shaped the literary production of the 1950s and 1960s. "Modernity" is the process of rapid economic growth produced by foreign investment in key areas of the economies of Latin American countries. This economic growth was generated by an alliance between the "old agrarian oligarchy" and the "capitalist imperialism of the United States." The former diversified its activities, "without destroying the agrarian base of a power that it believed it was entitled to both by divinity and by the right of conquest" (1974: 14 My transl.). The agrarian oligarchy became the intermediary in modern financial and commercial activities. American imperialism required not only an "intermediary class" to effectively manage the economic life of Latin American countries, but also "a whole set of services in public administration, commerce, advertising, business management, extractive and manufacturing industries, banking, transportation and even entertainment: bread and circuses. General Motors assembles cars, repatriates profits and sponsors T.V. programs" (Idem, my transl.).

This process of economic growth led to the emergence of new political forces and the unbalanced growth of the capital cities. The populations of capital cities gradually

became "urban masses" composed of middle classes, rural immigrants and a new proletariat. Boom writers usually belonged to either the upper classes or to the emerging middle classes, and they could use these cities as their new literary scenario. The writer had in front of him or her one of the major features of our times: "the contradictory, complex and internationalized emergence and ascendancy of the sub-industrial world" (Ibid: 13 My transl.).

In that "sub-industrial world," shanty-towns grew together with the expansion of the consumer society. The contradictions between them led these writers to realize that the new "civilization," "rather than providing happiness, a feeling of identity or a sense of community, produced a new alienation, a deeper fragmentation, a more serious solitude" (Ibid: 28 My transl.). In this sense, Latin American societies have the same kind of problems that all industrial societies have. At the same time, however, the forests and mountains of Latin America, "with their oppressed Indians, their miners devoured by silicosis, their women chewing coca leaves; their dying children, their uneducated young people... remain untouched" (Ibid: 29 My transl.). Thus, Latin American societies are characterized by the contradictions between modernization and tradition, between Western models of development and traditional modes of production.

According to Angel Rama, industrialization also raised the educational level of the middle classes in urban areas, because of the relatively fast expansion of government-sponsored elementary, secondary and post-secondary education. University students were important consumers not only of the Boom novels, but also of university textbooks, books about politics and books that attempted to recover a "national past."

2.3.- The Cuban Revolution. An ideological framework for the Boom works

During the 1960s and 1970s Latin American universities were places concerned with the recovery of each nation's past and cultural independence. Many students and professors were Fidel Castro's followers, and various left-wing organizations were constantly being formed. Moreover, support for the Cuban Revolution was a popular issue not only among young university students, but also among the Boom writers themselves. In fact, the success of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 was the major influence on Latin American cultural independence. This success also revived the expectations of radical social change.

According to Donoso, support for the Cuban Revolution was the only issue upon which the Boom writers had nearly complete agreement. He suggests that the Boom began in the Congress of Intellectuals held in the city of Concepción in 1962. In that Congress, Fuentes spoke publicly "only of politics, never of literature," since "in Latin America the two were inseparable" (Donoso, op.cit.: 48). Many writers from throughout Latin America attended the Congress and unanimously demonstrated their support for the Cuban cause. They also shared Fuentes' enthusiasm for Fidel Castro and his faith in the Cuban Revolution. This faith was a major factor in the internationalization of the Latin American novel, since it managed to unify outlooks and goals and provided an ideological structure that created a feeling of continental cohesion.

The Cuban government also started promoting Latin American culture. In the early 1960s La Casa de las Américas was founded in La Havana, and La Revista de Las Américas became the major means for bringing together Latin American writers. Casa

de las Américas organized literary congresses, festivals and contests. It worked as a publishing house and its main purpose was to publish Latin American classical literature, as well as new works and literary studies of these works.

The cultural policy of the Cuban government had a serious effect on literary journals and publishing houses all over Latin America. Several journals, such as Marcha in Uruguay, Siempre in Mexico and Primera Plana in Argentina, also started promoting Latin American cultural productions. Soon a network of close communication was established among them. The results of this communication were "permanent exchanges, trips and congresses, manifestos, co-editions and special issues." This produced a real cultural cohesion in Latin America (Emir Rodríguez Monegal, 1962: 20 My transl.).

Yet the policy of rapprochement of the Cuban intellectuals did not last long. In 1968 the Unión de Escritores y Artistas de Cuba - Cuban Writers and Artists Association - presented awards to a play by Anton Arrufat and to a collection of poems by Heberto Padilla. Both works were considered "counter-revolutionary" and Padilla was arrested on March 20, 1971. He was not released until April 27. His arrest began a long debate in Latin America on intellectual freedom and the failures of the Cuban regime. As for the main Boom writers, they were separated into literary and politically irreconcilable groups. A project for a magazine with rotating directors and a long list of contributors broke up, and with it the previous unity of the Boom in ideological and political terms. This division can still be seen: Mario Vargas Llosa is a right-wing presidential candidate in Peru, while Julio Cortázar's last book is a collection of essays on the intellectual's role in the process of liberating Latin America.

3.- The literary dimension of the Boom

The Boom writers were the first commercially successful professional writers in Latin American literature. They lectured, gave conferences and had contracts with publishing houses. The success of the Boom writers in the Spanish-speaking world led them to look for a broader audience. In their search for "universality" for their works, Boom writers borrowed contemporary Western aesthetic parameters for their own purposes. In their approach to literature, Boom writers held similar principles.

3.1.-The "universal value" of the Boom works

Most Boom writers - at least the four major ones - spent long periods of their lives abroad, particularly in Europe. Consequently, most Boom novels were written outside the writers' respective countries. The motives for this "exile," states Donoso, "may be numerous and varied, from easily formulated political reasons to the most ambiguous causes that might force them to flee the ghosts suffocating and drowning them in their own countries" (op. cit: 68). As Donoso further argues, this "exile," "cosmopolitanism" and "internationalization" "have shaped a very considerable part of the Latin American literature of the sixties" (Idem).

The Boom writers shared the enthusiasm of the cultural movements of the 1960s, when

the total boredom with the nouveau roman and the "happenings" began; and the indignation toward the use of napalm in Vietnam and toward the invasion in Santo Domingo; we saw U.S. draft cards being burned publicly; and we could

not explain how a novel as extraordinary and complex as Herzog could remain for so long on the bestseller lists in the United States (Ibid: 91).

The Boom writers gladly read Susan Sontag, Baldwin, Lie Down in Darkness; they talked about camp, trivia, op, pop and gestalt (Ibid: 91). For the generation of the Boom, what Donoso calls "cosmopolitan myths" - "who played the role of Prissy in *Gone With the Wind*? Who did the lighting for Philadelphia story? Who married the fashion designer Adrian?" - had the same relevance as the "heroic national myths" (Ibid: 94).

The Boom writers looked toward the United States, toward the Anglo-Saxon countries, toward France and Italy, in search for aesthetic models. They were also concerned with what Donoso calls "experimentation on the possibilities of the novel," which had started at the beginning of the century with writers such as Joyce, Kafka and Proust. The major innovations of these three writers are the following:

- 1) Disintegration of the linear and consequential logic in the narration. The chronology of events is broken, and multidimensional and simultaneous spaces are introduced. The relationship between the world and the work of art is questioned, and reality appears incoherent, whereas the work of art becomes autonomous as an independent, "created" object, with its own mutations.

- 2) The omniscient narrator disappears, and then either the narration is carried out by a dualistic narrator who is a protagonist and a witness at the same time, or the writer plays with different points of view and breaks the formal unity of the novel. These ways of narrating produce a sense of ambiguity that becomes the only possible way of saying

something about the ambiguous and contradictory reality. Henry James and Joseph Conrad, for example, manipulate different points of view and eliminate the old narrative thread of the first person and the omniscient narrator with complicated structures that break the formal unity of the novel.

From this perspective, writing a novel becomes an intellectual challenge. The novel itself becomes the literary genre par excellence, because it allows for a continual inquiry in the directions of writing. The separation between content and form becomes pointless, since reality is questioned without necessarily dealing with specific social or political topics such as those of the bourgeois realism of the 19th century - Balzac and Zola, for example - or the socialist realism promoted in the Soviet Union during several decades after the revolution.

The Boom writers incorporated, as did many others, these principles in their writings. For example, in The Time of the Hero Vargas Llosa plays "strange and perturbing games with points of view." In so doing, he experiments with the novel "consciously and intellectually." At the same time, he places himself "in a position of investigating the very nature of the novel, advancing further and further...toward the elimination of the narrating and expressive intermediary in order to arrive at a totally objectified art" (Donoso, op.cit.: 77). Similarly, Fuentes' Where the Air is Clear is a synthesis that includes "all the illegitimacies of race and taste and language and form," where artificiality dominates naturalness and imagination subjugates realism, "obeying a powerful, personal viewpoint rather than any pre-novelistic unities" (Ibid: 44). According to Donoso, Fuentes' novel is a novel of "investigation" rather than of "documentation,"

directed toward the problems of society, history and anthropology and also toward an existential adventure of an author looking for himself, "looking and writing and at the same time criticizing his own looking and writing" (Ibid: 40).

Thus, Boom writers incorporated contemporary narrative techniques into their writings. In so doing, they took as their own the non-separation between form and content. They also abolished the cliché among Latin American critics that "to the essential," which had to be ours, was opposed "the intellectual," which had to be foreign (Idem). Moreover, the appropriation of contemporary aesthetic parameters allowed these novels to attract an international audience. By mastering and renewing language Boom writers found their commonality with their contemporaries.

3.2.- The Boom novels as Latin American products

There are other aspects in the Boom's use of language. As stated by Graciela N. Ricci Della Grisa, the innovating elements of the Latin American narrative system can be explained not only by the influence of contemporary aesthetic parameters, but also by the search to signify Latin American identity in historical, religious, social and political terms. The Latin American writer, states Fuentes, had to create a language that would say all that has been silenced in a "long history of lies, silences, rhetoric and academic complicities" (1974: 31 My transl.). The result of this search was an original language marked by new semantic and formal dimensions. Recovering Indian languages and pre-hispanic world conceptions was essential to obtaining this original language. Boom writers made use of Indian languages and of their symbols and myths.

However, the search for a Latin American cultural identity went beyond recovering pre-hispanic traditions. Latin American culture is made up of various cultures and races, so in some countries Indian culture is almost nonexistent while others have strong Afro-American elements. Latin America was thus being recovered as a diverse cultural bloc, capable of giving account of its own diversity (Ricci, op. cit.: 86-87). With the Boom group and Borges as a starting point, Latin America reached a stage of "self-affirmation." At this stage, Latin American writers started to see Latin America as an independent cultural bloc (Ibid: 75).

4.- Latin American cultural identity: an identity of "self-affirmation"?

The hypothesis of this thesis is that the cultural account of the Boom is problematic because of the absence of women writers within the group. Although the Boom responded to the urgent need to construct a progressive Latin American identity, they also reproduced patriarchal assumptions. The Latin American experience was being constructed only by men who silenced the experience of Latin American women. However, the women's voices that were silenced in male writers' texts can be heard in the work of the women writers who however were not as internationally successful as their male contemporaries.

5.-The Boom writers

The four Boom writers this thesis will deal with are Carlos Fuentes (Mexico), Gabriel García Márquez (Colombia), Mario Vargas Llosa (Peru) and Julio Cortázar

(Argentina-France). They were chosen because most critics define them as the writers most representative of the Boom and they are among the most internationally known. Although their definitions of the Boom may differ and each created his own literary style, they constituted a homogeneous group in terms of their political views and their understanding of the intellectual's role in Latin America.

The novels that will be analyzed are their most popular ones or the most critically successful. They are La muerte de Artemio Cruz (1962) by Carlos Fuentes; Cien Años de Soledad (1967) by García Márquez; La Ciudad y los Perros (1963) by Vargas Llosa; and Rayuela (1963) by Cortázar. Although critics disagree about who belongs to the Boom and which novels are most important, most critics agree that these four novels are among the "classics" of the Boom, or in Donoso's words, among those novels which will not be "eclipsed." Details about popularity of the novels, both in Latin American and internationally, and their plots will be given in each author's section.

6.- Women writers of the period of the Boom

Selecting female authors who were "representative" at a Latin American level was not as easy. There were many women writers in each country, but very few had been translated into languages other than Spanish, or had even been read in other Spanish-speaking countries. Most women writers were only acknowledged nationally insofar as they participated in the "national culture" or contributed to the literary traditions of the time. The criteria for selecting the four female writers was their degree of popularity within their own countries and the extent to which critics related them to

the Boom.

The selected female authors are Rosario Castellanos (Mexico), whose Balún Canán (1957) was considered a "precursor" of the Boom and who was buried in the "Rotunda of the Distinguished Men" (sic) in Mexico City; Elena Garro (Mexico), whose Recuerdos del Porvenir (1963) was considered one of the first "magic realist" novels in Latin American literary tradition and was a novel that influenced García Márquez's Cien Años de Soledad; Marta Lynch (Argentina), whose La Señora Ordóñez (1967) was as popular as Cortázar's Rayuela in Argentina; and Marta Traba (Argentina-Colombia) whose first novel, Las Ceremonias del Verano (1966) was awarded the prize Casa de las Américas.

The feminist elements of these women writers' work have been largely ignored by the literary establishment. For example, Castellanos is seen as speaking of Indian's oppression not women's oppression. Both she and Garro are seen as exploring "Mexicanity." Lynch is seen as speaking about the Perón and post-Perón era in Argentina and both she and Traba are seen as exposing the years of torture and repression in the Southern Cone. This thesis will emphasize the overlooked feminist elements in their works and study them as women writers, rather than as sexless writers.

CHAPTER 3 - THE BOOM WRITERS

Writing a novel is a ritual like a strip tease. Very much like the girl who, under bold spot lights, sheds her garments and bares one by one her secret charms, the novelist, too, reveals his intimate self through his novels. But, of course, there are differences. What the novelist reveals of himself are not his secret charms, like the stripper, but rather the demons that torment and obsess him, the ugliest parts of himself: his nostalgia, his rancour, his regrets. Another difference is that a stripper starts out dressed and ends up naked, while the opposite is true in the case of the novelist: he starts out bare and ends up covered. The personal experiences (those lived, dreamed, heard, read) which were the initial stimuli for the writing of the story became so maliciously disguised during the creative process that when the novel is finished no one, often not even himself, can easily hear the autobiographical heartbeat that inevitably pulses in all fiction. To write a novel is to engage in a reverse striptease, and all novelists are discreet exhibitionists.

Mario Vargas Llosa

CARLOS FUENTES (1928-)

1.- Biographical Data

Carlos Fuentes was born in Panama City in 1928. His father was a mexican diplomat, so he spent most of his childhood moving from one city to another. After graduating from high school in Mexico City, Fuentes studied law at the National University of Mexico and the Institute for International Studies in Geneva. While in Geneva, he was a member of the Mexican delegation to the International Labour Organization. On his return to Mexico, Fuentes served as head of the Department of Cultural Relations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He also worked in administrative and editorial positions in the National University. In 1956 Fuentes and Emmanuel Carballo founded the Revista Mexicana de Literatura (Mexican Review of Literature). At this time, Fuentes also began to write articles on culture and politics for several left-wing papers. In the following years, Fuentes lived in different parts of the world: London, Paris and Princeton among them. He has a house in Mexico City, but rarely stays there. Fuentes travels extensively and often lectures at various universities, mainly in the United States.

2.- Works, popularity and translations

Fuentes is mainly known as a novelist, yet he has also written literary criticism and political essays. He started publishing very young. His first articles and short stories were

published around 1941 to 1943 in the Boletín del Instituto Nacional de Chile. His first collection of short stories appeared in 1954 under the title Los días enmascarados and four years later he published his first novel, La región más transparente. Fuentes is a tremendously productive writer, publishing 10 more novels after the first one. They are: Las buenas conciencias (1959); La muerte de Artemio Cruz (1962); Zona Sagrada (1967); Cumpleaños (1969); Terra Nostra (1975); La cabeza de la hidra (1978); Una familia lejana (1980); Gringo Viejo (1985); and Cristóbal Nonato (1987). He also has a novella (Aura [1962]), three more collections of short stories (Cantar de ciegos [1964] Cuerpos y ofrendas [anthology, 1972] and Agua quemada [1981]), three plays (El tuerto es rey [1970], Todos los gatos son pardos [1970], and Los reinos originarios [1971]), and several essay collections (Paris, la revolución de mayo [1968], La nueva novela hispanoamericana [1969], Casa con dos puertas [1970], Tiempo mexicano [1971] and Cervantes o la crítica de la lectura [1976]).

Fuentes' work has been well received by the Mexican literary establishment. According to Emmanuel Carballo, both Fuentes' literary skill and clear political position make him a "unique" case within the Mexican literary tradition (1986: 534). Elena Poniatowska speaks of him as "the Fuentes phenomenon" that produced two major changes in Mexican literature. One of the changes is related to Fuentes' accurate portrayal of Mexico: "For the first time, literature has to do with real life, and concomitantly, life is in the books of this young genius" (1985: 13, my transl.). Fuentes' second achievement was to make the writer's occupation prestigious. He was among the

first Mexican authors to make a living from writing. In doing so, he opened the way for younger artists.

Fuentes also successfully promoted himself abroad and became one of the best known contemporary Latin American authors. In fact, he has often been criticized for his "cosmopolitan" attitudes and for voluntarily living abroad. Some critics believe that his "exotic" view of Mexico is an unfortunate consequence of this. In contrast, other people believe that Fuentes' "cosmopolitan" education and attitude allowed him to overcome the "provincialism" that marked Latin American literature before his generation.

Fuentes' topics and concerns are extremely varied. While novels such as La región más transparente or La muerte de Artemio Cruz deal with cultural, political and social issues of modern Mexico, novels such as Cambio de piel or Terra Nostra have varied scenarios and characters, and attempt to address universal issues. Fuentes is also versatile in his narrative techniques. Like most Boom writers, Fuentes incorporated numerous stylistic innovations from European and American literature into his writing. As Lanin A. Gyurko points out,

Every one of his works, from the epic La región más transparente to the highly problematic Cambio de piel and from the mythopoetic Zona sagrada to the heretical Cumpleaños and the mammoth summa that is Terra Nostra, Fuentes sets for himself new, ambitious, and many times audacious goals. In almost all of his novels, the Mexican author experiments with language and structure, and develops innovative and challenging techniques of characterization. The cambio de piel [change of skin] motif constituting the thematic and structural basis of the novel with that title can be seen as a creative principle governing his entire work, which, more than the production of any other Latin American novelist, demonstrates a capacity for artistic renewal (1980: 29).

Fuentes is also a widely translated author. Almost all his novels and collections of short stories have been translated into English and French. La región más transparente was translated into English, French and Czech, and Aura was translated into Italian, Portuguese, German, Czech, Norwegian, Dutch and English. Fuentes' most translated novel is La muerte de Artemio Cruz, which was issued in 14 languages.¹

As well, Fuentes has been awarded several international literary prizes. In 1988 he received the Premio Cervantes from the King of Spain. In the same year, the National Arts Club of New York gave him the gold medal of literature. Fuentes also received the Rubén Darío prize from the Sandinista government. Graham Greene and Gabriel García Márquez have previously received this prize.

3.- Political position and the intellectual's role

Fuentes actively supported the Cuban Revolution. He made his enthusiasm for Fidel Castro public and spoke up for the Cuban cause in the Congress of Concepción in 1962. In a recent trip to Nicaragua in 1988 Fuentes also expressed public support for the Nicaraguan Revolution. He believes that the defense of both the Cuban and the Nicaraguan Revolutions is the defense of Latin America because they represent the right to explore alternative ways of economic and social development. In recent years, however, Fuentes has also been critical of the Cuban government, which he argues has achieved much in the fields of education, health and work conditions, but at the price

¹See the bibliography prepared by Aída Elsa Ramírez Mattei in La narrativa de Carlos Fuentes, Ed. de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1983

of individual freedoms (Stephen Talbot, 1989: 27).

Fuentes also supported the student uprisings of the 1960s. In May 1968, while living in Paris, he wrote a sympathetic photographic essay describing the student movement. In Mexico, in response to the Tlatelolco massacre in October of the same year, he joined Octavio Paz and others to resist the political monopoly of the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) and to encourage the creation of alternative channels of communication among different social groups. Fuentes thought that reforms such as the nationalization of basic industries, control over foreign investments and union democracy were badly needed. He later worked for the government of Luis Echeverría as ambassador in France, since he felt that the President was eager to create more responsive democratic governmental structures. However, Fuentes has always been critical of Mexico's one-party system, its unequal distribution, its lack of significant agrarian reform, the two superpowers' policies and the U.S. presence in Mexico and the rest of the world. In American forums, Fuentes has become an important expositor of the Latin American point of view concerning U.S.-Latin American relations (Elena Poniatowska, 1985: 24-25).

According to Fuentes, Hispanic American novelists must create a new language that says what "our long history of lies, silences, rhetoric and academic complicities" has kept silenced (1974: 31, my transl.). The role of literature is to produce a different type of discourse where words recover their meaning, "things are called by their own real name" (Interview with Emmanuel Carballo, 1986: 551), and an "anti-dogmatic" view of human problems is presented (Fuentes, 1974: 11). Rather than giving literature the

political function of instigating socialist revolution, Fuentes believes that a "revolutionary mode of expression" can also oppose official views of reality and therefore play a political role. Literature presents a different world from the one we know, and in doing so it brings up the possibilities of social change.

4.- Focus of the present study

This section will analyze La muerte de Artemio Cruz (hereafter to be abbreviated MAC) for several reasons. First, MAC was published between 1957 and 1967 and is a classic of the Boom. Second, MAC is Fuentes' most popular novel and the one most favoured by the critics. As Emmanuel Carballo puts it, MAC is Fuentes' "most ambitious novel in terms of its structure and goals, before the appearance of Terra Nostra" (1986: 571, my transl.). Finally, MAC is representative of Fuentes' work. Although his thematics are varied, his idea of experimenting with language and his concern with post-revolutionary Mexico are key issues in the novel.

MAC is the story of the last 12 hours in the life of Artemio Cruz. During these 12 hours Artemio thinks of the most crucial 12 days of his life - days when he made critical decisions. He was born in an hacienda near the Gulf of Mexico; he moves to Mexico City; he gets involved in the Revolution; he marries Catalina, the daughter of a porfirista who exchanges her with Artemio in order to save his social position, which is threatened by the Revolutionary movement; Cruz then becomes a cacique, or landowner; he returns to Mexico City as a deputy and rises socially and economically, by permitting financial

corruption and American investments in Mexico.

Cruz's interior monologue is narrated in the first person, and is constantly interrupted by a second person, which works as the voice of Cruz's conscience. As stated by Gyurko,

there is a continual antagonism between the first person narrative --the self-exalting yo-- and the second-person monologue relentlessly probing the protagonist's shortcomings as well as the unfulfilled aspects of his nature. It subjects his physical and psychological self to remorseless scrutiny and reproaches Cruz for his moral failings. The 'you'-monologue is the most complex narrative form, one which serves several functions: alter ego, voice of conscience (both individual and national), subconsciousness and superego (1980: 32).

Some of Cruz's thoughts are narrated in third person, and filtered through a voice that only describes exterior events. This "he" voice deals with the past, and therefore lacks the sense of potential change included in the "you" sections, which are narrated in the future tense. It is through this third voice that key episodes in twentieth-century Mexican history are presented. In this sense, Cruz becomes a national symbol, a member of the new social forces that emerged after the Revolution and acquired financial and political status through it.

The complex structure of the novel presents Cruz not only as a multiplicity of selves but also as a series of incompatible selves that cannot achieve a redemptive unity. At the end of the novel, when Cruz dies, the three voices are compressed into one: "Artemio Cruz... Name... 'hopeless'... 'heart'... 'massage'... 'hopeless'... You will not know any more... I carry you inside and with you I die. The three, we...will die.

You...die, have died... I will die" (MAC: 316). This final compression

heightens the tension the reader experiences between sympathy for Artemio Cruz and judgement of him, between allowing him to live as he wishes in the past of his potential goodness or to die as he must in the present of his accomplished harm. As Fuentes has said of Artemio Cruz, "Good or bad, the reader must choose." The shifting perspectives make the choice engaging, but difficult (Faris, op. cit.: 65).

4.1.- Previous readings of MAC

MAC deals with one single character's life and decisions. His life has been considered as an example of the post-revolutionary bourgeoisie who betrayed the principles of the Revolution. Hence, the contradictory forces that shaped Mexico as a modern nation are found in the character of Artemio Cruz, as they are found in Octavio Paz's analysis of the Mexican soul, in The Labyrinth of Solitude (1959).

Other studies have focused on the character of Artemio Cruz not as a national symbol, but as an individual caught in a complex decision-making process. Interestingly, however, the role of female characters in the novel has often been overlooked in these studies. Critics have taken for granted that they are part of Cruz's own story, each representing different choices for Cruz's existential problems. Catherine M. Allen, for example, sees the character of Artemio Cruz as a choice-maker and draws a correlation between Jean-Paul Sartre's philosophy and Fuentes' novel. According to her, Fuentes' search for the cultural boundaries of "Mexicanity" is secondary to his portrayal of Cruz as a "man" in contemporary society. He is presented as an "imperfect being" in an "imperfect world," as a "man" who must make choices that he will be unable to evaluate

for a long time. Because of this, "Cruz evokes either sympathy or hatred, yet he makes a moral judgement impossible." Allen concludes that in his novel, "Fuentes combines the existentialist themes of choosing, of individual responsibility and guilt with an economic interpretation elaborated from Mexican history. This is Fuentes' constructive message, which makes him an original thinker and a transcendental artist" (1971: 440 My transl.).

Similarly, René C. Jara believes Artemio Cruz represents not only Mexico, but also the "Hispanic American man," because of his attempts to "search for himself" through "Woman." Jara thinks the three main female characters of the novel are "potential realizations of the character," Artemio Cruz. Each represents something different: "Regina is pure authenticity and nature" whereas Catalina represents a means towards Cruz's "authentication," if he could admit his "guilt." Laura is the possibility for Cruz to recover himself, if he dared renounce his social image, a risk that Cruz does not take. However, Cruz "closes his eyes" when he is searching for "Woman" among different women, and therefore cannot find her. Consequently, he cannot find himself either. However, MAC demonstrates that the "Hispanic American man" must keep on seeking his origins through "Woman." "Woman" is the symbol of Hispanic American man's freedom and his real "possibility of existence" (1971, my transl.).

These two readings of MAC concentrate on Cruz and ignore the role of women as objects in the novel. Catherine Allen sees Cruz's experience as the experience of modern "man" in an "imperfect world." She thus ignores women's experience and generalizes from man's experience. Jara makes Cruz the symbol of the "Hispanic Man." Within Jara's scheme, "Woman" is just a silent mirror in which a male identity can be reflected.

Jara's "Hispanic American man" can exist and find himself only if "Woman" is silenced.

4.2.- Purpose of the present study

My reading of MAC will focus on the role that female characters play in the novel in their relationship with Cruz. I will argue that they are objects in Artemio's decision-making processes and in his life project. What appears to be their self-alienation will be considered here as an alienation resulting from a subject-object relationship. However, the "dehumanization" of Fuentes' female characters, as set forth by Gyurko, "is almost countered or echoed by the victimization of the male" (1974-1975: 229). Fuentes' female characters cannot free themselves from male restrictions. However, male characters also suffer from being oppressors. Both Catalina and Cruz are caught in a mutually destructive relationship.

Moreover, the model of the "terrifying mother" and women as products of male fantasies are recurrent female characters in Fuentes' work. In Patricia Smart's words, Fuentes can tell "son histoire à lui" only by silencing "son histoire à elle." Within the Father's House, where it is either his or her identity, Fuentes alternately portrays the female character as a threat to the male character's identity or as a source of it.

5.- MAC: Women as objects in Cruz's life project

5.1.- Analysis of characters

Gyurko argues that the female characters in MAC and Cambio de piel are dehumanized, in that they work as instruments of male desire and respond to male characters "only to the extent that they conform to their fantasies of what a woman should be" (Ibid: 206).

In MAC, Regina is Cruz's first love. Her identity is determined by Cruz. For Artemio Regina represents "la primera muchacha que pasara, incauta, por la calle...montada a la fuerza en un caballo y violada en silencio en el dormitorio comun de los oficiales, lejos del mar..." (MAC: 82-83); namely, someone who is valued only through Artemio's eyes. Artemio considers Regina his possession: "...sólo un hombre es dueño -piensa Cruz -de todas las imágenes secretas de Regina y ese hombre la posee..." (MAC: 73). In Cruz's mind, Regina has no tongue or eyes, she is just "dumb flesh" (MAC: 64).

Regina lives and dies for Cruz. Nothing matters to her except waiting for him and recreating their first encounter on the beach, so that Artemio can feel "clean," "innocent," and "confident of love" (MAC: 82). She is murdered by the Federals while Cruz flees in cowardice from the battlefield, leaving his men to die. Hence, Regina is the symbol of Cruz's early ideals during his involvement in the Revolution. Cruz uses her image to preserve his own identity when he is close to death. Although he declares his love for her, in his delirium he demands that she sacrifice herself again in order to prolong his life.

Regina idealizes her relationship with Cruz, following him from town to town, and creating a romantic myth around their encounter to blot out its brutality. Instead of remembering the kidnapping and violent rape, Regina contrives a story of a chance meeting on the beach. As pointed out by Gyurko,

through this spiritualization of the past, Regina attempts to reclaim her dignity and her control over her own life... Yet Regina never succeeds in creating an independent self; she derives identity only through her relationship with Cruz (1974-75: 208).

Indeed, rather than being aware of her status as an object in Cruz's fantasies, Regina seems to adjust her image to meet the expectations of her male-aggressor.

Just as Regina becomes a victim of blood sacrifice to ensure Cruz's survival,

Catalina becomes a victim of spiritual sacrifice to him as Don Gamaliel [her father] exploits her filial devotion and bargains her away to Cruz in order to ensure the comfort of his remaining years. Catalina is reduced to a mere pawn, as Don Gamaliel orders her to appear on cue in a provocative dress in order to arouse the interest of Cruz. Catalina is not introduced to Cruz, rather she is put on exhibit by her father: "la sonrisa, ligeramente torcida, imitaba la de un presdigitador apto de descubrir la suerte inesperada." (39) Don Gamaliel astutely masks his cruelty beneath a facade of gentility and paternalism. His exploitation of Catalina is continued by Cruz, who claims her as part of the spoils of war (Gyurko, Ibid: 210).

In Smart's words, Catalina is exchanged as an object between two men, her father and her future husband. Her identity depends firstly on her father's social and economic position, and secondly on Cruz's favoured position. She is exchanged to keep both

positions safe.

Like Regina, Catalina is unaware of her status as an exchangeable object. She appears to be oppressed not only by external forces, but also and more importantly, by her own self. She assumes the roles that tradition, family pressure and religious dictum have assigned to her. Catalina's defiance of Cruz can only be a passive one, and consequently she withdraws her love and retreats into pride. Catalina even nurtures her humiliation, uses it as a weapon against Cruz, and finishes by destroying herself.

Lilia is Cruz's last lover. Originally a vacation companion, she becomes his mistress. Her identity is also defined by Artemio's financial power, and he also considers her his possession. The fact that he "possesses" her leaves a mark on Lilia: "¿Entonces esa mujer no había sido marcada para siempre? ¿No sería, para siempre, una mujer poseída ocasionada por él? ¿No sería esa su definición y su fatalidad: ser lo que fue porque en un momento dado fue suya?" (MAC: 158) However, Lilia despises him and deserts him for a younger man. When she returns to Cruz, he imposes strict control on her behaviour;

the oppressed Lilia finally becomes, both physically and morally, a grotesque reflection of Catalina. Both women cling to Cruz for material comfort. Like Catalina, Lilia remains incarcerated both within the role that Cruz has imposed on her and within her own self (Gyurko, 1974-75: 212).

Hence, Lilia is unaware that she is a sexual object, bought by a man to prove to himself that he can still command the devotion of a glamorous and sexual woman. She is afflicted by feelings of insecurity when she grows older, since her identity depends on

whether she is desirable to the man.

Laura is the only female character in the novel who has an independent life and value apart from that assigned by Cruz. She is also the only woman who frees herself from external constraints on her behaviour. Laura resists Artemio's attempts to restructure her life in to conform to his own desires. Unlike Catalina, she has enough courage to divorce her first husband and to ask Artemio to divorce Catalina. Artemio refuses not because of Catalina, but because he thinks divorce would endanger his social position. Although Laura is unwilling to be Cruz's mistress and decides to end their affair, she is punished for speaking her desire.

In the last moments of his life, Cruz wants Catalina's forgiveness for his affairs and for his behaviour. Yet, communication between them is impossible. Artemio wants to communicate with Catalina, but she cannot listen. Cruz suffers from this, and dies without liberating himself of his guilt. In this sense, "the tyrannical Artemio Cruz" is forced "to share the hell worlds of physical and mental anguish" (Gyurko, 1974-75: 229) that he has inflicted on those around him. His role of oppressor also alienates him from women.

In his analysis of the mother-son relationship in La región más transparente, Las buenas conciencias, MAC and Zona Sagrada, M. Kasey Hellerman (1974) finds that a common feature of the male characters is that they must be away from their mother's influence to achieve their own identity. In other words, the model of the "terrifying mother" who threatens male identity is a recurrent character in Fuentes' work. For example, Cruz is the son of an hacendado and a mulatto slave, so he is the result of a

violation. This in Spanish is called a hijo de la chingada -son of a raped woman. Cruz succeeds socially because he is removed from maternal influence and acts within a code of violation and conquest.

The relationship between Catalina and her son Lorenzo is that of a "terrifying mother" and a son whose identity she threatens. Catalina wants to find compensation for the disillusionments and deceptions of her youth in her son's love; she wants him to be a surrogate protector and lover. However, Lorenzo is removed from his mother's influence and taken to distant Coyuya, eventually leaving Mexico to fight in the Spanish civil war. In Spain he "finds his identity and fulfills his life mission because he is unhindered by maternal fantasies and aspirations" (Hellerman, 1974: 872).

The relationship between a "terrifying mother" and her son is a central theme in Zona Sagrada. Guillermo Nervo sanctifies his mother (Claudia) and turns their relationship into that of the Holy Virgin and Christ child. However, his identity is dissolved each time he confronts the intimidating presence of his mother. Claudia is an extremely temperamental woman who is professionally and economically successful. However, because her son is a reminder of her aging, she hinders his relationships with women. By the end of the novel Guillermo is emotionally destroyed. "He feels himself become transformed into a dog -the expressionistic form of the slavish adoration that he has always evinced towards Claudia. He remains submerged within animal time, without awareness of the past or the future, with only consciousness of the moment" (Gyurko, 1972-73: 209).

Intimidating women who threaten and destroy male identity are also the central

theme in Cambio de Piel. Javier, the main male character, must run away from his mother's overprotection, which he feels threatens his identity. He searches for the "New Woman" - an ideal, distant, undiscovered woman. He constantly forces Elizabeth, his wife, to assume the role of the "New Woman" and take part in his fantasies. Elizabeth is later replaced with a younger woman, Isabel - which ironically is the Spanish name for Elizabeth - and who is, for Javier, a symbol of youth and harmless memory. Both Elizabeth and Isabel indulge Javier's fantasies. Elizabeth does so to gain his love, Isabel because she wants her beauty and personality to be immortalized through Javier's vision as an artist. However, Javier destroys in Elizabeth and Isabel what represents a threat to his identity, and in the process destroys himself. He loses his sense of reality, and at the end of the novel the 'I' of all the characters disintegrates.

5.2.- Conclusion

Artemio Cruz is the son of a raped woman. He succeeds socially because he is removed from her. To achieve his "success" he must detach himself not only from her, but from the various women he gets involved with. These women are objects in his life project. However, they do not appear alienated by their role as objects, but rather self-alienated. Catalina is caught in a self-destructive pride; Regina in her idealization of her encounter with Cruz; and Lilia in her fear of aging. The only female character (Laura) who acts independently from Cruz is punished when she speaks her desire.

However, when Cruz is about to die he asks for Catalina's forgiveness, which he

does not obtain. He dies not only condemned by her, but also self-condemned. Thus, Artemio is trapped in his role as oppressor. In the last moment of his life he also suffers from women's oppression, like other Fuentes' characters. As pointed out by Gyurko, "few of Fuentes' characters of either sex ever gain true liberation, one that requires the use of fantasies not as means of self-exaltation nor as a blockade against an adverse external reality but as the creative inspiration to remake reality and spiritually renew the self" (1974-1975 :229).

Women as "terrifying mothers" (Zona Sagrada), as objects of fantasies (Cambio de Piel), or as witches with supernatural, terrifying powers (Aura), are constantly threatening male identity in Fuentes' works. Fuentes writes within the Father's House, where it is either his or her identity. Hence, he is caught in the disjunctive of either "son histoire à lui" or "son histoire à elle," and he writes his story by silencing and fearing hers.

GABRIEL GARCIA MARQUEZ (1928-)

1.- Biographical Data

Gabriel García Márquez was born in Aracataca, a small town near the Caribbean coast of Colombia, in 1928. He lived there as a child with his grandparents. In 1947 García Márquez (henceforth to be abbreviated GM) began law studies at the National University of Bogota. One year later he started working as a journalist. GM worked for several newspapers in his home country and in 1955 he was sent to Geneva as a correspondent for El Espectador. When the newspaper was closed by the Colombian government GM moved to Paris and traveled throughout Eastern Europe. In 1958 he lived in Caracas, Venezuela. From 1959 to 1961 he worked for Cuba's Prensa Latina in Bogota, Cuba and New York. He later resigned and moved to Mexico, where he wrote Cien Años de Soledad and screenplays, and edited two magazines. In 1967 he moved to Barcelona to write El Otoño del Patriarca and in 1975 he moved back to Mexico. In 1982 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature. GM has a house in Mexico City and another one in Cuernavaca, Mexico, an apartment in Bogota and one in Paris, and he constantly moves from one place to another (GM, 1982: 134). He often goes to Cuba, since he is a close friend of Fidel Castro (Ibid: 178-180).

2.- Works, popularity and translations

GM published his first novel, La Hojarasca, in 1955, and won a national prize for one of his short stories in the same year. In 1961 he published El Coronel no tiene quien le escriba and was awarded the National Novel Prize in Colombia for En mala hora. One year later he published this novel and a volume of short stories, Los funerales de Mamá Grande. Cien Años de Soledad and Isabel viendo llover en Macondo were published in 1967. Then came Relato de un naufrago (1970) and La increíble y triste historia de la cándida Erndira y de su abuela desalmada (short stories) in 1972. A compilation of all his short stories was published in Barcelona in 1975. El Otoño del Patriarca (novel) was published in the same year. His most recent three novels are Crónica de una muerte anunciada (1981), El amor en los tiempos del cólera (1986) and El general en su laberinto (1988).

A compilation of GM's articles from the late 1950s was published in 1973 as Cuando era feliz e indocumentado. Operación Carlota, which is an essay on Cuba's role in Africa, was published in 1977 followed by Periodismo militante in 1978 and his total journalistic work in 1982 in three volumes. In addition, numerous conversations on his political position and his experience as a writer in Latin America have been anthologized. Two of the major ones are La novela en América Latina: Diálogo (1968), which is a set of conversations with Mario Vargas Llosa, and El olor de la guayaba (1982), which is a conversation with Plinio Apuleyo Mendoza.

GM's popularity in Latin America is enormous. Cien Años de Soledad's first edition of 20,000 copies was sold out in one month in just one city - Buenos Aires. In Latin

America, 100,000 copies were sold within a year, and 500,000 within three years. A few months after its first edition in Spanish, GM had already signed 18 contracts for the translation of his novel (García Ramos, 1984: 34). The case of Crónica de una muerte anunciada is even more striking. Its first edition sold 1,150,000 copies in Colombia and 1,000,000 in Argentina and Spain. Within a few weeks, the Colombian edition had to be reprinted. (Gilard, 1981: 15). Currently GM's novels are still published in large numbers.

GM is not only popular in Latin America. All his literary work has been translated at least into English. Cien Años de Soledad became an international bestseller in a very short time and has been translated into 26 languages. GM's work has also been extensively studied and promoted. On December 7, 1968, Le Monde had a "full two-page spread on GM and his work, a distinction it does not frequently bestow upon a writer, not even upon Frenchmen, still less upon a Latin American author" (Wolfgang A. Luchting, 1970: 261). GM's work has been analyzed in Spanish, English, French, Italian, German, Russian, Lithuanian, Romanian, Czech and Hungarian.¹

GM is also one of the most internationally awarded Latin American writers. Cien Años de Soledad received the Chinchiano Prize in Italy (1969); in France it was named the best book of the year (1969); Time magazine considered it "one of the best books of the year" (Raymond L. Williams, 1984: Chronology) in 1970, and in the same year GM received the Neustadt Award from Books Abroad, an honorary doctorate from

¹See Fau Margaret Eustella. GGM: an Annotated Bibliography. 1947-1979. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1980, and Bibliographical Guide to GGM, 1979-1985. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1986

Columbia University, and the Rómulo Gallegos prize.

3.- Political position and the intellectual's role

GM's popularity in Latin America is due not only to his literary work, but also to his political activity. Like Fuentes, GM believes that the "revolutionary duty" of a Latin American writer engaged with his reality is just "to write well." (GM, 1982: 83-84) He is against any political restrictions on the creative activity. Yet, like Fuentes, GM states that Latin American social and political reality pushes the writer to political militancy. Hence, GM gave the money from the Books Abroad prize to a fund for the defense of Chilean political prisoners. He has also traveled to Cuba, Angola, Vietnam, Sweden, Paris, and Washington, D.C., as a member of the Panamanian delegation to witness the signing of the new Panama Canal treaty (Regina Janes, 1981: 15). In addition he has worked for Human Rights defense commissions in the Third World and as a mediator in political conflicts (See GM, 1982, pp. 147-151 for details). GM believes that the world "sooner or later will be socialist" (GM, 1982: 83-84 My transl.).

4.- Focus of the present study

This section will analyze Cien Años de Soledad (hereafter to be abbreviated CAS) for several reasons. First, CAS was published between 1957 and 1967 and is a classic of the Boom. Second, CAS is GM's first popular novel. It made him famous and in a sense, "represents" him. Emmanuel Carballo, for example, believes that before CAS GM was just a good writer, and after it he was an "extraordinary writer, the first among his

teammates to write a masterpiece" (1981: 52 My transl.). Third, the novel has been studied extensively and most critics agree that it is GM's best novel, although GM does not believe this. (For him, Crónica de una muerte anunciada is his best novel, and he is surprised that a novel that he wrote just "thinking of a few friends" and which he expected to sell no more than 5,000 copies sold everywhere "like hot cakes" [GM, 1982: 113 my transl.]). Each of GM's previous books "were fragments of the story of Macondo"; these books are nothing but an "intermittent draft of this outstanding novel" (Mario Benedetti, 1969: 103 My transl.). In CAS "the project of Macondo is finally realized" (Stephen Minta, 1987: 146). In this sense, the novel is the author's most representative piece of work.

At the risk of oversimplifying, CAS is about a married couple who are scared of having a child with a "pig's tail," since they are cousins. Once before in their family history members of the same family had had sexual intercourse and had produced a child with a "pig's tail." Consequently, Ursula protects herself with a chastity belt until Prudencio García calls her husband impotent. José Arcadio Buendía, the husband, kills Prudencio García and thereby restores his honour. However, Ursula and José Arcadio must leave the town to scape both the soul of the dead man and their own guilt. They found Macondo, where they raise a family. The novel describes several generations and the various incestuous relationships among them.² The final couple - Amaranta Ursula

²According to Fausto Avedano, there are more than 50 "short erotic episodes" in the novel (See "El factor best-seller en CAS, in Explicación de CAS, San José, Costa Rica, 1976 pp. 65-77). Gustavo Alvarez argues that what distinguishes the 23 members of the Buendía family is "a different attitude towards sex," where the thread of the story is the "sexual act" ("Las formas de hacer el amor en CAS," *ibid*, pp. 39-63). See also Nueve asedios a GM, 1969, p. 95; or Olga

and her nephew Aureliano - have a child with the pig's tail, signifying the end of the family and of Macondo. Both Amaranta Ursula and the child die. Ironically, they are the first couple to overcome solitude, and the last.

4.1.- Previous readings of CAS

CAS has been studied from many different perspectives. It has been looked at thematically, stylistically, aesthetically, mythologically, biographically, socially, politically, and so on. In Argentina, a group of psychoanalysts got together and decided that CAS was a case of "a perfectly overcome Oedipus Complex" (GM, interview with Claude Couffon, 1969: 43 my transl). Floyd Merrell suggests that CAS can be read on various levels: it can be understood as the history of Colombia and be read at a "socio-political level," or as the recovery of Latin American identity, which allows a "mythico-cultural" reading of the novel. The novel can also be taken as a reflection on Christianity and can be read at the "mystico-religious level," or as a reflection on the world that leads to a reading of the novel at "historical/archetypical levels." Finally, the novel also permits a reading at "cyclical/entropic levels," when looked at as representing the universe (1974: 59).

Merrell states that in CAS the "development of scientific thought in the Western world" can be grasped in José Arcadio's conception of reality. José Arcadio gets involved in all kinds of experimental projects in his rustic laboratory. He represents "Western man's [sic] struggle to explicate and comprehend nature" (Idem). Similarly,

James Higgins argues that "through local situations and characters, GM expresses the history and condition of Western man [sic]." Behind the humour of the novel there is a "tragic view of human condition." The novel stresses the "radical solitude in which man lives." According to Higgins the solution that GM offers in his novel is to overcome men's solitude, which is caused by their selfishness, through love. "Any new order must be based on the values that the Buendías learned too late to be saved...GM projects us toward a future in which men have transcended their selfishness and have known how to love each other" (1969-1971: 314 My transl.).

Benjamín Torres also believes that CAS portrays the lack of love between human beings. Taking a Jungian perspective, he states that CAS questions the predominance of the conscious psyche guided by thought in the Western world. This predominance has led to the repression of the unconscious and the attribution of an inferior status to feelings. According to Torres, CAS suggests that the knowledge of reality and even "our happiness in the world depends on our ability to love." That is implied in the love that the last Buendía couple feel for each other (1987: 241 My transl.).

The three readings of CAS presented above speak of the novel as the reflection on "Western man," where the experience of both men and women are combined, actually denying women's experience. Merrell does not see anything strange in the fact that only male protagonists get into José Arcadio Buendía's laboratory to search for truth, whereas female characters remain in the kitchen devoted to the everyday duties of keeping the family alive. He ignores this dichotomy between male and female characters, and elevates José Arcadio's search for truth to the level of "Western man's experience."

Similarly, both Higgins and Torres speak of human beings' solitude and love without distinguishing between the two sexes and exploring the roles attributed by the author to both male and female characters in their love and sexual relationships. A different conception of the Buendías' solitude can be grasped through an analysis of these roles. Rather than seeing selfishness as the cause of their solitude, the patriarchal relationships between male and female characters can be seen as responsible.

Critics usually find GM's female characters practical and strong, because they remain attached to the world. The male characters daydream a lot more. Female characters can better face adversity and every day problems than male characters can. In other words, men involve themselves in crazy, unbelievable enterprises, such as wars and chemical experiments, whereas women remain in traditionally feminine domains, and often oppose those enterprises and bring their men back to reality. In GM's words, "women hold the world while men attempt to push history" (1982: 109 My transl.). According to him, women lack "historical sense," because if they had it, they could not properly achieve "their primary task of perpetuating the species" (Ibid: 156 My transl.).

In his personal life, GM states that, like his male characters, he needs a "woman able to take him by the hand through the darkness of reality" (Ibid: 155 My transl.). In fact, GM's wife, Mercedes, is described by Apuleyo Mendoza as a strong woman able to quietly face adversity, as "one of those women from the Caribbean who have a wise control of reality and embody the real power behind the power" (Ibid: 131 my transl.). According to López-Capestany, GM has been able to free himself from "every day responsibilities" and devote himself to writing thanks to Mercedes' "administrative

talents" (1975: 613).

Mercedes has also dealt with GM's crazy, unpredictable reactions. For example, when he finally thought of a way to begin CAS, he was with his family on its way to Acapulco. At that very moment he decided to go back to Mexico City to write the novel. He says to Manuel Pereira: "...tu n'as pas idéé de la quantité de choses que Mercedes a du supporter, des folies comme celle-là" (Entretien avec GM, 1981: 22).

According to GM, Ursula Iguarán, his main female character, shares some of Mercedes' features, but also those of other women whom he has known during his life. "Ursula is my ideal woman, in the sense that she is the paradigm for everything I think a woman is" (1982: 24 my transl.). GM sees her as the centre of the "planetary system" of her family. After her death, "it does not matter what happens next" in the book (Ibid: 109 My transl.).

Most critics agree that Ursula is the model of the practical and strong woman. She is usually referred to as the "Mother" who is the main support of the family. She spends all her life - more than 100 years - working for her family's survival as head of the house, because her husband has no sense of reality and dies a madman, tied to a tree. Hence, she continuously does the housework, understands her people's feelings and has premonitions about the future. Ursula functions as a voice through which the narrator explains the real motivation for his characters' actions. As pointed out by Kappeler, "frequently, the chronicler leans on Ursula's opinion, without always having to judge or correct it with what was 'actually' the case" (1983: 51). Ursula's view of her family counts more than anyone else's in CAS. Thus, because of her role as a housekeeper and

head of the family, many critics see Ursula as the matriarchal ruler.

In his conversation with Apuleyo Mendoza, GM was asked what kind of reply he could give to the accusation that he is "machista." In his reply, GM defined feminists as women who "want to be men," so they become "frustrated machistas." In his view, machismo is something normal in his society, because it is a "matriarchal society" (1982: 159 My transl.).

4.2.- Purpose of the present study

This study will explore the dichotomies that prevail between GM's female and male characters, in order to expose the role attributed to women as housekeepers and heads of the family and, more importantly, to demystify the idea that this role leads to matriarchal relations within the family and therefore maintains a "matriarchal society." By analyzing both male and female characters in CAS it will be shown that the role of woman as housekeeper and head of the family actually reproduces the patriarchal law, or in Smart's words, the Father's Law. What both GM and his critics call matriarchy is what Smart refers to as a "disguised patriarchy," where women are portrayed as "reproducing mothers" whose major role is to support the Father's House.

As stated by Smart, the ideological construct of the patriarchal triangle allows the "tragic" tradition in men's works, where violence is exercised against women who are portrayed as "terrifying mothers" or as objects in their role of "reproducing mothers" within the Father's House. Interestingly, these two types of mothers are found in both

Fuentes' and GM's literary works. Fuentes' male characters have an ancestral fear of women, in particular of their mothers; any contact with these women could lead to the loss of male identity. On the other hand, GM mystifies woman, not in her role of terrifying mother, but in her role as reproducing mother. She appears as the support of the family, without whom men could not devote themselves to making history. However, GM does not give the women strong, practical and realistic qualities because they are women. He states that his female characters are "masculine." Hence, the major feature of his female characters is something they borrow from men. Women in GM's literary works are not practical for their own benefit; they possess these qualities in order to sustain the family.

Thus, like Fuentes, GM shapes female identity according to his own desires. Moreover, this female identity is actually working as the "Autre-réifié" from which male subjectivity is created. GM and Fuentes are both caught in the disjunctive of "son histoire à lui" or "son histoire à elle" within the Father's House. They shape his story by silencing hers.

5.- CAS: a disguised patriarchy

5.1.- Analysis of characters

In the line of male descendants of the Buendía family, names, physical and temperamental features are repeated from one generation to the next. There are five Arcadios and 22 Aurelianos. "Mientras los Aurelianos eran retraídos, pero de mentalidad lúcida, los José Arcadio eran impulsivos, pero estaban marcados por un signo trágico"

(CAS).

The first Aureliano and José Arcadio are the first children of Macondo's founding couple. They have opposite physical features and personalities. Aureliano is bony, pale and quiet, whereas José Arcadio is muscular, enormous and noisy. Early in the novel José Arcadio is defined by his extraordinary penis and his sexual vigour, while Aureliano is defined by his deep eyes and imagination. Aureliano stays and works at home when he is not in the war; José Arcadio travels and does not work. Aureliano falls in love with a little girl, marries her and they live together at his parents' house. It seems that Aureliano suffers from some kind of sexual incapacity, which is compensated by courage in the war. José Arcadio, on the other hand, is sexually initiated by a prostitute and, in turn, initiates his brother verbally. He seduces several women before marrying Rebeca, his adopted sister, whereupon both must leave their parents' house.

Both Aureliano and José Arcadio have sexual relationships with Pilar, who is the illegitimate mother of the family. She has one son with each of them. José Arcadio's son is named Arcadio. He is physically similar to his father, yet closer to his uncle in his temperament. Thus, he has a tremendous hereditary strength and a big, hairy body, but he is solitary and timid. He becomes rich illegally by collecting taxes on land that does not belong to him. Aureliano's son is called Aureliano José and he is also physically similar to his father, but resembles his uncle in his behaviour. He does not work and has no money; he travels and spends time with women.

According to Josefina Ludmer, Aureliano and Arcadio are characterized by the mind over the body. They represent work, making money and political convictions. In contrast,

José Arcadio and Aureliano José are characterized by the predominance of the body over the mind. They do not work, do not make money and live more instinctively (1985: 63-66).

It can also be argued that the main feature that distinguishes one pair from the other is their sexual behaviour. Both pairs have incestuous tendencies; however, the first pair seeks women outside the family, whereas the second is obsessed with women in the family.

The first pair brings the outside women into the household and decides to produce offspring. Aureliano falls in love with a little girl, Remedios, and marries her, but she dies while delivering their first child, because of her youth. As a consequence, Aureliano goes to war, fights 32 battles and loses all of them. During his campaign he sires 17 illegitimate sons. Arcadio brings Santa Sofía de la Piedad home, a woman given to him by Pilar in her attempt to avoid sleeping with her own son. Arcadio and Santa Sofía de la Piedad have three children. She behaves like an exemplary mother. In contrast, the second pair of male characters are more sexually-oriented, but can only deal with prostitutes or are obsessed with women in their own family (Rebeca in the case of José Arcadio and his aunt, Amaranta, in the case of Aureliano José). José Arcadio has only one child with Pilar and none with Rebeca (he dies young), while Aureliano has none and never marries.

Hence, the ruling factor in the male characters' sexual behaviour is its legality or illegality, within the family or outside the family, or, to put it in Smart's words, within

the Father's House or outside the Father's House. When it is a woman from outside the family who is not a prostitute, the relationship becomes legal and takes place in the House. In contrast, when the chosen woman belongs to the family the relationship can never be established, as in the case of Aureliano José and his aunt Amaranta. Or the couple must leave the Father's House, like Jose' Arcadio and his adopted sister Rebeca.

The male characters are defined in their abilities to deal with their sexual needs - always in terms of excess of virility or a lack of it. Sexual virility is often somehow compensated, as with Colonel Aureliano, who promotes 32 wars and becomes a national hero. The only male character who suffers from a lack of virility and cannot compensate for this dies as a victim of a group of children. According to Gustavo Alvarez Gardezabal, GM "punishes" him with a death which lacks dignity precisely because of GM's disgust with men not possessing the qualities of the macho (1976: 55).

Hence, in her role as housekeeper and head of the family, Ursula is really protecting a dynasty of male characters whose names are repeated and whose sexual behaviour is defined by the Father's Law. The result of this is the establishment of the dichotomy of legitimate-illegitimate children and a type of sexual conduct within the House or outside the House.

Thus, the female characters of the novel are also defined from this perspective. They can be divided into groups, with their sexual status - legal women within the House, or illegitimate women outside the House - as the distinguishing feature.

Ursula and Fernanda are the two major homemakers, although their styles are opposite. Lydia D. Hazera defines Ursula's style as "open, tolerant, constructive, vital

and kind," and Fernanda's as "closed, narrow, fanatic, destructive, dead and selfish" (1976: 158, my transl.). Ursula maintains a hospitable house which Fernanda later turns inhospitable; Ursula builds additions on it that are neglected by Fernanda; Ursula is financially productive, whereas Fernanda is snobbish (having been educated to be a "queen") and expects to be kept by her husband, Aureliano II. As Hazera points out, "more than any other characters, GM uses Fernanda to make fun of falsity, hypocrisy, religious bigotry, fanaticism and over all, political reaction" (Ibid: 157 my transl.).

The other two women who go to live in the Buendía house because of their relationships with one of the men in the family are Santa Sofía de la Piedad and Remedios. The first is hardly noticed in the Buendía's house because of her submissive, shy and self-sacrificing personality. Fernanda believes that she is a maid rather than her mother-in-law, since Santa Sofía de la Piedad's loyalty to Ursula is enormous. Santa Sofía de la Piedad takes over Ursula's candy animal business when the latter loses her sight, and tries to protect the house from deteriorating after Ursula's death. After serving the family for her entire adult life, Santa Sofía de la Piedad finally decides to silently leave the Buendía house, "...arrastrando los pies y arqueada por los años..." (CAS) According to Margaret Sayers Peden, Santa Sofía de la Piedad is treated like a servant because she is not Arcadio's wife, but his concubine - even though she lives in the house (1976: 321). Remedios is the little girl with whom Aureliano falls "crazily and desperately" in love and asks to marry. Although she is barely pubescent, she learns the role of married woman, becomes "mature" in marriage, demonstrates maternal instincts, and "sings from sunrise." As Sayers Peden puts it, Remedios is the essence of naivete,

virginity, lack of experience and lack of lust, and therefore conforms perfectly to Aureliano's idea of a woman (Ibid: 320). According to the narrator in CAS, Remedios is "the justification that he needed to live" (CAS).

Another ideal woman is Remedios the Beauty. She also represents virginity and naivete. She is unaware of her beauty, does not notice the effect that she has on men, and does not realize that some of them have even died for her. Because she is "impermeable a los formalismos, más indiferente a la malicia y a la suspicacia, feliz en un mundo propio de realidades simples" (CAS), Remedios the Beauty functions in the text as the primitive image of "female-nature." She represents nature as opposed to culture, where nature means eternal innocence and pristine, pure sexuality.

Rebeca and Amaranta, although very different, can be identified with each other through one feature of their sexual behaviour. Amaranta is sexually repressed all her life, has incestuous tendencies toward her nephew that are never acted out, and dies a virgin. Rebeca also suffers from sexual repression, but she channels it into eating soil. Rebeca is cured of this habit when Pietro Crespi declares his love for her. However, because their wedding is constantly postponed, Rebeca relapses into her obsession until she is rescued by her adoptive brother, José Arcadio. Hence, what both Rebeca and Amaranta suffer from is a lack of men.

Another two female characters who resemble each other are Pilar Ternera and Petra Cotes. The name Pilar means "pillar," and she is the mother of the second generation of the Buendía family. She is the emotional support to the male characters, who look to her for their sexual initiation. Her active sexual life and her irresistibility to men are

clearly opposed to Ursula's lack of sexual life and attractiveness. Similarly, Petra's name is also symbolic of support, since it refers to stone. She is as cheerful as Pilar Ternera, and her sexual activity is even magical, for she produces wealth (in the form of incredible fertility in livestock) through making love. Petra is Aureliano II's concubine, and therefore Fernanda's rival. Petra's openness, fertility, generosity and "vocation for love" are also antithetical to Fernanda's moral rigour and frigidity.

Hence, Sayers Peden argues that women in Macondo can be divided into two groups: those who appear sexually active but cannot be wives and mothers, and those who can be wives and mothers but whose sexual life is silenced. Women are defined from a male perspective and their personalities are shaped by the male's emotional and material needs (1976: 316).

As Alvarez Gardeazábal argues, the narrator of CAS imposes some "odd" rules on himself when describing scenes of sexual intercourse among his characters. For example, sexual relationships within marriage are not narrated in detail, they are merely announced. However, sexual intercourse between lovers is described faithfully. Similarly, sexual intercourse that is paid for is ignored (1976: 46). In doing so, the narrator stresses the differences between the types of women in each of their attributed roles. It seems that pleasure is not permitted to married women; on the other hand neither is it allowed for Pilar and Petra, since they are portrayed as the pleasure-providers. Their sexual capacity produces satisfaction for their partners (Ibid: 59).

The two younger female characters of the novel have different sexual behaviour. Hazera sees Meme's temperament as closer to that of the first José Arcadio and her

father than to that of her mother, Fernanda (1976: 164). She has to leave home because of an illicit relationship which produces a son. Like Pilar and Petra, Meme also has a "vocation for love." However, as argued by Alvarez, Meme is "punished" by the narrator when her mother sends her to a convent. Although Meme is the first female character with any self-determination, this does not last very long. Her sexual freedom is not equal to that of the male characters.

Amaranta Ursula, the last female character of the novel, is also presented as more self-determined. Alvarez argues that she is the only female character who derives pleasure from sex and who belongs to the group who know how to make love (1976: 62-63). However, Amaranta Ursula is punished with death, after having given birth to a child with a "pig's tail," who is itself eaten by ants. Aureliano Babilonia, Amaranta Ursula's sexual partner and nephew, is the only surviving member of the family. He is also the only one capable of decoding Melquíades' manuscripts, which recount the history of the family. Both the town and the family are destroyed, but the last survivor reads the manuscript and discovers truth - it is a male character.

5.2.- Conclusion

In CAS the Buendía house is a place which rules and legitimizes the Buendía sexual relationships. The male characters are ultimately the ones with the power to decide which one is legitimate or illegitimate, according to the Father's Law. Women in CAS are defined from a male perspective, which means that they are either legal and within the

House, or illegal and outside the House. Female characters in CAS always conforms to men's emotional and/or material needs. Hence, what GM and some of his critics consider a matriarchy is in fact a patriarchal order, in which female characters are portrayed as either "reproducing mothers" whose main role is to support the House, or as mere pleasure providers outside the Father's House. These two roles demonstrate that GM is writing within the Father's House and is also caught between the disjunctive of "son histoire à lui" or "son histoire à elle." He is shaping his story by silencing hers.

MARIO VARGAS LLOSA (1936-)

1.- Biographical Data

Mario Vargas Llosa was born in Arequipa, Peru in 1936. He spent part of his childhood in Cochabamba, Bolivia, where he was raised by his mother and grandparents. In 1946 he moved to Lima and in 1953 he entered San Marcos University to study law. At the same time he started to work for various newspapers and to publish his first short stories. In 1958 he went to Spain to study for a Ph.D. in literature at the University of Madrid. In 1959 he moved to Paris where he wrote La Ciudad y los Perros. He traveled to Peru in 1964 to revisit the jungle region and to prepare material for his second novel, La Casa Verde. In 1966 he moved to London where he taught at Queen Mary College, and three years later he moved to Barcelona. Vargas Llosa returned to Lima in 1974, but still travels extensively to lecture at various universities.

2.- Works, popularity and translations

In 1952 Vargas Llosa (henceforth to be abbreviated VL) produced and presented his first play, La huída del Inca. In 1958 he won Revue Française's short-story competition for El desafío and in 1959 he published his first short story collection, entitled Los Jefes, which won the Leopoldo Alas literary prize. In 1963 VL's first novel, La Ciudad

y los Perros, appeared. It received the Biblioteca Breve prize, Premio de la Crítica Española, and second place in the Prix Formentor literary competition. Three years later VL's second novel, La Casa Verde, was published. It won three prizes: the Peruvian Premio Nacional de la Novela, Premio de la Crítica Española, and the \$22,000 Venezuelan Rómulo Gallegos award. Like Fuentes and GM, VL is also enormously prolific. He published several novels in a short time: Conversación en la Catedral (1969), Pantaleón y las visitadoras (1973), La tía Julia y el escribidor in 1977, La guerra del fin del mundo (1981), Historia de Mayta (1984), ¿Quién mató a Palomino Molero? (1986) and Elogio de la Madastra (1988). VL wrote two plays as well. La Señorita de Tacna opened in 1981 in Buenos Aires and Lima, and won the Premio Anual de la Crítica Argentina. Kathie y el hipopótamo appeared in 1983.

As well, VL has been extremely productive in literary criticism. While a student in Lima he edited a literary journal, Cuadernos de Conversación, with Luis Loayza and Abelardo Oquendo. In 1970 he published, with Julio Cortázar and Oscar Collazos, Literatura en la revolución y revolución en la literatura, a collection of essays which discusses the role of Latin American writers in social and political reality. A year later VL published a major work on García Márquez entitled García Márquez: historia de un deicidio. VL is the coauthor of García Márquez y la problemática de la novela, published in 1973. He has also written critically on the French writer Gustave Flaubert, and in 1975 La orgía perpetua: Flaubert y "Madame Bovary" appeared. In 1976 VL became the President of the International PEN Club and in 1981 he published a book of collected essays called Entre Sartre y Camus. Contra viento y marea is a collection of essays

written by VL between 1962 and 1982 on both political and literary topics.

VL's work has been translated into 26 languages. His most often-translated piece is La Ciudad y los Perros, which was published in 17 languages. As well, a great deal has been written on him in several languages, including Spanish, English, French, German, Hungarian, Italian and Swedish.³

3.- Political position and the intellectual's role

Like Fuentes and GM, VL also believes that the Latin American writer cannot remain detached from the social and political reality of his or her country. He also denies that literature must give an exact picture of reality to be considered good. Rather, VL believes that a writer is an eternal "rebel" who must constantly question the established order of things. For VL, the writer in Latin American societies is "a rebel with a cause, or rather with a double cause, one cultural and one social" (Peter Standish, 1982: 13).

VL began championing the causes of writers oppressed by communist regimes in 1967 during a speech given in Caracas when he received the Rómulo Gallegos prize. In doing so, a schism was created between him and other Boom writers. Unlike GM, VL broke with the Cuban Regime in 1971 because of the case of the poet Heberto Padilla (See Chapter 2 for details). Recently, VL has argued that the task of the writer depends on the situation in each country. Whereas in the United States and Western Europe the writer's responsibility is a "personal" one, in countries such as Peru, Bolivia

³For the most comprehensive critical bibliography on VL's work, see José Miguel Oviedo, Mario Vargas Llosa: la invención de una realidad. Barcelona, Seix Barral, 1982, pp. 373-460. Oviedo's bibliography includes all the main critical works published until 1980.

and Nicaragua the writer must assume

a social responsibility: at the same time that you develop a personal literary work, you should serve, through your writing but also through your actions, as an active participant in the solution of the economic, political and cultural problems of your society (VL quoted by Peter Standish, Ibid: 15).

Currently, VL is a right-wing candidate for the next national election in Peru, to be held in April 1990.

4.- Focus of the present study

This section will analyze La Ciudad y los Perros (henceforth to be abbreviated CP) for several reasons. First, CP was published between 1957 and 1967 and is a classic of the Boom. Second, CP is VL's most popular and translated novel. After its publication, it was acclaimed as one of the best novels written in Spanish during the preceding three decades. Also, CP is one of VL's most representative works in terms of his thematic and structural approach.

CP has a peculiar story in terms of the reaction produced in Peru when the novel appeared and the image that this reaction created of VL. Shortly after its publication in 1963, 1,000 copies of CP were incinerated in a symbolic act on the parade ground of

the Leoncio Prado Academy, where the action of the novel takes place. Not surprisingly, what was intended to be an act of suppression only served to increase VL's reputation and to sell more copies of the book. Consequently, VL's image was that of the always-rebellious writer who would devote himself to criticizing Peruvian institutions. He became popular at the age of 27, just at the beginning of his literary career.

As pointed out by several critics, CP's story is quite simple:

1) the theft of an exam at a military school is followed by the collective punishment of the suspension of weekend leaves; 2) one cadet squeals on another and is mysteriously shot while on military manoeuvres; 3) another cadet accuses the suspected executioner; 4) an investigation ensues and the incident is ruled an accident (Dick Gerdes, 1985: 34).

However, from a simple plot VL makes interesting points about personal and social behavioral attitudes on moral issues. Indeed, the characters of CP have a complex psychological constitution.

The characters' complexity in CP is achieved through several narrative techniques. The novel is divided into two lengthy sections, each with eight chapters and an epilogue. Each chapter generally consists of four or five subsections separated from one another by the typographical conventions of blank spaces and (in the Spanish edition) the capitalization of initial words in the following section. One chapter has only one narrative subsection, two chapters have ten, and the epilogue and three other chapters contain three narrative subsections. Rilda L. Baker suggests that "this organization into

episodic sections within the larger chapter divisions facilitates the movement among multiple temporal and spatial settings." Hence, "the reader experiences a constant interplay between past and present, between actors in the primary setting (the academy) and others in the secondary location (the city)" (1978: 6-7).

In addition, the novel is narrated in past-tense and present-tense verbs and in the third person and first person. Raymond Williams considers that "approximately one-third of the novel consists of first-person narrations - 36 of 81 segments" (1986: 31). Through these changes in the narration, VL gradually creates the identity of his characters (though only the male ones, as will be shown later). However, this is not always straightforward for the reader; the identity of the story's narrator, the Jaguar, is not known until the epilogue.

4.1.- Previous readings of CP

Like CAS, CP has also been widely studied. However, unlike GM's novel, the perspectives have not been so varied. VL's work as a literary critic has usually helped critics dealing with his work, since VL's theory of the novel is applied in his literary creation. According to VL, the novel is the prime genre that subsumes other genres, making use of them for its own purposes. Although he believes that his novels describe "one aspect of Peruvian reality but at different levels" (Emir Rodríguez Monegal, 1971: 56 My transl.), VL states that the part contributed by the author is what makes a novel literature as opposed to "social documentation." However, despite the personal process

involved in the writing itself, VL believes that the final result must be an autonomous work; one in which the role of the author is not noticeable. The example he gives for this is Flaubert's Madame Bovary. VL calls it a "total novel," namely, a novel that encompasses all aspects of reality. Paradoxically, the achievement of a detailed, total picture of reality means that the author's presence is forgotten. This is the way in which VL refers, not only to Flaubert's novel, but to his own works.

Critics generally agree that VL's work is ultimately dealing with Peruvian social reality. In this sense, CP has been called a "realist" novel which portrays modern Peru socially and politically. VL attended the Leoncio Prado Academy, where the novel's story is set. The first Spanish edition of the novel includes a street map of Lima and a photograph of the Academy. VL believes that people from different regions of Peru can be found in that school (Idem). Hence, critics have often stated that CP's main characters represent a cross-section of Peruvian society, coming from these various regions and belonging to different social strata.

A second common statement about CP is that the novel highlights the tension between the characters and their environment. This is indicated in the title of the novel itself, where los perros - the dogs - is the group of cadets in the academy and la ciudad - the city - is the outside world, that is, the city of Lima. Critics usually discuss the cadets' actual possibilities for making choices in their environment. Jorge Laforgue, for example, argues that the characters of CP "are trapped" in a world with no possible exits. They cannot afford a single moment of rebelliousness or freedom. VL's novel lacks "a future, a time of freedom, the possibility for a universal moral," which could help CP's

characters understand their situation and free themselves from it (1971: 123 My transl.). Other critics, however, argue that there is room for choice in the novel and that at least some of his characters partially succeed in achieving some personal dignity. That Jaguar is true to himself and morally sincere at the end of the novel indicates the possible space for human freedom.

On the same ground, critics have pointed out that the novel critically portrays the failure of society to educate new generations. Wolfgang A. Luchting, for example, argues that VL's characters' single choice is the adherence or non-adherence to bourgeois values, where those who adhere to them sooner or later discover that they are "partially or totally," false values. Only the characters who consciously or unconsciously rebel against this value system manage to properly develop their "entelechy." Luchting's conclusion is that the frustration of VL's characters effectively portrays the frustration of the "individual entelechy of Latin American man." The reason for this frustration is the bourgeois value system inherited from Europe (1971: 41-43 My transl.).

The failure of the bourgeois system of education points to an inter-generational conflict recurrent in various works by VL, such as Los Jefes, Los Cachorros and CP. Alberto Escobar, for example, argues that VL's frustrated characters are usually adolescents who become simultaneously victims and victimizers in their society (1972: 113). Adolescents must learn to survive in the corrupt, adult world, and sooner or later they discard the ineffective value system learned within the family. Hence, adolescence as the passage to adult responsibilities is represented in CP as a traumatic experience. The epigraph to part two, taken from Paul Nizan, says as much: "J'avais vingt ans. Je

ne laisserai personne dire que c'est le plus bel age de la vie" (CP).

Society in VL's literary world is ruled by what José Luis Martín refers to as "the jungle law" (1974: 95), where the Darwinian theory of the survival of the fittest applies. VL portrays a society where violence is part of every day life. In so doing, he criticizes power both at civil and military levels, since in Peruvian society it is difficult to differentiate between the two. Thus, in VL's works adolescence is a process of integration to the real world, which is represented as brutal and authoritarian.

Critics refer to VL's adolescents as a "castrated generation." They think that, like all "learning experiences" in man's (sic) life, youth is not a golden age, but rather a process that will mark the adult for the rest of his life (José Miguel Oviedo, 1971: 348). Martín believes that the conflict of VL's characters is a universal crisis common to adolescents or "all latitudes and times," which he terms "adolescent machismo." He argues that because of the toughness of the world, VL's adolescents cannot distinguish between machismo and real hombría (manliness). VL's adolescents are caught in a situation of violence, competition, loneliness, hatred, revenge and hard words, as opposed to friendship, fraternal love and sacrifice for others. The reason these characters display "exhibitionist machismo" rather than real hombría, is that they are socially obliged to behave violently (1971: 379-403).

It is noteworthy that these critics assume that all adolescents are men, and that adolescence is the process through which adolescents develop male qualities, either a "real hombría" or an exaggerated machismo. Most critics of VL's work ignore the fact that these processes describe only male characters' experiences. From these experiences

a common adolescent crisis, regardless of the sex of the characters, is pointed out as a key element in VL's literary world. Like Fuentes and GM, the role of female characters in VL's work has been overlooked by his critics, and more importantly, generalizations of humanity are drawn from the particular experience of VL's male characters. Also in VL's case, literary critics reproduce in their critiques the writer's silencing of women's voices in literary texts.

4.2.- Purpose of the present study

VL's literary world is predominantly male - his central characters are always male. Female characters are instruments for achieving male characters' identities or, as he himself expresses it, simple "stimuli" for their actions. The next section will explore the role of female characters in CP. It will follow Sharon Magnarelli by arguing that women's images in the text work simultaneously as support and threat to male identity. Within Smart's framework, male characters cannot establish a subject-to-subject type of relationship with female characters, since these appear as "l'Autre-réifiée" from which the male identity is constituted. However, male characters are also condemned for their lack of communication with women. Both men and women appear as psychological victims of a patriarchal society where the formation of the male identity requires the sacrifice of the female.

Both the reproducing mother and the terrible mother are present in VL's characterization of women. As well, the dichotomies of the good/bad women and mother/prostitute are the ruling factors in VL's definition of women. VL belongs to the

tragic literary tradition that shows a conflictive relationship to women when attempting to represent them in their literary works. He is also caught in the disjunctive of "son histoire à elle" or "son histoire à lui," and he writes his story by silencing hers.

5.- CP: Women as "stimulus" for male adolescents' actions

5.1.- Analysis of characters

Roy Boland, in his book Mario Vargas Llosa. Oedipus and the papa state, studies VL's characters in their psychological dimension, since he feels that this has been neglected by VL's other critics. He focuses on the Oedipus complex of VL's adolescent male characters, "who are impelled by deep-seated Oedipal undercurrents" (1988: 1). Boland believes that due to VL's vast knowledge of Freudian psychoanalytical theory, the Freudian elements in his literary work "do not constitute the input of Vargas Llosa's unconscious, but rather, they constitute a second 'message' at a conscious, secondary, concealed level" (Ibid: 3). According to Boland, the Peruvian writer "utilises Freudian theory ... as his novelistic key for opening his readers' eyes to the invisible psychological forces that shape the lives of Peruvians, individually and collectively" (Ibid: 2).

Although Boland stresses that his concern is the male Oedipus complex as portrayed in VL's novels, he does not critically discuss the role that female characters play in overcoming this complex. This study will take Boland's analysis as a starting point to further the argument that VL's male characters use women to shape their identity and, in doing so, silence female characters. In Smart's words, women in VL's literary world

are the "Autre-reifiée" or the silent object through which male identity is created. Hence, overcoming the Oedipus complex is the way to achieve a male identity via a woman. In the son's struggle against paternal authority, the mother or a female figure are the sacrificed objects.

The conflict in which VL's male adolescent characters are caught can be explained differently when looked at from this perspective. Rather than a "frustrated virility," a castration complex which leads toward homosexual attitudes (Roland Forgues, 1981: 176-92), or machismo as opposed to real hombria, the problem of VL's male characters is that their identity is achieved only through the denial of women's identity. VL's male characters' either submissive or violent behaviour as well as their inability to relate to women result from the fact that women are the sacrificed objects in the formation of their male identities.

Although adolescent male characters in CP come from different regions of Peru and belong to different social strata, they have the same family structure at home. The reasons for their being sent to military school are similar, usually the underlying belief that a military education makes "real men." In Boland's words, the three main characters in CP undergo two types of parricidal struggles, one at an individual level and the second at a collective one. In the first, they try to emancipate themselves from paternal dependence, whereas in the second they try to resist the tyranny of their military superiors. The success of the first struggle will help the success of the second, and vice versa;

When a son, such as Alberto and Richi, is vanquished by his father, he is psychologically castrated and rendered impotent in the struggle against extensions of paternal authority, such as the army; on the other hand, when a son triumphs against his father or father-surrogate (for example "el Jaguar" against his godfather), he is psychologically hardened for any future struggles against extensions of paternal authority (1988: 40).

Hence, Alberto feels ambivalent toward his father, showing both resentment toward and admiration for him. Alberto wants to imitate his father in terms of his conquests of women, yet he recriminates his father for abandoning his mother. Boland argues that Alberto attempts to fulfill his incestuous desire for his mother by having sexual intercourse with "la Pies Dorados," a prostitute. However, Alberto's failure with her signals a psychological castration that leads him to behave "'passively like a woman,' that is, like a homosexual or a castrated male; and he displays a guilty conscience over his attempted parricide" (Ibid: 46).

Similarly, Ricardo Arana - "Richi" - also sees his father as a superior rival for his mother's affection, and he is finally subdued by excessive paternal violence and cruelty. Hence, Richi also "displays a feminine passivity and a craving for punishment, as if he were in urgent psychological need of confirming what Freud describes as 'the old passive attitude to the father'" (Ibid: 54).

Jaguar, in contrast, embodies the myths of machismo and physical prowess. He is feared by the other cadets and dominates them by superior force. As stated by Standish, Jaguar's family life is different from that of Alberto and Richi. Jaguar

has lost his mother, is sleeping in a ditch and searching for her by day ... Then he finds his padrino's wife making sexual advances to him; to escape their liaison he threatens to abandon her altogether unless he is enrolled in the Leoncio Prado (op. cit.:55).

Jaguar has also slipped into a round of petty crime under the influence of Flaco Higuera. Unlike Alberto and Richi,

Jaguar enters the academy with an advantage of sorts over the other cadets. He is the only one to have had direct experience of the adult world; for the others such experience has been mediated by parents (Idem).

However, these three characters' behaviour is to different extent, stimulated by one female character - Teresa. VL's critics believe that it is unrealistic that all three love her, two without knowing about the others. To this objection VL replies that it can be considered a fault of his novel, but that he used Teresa to better define his male characters: "I wanted each one of them to see Teresa according to his own situation and in a different way. This would allow me to define them better" (Emir Rodríguez Monegal, 1971: 54 my transl.).

According to Magnarelli, female figures and in particular Teresa, have two concomitant functions in the novel. First, they are evoked as the "already past" and "already absent" memory, so they work as the lost paradise of the male characters, where

"the good life with 'good' women" is. (1981: 217) Yet, the only way male characters can create an identity for themselves is by proving that they have none of the characteristics associated with women, such as "weakness, emotionalism, passivity, reception of cruelty (as opposed to the perpetration of cruel acts)" (Idem).

Teresa as a reflection from which the different features of each of the characters will be drawn, she is "past and absent." The interior discourse coming from both Jaguar and Alberto is often directed to Teresa as "an already past, already absent, female you" (Ibid: 216). Teresa is represented by each of the three boys in a different way, yet they all succeed in reaffirming their own separation from her and thereby in representing her in an unthreatening way. In doing so, the three boys negate the "female OTHER" and define their masculinity, "since the SELF is identifiable insofar as it recognizes, separates itself from, and stands in contrast to the OTHER" (Ibid: 220).

This is not exclusive to Teresa, since the rest of the female characters in CP are also defined from a male perspective. In the boys' perceptions, the female is reduced to two oppositional possibilities: the mother (good) and the prostitute (bad) (Ibid: 219). However, in the text both the mother and the prostitute share a common feature - being a commodity which is bought or sold:

It is apparent that Alberto's mother re-unites with his father in spite of the latter's continued extra-marital activities in order to regain her social position and financial security. Similarly, Jaguar's mother ceases to conduct herself in a motherly manner and to discipline him accordingly in exchange for monetary remuneration. And Tere, portrayed in all the innocence (?) of the future mother, has two main preoccupations (concerns nurtured and encouraged by her aunt and her mother as she remembers her): 1) to find a husband to support her and

her aunt; 2) to find that husband from the highest possible economic class. To this extent, then, the interest of the mother figures in financial security and their willingness to exchange their "honour" for that money is not different from that of the prostitute (Ibid: 222).

Thus, from the perspective of the male characters in CP, the female is both desirable and despicable. She is desirable because the male can prove his masculinity by demonstrating how different he is from her, and because by conquering her he proves his superiority. Yet she is despicable because the process of conquest makes his superiority vulnerable. "Therefore, the female directly and indirectly confers manliness but at the same time is a threat to that manliness" (Idem). In Smart's words, female characters are "l'Autre reifiée" or the silent mirror in which male identity is reflected and which eventually threatens this identity.

The female characters in La Casa Verde, one of VL's most ambitious works, can be divided into nuns and devout women on the one hand, and prostitutes on the other. There are also Indians who work as servants and some laundresses, but the common feature among all of them is that they depend on men. Toñita, who is raped by Anselmo, "starts living" and "becomes a woman" after the rape, according to him; the prostitutes are controlled by the owners of the brothel; Indian women and laundresses are also at the mercy of their masters or whoever wants to rape them. The destinies and identities of the most central female characters are defined from the perspective of male characters, who are the real protagonists. This is the case of Antonia, Bonifacia, Lalita and La Chunga. La Chunga is more active than the other female characters in the novel and

appears as marimacha, that is, she is ostracized for not being feminine. In different ways, these female characters play the passive role of instruments in men's desires.

Thus, VL's female characters lack the psychological insight that his male characters have. VL shows himself unable to overcome the dichotomy of mother/ prostitute and good/bad woman. His mother characters appear resigned before virile outrage, whereas prostitutes are idealized figures with whom men can find satisfaction of their "lowest passions" (Boldori de Baldussi, 1974: 36). VL does not have a single female character who shows herself superior to her environment and able to escape the conditioning that society has imposed on her (Ibid: 35-40). Rebelliousness is something exclusive to the male characters.

5.2.- Conclusion

When critics refer to rebelliousness in VL's characters, they are speaking of his male characters only. Female characters not only are not rebellious, but they are used to channel male characters' rebelliousness. In VL's violent world, where his characters are required to develop strategies for self-defense, men defend themselves by distancing themselves from women. Women are used to bolster male identity and they are silenced by it. VL's male characters see in women a support for their identity and concomitantly a threat to it.

However, VL's male characters also suffer from women's social situation and from their lack of communication with women. Both men and women are psychological

victims of a patriarchal society where the formation of a male identity requires the sacrifice of the female's.

VL's portrayal of women also speaks of his own threatened identity as a writer. As he expresses it, a writer is like a "stripper." When he writes he reveals "the demons that obsess him, the ugliest parts of himself: his nostalgia, his rancour, his regrets" (VL quoted by José Miguel Oviedo, 1978: 166). One of these demons is his relationship with women and his view of them. VL also sacrifices "son histoire à elle" in order to write "son histoire à lui" within the Father's House.

JULIO CORTAZAR (1914-1984)

1.- Biographical Data

Julio Cortázar was born in Brussels, Belgium in 1914. His father worked with the Ministry of Public Works of Argentina, so the family stayed in Belgium for four years. In 1918 they went back to Argentina and lived in Banfield, where Julio was raised by his mother and aunts. In 1935 he earned degrees as a primary and secondary school teacher and enrolled at the Faculty of Literature of the University of Buenos Aires. Two years later he left university and became a high school teacher. In 1944 he started teaching literature courses at the University of Cuyo (Mendoza), even though he had not completed his academic degree. In 1947 he earned a degree as a public translator and one year later he started working as a translator. In 1951 he was awarded a scholarship to study in Paris, where he remained the rest of his life. However, Cortázar traveled extensively and lived in several places. He visited Cuba and other Latin American countries, usually to attend political meetings and Congresses. Cortázar died in Paris in February 1984 after a long fight with leukemia and heart disease.

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2.- Works, popularity and translations

Cortázar's main literary genre is short stories, although he also wrote four novels, poetry, literary criticism and various essays on the intellectual's political commitment. His first short story, Casa tomada, was published by Borges in Anales de Buenos Aires in 1946. The rest of his short stories were published in various collections: Bestiario (1951), Final del juego (1956), Las armas secretas (1959), Todos los fuegos el fuego (1966), El perseguidor y otros cuentos (1967), Octaedro (1974), Alguien que anda por ahí y otros relatos (1977), Un tal Lucas (1979), Queremos tanto a Glenda (1980) and Deshoras (1982). Selections of Cortázar's short stories were edited several times under different titles.

Cortázar's first novel, Los premios, was published in 1960. His most known novel, Rayuela, came out in 1963, followed by 62. Modelo para armar (1968) and El Libro de Manuel (1973). Cortázar has only two volumes of poetry, Presencia (1938) and Paemos y meopas (1971), as well as one dramatic poem, Los Reyes (1949). However, most of his poems are contained in his other works.

The rest of Cortázar's work is difficult to put into literary genres. Evelyn Picon Garfield calls La vuelta al día en ochenta mundos (1967) a "collage-book" (1975: xi), because it is comprised of essays, poetry and stories. The same could be said of Ultimo round (1969). Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires (1968), Prosa del observatorio (1972) and Estrictamente no profesional, humanitario (1976) are texts accompanied by photographs. Historia de Cronopios y de Famas (1962) is defined by Picon Garfield as a book of "anecdotes" (Ibid: x), yet they are anecdotes of cronopios and famas, which are literary

figures invented by Cortázar. Fantomas contra los vampiros multinacionales, una utopía realizable narrada por Julio Cortázar (1975) is a comic strip with political, anti-multinational tones. One year before his death, Cortázar published Los astronautas de la cosmopista, a book written with Carol Dunlop, his last companion.

In Viaje alrededor de una mesa, Cortázar's political views are presented as part of a round-table discussion held in Paris in April 1970. Nicaragua tan violentamente dulce (1983) is a collection of essays on the intellectual's role in the liberation of Latin America. Particularly relevant in the field of Cortázar's literary theory are La casilla de los Morelli (1973, selections from Rayuela, La vuelta al día... and Ultimo Round), Territorios (1978), Imagen de John Keats (1952, kept by Cortázar in Paris) and the introduction to Edgar Allan Poe's works translated by him and published in Spanish as Obras en Prosa (1956).

Cortázar's popularity in Latin America is enormous. Rayuela, for example, was published 14 times in Argentina between 1963 and 1977. From 1977 to 1984 seven editions of it appeared in Barcelona, one in Cuba, one in Venezuela, one in Mexico and one in Madrid. Because of Rayuela's success, Bestiario was published 16 times between 1964 and 1980, at a pace of one edition almost every year. This is also the case of Todos los fuegos el fuego, with 16 editions between 1966 and 1982; Historia de cronopios..., with 14 editions in Argentina and four in Spain between 1964 and 1983; Final del juego, with 14 editions in Argentina between 1964 and 1981 and two more in 1982 in Mexico and Spain; Las armas secretas, with 13 editions between 1965 and 1980 and five more in Spain. All these books were published almost every year in Argentina for about 15

years.

These books are also Cortázar's most translated ones. Todos los fuegos el fuego was translated into 15 languages, Las armas secretas into 13, Bestiario into 11, Historia ... into eight, and Rayuela and Final del juego into 10. Among the translations are English, French and German. Cortázar's work has also been analyzed in numerous languages.²

3.- Political position and the intellectual's role

Cortázar visited Cuba and Nicaragua and actively supported their revolutions. He was sympathetic to socialism; he considered it the single modern tendency which embodied the essential human principle that "humanity will really deserve this name only when exploitation of man by man ceases" (1968: 103, my transl.). Cortázar also believed that artists are morally responsible for maintaining peace and social justice beyond their national boundaries (Ibid: 110).

However, like the other Boom writers studied here, Cortázar rejected political restrictions on literary creation. He believed that literature was a space for experimentation, which allowed for all kinds of stylistic and structural innovations. As has been seen, it is difficult to put Cortázar's works into different genres, because his writing broke the barriers of these genres. Cortázar also opposed the idea of the writer as

²For the most comprehensive critical bibliography on Cortázar's work, see Sara de Mundo Lo, Julio Cortázar: his Works and his Critics, Illinois Albatross, 1985

the major storyteller and omniscient narrator and defined the "accomplice-reader" as an active reader who participates in the construction of the text's message. In Luis Gregorich's words, "Cortázar's literature is a critique of literature, rather than a critique of society" (1968: 129).

4.- Focus of the present study

This section will analyze Rayuela (henceforth to be abbreviated R) for several reasons. R was published between 1957 and 1967 and is a classic of the Boom. The novel is also Cortázar's most ambitious, important and representative piece of work. Rosa Boldori, for example, believes that R contains Cortázar's major literary concerns, and Norma Desinano considers R the "milestone" within all his works. Similarly, the Times Literary Supplement of London presented R as Cortázar's masterpiece and as the "first great novel of Spanish America." (quoted by Marcelo Alberto Villanueva, 1972: 33-34).

R recounts the story of Horacio Oliveira, an Argentine intellectual who is around 40 and has lived for some time in Paris. He spends his hours in continual self-analysis, questioning his every thought, word, action and emotion. He has a group of friends called "the Serpent Club," with whom he listens to jazz and converses about literature, music, philosophy and art. Oliveira has a love relationship with an Uruguayan woman

nicknamed la Maga, whom he abandons after the death of her baby. Oliveira realizes he loves la Maga and begins to look for her. He decides to return to Buenos Aires, since he thinks it possible that la Maga has returned to Montevideo. In Buenos Aires, Oliveira is welcomed by his childhood friend Traveler and his wife, Talita. A triangle forms when Oliveira confuses la Maga with Talita and becomes attracted to her. He also senses that Traveler is his "double." At the end of the novel, the three work in a mental house and Oliveira develops a persecution complex. One day, Oliveira locks himself in his room, where he builds an intricate system of threads crisscrossed through the room like a spider web. He places basins and spittoons of water and ball bearings on the floor. Traveler enters into the room and makes his way toward Oliveira after falling into the trap, but he cannot convince Oliveira to leave the room. Traveler returns to Talita, who waits in the yard near a hopscotch design. Oliveira from the open window thinks that it would be easy to let himself fall out into the hopscotch. It is not specified whether Horacio commits suicide or goes crazy.

4.1.- Previous readings of R

Cortázar's work has been studied from three vantage points: "fantastic literature, literary theory, and the search of man for his destiny" (sic) (Joaquín Roy, 1974: 11). The two latter have been the major perspectives used to analyze R.

The structure of R has been considered extremely innovative and original. The novel has a peculiar introduction, in which the author states that there are at least two books

in R. One comprises 56 chapters that are ordered one after the other. The second book starts at chapter 73 and has "expendable chapters" that are randomly interspersed within the chronological sequence of the traditional story: 73-1-2-116-3-84-4-71-5-81-74, etc. The "expendable chapters" break the novel's progression of the plot and comment on the actions and thoughts of the characters. Since the last two chapters alternate eternally, 58-131-58-131, the story has no end. This "second book" is designed for what Cortázar refers to as the "reader-accomplice," who must construct his (the attribution of gender is quite precise) version of the story and find an end for it.

Critics have considered this approach to literature a literary revolution. Joaquín Roy, for example, believes that "from an aesthetic viewpoint, R is a total innovation, free of inhibitions, it is literature that fights to break all the barriers of traditional genres" (1972: 173 My transl.). Similarly, Angela Dellapiane considers R the "anti-novel par excellence," which "challenges the reader, the language, and the novelistic creation" (1972: 153 My transl.). For the same reasons, Rosa Boldori believes that R puts Cortázar "among the great masters of the novelistic genre" (quoted by Marcelo Alberto Villanueva, 1972: 34 My transl.).

However, a major problem in Cortázar's approach to literature is the terminology he used to define the two different types of readers. As stated before, the "reader-accomplice" is the only one who can achieve the artistic goals of the writer, in so far as he (the attribution of gender is quite precise) becomes a co-author of the text by actively participating when reading. Cortázar contrasts this type of reader with the

"female-reader," who "embodies passivity, reads in order to escape from past and future, is in love with rhetoric, and with traditional literary style" (Laszlo Scholz, 1977: 55 My transl.). The "female-reader" expects ready-made action and dares not become involved in the story. Cortázar later retracted this dichotomy between his two types of readers and asked "pardon of the women of the world for the fact I used such a 'machista' expression" (quoted by Evelyn Picon Garfield, 1975: 108). However, la Maga is the character who likes traditional literary style and behaves like a female-reader in R. Passivity is one of the traditional feminine features that Cortázar attributes to her, as will be seen later.

It is also generally believed that in R Cortázar's concerns for "contemporary man" are best illustrated. Oliveira is an example of the "contemporary man" who is unable to live harmoniously with the external world and find his fellow beings. He is an isolated man caught in Western, rational schemes of thought, solitude and self-alienation. However, Oliveira's situation is not absolutely hopeless; most critics agree that he is searching for something. Evidently, this "something" varies with the perspective of the analysis. Some of these perspectives will be explored below.

A common reading of R is the existentialist reading. Oliveira experiences detachment from everything and everybody around him. He knows that he must learn to be free and give meaning to this freedom. Oliveira is a man who, "rather than being, constantly seeks to be" (R: 418). He seeks "the realization of his existential being through the image of love" (Kathleen Genover, 1973: 172 My transl.).

The link has also been drawn between Cortázar's work and the principles of surrealism, both in terms of his aesthetic conception and some of his characters' features. Oliveira rebels against the established state of beings and searches for "the Absolute," namely, "the point where contradictions are resolved" (Evelyn Picon Garfield, 1975b: 73). The means toward this point is the "spontaneity of imagination and of desire" (Ibid: 76). Love "makes the breach toward the Absolute" (Ibid: 97), with woman playing the role of mediator "between external and internal reality" (Ibid: 101 My transl.).

Horacio Oliveira has also been considered one of Cortázar's "pursuers." Saul Sosnowski defines them as men (pursuers are always men in Cortázar's works) who, rather than having scientific views of reality, have "aesthetic" ones, which prevent them from reducing objects to their pure material aspects. These pursuers attempt to "penetrate the secrets of the Universe" through "poetic knowledge." In so doing, they broaden their understanding of reality (1973: 58). "Poetic knowledge" does not function through concepts or categories, but rather proceeds by "assault and affective entrance" into the object (Ibid: 59). The major pursuers in Cortázar's work are Johnny Carter, Persio, Medrano and Oliveira. The first three are characters in two of Cortázar's short stories published before R. According to Sosnowski, they all have a poetic view of reality and want to penetrate "the mythical level" of it.

Similar in these readings of R is Cortázar's rejection of Western rationality. Oliveira searches for alternative ways of relating to reality. He is seeking the "lost paradise" that "modern man" lost due to excessive "rationality and pragmatism," so K offers a "new

idea of man" that "brings together various levels of human experience" (Ana María Pucciarelli, 1972: 185-193). The various games that R's characters play with language reveal Cortázar's emphasis on "the creative abilities of man" to broaden his conception of reality (Richard F. Allen, 1972: 303).

Oliveira's resistance to rationality and pragmatism is also seen as the search for the "Other." This "Other" can be "the kibbutz of desire, ... la Maga, not knowing, escaping the bourgeois order..." (Sara Castro-Klaren, 1986: 181 My transl.). La Maga is crucial in Oliveira's search. Critics see her as the "symbol" of this search (Graciela de Sola, 1968: 91), as the means toward Oliveira's realization (Genover, op cit.: 170), as the projection of his self (Lidia Arone Amenstoy, 1972: 71), as the "catalyst" of his life (Alfred Mac Adam quoted by Marcelo Alberto Villanueva, op. cit.: 51), as the mediator toward the "Absolute" (Picon Garfield, 1975b: 248), and so on.

Critics also find that la Maga has the characteristics which Oliveira lacks. She is like an uncorrupted, innocent child; she is "an innocent and naive being" (Dellepiane, 1972: 165); she is clumsy, ignorant and absentminded (Brodin, 1975: 175). She represents "the intuitive, the affective, the passion" (Villanueva, 1972: 55), and a "chaotic world" (John G. Copeland, 1972: 143) so she "does not communicate through words" (Idem). She "gives without expecting anything in return" (Fernando Alegría, 1971: 86) and is empty without Oliveira's love (Brodin, 1975: 29).

Picon Garfield compares la Maga with André Breton's Nadja. They are both "a mystery that invites and haunts man," they can "communicate intuitively and effortlessly"

(1975b: 101), they ignore logic and reason (Ibid: 114) and they cannot understand abstract notions (Idem).

These critics do not discuss la Maga's role as object in Oliveira's search. They follow Cortázar's dichotomy of Oliveira as educated and rational and la Maga as ignorant and intuitive. They assume that Oliveira is the central character of the novel and other characters only explain different aspects of him.

4.2.- Purpose of the present study

This section will explore the dichotomy that prevails between Oliveira and la Maga in order to expose the traditionally masculine and feminine characteristics attributed to each of them respectively. Oliveira is the subject-searcher or pursuer and la Maga the object of his search or the means to it (toward his realization, authenticity, the lost paradise, the Absolute, or whatever it might be). As the object or means of Oliveira's search, la Maga is, in Smart's words, the silent mirror that reflects Oliveira's story. However, as in Fuentes' and VL's work, Oliveira is also condemned by his lack of communication with both la Maga and Talita. Rather than real women to communicate with, Oliveira deals with the abstractions of what he thinks a woman should be. His solitude is caused by his inability to think of them differently.

Oliveira, as Cortázar's creation and as one of his "pursuers," highlights Cortázar's idea of woman as well. While Oliveira searches and represents "contemporary man" in his search, la Maga works as the abstraction where he projects his transcendence, so her

silence makes possible Oliveira's voice. This is not exclusive to R: "it is always Oliveira, Juan, Andrés that we hear about. Why not la Maga, Hélène, Ludmilla?" (Martha Paley Francescato, 1978:134). Cortázar as the critic of "contemporary man's" condition is omitting the voice of contemporary women. Like the rest of the Boom writers studied here, he is also telling "son histoire à lui" by silencing "son histoire à elle."

5.- R: La Maga as the means and object of Oliveira's search

5.1.- Analysis of characters

Oliveira is an educated intellectual whose vocation was to write, but never becomes a writer. He does not have a steady occupation while in Paris, so he calls himself "a conscious b.m." Because he is the main narrator of the story, we know that he constantly questions his actions and thoughts, although he never has answers. Babs, one of the members of the "Serpent Club," calls him the "inquirer" and Oliveira calls himself a "self-witness and self-judge, an ironic autobiographer." His behaviour is nonconformist and unusual, and his comments sharp and ironic. However, Oliveira realizes that words are insufficient to communicate. He mistrusts intellect and is aware of his solitude. Concomitantly, Oliveira becomes fascinated by what he thinks la Maga's world is.

Oliveira sees la Maga as "a materialized nebula" that does not have its centre in its head. She is something unreal, illusory, "the figment of imagination, or of a dream" (Ana Hernández del Castillo, 1981: 34). In fact, la Maga does not exist independently from Oliveira. She feels like a painting that Horacio contemplates:

How complicated. You're like a witness. You're the one who goes to the museum and looks at the paintings. I mean the paintings are there and you're in the museum too, near and far away at the same time. I'm a painting. Rocamadour [la Maga's son] is a painting. Etienne [member of the "Serpent's Club"] is a painting, this room is a painting. You think that you are in this room, but you're not. You're looking at the room, you're not in the room. (R:29)

Unlike Oliveira, la Maga is unaware of her actions and behaviour. "She is incapable of keeping things up, she does not have the least sense of distance, time falls apart in her hands, she goes around bumping into everyone" (R: 329). La Maga is also unaware of the role she plays in Oliveira's world view. He thinks that la Maga is his "witness and spy without being aware of it" and is "like the blind people who illuminate and show the way also without realizing they are doing it." Because of the characteristics Oliveira attributes to la Maga, communication between them is impossible. However, Oliveira does not wish to communicate. Rather, he wants to have access to la Maga's world, or more specifically, to possess her world. Oliveira explains his love for la Maga:

I do not love you for you or for me or for the two of us together, I do not love you because my blood tells me to love you, I love you because you are not mine, because you are from the other side, from there where you invite me to jump and I cannot make the jump, because in the deepest moment of possession you are not in me, I cannot reach you, I cannot get beyond your body, your laugh,... I'm tormented by your love because I cannot use it as a bridge because a bridge can't be supported by just one side (R: 434).

Some critics have suggested that sexual intercourse is the only time when Horacio and la Maga find each other. However, it is Oliveira who looks at her and "invents" her as he touches her:

I touch your mouth, I touch the edge of your mouth with my finger, I am drawing it as if for the first time your mouth opened a little, and all I have to do is close my eyes to erase it and start all over again, every time I can make the mouth I want to appear, the mouth which my hand chooses and sketches on your face, and which by some chance that I do not seek to understand coincides exactly with your mouth which smiles beneath the one my hand is sketching on you (R: 42)

Oliveira wants to possess the "materialized nebula" that has no centre and does not think. He sees la Maga as a "bridge" which he cannot cross. He even believes that she asks him for "the knowledge of her that only a man can give to a woman," as well as her own death. Oliveira thinks that la Maga wants to be both possessed and annihilated by him:

One night she sank her teeth into him, bit him in the shoulder until the blood came, because he had fallen to one side, a little forgetful already, and there was a confused and wordless pact. Oliveira felt that la Maga wanted death from him, something in her which was not her awakened self, a dark form demanding annihilation, the slow wound which on its back breaks the stars at night and gives space back to

questions and terrors. Only that time, off centre like a mythical matador for whom killing is returning the bull to the sea and the sea to heavens, he bothered la Maga in a long night which they did not speak much about later. He turned her into Pasiphae, he bent over and used her as if she were a young boy, he knew her and demanded the slavishness of the most abject whore, he magnified her into a constellation, he held her in his arms smelling of blood, he made her drink the semen which ran into her mouth like a challenge to the Logos, he sucked out the shadow from her womb and her rump and raised himself to her face to anoint her with herself in that ultimate work of knowledge which only a man can give to a woman, he wore her out with skin and hair and drool and moans, he drained her completely of her magnificent strength, he threw her against a pillow and sheet and felt her crying with happiness against his face (R: 37-38).

La Maga seems to enjoy this violence and wishes for death. The narrator suggests that this death is symbolized in la Maga's willingness to belong to the "Serpent Club," in order to learn and become educated. However, la Maga and Horacio "could never understand each other because when they were discussing something they would be off on different tracks and different interests" (Idem), so the only possibility left is to kill her during love, "to make her really his and take her to his side" (Idem).

La Maga not only fits into the scheme of Oliveira's sexual violence and appears thankful for it, but she also admits that intellectually she is inferior to Oliveira. She says that she does not know "how to think" and that she does not know "how to express herself," so in the discussions of the "Serpent Club," she remains silent or asks questions that exasperate and embarrass Oliveira. La Maga accepts all that is done to her and

thought of her. Her apparent wisdom is like a natural gift, rather than her own acquisition, and it is something that Oliveira's schemes have attributed to her. La Maga's existence, behaviour and thoughts are only understood within Oliveira's frames of thought.

When Oliveira abandons la Maga, she disappears. Nobody knows where she is or sees her again. It is suggested that she commits suicide by throwing herself into the Seine, although her end is never clarified. However, Oliveira does not need her body to keep her alive, just her image, which is within himself. He can return to Buenos Aires and see la Maga in Talita.

Talita's personality differs from la Maga's. However, Oliveira gradually confuses her with la Maga. Brita Brodin refers to this process as the "transmutation" of both identities. Evidently, Oliveira rules this process. His desire for la Maga rather than of the real Talita leads him to Talita.

The turning point of the triangle of Traveler, Talita and Horacio is significant when seen as the exchange of Talita-object between two men. The bedrooms of the Traveler and Horacio are in buildings that face each other. Horacio and Traveler build a bridge from window to window, and Talita is chosen to take a parcel to Horacio. However, the bridge is not secure and she gets stuck in the middle of it. Traveler and Oliveira are standing by their windows, facing at each other and talking. They forget about Talita and she realizes that "they have built a bridge between them," and that they would not notice if she fell. Talita finally throws the parcel to Horacio and goes back to Traveler. However, Horacio knows the role she is playing between the two men and he tells her:

"There is no reason to hide. It's a fact that in some sort of way when you join us the similarity and the difference [between Oliveira and Traveler] come out at the same time" (R: 264).

Hence, although Talita realizes that Oliveira does not care about her, she is powerless before him. She also works as the bridge that he needs to find himself, via the differentiation from Traveler. In Smart's words, Talita is the silent object that two men exchange to strengthen their identities.

Thus, as opposed to the "transmutation" of identities that occurs between la Maga and Talita, what happens between Oliveira and Traveler is a "straightening" (Brita Brodin, 1975). They both know they are similar, but they also know there are differences between them. Furthermore, Oliveira and Traveler are recognized as doubles by each other, by Talita and by the reader, while Oliveira is the only one who identifies Talita with la Maga. La Maga and Talita are denied their own, independent identities, because Oliveira considers them projections of himself.

This is not exclusive to la Maga and Talita. As noted by Helena Araújo, "the sadism with la Maga will be extended to Pola [Oliveira's lover], will become violence against Hèléne in 62. Modelo para armar, and will be sadism again with Francine in El Libro de Manuel. Needless to say, regarding phallochacy and sexual vanity, Hèléne and Francine's lovers are new versions of Oliveira" (1979: 552 my transl.). Andrés, for example, is also a "pursuer" who rapes Francine to "find" himself. The scene is narrated in first person, and Andrés is simultaneously performer and witness. In the beginning

Francine resists, but ends by enjoying and having an orgasm. As Araújo further argues, Cortázar's message in this scene is straightforward: "...woman is taught to enjoy by being mistreated, forced, humiliated... woman can only know herself sensually through man... punishment is compulsory either as a preamble or as an epilogue to her zeal, her animality, her orgasm" (Idem).

In El Libro de Manuel, Cortázar foresees a "new society" for Manuel, a baby boy. His parents are engaged in illegal activities, since they are struggling against military regimes in South America. Ludmilla, a female character, participates in these activities because she falls in love with Marcos. The division of labour between men and women is untouched in the "revolutionary" group: men are clumsy to feed or take care of Manuel, so women always do it. Women are allowed to stay in the house where the group is hiding because they make coffee and sandwiches. Hence, Cortázar's idea of a new society only speaks of a better future for "new men," but never for new women.

5.2.- Conclusion

Despite how different la Maga and Talita are, they are the same for Oliveira: a "mysterious world," an object to possess, a "bridge," or a means toward his self-identification. Oliveira silences both la Maga and Talita in his attempt to find himself. However, he does not find himself nor does he reach an understanding with la Maga or Talita. Horacio is unable to think of women other than as projections of himself, and so he cannot establish with them a subject-to-subject type of relationship.

That is not exclusive to Oliveira. Cortázar's "pursuers" are alike. Cortázar as the critic of "contemporary man" is omitting the voice of contemporary women, and his project for a "new man" in a new society does not leave any room for new women. He also silences "son histoire à elle" in order to tell "son histoire à lui" within the Father's House.

CHAPTER 4 - WOMEN WRITERS OF THE BOOM PERIOD

The cage was always on the side where she was: she gave a groan that seemed to come from the soles of her feet. Then yet another groan.

I am creating myself. And we walk in complete darkness in search of ourselves. It hurts. But it is the pain of childbirth: something is born. It exists.

Clarice Lispector

Ah, Dolores! The brief time we spent together isn't important. The intensity is what counts, the world we glimpsed, the fear we shared. And I don't mind telling you that my hands are perpetually frozen and that they'd gladly reach out to you for warmth. Let's take things at a time, sister; let's see if we create or are mere witnesses.

Marta Traba

ROSARIO CASTELLANOS (1925-1974)

1.- Biographical Data

Rosario Castellanos was born in Mexico City in 1925. She lived in Comitán, Chiapas - a province in southern Mexico - until she was 16. She got a master's degree in Philosophy in 1950 at the National University of Mexico and then studied Aesthetics in Madrid, Spain. In Mexico she coordinated the National Indigenist Institute of San Cristóbal de las Casas for two years, and worked as an editor of children's books. She taught at the National University of Mexico and directed its Press Agency. During this time, she constantly published articles, essays and literary criticism in various journals and newspapers and was a visiting professor at some U.S. universities. She died electrocuted in 1974 in Tel Aviv, Israel, where she was the ambassadress.

2.- Works, popularity and translations

Castellanos' work covers all literary genres, however she started by writing poetry. She published nine volumes: Trayectoria del polvo (1948), De la vigilia estéril (1950), Presentación en el templo (1951), El rescate del mundo (1952), Poemas 1953-1955 (1957), Al pie de la letra (1959), Lívida Luz (1960), Materia Memorable (1969) and Poesía no eres tú (1972).

Castellanos authored three collections of short stories: Ciudad Real (1960), Los

convidados de Agosto (1964) and Album de Familia (1971). She also wrote two novels, Balún Canán (1957) and Oficio de Tinieblas (1962), and three theatre plays, Tablero de Damas (1950), Salomé y Judith (1959) and El Eterno Femenino (1975). She published numerous essays and articles, some of which are compiled under these titles: Sobre cultura femenina (1950, her master's thesis), Juicios Sumarios (1966), Mujer que sabe Latín (1973), El mar y sus pescaditos (1975) and El uso de la palabra (1975).

Castellanos lacks the international acknowledgement that her male contemporaries have. However, she is one of the most translated Mexican and Latin American women writers. Balún Canán was translated into English, French, German and Hebrew, and Oficio de Tinieblas was translated into French, Polish, Hebrew and Russian. A short part of this novel was translated into English.³ As well, some of her short stories and poems were translated into English, French and Italian and published in literary journals and anthologies.⁴

Castellanos is also a well-known author in the Mexican literary scene. Oficio de Tinieblas was awarded in 1961 the Xavier Villaurrutia prize and the Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz prize in 1962. She received the Carlos Trouyet prize for the best literary work in 1967 and the Elías Sourasky prize from the Mexican President Luis Echeverría. She was buried in the Rotonda de los Hombres Ilustres - Rotunda of Distinguished Men -

³See Latin American Literature Today. Trans. by Anne and Christopher Fremantle. Ed. Anne Fremantle. N.Y.: Mentor, 1977, pp. 72-79

⁴See the bibliography prepared by Maureen Ahern in Homenaje a Rosario Castellanos, Valencia, Ed. Albatros Hispanófila, 1980

(sic) in Mexico City.

3.- Political position and the intellectual's role

Castellanos is the single woman writer included in "the Body of the Boom" in Donoso's classification. Critics have considered her first novel, Balún Canán, a "precursor" of the Boom (Beth Miller, 197 :9). However, Castellanos did not seem to have elaborated on the social function of her literature and the intellectual's role in Latin America.

In 1962 Emmanuel Carballo interviewed both Rosario Castellanos and Carlos Fuentes. Fuentes was asked his opinion about socialism and what it meant for him to be a left-wing writer - a common question to ask Boom writers. In contrast, Castellanos was asked only about her literary career and the structure and themes of her works. The reason for this is not Castellanos' lack of a political position, for, as Carballo himself states, "her prose is the best constructed and ideologically the best oriented" among those of her generation (1986: 519-520 my transl.). Furthermore, Castellanos' popularity is not only due to her literary work, but also to her teaching career and activity in the National Indigenist Institute, where she served as protector of Indians' rights and culture. She also had a remarkable public life that ended at the Mexican Embassy in Israel, where she died accidentally. Despite an active public life and a committed literary work, Castellanos did not elaborate on the intellectual's role the way other Boom writers did, nor was she asked to do so by literary critics.

Castellanos was one of the first women writers in Mexico to write about foreign women writers and to speak about Mexican women's condition. In Sobre cultura femenina Castellanos explores the factors that have prevented women from participating in the creation of cultural products. She argues that a "feminine culture" does not exist because women are socialized to look for transcendence in motherhood rather than in intellectual occupations. Women who decide to write must get rid of "conventional images of femininity" and construct their own images of themselves, based on their own experiences. These women must "invent themselves" (Castellanos quoted by Aurora Ocampo, 1985: 72-85). In Mujer que sabe Latín Castellanos refers to female authors who have looked for transcendence in a traditionally masculine occupation. She writes about María Luisa Bombal, Ivy Compton-Burnett, Isak Dinesen, Betty Friedman, Natalie Ginzburg, Lillian Hellman, Violette Leduc, Doris Lessing, Clarice Lispector, Mary McCarthy, Silvina Ocampo, Flannery O'Connor, Simone Weil, Eudora Welty and others. Castellanos has also written essays about Simone de Beauvoir and Virginia Woolf. According to Beth Miller, Mujer que sabe Latín is "the first feminist book written by a known Mexican women writer" (1978: 118 My transl.).

Similarly, a major concern in Castellanos' literary work is woman's social condition in Mexican society. The reception of the feminist elements in Castellanos' work by the Mexican literary establishment will be discussed in section 4.1.

4.- Focus of the present study

This study will analyze Balún Canán (henceforth to be abbreviated BC) for several reasons. The novel was published between 1957 and 1967 and has been considered a "precursor" of the Boom. Within the tradition of Mexican literature, BC has been placed among the key works which explored "Mexicanity."⁵ Also, BC contains Castellanos' two major themes, the oppression of Indians and women, and hence is a representative piece of her work.

BC is the story of the collapse of the Argüello family and its last heir, César Argüello. He owns a hacienda in Comitán, southern Mexico. The novel compares the world of the ladinos - the white people of the region - with the Indians, a dominated group that does not speak Spanish, does not own the land of the hacienda where they work, and has different habits and traditions. The two groups appear to be irreconcilable. Power relations between the ladinos and the Indians as well as within Argüello's family are exposed in the book.

BC is almost completely narrated by a seven-year-old girl, Argüello's daughter, and by a third-person omniscient narrator. There is a clear division between the two voices. The girl's voice narrates mostly in present time, whereas the omniscient speaker narrates in past tense, thus giving a sense of distance. According to Fabienne Bradu, both voices

⁵According to Nahum Megged, the books published during these years which were concerned with searching for "Mexican essence" are El laberinto de la Soledad, Fenomenología del Relajo, Corona de Luz, Hasta no verte Jesús mío, and BC. (See Diálogo con la mujer más honrada, in Rosario Castellanos, el verso...p. 10)

are autobiographical. Castellanos uses a "neutral" third-person narration to say what she dares not say in first person (1987: 92).

4.1.- Rosario Castellanos and the Mexican cultural milieu

Castellanos' work has been mostly placed within the tradition of literatura indigenista, namely literature that portrays the oppression and poverty in which the Indian population of Mexico lives. However, Castellanos' work also refers to women's oppression, and this has often been overlooked by literary critics. Oded Sverdlik, for example, states that Castellanos' literature does not have a space "reserved just for women." In her literature she does not vindicate "any feminist movement, but rather the natural choice to create from the feminine, with no self-limitations" (1984: 156 My transl.). It has often been suggested that Castellanos' themes - Indians' oppression and women's oppression - are "mixed up," since neither has more relevance than the other. González Solano, for example, states that in Castellanos' work both "her Indians and her defense of women overlap. No one can say that one issue is more important than the other" (1984: 81 my transl.).

For Carlos Pellicer, Castellanos is an "example of the new Mexican woman" due to her "love for the exploited human being," her "progressive ideas," her kindness, her moral integrity, and her work at the university and at the Mexican Embassy in Israel (1984: 152). No references are made to Castellanos' concerns for women's social oppression, which are clearly expressed in her writings, nor to her attitudes as a woman

in her private life or professional career.

Critics also stress that Castellanos never lost her feminine qualities. She was tender and graceful; her "shyness" was "feminine" (Absalón Castellanos, 1984: 36) and her feelings were "diffuse and delicate," because they came from the very depth of the "feminine soul" (Salvador Elizondo, 1984: 46). Castellanos did not forget her feminine duties. She was a woman "devoted not only to motherhood, but also to art" (Ibid: 47).

In 1971 Rosario Castellanos' literature was considered "feminist" for the first time, and she was seen as a woman writer whose work had many references to women's oppression in Mexico.⁶ However, critics often attempt to measure her "feminism" and to make it clear that she was not too radical on this issue. González Solano states that Castellanos did not want to become a "feminist leader with masculine characteristics" (Ibid :84 My transl.). Her feminism was not "prudish," since "she was aware of what could be done and of what could not be done" (Ibid: 75 my transl.). González Solano considers Virginia Woolf a "great woman writer," yet someone who had many problems in her private life. Woolf's suicide made it evident that "everything was wrong with her" (Ibid: 85 My transl.). Rosario Castellanos, in contrast, was an authentic woman whose death was accidental, whose feminism was never exaggerated, who did not pretend to be an "intellectual," but rather wanted to show her "reality" and her "essence" (Ibid:

⁶According to Juan Ventura Sandoval, Luis Adolfo Domínguez was the first critic who considered Castellanos' literature "feminist," in "La mujer en la obra de Rosario Castellanos," Revista de la Universidad de México, vol XXV #633, published in February 1971 (Juan Ventura Sandoval, 1987: 18)

74-87).

As can be seen, the feminist elements in Castellanos' work and personal life are constantly undermined by the Mexican literary establishment. She is admitted within Mexican literary tradition simply as a writer, not as a woman writer. When she is seen as a woman writer, critics find in her traditionally feminine qualities, rather than openly expressed feminist ideas.

Some studies focusing on Castellanos' female characters started to appear in the late 1970s and early 1980s.⁷ These studies have argued that Castellanos' work problematizes the societal restrictions which prevent women from directing the course of their lives. The destinies of Castellanos' female characters are determined by the roles that women are socially assigned. They must be wives and mothers and go through the cycle of niña- señorita- señora- abuela,⁸ so that women who are unworthy of marriage are socially condemned. Power relations between sexes, both within the family structure and between different ethnic groups, are exposed in Castellanos' work.

Other studies have focused on Castellanos as a woman writer.⁹ Because

⁷See, for example, Ventura Sandoval, Juan. Ficción y Realidad. Las mujeres en la narrativa de Rosario Castellanos. Mexico, Universidad Autónoma de Tlaxcala, 1987, or Fiscal, María Rosa. La imagen de la mujer en la obra de Rosario Castellanos, Mexico, UNAM, 1980.

⁸girl-Miss-Mrs-grandmother. According to Regina Harrison Macdonald, "in becoming a married woman, accepting the metamorphosis of niña-señorita-señora-abuela, woman fulfills a vital purpose within Mexican society," this purpose being the reproduction of the patriarchal family (See "Rosario Castellanos: on language," in Homenaje a Rosario Castellanos, op.cit., p. 56).

⁹See Franco, María Estela. Rosario Castellanos: semblanza psicoanalítica: otro modo de ser humano y libre. Mexico, Plaza y Janés, 1985; Schwartz, Perla, Rosario Castellanos: mujer que

Castellanos' work is eminently autobiographical, critics have explored the relationship between her life and her fictional characters. These studies have shown that fiction is Castellanos' means towards consciousness of herself and of her social reality, or, in Castellanos' words, her way of "finding her place in the world" (Castellanos quoted by Aurora Ocampo, *op.cit.*: 79).

4.2.- Purpose of the present study

The purpose of this section is to see Castellanos as a woman writer, rather than a sexless writer. She will be seen as the woman whose supposed role was to be the silent object that sustains the Father's House. Her attempt to break the silence through her writings will be followed in BC. Similarities between some events in the novel and in Castellanos' life will be pointed out.

5.- BC: "the girl" or the silent object in the Father's House

5.1.- Analysis of characters

César Argüello represents authority, both within his family and for the Indians who work in his hacienda. The Indians respect him and accept the tradition of his authority.

supo latín Mexico, Katún, 1984; Robles, Marta. La sombra fugitiva, Mexico, UNAM, 1986; Bradu, Fabienne. Señas particulares: escritora, Mexico, FCE, 1987, and the bibliography prepared by Mauren Ahren, *op.cit.*

As a patrón, Argüello can have sexual intercourse with any of the Indian women of his hacienda. He believes that this gives the Indian women social prestige, because these women "had the virtue that the patrón had liked them" (BC:80).

César Argüello is depicted as a balanced and ironic man, used to giving orders and being obeyed. The third person narrator describes him as clever, hard working, strict, inflexible, despotic, violent and strong. He does not know how to speak with people whom he considers inferior. Any sentence coming from him seems an order or a reprimand, and his jokes are like taunts (BC:143). His voice is central in the narration of the novel, since he sounds very confident, his ideas expressed through long monologues delivered in a loud voice.

Argüello also rules within his family. His wife, Zoraida, marries him to improve her social position and accepts her husband's "illegitimate" women and children because she is the legal wife "and that is the only thing which counts" (BC:81). Zoraida reproduces the Father's Law when she assumes the role of reproducing mother and states that she wants many children. She knows that, were it not for the two she has by him, César would have already left her. She believes that she is saved because one of them is a boy (BC:92).

The patriarchal structure of the Argüello family is exposed through the different ways the girl and the boy are raised. César and Zoraida give Mario continuous attention, whereas "the girl" is rejected by her mother because she is "too small" (BC:27). César wants his son to become a man and teaches him manly skills, such as riding a horse.

When Mario wants something, he just asks for it. Mario is the actor in the children's games, and he is proud of his success (BC:22-23). "The girl," in contrast, is just the spectator of what Mario does, and when she asks for something, it is often denied to her. Mario and "the girl" also have different expectations of life: Mario wants to become a hunter, whereas "the girl" wants to have a house for feeding poor people (BC:25). The most evident difference between the boy and the girl is that the boy has a name, Mario, whereas the girl is always called "the girl."

"The girl" in BC is the woman-object in the Father's House. The social division between the sexes is established by the Father's Law, which privileges the son and not the daughter, because the son will reproduce the Father's name. Mario is exposed to the external world and is proud of himself, whereas "the girl's" place in the Father's House is just that of the silent object whose identity is sacrificed.

"The girl" fears her father's authority when she says that she cannot see beyond her father's knees. She imagines that he is constantly growing, "like a tree," and that a tiger is crouched in one of its branches (BC:9). She also realizes that her father's right to give orders is because "he is the one who owns" (BC:16).

However, in "the girl's" voice a reaction to male authority can be heard. The book starts with "the girl's" voice saying: "I am not a grain of anise. I am a girl and I am seven years old" (BC:9). Her narration is nothing but her attempt to establish her own identity, which is in danger because of her brother. She realizes that Mario is favoured by her parents, and both envies him and feels rage against him. "The girl" sees her

brother as a rival, so she looks at him "from top to bottom" (Idem) and proudly teaches him things that he does not know. However, her only advantage over him is that she is older than he is.

By the end of the novel, both kids steal the key for the hacienda's oratory, and Mario gets sick. "The girl" thinks that Mario is sick because they stole the key, and that if she gives the key back he will be cured. However, she also knows that if she returns it, she and not Mario will be punished. She has the choice to decide for her own or Mario's survival and finally decides for her own and keeps the key. In these last pages of the novel, "the girl's" narration is continuous. Her brother dies, her father is not present, and her mother emotionally collapses. In describing all these events, "the girl" ends up feeling guilty. She leaves the key beside Mario's grave and prays for him because "she already knows what loneliness is," and does not want him to go through it (BC:289). When she gets home, she writes Mario's name everywhere, "on the bricks of the yard," on the walls, on her notebooks, because "he is far," and she would like him to forgive her (BC:291). Hence, she learns Mario's name rather than her own, and in so doing she assumes "son histoire à lui" rather than "son histoire à elle."

There is also rebelliousness against the Father's Law in other female characters of BC. Matilde is César's niece, a single woman who cannot expect to marry because of her age. Matilde is condemned by the Father's Law, since she is not able to reproduce the Father's name, which is the role assigned to her. She becomes involved with Ernesto, an illegitimate son of César Argüello's brother. Ernesto has been born "marked" because

he cannot use his Father's name, nor can he enjoy the privileges of the Father's House, so he is also socially condemned.

After Ernesto and Matilde have sexual intercourse, Matilde feels guilty and thinks she will lose Ernesto's respect. Indeed, Ernesto thinks she was too easy and loses all respect for her. What bothers him more is that Matilde gets pregnant and has an abortion, without consulting him. She appears to be self-determined when she decides that she does not want to give birth to a child outside of the Father's House, and therefore harmless. However, the description of Matilde's decision to have an abortion and her self-defense against the image of her which Ernesto has invented is inserted in parentheses, as opposed to Ernesto's long speeches when he gets drunk. Matilde looks at herself in the mirror and feels ashamed of herself. Just like the girl, Matilde also takes one step in her attempt to recognize herself when she decides to have an abortion. Yet, just like the girl, she also fails to do so. The girl does not manage to discover her name, and Matilde despises her image in the mirror.

Rosario Castellanos' life as a child is similar to the girl's in BC. She spent her childhood in a hacienda in Comitán and her father's name was César. She also had a brother, whose name was Mario Benjamin, who was one year younger than she was, and who died from appendicitis at a young age, precisely when Castellanos was eight years old. After Mario Benjamin's death, Castellanos was "kicked out forever from the visual space of her parents," who were "blind from pain and nostalgia" (Castellanos quoted by Maria Estela Franco, 1984:68 · transl.).

According to Franco, Castellanos imposed on herself some "masculine values" in order to fulfill the expectations that her parents had of Mario Benjamin. Because Castellanos' parents preferred Mario Benjamin to Rosario, she tried to compensate for his death, so she assumed some of the values of "the ideal I" transmitted to Mario Benjamin, such as vivacity, intelligence and power (Ibid:82). She regulated her life according to what she thought Mario Benjamin would do if he were alive; she studied hard, because her parents wanted Mario Benjamin to study hard (Castellanos quoted by Franco, Ibid: 87). Concomitantly, Castellanos saw her brother as a rival, and she constantly tried to defeat his image through her writing (Ibid:71). Castellanos used fiction as a means toward self-affirmation and as a way of struggling against her parents' neglect of her. In her own words, she became a writer in order to "get rid of the ghosts" that surrounded her. Like "the girl" in BC, Castellanos had to constantly write herself, because she felt that her words "melted in the air as soon as they were pronounced" (Castellanos quoted by Franco, Ibid:89 my transl.). Written words were her best means of relating to the world, since she considered poetry her own way "of understanding things and putting them in order" (Castellanos quoted by Aurora Ocampo, op.cit.: 80 my transl).

5.2.- Conclusion

Rosario Castellanos is the rebellious daughter who attempts to break the silence to which she was condemned in the Father's House. She gives words to her female

characters in her first novel, yet these words remain within brackets or fail to achieve the girl's task of telling her own story, a different story from that of her brother.

However, Castellanos' search for herself did not stop in her first novel. According to Fabienne Bradu, in BC Castellanos started to demand from her parents the right to existence, and her attempts at self-affirmation constantly re-emerged throughout her work. The sources of Castellanos' work were mostly autobiographical, so she both affirmed herself and disguised her own story through fiction. Hence, "the real Rosario Castellanos is and will remain in her work, simultaneously ripped apart and reunited in her contradictions and her huge desire to be" (1987: 100).

ELENA GARRO (1917-)**1.- Biographical Data**

Elena Garro was born in Mexico between 1917 and 1922. The exact date and place of her birth are uncertain. Unlike the Boom writers, there are few biographical data about her. Most critics agree that she was born in Puebla, yet it has also been suggested that she comes from the province of Guerrero. Garro states that she spent her childhood in a little town in Guerrero, southwest Mexico. Her father was a Spanish educated man who did not send his children to school but rather tutored them at home. Through her father, Garro learned French and Latin and read key works of world literature. She later attended the National University of Mexico, where she met Octavio Paz. She worked as a choreographer for the University Theatre when she was 17. In 1937 she married Octavio Paz and they both traveled to Spain where they lived during the Spanish civil war. They also lived in France, the Far East and the United States until they divorced. Elena Garro now lives in Spain.

2.- Works, popularity and translations

Garro states that she would have liked to be "a dancer or a general" rather than a

writer, and makes clear that her vocation was to the theatre (Letter to Emmanuel Carballo, 1986: 504). Consequently, she has mostly written theatre plays. Her first work, Un hogar sólido, was published in 1958 and consists of six short plays. In 1959 three more plays came out. They are La mudanza, La señora en su balcón and El árbol. In 1964 she published for the first time a three-act play, La dama boba, and in 1966 another one-act play appeared, Los perros. Her last play, Felipe Angeles, was published in 1967, although she finished writing it in 1956 and correcting it in 1961. These works were published in journals of limited circulation, usually belonging to universities or cultural centres such as the University of Veracruz or the INBA - National Institute for Fine Arts.¹⁰

Garro authored several collections of short stories: La semana de colores (1963), Andamos huyendo Lola (1979) and La casa junto al río (1983). Some of Garro's short stories have been published separately in various journals. She has also written three novels: Recuerdos del porvenir (1963), Testimonios sobre Mariana (1981) and Reencuentro de personajes (1983). A short fragment of Testimonio de Mariana was previously published in 1967. In addition, Garro has produced literary criticism and

¹⁰There is also disagreement concerning the exact date of publication of Garro's works. For the purpose of this paper the information provided by Antonieta Eva Verwey in Mito y palabra poética en Elena Garro, edited by the University of Querétaro, Mexico, is being used. However, Verwey does not provide the date of publication of Felipe Angeles, which in Beth Biller & Alfonso González's 26 autoras del México actual appears as published in 1967, whereas in other studies the date provided for the first edition is 1979. The information regarding the type of editions of Garro's plays was taken from Beth Miller and Alfonso González's 26 autoras del México actual, Mexico, Costa-Amic ed., 1978.

scripts for cinema.

Like the other women writers presented in this thesis, Garro lacks the international acknowledgement that her male contemporaries have received. Even within her own country, Garro has not been paid the attention that some writers like Rosario Castellanos have received.¹¹

Verwey argues that the lack of interest in Garro's work is partly due to the unavailability of her books. Garro's Recuerdos del Porvenir, for example, was written in 1953 and published 10 years later only as a result of Octavio Paz's intervention, because as Garro states, "nobody wanted it" (Ibid: 505). The novel was out of print for about 15 years, and it was not reedited until 1979. Except for the work of two critics,¹² before 1982 Garro's work had not been studied as a combination of different genres in which a particular world view can be discerned. The few articles and book reviews that randomly appeared in journals during the 1970s focused mainly on Garro's theatre plays.

Garro's work has been translated into no more than four languages - English, French, Swedish and German -, and never completely. Recuerdos del Porvenir was translated into English as Recollections of Things to Come and published in 1969. Some of Garro's short stories and plays have recently been translated into English and

¹¹However, Castellanos' work was mostly acknowledged after her death. According to Aurora Ocampo, 61% of the studies on Rosario Castellanos appeared after her death (Quoted by Fabienne Bradu, in Señas particulares: escritora, Mexico City, 1987).

¹²Verwey mentions Esther Selligson and Emmanuel Carballo as the two single critics who have had a global approach to Garro's work before 1982.

published in anthologies of contemporary Latin American women writers.

3.- Political position and the intellectual's role

The Boom writers and Garro are significantly different in their approach to literature. Garro's reasons for writing are not the renewal of language or the innovation of literary forms. She states that she writes just to "amuse" the reader (Ibid: 515) and that if she were rich, she would not waste her time writing "stupid things" but rather, she would read her favorite authors, whom nobody reads any more. Garro goes so far as to say that it is a shame she is not Corín Tellado (Ibid: 517), a woman writer of romantic novels. Serious writers denigrate these novels, yet they sell much better than "real" literature. Garro refers to her own works as plays which nobody is interested in and which have not made any major contribution to national culture (Ibid: 505). She adds that she kept Recuerdos del Porvenir in a trunk for seven years and even tried to burn it; her daughter and nephew prevented the manuscript from burning (Ibid: 504). When asked about the novel's literary intentions, she replied that she just wanted to relate some childhood memories. Thus, unlike the Boom writers, Garro did not elaborate on the role of the writer as related to his or her social reality. Moreover, she was cynical about the value of literary production.

Garro also rejected the left-wing political position that was a common feature of the Boom during the 1960s. In an interview in 1965, when most Latin American intellectuals were faithful to the Cuban Revolution, Garro denied being pro-Castro.

Unlike Rosario Castellanos, Garro was not a feminist and even declared herself "anti-feminist." Garro also retained her Catholic religion, which was unusual among intellectuals. Her only concern in political terms was to legitimate the principles of the Mexican constitution, among them agrarian land reforms (Verwey, 1982: 9). Also in ironic tones, she stated that "unfortunately, she was nobody's, neither a red nor a black fascism's victim," and that she is "grateful to all political regimes, including of course the PRI" (Institutional Revolutionary Party) (Letter to E. Carballo, 1986: 515 my transl.). Due to these public declarations, Garro became a controversial and unpopular figure in Mexican cultural life.

4.- Focus of the present study

This study will analyze Recuerdos del Porvenir (henceforth to be abbreviated RP) for several reasons. First, RP was published between 1957 and 1967. Second, RP is an important piece of work both in the Mexican and Latin American literary context. In Mexico, it was awarded the Xavier Villaurrutia prize and was considered one of the key novels of the Mexican Revolution.¹³ Within the context of Latin American literature, RP has been described as one of the first Latin American novels to use "magical realism." As noted by Picon Garfield,

¹³This kind of novel was written by people who experienced the revolution and therefore could critically portray the new Mexico that resulted from it. Among these writers are Mariano Azuela, Martín Luis Guzmán, Agustín Yáñez, Juan Rulfo and Carlos Fuentes.

in 1963, before the term "magical realism" was popular in Spanish America and used to describe novels like One Hundred Years of Solitude (1967) by García Márquez, Garro's Recollections of Things to Come had already infused fiction with the magical transformations of everyday existence and the mythical dimension of indigenous legends (1988: 69).

In fact, García Márquez states that RP influenced his writing of One Hundred Years of Solitude. Thirdly, RP can be considered Garro's most representative work in the sense that the major issues of her literary conception - her view of the Mexican Revolution and her dissolving of the boundaries that separate reality from fantasy - are key elements of this novel.

RP is the story of Isabel Moncada and her family, who live in a small town called Ixtepec during the post-revolutionary years in Mexico. Peasants and upper-class families live under the military control of General Francisco Rosas and his Estado Mayor, the officers who live with their mistresses in the hotel of the town. The two groups of people - the town and the soldiers - are irreconcilable and do not get involved with each other. The town people mystify Francisco Rosas' mistress, Julia, blaming her for all the atrocities committed by the general, whom they believe is made violent when she does not return his love. One day, a foreigner, Felipe Hurtado, arrives in Ixtepec and stays for no apparent reason. The people think that he has come for Julia, so they fear that something important will happen. In fact, when Francisco Rosas looks for Felipe Hurtado to kill him, both Julia and Felipe mysteriously escape. In the second part of the novel,

Ixtepec unites to resist the religious persecution undertaken by the government and helps the father of the town and his sacristan escape from the military. However, the plan fails and the father and the sacristan, as well as other people involved in the plan, are caught and some of them executed, among them one of Isabel's brothers. Others are judged and condemned to death, among them Nicolás, Isabel's older brother. Isabel becomes Rosas' lover and is seen as a traitor by the town. However, Isabel asks Rosas to spare Nicolás. Rosas orders his assistants to substitute another man in the execution but Nicolás does not allow this and gets himself shot. Isabel listens to the shooting and believes that Rosas has not kept his word. She runs to a hill outside of town and disappears, apparently transformed into a stone. This stone in turn symbolizes the misfortune of the town of Ixtepec.

The novel is narrated by the town of Ixtepec itself. The narration shifts from first person singular to first person plural and to omniscient third person singular and plural. This allows Garro to present the events that occur in the novel as a collective memory and to clearly draw the line separating the town from foreign elements, namely the group of soldiers.

4.1.- Previous readings of Garro's literary work

Before the work done by Verwey (who is not Mexican but Dutch), RP had not been studied in depth, nor had it been Garro's literary world as a whole. It wasn't until the early 1980s that interest in Garro's work re-emerged, due to the re-editing of RP and

the appearance of Andamos huyendo Lola. Needless to say, analyses of both Garro's RP and her literary corpus as produced specifically by a woman writer also started to randomly appear in the mid-1980s.

Garro has been considered to be part of the group of Mexican artists who devoted themselves to the exploration of Mexican history and of what has been termed "Mexicanity." This kind of analysis usually points out Garro's view of Mexican history and argues that Garro effectively criticizes the structures of power that resulted from the Mexican Revolution.

Studies of RP have mainly focused on both the novel's theme and structure. Verwey's work, for example, attempts to place RP within the context of contemporary Latin American narrative by analyzing the novel's language, structure and use of myth. From this vantage point, it has been pointed out that RP's conception of time as circular rather than chronological is linked to the Aztec culture. Garro's work, then, recovers Indian world views, traditions and myths.

As stated before, RP has been considered a "magical realist" novel, in that some of the events that occur in the novel can not normally occur in "real" life, yet they are narrated as if they were part of it. Nobody in the novel seems to be surprised when these magical events happen. However, an analysis of the two major female characters of the novel within the context of these events has not been conducted.

Critics of both Garro's short stories and her plays stress the coexistence in her work of a fantastic world together with the "real" one, where the boundaries that separate

reality from fantasy are abolished. Hence, Robert K. Anderson puts Garro's short stories in the tradition of "magical realism," where "the child, the Indian, the neurotic character and the magical being reveal to us perspectives and ideas totally incongruous with those that we experience in everyday life" (1982: 117 my transl.). Garro's literary world leads us to a "subtle yet deep questioning" of our everyday reality (Ibid: 120 My transl.). Similarly, Garro's characters in her dramatic work are seen as "oscillating between reality and illusion," where the illusory world represents an evasion from the overwhelming external reality in which human beings have to live (Frank Dauster, 1964: 89 My transl.). However, the fact that female characters are the protagonists who "evade" reality has not caught the attention of Garro's critics until recently.¹⁴

4.2.- Purpose of the present study

This study will analyze the two major female characters of RP within the context of magical realism. I will argue that Garro's magical realism can be distinguished by the importance of her female characters in the outcome of the story. The mysterious woman

¹⁴See Robles, Marta, La sombra fugitiva Vol. II, Mexico, UNAM, 1986; Bradu, Fabienne, Señas particulares: escritora, Mexico, FCE, 1987; Méndez Rodenas, Adriana, "Tiempo femenino, tiempo ficticio: Los Recuerdos del Porvenir, de Elena Garro," Revista Iberoamericana 132-133, jul-dec. 1985; Ostergaard, Ane-Grethe, "El realismo de los signos escénicos en el teatro de Elena Garro," Latin American Theatre Review, Vol 16-1, Fall 1982; Mora, Gabriela, "Los perros y La mudanza de Elena Garro: designio social y virtualidad feminista," Latin American Theatre Review, Vol 8-2, Spring 1975; Messinger Cypess, Sandra, "Visual and Verbal Distances in the Mexican Theatre: the Plays of Elena Garro," in Women as Myth and Metaphor in Latin American Literature, Columbia, Univ. of Missouri Press, 1985; Franco, Jean, Plotting Women. Gender and representation in Mexico, N.Y., Columbia University Press, 1989.

whose interior world is inaccessible to men and who is therefore protected from external reality as exemplified by Julia will be presented as a recurrent female character in Garro's work. In Julia and in Garro's later female characters, the distinctive feature is the constant escaping, through different means, from a reality that does not allow female identity to be achieved. However, Julia is contrasted with Isabel, a woman who belongs to the real world and is so vulnerable to it that her actions gradually lead to her own destruction. RP will be considered as the symbolic picture of a social reality that prevents women from mastering their own destinies.

5.- RP: symbolic representation of women's oppression

5.1.- Analysis of characters

The analysis of characters will focus on the two different groups of women in the novel, with Isabel and Julia as their representatives. One group is composed of women of the town who are "family women" - mothers, widows, daughters or sisters. In the other group are women who live in a hotel and who have left their families to become the military officers' mistresses. These two types of women only meet in the serenatas, in the central square of the town. However, they never speak to but only look at each other. Consequently, the women of the town imagine their own stories about what happens in the mysterious hotel, and the women in the hotel sense the rejection of the towns people and react proudly to it.

In between the two groups is the military state, and hence the soldiers draw the

symbolic line that distinguishes the two groups. The soldiers are portrayed as strong in public but weak and complacent with their mistresses. This group of soldiers is commanded by Francisco Rosas, a man who is heartless and violent yet who suffers from Julia's indifference. Rosas embodies machismo. He is tough in his public and private life, and believes that control over the town and over women is achieved through force. He is also the principal male character of the novel, since he gets involved with Julia and Isabel and fails to communicate with either of them.

Since Julia and Isabel represent two different groups of women, they possess opposite features. They are leading characters in the novel, since the major events occur because of their initiative. This is not exclusive to Julia and Isabel. The group of mistresses at one point decide to leave the town and their "protectors," and the group of the town women and the prostitutes participate in the plan to help the father and his sacristan escape. The initiatives taken to abolish the line separating the town and the people in the hotel come from female characters.

Julia's beauty haunts men. She exudes a mythical aura that makes her seem ethereal and unattainable. Julia is related to luminosity, and her vital attributes enable her to present herself as impenetrable to Francisco Rosas and to escape the penumbra of the town. Julia "lives in a world of her own, constructed upon her memories of other places and other men" (Harry Enrique Rosser, 1978: 289). She is indifferent to everything around her, including the people of the town and Francisco Rosas himself. Julia does not react to his love, nor to his rage.

Isabel, in contrast, is extremely vulnerable to her social reality. She has pleasant memories of her childhood, which she sees as a lost paradise in which she was equal to her two brothers. As she grows up she suffers from the differences between her and her brothers. She realizes that her only choice is marriage while her brothers can leave home in order to seek work.

As opposite characters, Julia and Isabel are opposed symbolically. Robert K. Anderson represents Julia as a symbol of hope and dynamism, which is portrayed through her relationship with Felipe Hurtado. Julia and Felipe can reach each other because of their energy and capacity for love, while Isabel and the rest of the town are "absorbed in themselves" and are trapped in their own fears. Rather than energy and love, Isabel represents "inertia and solitude" (op. cit.: 219-220).

Similarly, Verwey sees in Julia the image of love and luminosity and in Isabel the image of hardness and opacity. Verwey also distinguishes between a fluent and a non-fluent time, with Julia and Felipe Hurtado's escape from the town as a moment of energy and Isabel's turning into a stone as the symbol of a timeless condemnation of the whole town.

Thus, Julia can find self-realization through love by protecting herself from the external reality and building within herself a private world, whereas Isabel becomes a victim of the same external world. Julia can finally rule her own destiny, whereas Isabel's fate is decided by the events which lead her to an impasse, and indirectly by the people of the town. However, Julia's realization through love happens only in ideal

terms, that is to say, outside the reality of the town and its societal restrictions. She and Felipe Hurtado must mysteriously disappear to avoid being killed by Rosas. Only by using magical realism can Garro portray a love relationship where man and woman are equal, and Julia and Felipe's escape can only be seen as a mystery which remains unexplained. In contrast, Isabel's attempts to relate to real men in the real world lead her to her own destruction.

The dichotomy between Julia and Isabel is the dichotomy between a type of ideal love where women equally participate with men and the type of love where women can only be either wives or mistresses, which are Isabel's two choices in the real world. Isabel is caught between these two choices because of her status as object within the Father's House, which she cannot escape. Garro needs the character of Julia to achieve what Isabel cannot achieve. Julia as the mysterious, unattainable and outside woman is the woman-subject who rules her own destiny. There is no space for this in Isabel's social reality.

However, the different groups of women attempt to overcome the male definition of women as wives or mistresses, although they do not succeed. The group of mistresses are unable to leave the town, and the plan which brings wives and prostitutes temporarily together fails. The town remains motionless and loses control over its destiny. As Garro herself states, nobody is saved in the novel. Moreover, since the narrative voice tells of a condition not yet attained, "memories of the future," as the title of the novel indicates, there is little hope for change in the social reality which oppresses women by limiting

their choices to those of wives, prostitutes or mistresses.

Recognition of a social reality that denies the achievement of a female identity can be found in Garro's novel. Isabel is destroyed for her rebelliousness and is seen as a traitor when she decides not to be an object within the Father's House. Only through magical means can Julia become a free subject. Garro's female characters are "harmless victims" who never succeed in overcoming "either through reason or cunning" the obstacles of their environments. However, they do make some "attempts at transformation, rebelliousness, hatred toward all that appears submissive or resigned, repudiation of masculine authority and the unfruitful search for idealized love" (Martha Robles, 1986: 138 my transl.).

In some of her plays and short stories, Garro creates positive feminine images. Her female characters search for an extended reality and in so doing they undermine the patriarchal system of signification. According to Sandra Messinger Cypess, Garro's female characters, although situated in an inferior social position, acquire an ascendant role when they invert the communicative system. They break physically and existentially with their male partners as well as with their unidimensional view of the world. "Garro affirms the supremacy, not of one gender over another, but of a sign system that favours multiplicity over uniformity, freedom of expression over conformity" (1985: 57).

Women in Garro's work constantly escape from reality either to an interior world, through fantasies, by being magical, ethereal and unattainable, by climbing up the trees (la Señora Blanquita, a female character in a short story) or by constructing pillars

around them (Doña Blanca, a female character in a play). These women seem to be protecting an identity that the real world prevents them from achieving. Garro's most recurrent female character is one who fights against all kinds of external forces to not disappear. Julia succeeds only in ideal terms and through magical means. Garro's later female characters, however, do not succeed in any terms. They are condemned to hallucinatory, perpetual escapes, in which not even what they are escaping from can be identified. That is the case of the mother and daughter in Andamos huyendo Lola and of Mariana in Testimonios de Mariana. In Fabienne Bradu's words, Julia's "active and successful rebelliousness becomes a passive and irremediable condemnation to persecution" (1987: 19 My transl.).

5.2.- Conclusion

The recurrent presence of female characters as protagonists, as well as their common feature of rebelliousness and of endless escape from reality through various means, reveals Garro's vision of a female identity that is constantly threatened. Her uneasiness in assuming for herself what was expected from a writer in the Mexican intellectual milieu of the 1960s also speaks of her own search for identity and of her rebelliousness against the literary establishment. As stated by Bradu, there is a close relationship between Garro's novels and her personal life: "in any of her novels Garro has written her most real autobiography" (ibid: 28 my transl.). Her works are testimonies not of Mariana,

as in one of the titles of her novels, but of a woman writer who is in constant search of herself in her writings. Garro is also the rebellious daughter who refuses the role of silent object assigned to her by the Father's Law, and who, with difficulty, seeks her own independent identity.

MARTA LYNCH (1925-1985)

1.- Biographical Data

Marta Lynch was born in Buenos Aires between 1925 and 1930 (biographical data varies). In 1958 she graduated in literature from the University of Buenos Aires and left Argentina. She traveled for several years in the American continent, Europe, Africa, the Far East and the Pacific Islands. She lectured at various universities and institutions and attended numerous literary congresses. The rest of her life Marta Lynch lived in Buenos Aires, but she traveled extensively during this time. In 1985 she shot herself.

2.- Works, popularity and translations

Lynch considered herself an "innate novelist," however she wrote both novels and short stories. Her first novel, La alfombra roja, was published in 1962. Then came Al vencedor (1965), La Señora Ordóñez (1967), El cruce del río (1972), Un árbol lleno de manzanas (1978), La penúltima versión de la Colorada Villanueva (1978) and Informe bajo llave (1983).

In addition, Marta Lynch wrote six collections of short stories: Los cuentos tristes (1966), Cuentos de colores (1970), Los dedos de la mano (1976), Los años de fuego

(1980), Toda la función (1982) and No te duermas, no me dejes (1985). Cuentos de colores was awarded the Primer Premio Municipal in Argentina, and Los dedos de la mano was selected by the German publishing house Erdmann as one of the 10 best collections of short stories published in Latin America.

Like the other women writers presented in this thesis, Lynch lacks the international acknowledgement that her male contemporaries have received. Only two of her novels and some short stories have been translated into foreign languages - Italian, German, English, Portuguese, Russian, Croatian and Swedish. However, Lynch is a well-known author in the Argentine literary scene. La alfombra roja was awarded the Premio Fabril Editora and the Faja de Honor de la Sociedad Argentina de Escritores and until 1975 it maintained a steady pace in sales. Similarly, La Señora Ordóñez was printed in editions of 80,000 copies and by 1975 it had been published 12 times. Five editions of 10,000 copies each were sold during just one summer. As noted above, one of Lynch's collections of short stories was awarded an Argentine literary prize.

3.- Political position and the intellectual's role

Lynch believed that her main task as a writer was to write, and called herself a "total woman writer," because "three quarters of her life were devoted to writing" (1982: 57). Yet she also called herself a "maniac for social and political problems" (1983: 222) and stated that even if she tried to write only love stories, she always ended up writing about politics. She referred to Argentina as an extremely politicized country, where the writer

is pushed to take a position on national issues. There are various positions among writers, ranging from Borges who was indifferent to politics, to Ernesto Sábato, who always has something to say at crucial moments in Argentine history and who is a defender of human rights.

Lynch did not have a radical political position. She was in favour of a united Argentina and stated that "false" antinomies such as Peronism/anti-Peronism or civil/military hindered Argentina's development. That was her position in 1981, when Argentina was about to return to civil government after several years of military regimes. Lynch thought people should think of those years as a "mistake" rather than as a war, and should start to think of ways of effectively implementing democracy in the country (Ibid: 216).

Lynch also made some public statements on the Argentine women's situation. She stated that, although machismo is not as rampant in Argentina as it is in other Latin American countries, women writers have difficulties that men writers do not face (1975: 75). Both women writers and men writers have access to publishing houses. However, in order to be acknowledged, "you must be twice as capable as a man... and if you write well, they say you write like a man; if you write badly, you write like a woman (1983: 230 my transl.). There is also discrimination against women vis-à-vis translations, since men's works are more likely to be translated than women's. Needless to say, this is true not only of Marta Lynch, but of the other women writers this thesis deals with.

4.- Focus of the present study

This section will analyze La Señora Ordóñez (henceforth to be abbreviated SO) for several reasons. SO was published between 1957 and 1967. It became a bestseller in a short time and was the subject of debate in Argentine cultural life. SO was criticized for its "immorality" (Lynch quoted in Bernice Lynne Bennett, 1981: 86) and "shocked quite a few bourgeois souls with its frank treatment of marital relations," (Lewald, op.cit: 234) yet it was one of the first novels that opened the space for women's experience as a valuable topic in the Argentine literary scene. With SO Lynch departed from her male-centered works and created a female narrator who documented her own life. As Amy Sue Katz Kaminsky puts it, with SO "Lynch has enough artistic security to commit herself to writing a novel of a woman's experience" (1975: 4531-A). Hence, SO is Lynch's most representative novel, since her two major literary concerns - women's experience and the Perón and post-Perón era -are key issues in the novel.

SO recounts the life of a middle-class woman during the Perón era in Argentina. In the first section of the novel, the 16-year-old Blanca Maggi actively clashes with her family by breaking the code of sexual conduct imposed on her. She marries Pablo Achino at the age of 20. Achino is a wealthy young man who belongs to the Alianza Peronista and introduces Blanca to politics before he is killed. Significantly, Blanca keeps her maiden name in this section, because she refuses to surrender her virginity to him. In the second half of the novel Blanca is 40 years old and is married to Doctor Ordóñez, with whom she has two daughters. In this second section, Blanca becomes la

Señora Ordóñez (Mrs. Ordóñez) and her identity is totally obscured by her husband's name. Blanca resents the privation of the use of her own name and struggles against being merely Señora Ordóñez. She finds her life as a housewife frustrating and gets involved in several affairs. The novel is nothing more than Blanca's search for a centre, however she ends up by submitting to her husband and her marriage.

SO is narrated from two points of view. One is Blanca, speaking in first person, and the other is an omniscient speaker who uses the third person. This third person voice narrates external events and often enters the subjectivity of the characters.

4.1.- Marta Lynch and the Argentine cultural milieu

Both male and female Argentine authors discuss national issues in their works as well as in their public life. This concern with national issues often obscures the importance of other issues, such as women's issues. Thus, although apparently men and women have equal access to publishing houses, discussion on women's literature is limited. According to María Esther de Miguel, for example, the writers' task is "to tell the truth," to resist the maelstrom of commercialization in literature, and to give a reliable testimony of his or her society and his or her time (1967: 327). Argentine writers must maintain a permanent attitude of "denunciation" and a critical view of the "major national issues." De Miguel suggests that Argentine artists have traditionally had this attitude, and that women writers have just been incorporated into a task that was

already in progress (Ibid: 327).

Thus, there is no such thing as "feminine literature," because women writers' works participate in the same tradition as men's do, and topics or styles do not differ between female and male authors. De Miguel believes only in "good" literature and "bad" literature, since beyond man and woman is the human being. We are all in a room full of mirrors where a "similar intelligence, a parallel disgust, a recurrent solitude and the same shaky and difficult search" are multiplied. The writer must speak about man's (sic) intelligence, feelings, dreams and fantasies and rescue the values of the individual (Ibid: 336 my transl.).

When de Miguel's idea of literature is dominant in a cultural milieu, women's works are dismissed because they are not as "good" as men's, this really meaning that women's works do not speak about the same things and in the same way. Celia Correas de Zapata, for example, believes that although Argentina is a country that predisposes women to writing, women writers have not achieved the same quality as male writers. Women writers' works have little value because they do not deal with what is "truly Argentine" and show too much European influence. They are also not good from the structural vantage point, since they lack "the lucid structural craftsmanship made fashionable by Borges and Cortázar" (1975: 15). Argentina does not have a novel written by a woman of the stature of Rosario Castellanos' Oficio de Tinieblas or Elena Garro's Recuerdos del Porvenir, or a single good historical novel by a female author.

When women's works are considered "good," critics often overlook the elements that

deal with women's condition and can be considered feminist. For example, Sara Gallardo's Enero is the story of a country girl who gets pregnant and is forced to marry. De Miguel thinks the novel portrays a society where the arbitrary scheme of convention is maintained regardless of its effectiveness. The novel does not refer to how conventions are maintained and whom they benefit. Conventions are not related to patriarchal relationships, but rather to arbitrariness.

Similarly, Lynch's concern with Argentine women's condition has been overlooked by her critics, and she has been incorporated into the Argentine literary tradition as a sexless author. Angela B. Dellepiane, for example, places Lynch in the group of the "angry ones." The members of this group share the influence of Sartrean existentialism and their experience with the Peronist movement. From this perspective, Lynch's novels are considered "political" because they portray the ideological climate in Argentina during the Perón and post-Perón eras and problematize the country's social and economic situation.

However, Lynch differs from other writers of this group in that the Argentine social and economic climate in her work is often linked to family relationships in various social classes and is usually described through women's eyes. That is the case of at least three of Lynch's novels, SO, El cruce del río and La penúltima versión..., and some of her short stories. In La penúltima versión..., the protagonist is a middle-aged married woman who struggles to prevent the disintegration of her family in a world of social instability and moral sterility. In this sense, Lynch can also be considered a woman writer who

problematic Argentine women's condition. Indeed, recent U.S. dissertations have placed emphasis on Lynch's female characters.¹⁵

Moreover, Lynch is neither the only nor the first Argentine woman writer who treats male-female relationships from a critical perspective. At least three generations of women writers have problematized the marital institution and Argentine women's condition. The first generation devoted itself to "extricating itself from the prejudices and taboos of a patriarchal society," however their female characters remained caught in traditional choices and preferred the "security" of marriage to the responsibility of their lives as individuals. Silvina Bullrich, who started getting published in the 1940s, is the most well-known writer of this generation. This first generation opened the way to a younger group of women writers, such as Luisa Valenzuela, Sara Gallardo and Amalia Jamilis, who dealt with male-female relationships "with a tolerant and often amusing detachment." A third group of women writers, the "nueva ola" (new wave) "is ready to allow the female character a spirit of candid self-revelation and a freedom of action that

¹⁵See Amy Sue Katz's PhD dissertation entitled "Marta Lynch: the expanding political consciousness of the Argentine woman writer," in Dissertation Abstracts International, 36 (1976) 4531A-32A, and "The Real Circle of Iron: Mothers and Children, Children and Mothers, in Four Argentine Novels," in Latin American Literary Review 9 (1976); Lindstrom, Naomi, "The Literary Feminism of Marta Lynch," in Critique: Studies in Modern Fiction, 2 (1978) and "Woman's Voice in the Short Stories of Marta Lynch," in The Contemporary Latin American Short Story, N.Y., Nueva Senda Ed., 1979; Lewald, Ernest. "Aspects of the Modern Argentine Woman: the fiction of Silvina Bullrich and Marta Lynch," in Chasqui 5,3 (1976) and "Two Generations of River Plate Women Writers," in Latin American Research Review 15 (1980); the preliminary study to Páginas de Marta Lynch seleccionadas por la autora, by Gwendolyn Díaz, Buenos Aires, Ed. Celtia, 1983; and Lynne Lois Billman, "The Political Novels of Lucila Palacios and Marta Lynch," in Dissertation Abstracts International, MI 1969-37 (1976), 158A.

were only insinuated in the fantasies and deeds of the older River Plate women writers" (Ernest Lewald, 1980: 235).

4.2.- Purpose of the present study

This study will present SO as one of the crucial novels that opened the space for women's experience as a valuable theme within Argentine literary scene. SO will be placed here within the first set of novels described by Lewald. Although the protagonist experiences degradation and self-pity in her marriage, she does not choose to leave her status as object within it. She is both psychologically and economically unprepared to lead an independent life. Thus, SO speaks of a patriarchal society that makes women dependent on men -father or husband -thereby preventing them from mastering their own destiny.

The focus of this study will be on the main female character of the novel as the middle-aged, middle-class married woman who rebels against her social definitions -daughter, wife and mother. However, although she can identify the nature of her oppression in her role as silent object in the Father's House, which then becomes her husband's house, she is unable and even unwilling to free herself from it. Blanca cannot articulate her rebelliousness in order to achieve her own identity.

5.- SO: Blanca Maggi or la Señora Ordóñez

5.1.- Analysis of characters

The analysis of characters will focus on Blanca as the central character in the novel. Some references will be made to her mother - Soledad or the Castilian -to illustrate the relationship between them. As for the rest of the characters, the emphasis will be on Blanca's demystification of marriage and motherhood rather than on the characters themselves.

Bennett argues that the use of both the first and the third person in SO allows Lynch to create a dramatic tension "as each narrative voice openly relates events in Blanca's life and her emotions from different, although not widely disparate, positions" (op.cit.:76). The third person narrator "is undramatic and can relate details that the protagonist is unwilling to admit even to herself, or information beyond the scope of her knowledge," whereas Blanca is unable to philosophize on the meaning of the broad scope of her life and on "the key role of certain childhood experiences and family relationships which have contributed to her adult concepts of herself and of male-female relationships" (Ibid: 77-78).

Lynch also uses alternating periods of time to create a "disparity between Blanca's youth and her maturity, between the promise and the disappointment," so that Blanca is "neither the twenty-year-old nor the forty-year-old, but an amalgamation of both" (Ibid: 70). This technique makes Blanca a person without a real identity. "By juxtaposing layers of past and present, Lynch creates an emergent Blanca who is whole, but who has no

centre, no core of self" (Kaminsky quoted by Bennett, Ibid: 71).

Blanca problematizes through her behaviour the social roles assigned to her. She realizes, for example, that marriage and motherhood are institutions created by society to control women:

Todo consiste en hallar el instante oportuno para que una mujer se integre a una sociedad podrida que ha de ponerle la brida al cuello y en el brazo izquierdo su número de alienación. Hay un buen marido, un parto dichoso y la nueva víctima feliz estará en condiciones de responder a lo que de ella se espera (SO: 320).

Blanca also knows that marriage is an institution of exchange, where women offer their sexuality and get economic security in return. She describes the sexual act with her husband as a routine in which he takes the initiative and she just lets him go. Blanca resists pleasure and feels her husband is alien to her, because "she never managed to give herself." In contrast, Blanca has sexual initiative and enjoys sex with Rocky, her 25-year-old lover. However, she remains an object in the relationship because she sees "love" as her only reason for living and defines herself only in her ability to attract a man. Blanca cannot keep Rocky because of her constant fear of aging, so she finally submits to her husband.

Blanca's attitude toward motherhood problematizes the idea that women's single task is to have children and that all women enjoy it. When describing one of her deliveries she stresses the pain she feels and ironically comments on the "eternal position" - lying

on her back -to which woman is condemned:

Este dolor es lo que todos esperaban de mí, en esto acaba la siniestra alquimia del amor, la posición eterna de la mujer, de espaldas, colgada de las piernas, quién pudo haber inventado destino semejante (SO: 317).

Furthermore, Blanca feels totally alienated from the product "she threw" from herself and is happy to feel her abdomen flat again:

No hay necesidad de que me enseñen aquello que arrojé de mí. Quiero llorar y cerrar las piernas ahora; es indiferente que me estrujen, que aflojen las correas, que una criatura aülle cerra de mí sin emocionarme; lo esencial es haber podido cerrar las piernas y sentir las sábanas aplastándose sobre mi vientre chato (SO: 318).

However, Blanca rejects motherhood also because she sees in her daughters evidence of her aging, and she thinks of them and of other women as rivals. Blanca cannot find her centre in something apart from her physical appearance, which is her major concern in her relationships with men. Although she gets involved in politics for some time, she does so through her first husband, and when he is killed she withdraws from public life to her parents' home. Her relative success as an artist - she has produced some sculptures and paintings - does not help her develop an independent self. The night of one of her exhibitions, she meets Rocky and devotes her time to a relationship in which, again, her major concern is to avoid aging.

However, Blanca's rebelliousness is partially successful by the end of the novel. The novel starts with the scene in which the third-person narrator describes the sexual act between Blanca and her husband. Although the narration is done in the third person, it reflects the subjectivity of the protagonist; Blanca is talking about herself in the third person. Blanca feels detached from the act, as well as miserable and ridiculous. When the act is over, she runs to the washroom to cry "for all the love she will never have," until she takes her mind off her worries. Interestingly, the novel finishes with exactly the same description and Blanca again runs to the washroom. This time, however, she looks at herself in the mirror and acknowledges that "she has succeeded in something" and that she "did what she could":

- He triunfado en algo - se dijo Blanca -; ya no disculpo mis fracasos encogiéndome de hombros. Quizá no debí ser como fui, pero hice cuanto pude (SO: 402).

This last sentence -"I did what I could" - indicates that the causes for Blanca's frustration are not in her, but rather in her social environment. The expression that she uses to describe her relationship with her mother also emphasizes this point. She refers to an "iron circle" by which the generational structure is reproduced. Blanca shares with her mother her dissatisfaction with life and her pessimism; therefore, she simultaneously identifies with her mother and rejects her. Mother and daughter are caught in the same existential situation, which they cannot solve, and they limit each other in their life choices. As Kaminsky puts it, "Blanca retains a need for her mother's approval at

pivotal moments in her life (when she marries and has children), but she resents the Castilian's [Blanca's mother] judgments and disapproval" (1976: 80). The Castilian both affirms Blanca's virtue and curtails her freedom. The Castilian, on the other hand, is also limited by her role as the mother responsible for the family when she represses and sacrifices her desire for her physician. However, Soledad offers Blanca her rage as a heritage:

Mamma lived with anger and the anger was spread above all to Blanca and the monstrous familial mechanism slowly insinuated itself in her, like a potent poison seeping in her ear (Lynch, SO: 65 Kaminsky's transl.).

Both mother and daughter are caught in the same social roles of wives and mothers and share their inability to oppose them. Yet they also share their rebelliousness and they are both able to identify the nature of their oppression. Furthermore, Silvia (one of Blanca's daughters) also realizes that "if she insists on love," her life will have a "solemn continuity" with that of her mother and grandmother. There is no information, however, about the future of Blanca's daughters, except for María Luz's decision to leave Argentina and live in Paris.

5.- Conclusion

Although Blanca rebels against the three roles of daughter, wife and mother, she is unable to articulate her rebelliousness and to look for herself beyond these roles. She suffers from her status as object yet she cannot change it, so she keeps on letting other people rule her life by equating her beauty with her identity. Blanca cannot define herself through her own eyes, but only through men's eyes.

However, Lynch's novel opens a space for women's issues as a valuable theme within the Argentine literature scene. She is one of the first women writers to create a female voice which problematizes women's traditionally social roles. The silent object in the Father's House is speaking in Lynch's novel and taking the first step to becoming a subject with a voice of her own.

MARTA TRABA (1930-1983)**1.- Biographical Data**

Marta Traba was born in Buenos Aires in 1930. She graduated in literature at the National University of Buenos Aires and then studied art in Italy and France. Most of her life she lived outside Argentina in Colombia, Uruguay, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Spain, the United States and France. In Colombia she founded and directed the Museum of Modern Art of Bogota. She lectured in various universities where she lived and moved to Paris in 1982, after being denied permanent residence in the United States for unspecified reasons. In 1983 she died with her husband Angel Rama, a literary critic, and the writers Jorge Ibargüengoitia and Manuel Scorza in a plane crash near Madrid. They were flying to a cultural meeting in Bogota.

2.- Works, popularity and translations

Traba's work was mainly done in two fields: art criticism and narrative. She published 23 essay collections on art and wrote about 1,200 articles for various journals and newspapers in 15 countries. Traba also wrote six novels: Las ceremonias del verano (1966), Los laberintos insolados (1967), La jugada del sexto día (1969), Homérica Latina

(1979), Conversación al Sur (1981) and En cualquier lugar (1984). In addition, Traba authored two collections of short stories: Pasó así (1968) and Cuentos norteamericanos (1986). Her last novel and collection of short stories are posthumous. She also published one volume of poetry entitled Historia natural de la alegría (1952).

Traba is not considered part of the literary tradition in any of the countries where she lived and published. In the case of Argentina, she does not appear in anthologies and her work has barely been studied. Books such as Las letras y el destino argentino (1969), Estudios de literatura argentina (1969), Habla y literatura en la Argentina (1974), Literatura argentina y expresión americana (1977), Currents in the Contemporary Argentinean novel (1975), Essays on Argentinean Narrators (1982), Literatura del siglo veinte en el Río de la Plata: treinta y seis ensayos sobre escritores de Argentina y Uruguay (1984) do not refer to Marta Traba. Nor does the Diccionario biográfico de mujeres argentinas, published in 1986. Traba was not interviewed in the cross-country set of interviews published as Encuesta a la literatura argentina contemporánea in 1982. This survey contains interviews with 80 writers and literary critics. A previous survey with 40 writers published in 1969 as ¿Porqué escribimos? also omits Marta Traba. The same happens in Colombia, where Traba acquired her second official nationality. She does not appear in anthologies of contemporary Colombian narrative and her works are rarely mentioned in studies of Colombian literary tradition. Traba stated that even though she felt "closer to Colombian reality" than to Argentine reality and her "world view was established there," in Colombia "no one was even aware" that she had written several

novels (Interview with Evelyn Picon Garfield, 1985: 128-129). Traba is not mentioned in studies and anthologies of Latin American literature either.

Like some Boom writers, Traba lived in many different places, Europe among them. However, she did not receive the international acknowledgement that her male contemporaries have. Although her first novel was awarded a prestigious prize, the Premio Casa de las Américas of Cuba, it was not translated into foreign languages. Only Conversación al Sur was issued in Swedish, Norwegian and English. Some of Traba's short stories were also translated into English, however this initiative came from American scholars interested in Latin American women writers and is a recent development. Evelyn Picon Garfield, for example, included Marta Traba in both Women's voices from Latin America (1985) and Women's fiction from Latin America (1988). Picon Garfield considers Traba's work important because it shares with other women writers' works

the "triple opposition" of the critical stance taken by writers in modern societies: opposition to tradition; opposition to bourgeois culture with its ideas based on rationalism, utility and progress; and opposition to the artist's very own expression as a new tradition (1985: 20).

However, unlike Lynch and other Latin America women writers, Traba has still not been thoroughly studied in North America.

3.- Political position and the intellectual's role

Traba along with most Latin America intellectuals of the 1960s supported the Cuban Revolution as the "original and autonomous project of socialism that we all dreamed of." However, she started to criticize the Cuban regime when it moved to the "soviet orbit" (Traba quoted by Elena Poniatowska, 1984: 21) and retained a critical position toward the Soviet communism as "the denial of socialism," as well as toward Soviet invasions. She was also critical of U.S. interventions in Latin America and favoured "any kind of either socialist or progressive government" willing to make serious changes in "wealth distribution, education and services" in Latin American countries (Ibid: 24-25 my transl.).

As an art critic, Traba actively defended Latin American art. In the various Latin American countries where she lived, she conducted extensive research on domestic art and promoted it internationally. Traba believed that "we live in a territory different from that of North America, Europe and Asia, and [that] this difference should be capitalized" (1974: 14 my transl.). She considered Latin American art an original creation that embodies Latin American cultural particularity and thus resists external forms. According to Traba, Latin American art must resist the influence of two elements: the extreme "European conceptualization" of artistic forms and "American technology" (Damian Bayon, 1984: 95). She was particularly enthusiastic about Puerto Rico, where some artists see their work as a means towards constructing national identity, which opposes that of the American Union.

Like Marta Lynch, Traba was asked about her opinion on the situation of Latin

American women writers. She replied that a woman writer "may have the same opportunities to publish her work as the male author but doesn't have the same opportunities for writing it." Latin America

is not a continent of men, but of "machos" who have eternally relegated women to a secondary role, and when she has been able to take the reins up, she, too, has become a 'macha', in a dominant role because of her wealth or her intelligence or commercial skill (Interview with Picon Garfield, 1985:137-138).

Furthermore, even if women writers publish, their works never appear in anthologies or literary studies. "It's as if they didn't exist." That is also the case for translations. Few women writers are published abroad or translated. Thus, women win national literary prizes "when they're over 70 years old," and they rarely win international prizes (Idem).

4.- Focus of the present study

This study will analyze Las ceremonias de verano (henceforth to be abbreviated CV) for several reasons. CV was published between 1957 and 1967 and won the Casa de las Américas prize in one of the most serious Latin American literary competitions of the time. The panel of judges in the Casa de las Américas that year were Alejo Carpentier, García Ponce, Manuel Rojas and Mario Benedetti, all of them well-known writers. This means that Traba's novel was considered "good" by the Latin American literary establishment. Also, critics believe CV is one of Traba's two best novels and one in

which she did not follow a "masculine model" of writing, according to her own definition. Hence, CV is a representative piece of her work.

CV is narrated mostly by a female protagonist with no name, alternating with an external third person narrator. The novel is the story of four summers at different moments of the protagonist's life. The first summer takes place in Buenos Aires, when the protagonist is 14 years old. The second in Paris, when she is about 20. The third occurs in the Italian country side and the fourth in an unspecified city that could be in Colombia. In the last summer the protagonist is about 40 years old.

Jaime Mejía Duque notes that the four summers described in the book are not "actions" of a novel in the classical sense, but rather feelings and memories of the protagonist-narrator. Hence, the cognitive processes that the protagonist experiences in four different periods of her life are the key elements of this novel (1967: 687).

4.1.- Marta Traba and the Latin American cultural milieu

Traba left Argentina very young and lived in different places. However, what was stated in the previous section about the Argentine cultural milieu is also applicable to Traba's case. Latin American cultural milieus are similar to that of Argentina in the expectations they have of writers and artists in general. Artists are expected to have a clear political position and to discuss national issues. In the 1960s and 1970s, the critical situation in some Latin American countries pushed some artists to denounce social injustice and defend human rights. As pointed out for the Argentine case, the concern

with national issues left very little room for women's issues. In this sense, Traba's work, like Lynch's, also contains two concerns: the broad, social concerns - repression, political imprisonment, terrorism, poverty, and so on - and more specific, female-centered concerns.

Like the other women writers studied here, Traba's work has also been dismissed by literary critics. Jaime Mejía Duque, for example, believes that CV is a "good" novel because, although it was written by a woman, it is "virile," that is, "it does not fall into the simplicities to which our ladies arrive when they 'make literature'" (1976: 869). However, Mejía Duque concludes that Traba "deifies sensation," and that he prefers stories which are "externally recognizable," such as the ones told by Alejo Carpentier, Miguel Angel Asturias, Juan Rulfo or Mario Vargas Llosa (Ibid: 870 my transl.).

In 1982 Traba published her Hypothesis on a different literature. Here she defines literary text as the place designed by a particular technical ability that can create a highly elaborated product. This product is distinguished by a "high level of abstractions" and "autonomous semantic unities" that make possible "symbolic language." According to Traba, the feminine texts analyzed by her do not contain these characteristics. She argues that women writers must create a "counterculture" in which "peculiarities" of feminine texts have to be emphasized (Traba quoted by Maria Sola, 1984: 105).

Traba's attempt to distinguish "feminine literature" from "masculine literature" and to deny women writers' ability for creating "elaborated" products with "high levels of abstractions" can lead to undesirable consequences. Her conception of "feminine

literature" sets the limits for what we "should expect" from a woman writer, and it indirectly confirms the patriarchal idea that women's "natural" characteristics are passion, intuition and sensibility, as opposed to intelligence and objectivity. Within Traba's scheme, these characteristics would then be the determinant factors in women's artistic and cultural creations.

However, Traba's hypothesis attempts to open the space for women writers who might have something to say, apart from their concerns with the overwhelming social, political and economic problems of Latin America. In this sense, Traba represents a crucial stage in the formation of the Latin American woman writer because of her attempt to open spaces for women's voices in Latin American literary scene.

Traba's own writings reflect the two tendencies that she describes. On the one hand, she writes from her personal experience as a woman. On the other, her concerns become more "collective," and she leaves behind her own lived experience. María Sola suggests that the reason for the continuous shift from one perspective to the other is the strong pressure of the "masculine" model of writing imposed on Traba. She wants to respond to the needs of the literary establishment, where there is no place for women's experience. However, Traba's two best works are those where she does not follow the "masculine model" but rather accepts the "peculiarities" of her writing. These works are Las ceremonias del verano and Conversación al Sur (María Sola, 1984).

Traba's work particularly reflects the difficulty of combining the two sets of concerns women writers must deal with in Latin America. Unlike Lynch, Traba's novels

are either close to her personal experience as a woman or detached from it, in the sense that the dominant social and political issues that she describes actually neglect women's experience. It is not until Conversación al Sur that two female characters in first-person narration alternated with a third, omniscient voice, speak of how they experience repression in South America. The disintegration of the social world is described through these women's eyes.

4.2.- Purpose of the present study

It has been suggested that CV has autobiographical elements, since Traba lived in the four places where her character spends each of her summers. This study will consider CV a novel that Traba wrote from her own experience. In this novel, both Traba and her female character are engaged in the search for themselves. As stated by Maria Sola, Traba's first novel "reflects the existential search for her own identity" (op.cit.: 104 my transl.).

CV will be seen as a novel in which Traba privileged the creation of a woman's voice with the "peculiarities" of her writing she referred to 16 years later. Like Lynch, Traba opened a space for women's experience as a valid theme in Latin American literary scene.

5.- CV: a woman novelist and her summers

5.1.- Analysis of characters

In the first summer the protagonist is a skinny 14 year-old girl who attends a social club where a dancing party occurs. On the way to her aunt's place, before going to the party, she tries to mentally "erase" her parents' house. She wants to free herself from the collective houses where everybody is "uniform" and where all the fences look like each other (CV: 17). She wants to destroy that perfect world of forks, crystal glasses, black and white tiled floor and thick, white couches (CV: 25). She dislikes her "unfortunate real world" and defends herself from "neutral and horrible things," against the "colourless, odourless and tasteless world" (CV: 22). She believes that there must be a place for her elsewhere, because she is not a human being but "something different which must be, has to be in some part of the world, may be an angel, but here it is not possible to be an angel" (CV: 13). The protagonist wants to escape from her "real world," which is a traditional middle-class family of Buenos Aires. She defines herself as different from what she is supposed to be in the Father's House. When she gets to her aunt's house, she has mentally erased her parents's house.

The dancing party scene brings up the elements against which the protagonist is rebelling. She wears a dress made for her at the last minute, because she ruined the one she was wearing on her way to her aunt's place, as "the only way to get rid of it" (CV: 18). She looks at herself in the mirror and thinks she looks like a clown; she cannot recognize herself. At the party she waits to be asked to dance and finds the whole ritual

strange; she realizes that her role is to be attractive for young men's eyes. Gradually she gets to "the limits of repugnance" (CV: 38) and finds that "something breaks inside her, a sort of pain, a cold absurdity, a consciousness of guilt" (CV: 40). She abruptly stands up and runs to the washroom, looks at herself in the mirror, and again cannot recognize herself. She realizes that the reason for this is that she let other people put some make-up on her face, and she looks just like the other girls. The protagonist decides to erase the marks of her past, her family and social life. She thinks that she can find something secure only within herself. She refuses to play the role that the Father's Law assigned to her by rejecting the role of the object-to-be-seduced. Her purpose is to erase her parents' house as the stable structure where she is the silent object and to search for an identity away from the family forms.

In the second summer the protagonist is in Paris. This city is synonymous with love, but also with solitude and exile. Here, one of the new elements of her life is her relationship with Florian, which she refers to as "cat and mouse." She is the mouse and fights against being treated as an object. Her purpose is to become a subject in Florian's eyes, thus defeating solitude through communication with him. Florian, however, remains far away from her.

The third summer takes place in the country side of Italy. The protagonist goes there because she is tired of being so "self-centered." She wants to live "out of herself," to be aware of "the existence of objects, animate and inanimate things" (CV: 140). Her intention is to embed herself in the most "insignificant elements" in order to create from

them something significant which she would be part of. She is looking for a state of equilibrium with nature. María Sola argues that this third chapter is the most important from a feminist perspective, since the protagonist is about to lose the identity which she had before and to die "intellectually," and her unsubmitive personality is being gradually eroded. At the end of the chapter, however, the protagonist realizes that the state of peace created around her was a false solution and decides to leave and start all over again the search for her identity.

In the fourth chapter, the protagonist believes that she has found that identity through love, a love which "stops time" and "paralyzes memory" (CV: 157) and which she believes will make possible the communication she failed to have with Florian while in Paris. She wants to tell to her partner what she feels, but he is sleeping "and the shy caresses do not wake him up" (CV: 184). Finally he wakes up and walks silently toward the bathroom. She also wakes up, closes the window, goes back to bed and covers herself. Her last thought is that although it is summer, she is very cold.

Traba rejects all simple solutions to her character's existential problems. The solution is not just to "erase" her parents' house and to want to speak, because she constantly wants someone to hear what she has to say and no one listens. The protagonist wants to communicate with nature, through solitude, through love. Isolation in the Italian country-side offers a false solution. However, love is also not presented as a comfortable solution, especially because the protagonist must fight to be recognized as a subject and fails twice. Love remains, as stated by Mejía Duque, as "pure expectation"

(op.cit.: 868). The end of the novel suggests that the protagonist will continue to look for herself and for some one to hear her voice.

5.2.- Conclusion

As argued by María Sola, CV is one of the two books which Traba wrote from her own experience as a woman, since there are chronological and local similarities between the four summers described in the novel and Traba's own life. In this sense, Traba rejected in CV the "masculine model" of writing and broke the silence through the "peculiarities" of her writing. She privileged the creation of a woman's voice capable of documenting her own story. In doing so, Traba opened the space for women's experience as a valuable theme in Latin American literary scene.

CONCLUSIONS

In this study eight novels were analyzed from a feminist poststructuralist perspective. Four of the most popular novels produced by members of the Boom of Latin American literature were compared with four novels produced during the same period by women who were not considered to be part of the Boom.

The Boom writers were strongly influenced by the Cuban Revolution. They responded to the social and economic problems generated by modernization by constructing a progressive Latin American identity. No women were included in the Boom. It was hypothesized that although the Boom writers were manifestly constructing a progressive Latin American identity they were also reproducing patriarchal assumptions while the female writers were problematizing these assumptions.

Each of the novels was read looking for evidence of implicit patriarchal assumptions and for ways in which female voices were silenced or managed to break the silence. Key concepts from Patricia Smart's study of Quebec's literary tradition were used in this analysis.

Smart describes Quebecois society as a disguised patriarchy marked by the asymmetry between masculine and feminine where the feminine is subordinated to the masculine order and defined from a male perspective. This asymmetry is perpetuated through the patriarchal triangle defined by Smart as two men (the father and the

"prétendant") exchanging a woman treated as an object.

Smart found that Quebec had a "tragic" male literary tradition and a "subversive" feminine literary tradition. Both men and women write within the "Father's House," which Smart sees as "une métaphore de la culture et de ses structures de représentation idéologiques, artistiques et langagières." In the Father's House, the son and the daughter internalize the patriarchal triangle in different ways. The son does so by internalizing the Oedipus complex, where he can tell his own story only by possessing the woman-object and silencing her story. The consequence of this is a tragic male literary tradition, where violence is exercised against women through objectifying models such as the "reproducing mother" or the "terrifying mother." In the case of the daughter, her writing becomes subversive because it breaks the silence to which woman is condemned in her role as object within the Father's House.

The analysis of the novels in the present study mainly focused on the female characters. Female characters in male texts appeared to be, as Smart puts it, either idealized or despicable but always silenced and defined from a male perspective. The two models which Smart found in what she calls a tragic male literary tradition, that of the reproducing mother and the terrifying mother, were also found in the tradition of the Boom. Each of the male authors was found to be reproducing patriarchal assumptions although in different ways.

GABRIEL GARCIA MARQUEZ

The major female model for GM is the reproducing mother who is portrayed as the support of the family and the head of the household. GM reproduces the myth of the reproducing mother when he depicts her as the "real power" behind the man and the centre of the "planetary system" of the family, and refers to his society as a "matriarchal" society. Although the female characters in CAS are more practical than the male characters, they are defined from a male perspective. They are only practical when they are sustaining the family. Moreover, their being practical and realistic is not seen as a feminine trait; GM describes his strong female characters as "masculine."

All of the female characters in CAS are defined in terms of the type of relationship they have with the male members of the Buendía family. Women have either a legal sexual status within the Buendía's house, or an illegitimate status outside the house. They are either mothers and wives or mistresses and prostitutes. "Legal" women are not portrayed as sexually active, whereas "illegitimate" women have a "vocation for love." Women in CAS fulfill men's sexual, emotional and material needs, while men devote themselves to making history (wars) and progress (scientific experiments). Only one female character, Amaranta Ursula, speaks her own desire, but she is punished for this. Not only does she die in childbirth, but she also delivers a child with the (foretold) pig's tail which signals the end of the Buendía dynasty. Hence, what has been called a matriarchy by GM and his critics is what Smart refers to as a "disguised

patriarchy," where women are defined from a male perspective and idealized in their roles of either reproducing mothers or pleasure providers.

CARLOS FUENTES

The terrifying mother or witch is a recurrent character in Fuentes' work. He portrays women as threats to male identity and as objects used to reveal male identities. Fuentes' male and female characters are engaged in mutually destructive relations. Not only can women not break this cycle, but they use their objectified roles without rebelling against them. Hence, they appear self-alienated. However, male characters also suffer from their role as oppressors and are self-condemned.

Three of the four women involved with Artemio Cruz represent different choices that he has made at different moments of his life. Artemio uses either the woman's social status (Catalina), her memory (Regina), or her image as a sexual woman (Lilia) to achieve his own social and economic success, while each of the women are sacrificed. Each woman appears to be trapped in self-destructive behaviour: pride (Catalina), false fantasies (Regina), or a self-destructive fear of aging (Lilia). Laura, the only female character who resists societal restrictions and is independent from Cruz, is punished when she speaks her desire. However, the tyrannical Artemio Cruz also suffers from his role of oppressor and dies self-condemned. In this sense, Fuentes bears witness to the destructive effects of patriarchy. He portrays a situation where there is no possibility for a subject-to-subject type of relationship between men and

women as long as women remain in their objectified roles and men retain the role of oppressors.

MARIO VARGAS LLOSA

VL's work is characterized by the absence of female characters. This has led his critics to overgeneralize about a "castrated" generation of sexless adolescents, when in fact they are referring to male adolescents who become adults in a violent social environment. In this environment, men use women to establish male identity and in this process they silence women's voices. VL's range of female characters is a rather limited one in which women are either mothers or prostitutes or good or bad; they are all defined from a male perspective. There is no female character who transcends her environment or escapes social restrictions.

In CP, three male adolescents are in love with the same girl, whom VL situates as the "stimulus" for their attempts to establish their identities. Each of them achieves a male identity by sacrificing the woman's identity. The female as defined from a male perspective confers manliness yet at the same time is a threat to it. Hence, male characters mystify female identity in order to achieve their own. VL's male and female characters cannot have a subject-to-subject type of relationship as long as women have to be sacrificed for a male identity to be achieved.

JULIO CORTAZAR

Cortázar's female characters are also silenced. Oliveira silences both la Maga and Talita in his attempt to find himself. However, he neither finds himself nor does he reach an understanding with la Maga or Talita.

La Maga is presented as possessing everything that Oliveira lacks - emotion, intuition and naivete. La Maga is Oliveira's projection, in that he sees in her what he wants to see. He believes that he invents her by touching her and that she wants to be killed by him through love. Oliveira sees la Maga as either a "bridge" toward a mysterious world he cannot reach or as a final object of his continuous, fruitless search. After la Maga disappears because Oliveira has abandoned her, Oliveira continues looking for himself through Talita. Oliveira always sees women as projections of himself; they are what he lacks and what he cannot understand or reach. Cortázar's "pursuers" cannot have a subject-to-subject type of relationship with women, as long as they consider them as objects to be possessed or as a means towards understanding themselves.

Thus, the Boom writers studied here portray female characters according to male desires and in this process silence women's voices. In the works of these four male writers women are *l'Autre réifiée* which functions as the silent object on which a male identity is reflected and from which this identity is constituted. Women are the silent ground on which a male discourse that reproduces patriarchal assumptions about women is constructed. Within the Father's House, these writers silence "*son histoire à elle*"

in order to tell "son histoire à lui." The women writers, however, attempt to break the silence of women objectified within the Father's House.

ROSARIO CASTELLANOS

Castellanos' first novel shows how women are silenced through socialization. The main female character in this novel is a seven year-old girl who is unable to learn her name. Her parents give constant attention to her brother Mario because he has to become a "man," while "the girl" is rejected by her mother because she is "too small." She imagines that her father is constantly growing, "like a tree," and that a tiger is crouched in one of its branches. Mario is the actor in the children's games and is proud of his success, while "the girl" remains a mere spectator. However, "the girl" reacts against male authority. She becomes aware of her role as object within the Father's House and realizes that her parents are privileging Mario's identity rather than hers. When she has to decide for hers or Mario's survival, she chooses her own. However, she feels guilty for her decision which she believes has caused Mario's death. She writes Mario's name rather than her own, as if she were assuming "son histoire à lui" rather than "son histoire à elle."

Similarly, Matilde also rebels against male authority. Like "the girl," Matilde takes one step in her attempt to recognize herself when she decides to have an abortion. Yet, just like "the girl," she also fails to do so. The girl does not manage to discover her

name, and Matilde despises herself when she looks at herself in the mirror and narrates her decision to have an abortion.

MARTA LYNCH

A similar portrayal of women being silenced through socialization is the central theme of Lynch's SO. The story of her female protagonist, Blanca, deals with both her youth and maturity, thus successfully exposing the disparity between "the promise and the disappointment" (Bennett). When she is 16, Blanca actively clashes with her family by breaking the code of sexual conduct imposed on her. Although she gets married at the age of 20, she keeps her maiden name because she refuses to surrender her virginity to her first husband. However, Blanca Maggi becomes la Señora Ordóñez (Mrs. Ordóñez) with her second marriage, and her identity is obscured by her husband's name.

Blanca rebels against the feminine tasks assigned to her. She realizes that marriage and motherhood are institutions created by society to control women, in which the woman offers her sexuality and gets in return economic security. She finds her life as a housewife frustrating and gets involved in several extra-marital affairs. Blanca realizes that she and her mother share their dissatisfaction with marriage. One of Blanca's daughter realizes that "if she insists on love" her life will have a "solemn continuity" with those of her mother and grandmother. However, Blanca gradually gives up, and ends up by submitting to her husband and her marriage. In the

last sentence of the book Blanca says only: "I did what I could."

ELENA GARRO

In Garro's RP there is also evidence of a social reality that silences women. Isabel and Julia represent respectively the two types of women of the town, "family" women -mothers, widows, wives, daughters or sisters- and mistresses who live in a hotel away from their family. These mistresses are brought by the soldiers who rule the town.

Isabel and Julia are opposites. Isabel is a "family" woman who is extremely vulnerable to her social reality. She represents hardness and capacity. At the end of the novel she is turned into a stone and is condemned for her behaviour. Julia, in contrast, is not a "family" woman. She exudes a mythical aura that makes her ethereal and unattainable, and she is related to luminosity. Her vital attributes enable her to present herself as impenetrable to the general Francisco Rosas and to escape the penumbra of the town. Julia finds self-realization through her relationship with Felipe Hurtado and by building within herself a private world, while Isabel becomes a victim of the external world from which Julia protects herself. However, Julia's realization through love only happens in ideal terms, since she and Felipe Hurtado have to mysteriously disappear from the town to avoid being killed by Rosas. Hence, only by using magic means can Garro portray a subject-to-subject type of relationship between a man and a woman. Isabel's attempts to relate to real men in the real world lead her to her own destruction.

Most of Garro's female characters escape like Julia from the "real world" although they use different means. By escaping, they protect themselves from a social reality that prevents them from achieving an independent identity. This illustrates the woman writer who feels her own identity threatened and uses fiction as a means of not disappearing. Garro exemplifies numerous women who are looking for themselves and who choose fiction in order to create that interior, private world, where they can start to speak their own identity.

MARTA TRABA

Traba's central female character shows evidence of a woman's voice. She wants to communicate through nature, through solitude, through love. Neither isolation in the Italian country-side nor love are comfortable solutions to the character's existential problem, because she must fight to be recognized as a subject by her two partners and in both cases she fails. Although she tries to give voice to her experiences, there is no one to listen to her. Hence, Traba's protagonist needs a listener rather than a voice.

None of the novels by the women writers include a happy ending for their female protagonists; they offer, however, evidence of the various processes through which women are silenced, as well as of the women's voices themselves. There is a tendency in each female protagonist to look for transcendence of the self as subject in her social reality, as well as rebelliousness (most of the time inarticulated) against her role as object within the Father's House.

When four novels by male writers were compared with four novels written by women support was found for the hypothesis that the male writers reproduce patriarchal assumptions. They tell their stories while silencing the female characters in their novels. In contrast, women writers shape their identities as subject-narrators and open spaces for the women's voices which are being silenced in the male writers' texts. Female characters in women's works are groping toward an understanding of their being in the world. These female characters attempt to detach themselves from their familial identities and to escape from societal expectations. All of them, except for Garro's Julia, are immersed in a process of self-scrutiny. Hence, the four women writers studied here speak about the different ways in which women are silenced.

A complete history of the Boom has to take into account the forgotten story of numerous women writers who were publishing during the same period of time. Currently there are many women writers whose opportunities to write and publish are mainly due to earlier generations of women writers who created a space for women's experience in the Latin American literary tradition. Women's participation in both the creation of cultural products and in the promotion of social and political change (like the transition toward democracy in South America) has been much more visible in the last decade than in the previous ones. Hence, the Boom period was crucial not only as the moment when Latin Americans

started to reflect upon their own experience but also as the moment when Latin American women constructed a space for their cultural productions and contributed women's voices to the creation of a truly progressive Latin American identity.

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APPENDIX : ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

p. 40

"...the first woman who incautiously ventured outside...thrown helplessly across his [Artemio's] horse and carried back to the officers' dormitory to be violated in silence" (Fuentes, Death of Artemio Cruz, 76).

p. 40

"Only one man rules her [Regina's] secret fancies, he [Artemio] thought, and that man possesses her and will never give her up" (Ibid, 68).

p. 42

"She would not be, forever, the woman he would occasionally take and enjoy: that would not be her limit, her destiny: to be what she had been...because in a given moment she had been his. Well: but could she love as if he had never existed? (Ibid, 151).

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