CIRCLES WITHIN CIRCLES: TRANSLATION AND ANALYSES OF SELECTED SHORT STORIES BY JOSE EMILIO PACHECO

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a detailed examination of three short stories written by the Mexican author and poet, José Emilio Pacheco, selected from two of his collections: El viento distante and El principio del placer. I chose "Virgen de los veranos" and "Parque de diversiones" from the former collection, and "La fiesta brava" from the latter. There are two main focuses in my work; one is the translation of the three short stories into English and the other is the analyses of the stories. In addition, as an aid to placing the stories contextually within the history of Mexican literature, I include a chapter on the development of the Mexican short story.

In this first chapter I provide a survey of the short story's evolution throughout Mexican literary history. I briefly document the roots of the Mexican short story in the pre-Hispanic era and I give an overview of its development throughout the subsequent centuries up to the present times. In the second chapter I explain the general and the specific strategies I employed in translating the stories into English, providing examples wherever possible. The following three chapters are dedicated to a detailed analysis of each short story; I include discussions of all aspects pertaining to theme, plot, character development, and structure.

Pacheco's treatment of time is of particular interest and I deal with this both in the individual analyses and also in the final chapter. His representation of time is reminiscent of the Aztec cyclical concept of time, in which a belief in repetition is stressed. In the final chapter I identify the common elements seen throughout the

three stories and attempt to interpret the messages they impart to the reader. The author presents a view of humankind largely centered around the opposition, within society and within the natural world, between the dominators and the dominated or the oppressors and the oppressed. His characters, both human and animal, are often representations of both. His stories reflect a belief in the endless repetitiveness of life, and he uses myth and history as the common elements in presenting his ideas and imparting his message to the reader. "Virgen de los veranos" (Summertime Virgin), "La fiesta brava" (The Bullfight), and "Parque de diversiones" (The Amusement Park), in their translated forms, follow the final chapter and conclude the work.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to:

1) give the reader a basic understanding of the development of the Mexican short story through an overview of the history of short narrative in Mexican literature;

2) translate three short stories by the Mexican author José Emilio Pacheco into English, providing an explanation of the strategies employed in the translations;

3) analyse each short story;

4) tie the three stories together by identifying their common elements, purposes, and meanings.

In the historical overview I cover the beginnings of Mexican literature in pre-Hispanic times, the extensive period of conquest and colonization which produced an abundance of chronicles and historical works, the introduction of foreign influences into Mexican literature, and the development and role of the pamphlet, the newspaper, and the magazine. I also cover the numerous literary trends and schools of thought infiltrating the genre of the short story from the late 1700's throughout the nineteenth century, the influence of the Mexican Revolution upon the short story, post-World War II movements in literature, and finally, late twentieth-century trends and themes.

In the chapter which discusses the strategies employed in translating the stories from Spanish into English, I deal with the general and the specific problems encountered in each story. I also treat the broader, more general concerns inherent in the process of translation itself, and within the individual works themselves. In

addition, I include examples from the source texts and from my translations when explaining my solutions to individual and specific problems.

I devote one chapter each to the analyses of the three short stories chosen for translation. I analyse each story on an individual basis, discussing such things as the treatment of time, character development, narrators, language, oppositions and contrasts, structural features, the role of the reader, and elements such as religion, violence and nature. I identify and discuss the author's themes in an attempt to elucidate the messages they impart to the reader.

In the final chapter, in addition to identifying and discussing the elements common to all three stories, I also examine the elements common to only two of them. In this way, I tie the stories together, forming a solid basis which I use to explain the messages found within the common themes.

The translation of literature is one of the numerous ways in which we attempt, in some small measure, to transcend or to cross the linguistic and cultural boundaries that exist between nations. By translating a work from one language to another, the information, ideas, imagination, opinions, and messages of the author of the source text are given a much greater, broader, and diverse audience. Translating Mexican literature into English opens up a vista of the Mexican literary and cultural world to the English-speaking reader, allowing an insight, albeit in small measure, into certain attitudes and perspectives of the Mexican people, as observed and represented by individual writers. Through translation the English-speaking reader can be introduced

to the causes and results of political upheaval and struggle, to religious and cultural history and development, to national economic concerns, and to attitudinal changes brought about by these forces.

However, literary translation can only play a small role in fostering a better understanding between diverse cultures and societies. For one thing, this is neither the focus nor the goal of many translations. We must also recognize the simple fact that literary translation is not an exact science; many words and phrases in one language, and the ideas behind them, can not always be presented with the same force and clarity of meaning in another language. Individual speech patterns, nuances of meaning, poetic imagery, jokes, idiomatic expressions, slang, and swearing are some of the many difficult linguistic features likely to inhibit coherent and meaningful translations.

The three short stories written by José Emilio Pacheco that I have selected for translation are important because in them he writes about the ordinary Mexican people, and in doing so he deals with matters and concerns common to all people: religion, politics, money, oppression, violence, war, and self-esteem, all leading toward the larger questions concerned with the nature of life and humankind's progress within organized societies. These translated stories open up a portion of the Mexican world to the English-speaking reader through an exposition of the beliefs and lives of certain characters. They deal with the long-term effects of the Spanish conquest of the Aztec and Maya peoples. These include the Mexican's two-tiered identity struggle--pre-Hispanic identity vis-à-vis an essentially European view of Mexican society, and the

extent to which both are being challenged in contemporary Mexico by the pervading socio-economic influence of the United States. The stories also deal with the effects of war, poverty, and religious strife on ordinary people, and certain universal human characteristics such as greed, insecurity, and dominance.

The bibliography which appears at the end of my work identifies the sources for the information I provide in the chapter dealing with the history of the Mexican short story. The bibliography also lists the dictionaries and resource books I employed while working on the translations. The translation project required many in-depth, focused readings and re-readings of the source texts. A great deal of thought about, and research into the meaning of each word and phrase, helped me to come to a more complete understanding of the stories and their common themes and messages. I accepted the invitation proffered by the author to become an active reader. As a result, I began to ask many questions about numerous aspects of the stories. This process sometimes led to definite answers, sometimes to speculative possibilities. In many cases, my questions led to even more questions before I could attempt to answer the original ones. Some questions remain largely unanswerable; each reader will find his/her own personal answers, some of them different from the ones I offer, others much the same. In this way, Pacheco's desire for the reader's active involvement in the creative process will be fulfilled.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

José Emilio Pacheco was born in Mexico City on June 30, 1939. He studied in the School of Law and the School of Philosophy and Literature at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. In 1958 he wrote a collection of short stories entitiled La sangre de Medusa, published by Juan José Arreola in his collection Cuadernos del Unicornio. Pacheco's first series of poems, first published in literary magazines then collected in a volume, is called Los elementos de la noche. It was published in 1963 and includes all the poetry he produced between 1958 and 1962. Pacheco's second collection of short stories, El viento distante, was also published in 1963. Another collection of poems titled El reposo del fuego, appeared in 1966, and the following year he wrote a novel called Morirás lejos.

José Emilio Pacheco has had a rich literary career, spanning more than twenty years, and he has produced a great many poems and short stories. His further collections of poetry include: No me preguntes cómo pasa el tiempo (1969), Irás y no volverás (1973), Islas a la deriva (1976), Ayer es nunca jamás (1978), Desde entonces: Poemas 1975-1978 (1980), Tarde o temprano (1980), Los trabajos del mar (1983), Fin de siglo (1984), Alta traición (1985), and Miro la tierra (1986). He has published two more collections of short stories: El principio del placer (1972), and Las batallas en el desierto (1981).

In 1969 Pacheco was awarded the National Poetry Prize of Aguascalientes, and in 1973 won the Villaurrutia Prize for his narrative works. He was elected to the Colegio Nacional in 1986. In addition to being an acclaimed poet, novelist, and short

story writer, Pacheco is a highly-regarded literary critic, essayist, and translator. He has served as editor on the boards of several literary journals, edited several anthologies of Mexican poetry, collaborated on an anthology of poetry with Octavio Paz, and has translated French and American poets into Spanish. Pacheco has also travelled and lived in other countries and has been a visiting lecturer at universities in Mexico, the United States, Great Britain, and Canada, including the University of British Columbia.

Pacheco's poetry and stories are introspective and metaphysical and many of his themes are centered on a cyclical sense of time, presenting humankind as both a destroyer and as a victim of decay within the natural environment and within society. He presents life as a never-ending repetition of cycles: birth, death, and re-birth, occurring in both humankind and within the natural world. Pacheco employs a wide variety of styles in his poetry as well as in his stories, and the language in his prose is often poetic.

CHAPTER ONE

THE MEXICAN SHORT STORY: ORIGINS AND SHORT HISTORY

The genre which has come to be known as the short story, a literary art form distinct from the novel, the novella, and the essay, has a rich tradition in Mexican literature. It is by no means unique to Mexican literary history--short stories exist in countless other cultures and have more ancient roots in some countries than in others. But Mexican authors have worked this genre well, especially throughout the twentieth century, and have produced an abundance of short stories. As we trace the development of this genre in Mexico we will see that stories have been presented to their audiences and published in many different ways: from oral and pictorial to pamphlets, newspapers, magazines and collected works.

Equally diverse in the history of the Mexican short story are its content, style, and purpose. One of the reasons for this is the changing tides of literary movements influenced by politics, foreign trends, cultural development and technological growth, the latter having a tremendous effect upon all forms of communication. But there is another reason for this diversity: a great number of Mexican short story writers are also well-known essayists, poets, novelists, political writers, journalists, and chroniclers. In many cases they are more renowned for the works they have produced in the other genres than for their short stories. Still another reason for this diversity is the fact that many of the authors throughout the history of Mexican literature have also worked in other professions during their literary careers. Sometimes this meant

that they travelled extensively, enabling them to see life from different perspectives, and sometimes it meant that they were involved in social and political power circles.

PRE-HISPANIC

Because the spoken word evolved before the written word it can be said that all literary forms are rooted, in their infancy, in the oral tradition. In pre-Hispanic times the people of such cultures as the Maya, Toltec, Texcocano, Aztec, and Tarasco told each other stories about their ancestors, kings, priests, and heroes. Evidence is scant, but some hieroglyphic and pictorial discoveries, as well as some written works, tend to support this contention.

An important document relating to hieroglyphic evidence is El Anónimo or Códice Ramírez, discovered by Don José Fernando Ramírez in 1856. Carlos González Peña states in his History of Mexican Literature:

> The Codex, a single volume bound in vellum, contains a 'Report of the Origin of the Indians of New Spain, According to Their Legends' and three fragments belonging to other works. One of these depicts incidents relative to the history of Montezuma I; the second describes events of the Conquest from the arrival of the Spaniards at Texcoco up to the surrender of Mexico. . . . It is thought that the 'Report' was written about the middle of the sixteenth century; and, according to Chavero, it is an extensive interpretation of some hieroglyphic codex of the ancient Aztecs and was made in conformity with the purest

tradition. (46-47)

The works of Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, Fray Diego Durán, Hernando Alvarado Tezozómoc, Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxóchitl and the anonymous Relación de Michoacán are excellent sources of information regarding the pre-Hispanic story in Mexico. These works resulted from the study of ancient drawings and pictorials and from interviews with Indians. Many of these pre-Hispanic stories are concerned with the rise and fall of empires, with creation myths, kings, historical events, and even ordinary family events. The old books such as the Popol Vuh (the Book of the People, containing the history and legends of the Kingdom of Quiché) and the Libros de Chilam Balam, are evidence of a pre-Hispanic tradition replete with legends, myths, fables, cosmogonic and etiological stories, and heroic adventures (Luis Leal 12-13).

Luis Leal considers Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, a descendant of the Acolhua kings of the Texcocano culture and a student at the school of Santa Cruz de Tlaltelolco, the first Mexican short story writer. Although Leal subsequently casts doubts upon the originality of Ixtlilxóchitl's work, because of uncertainty concerning his sources, he claims that in Historia Chichimeca (1610-40) and Relaciones (c.1600) we see true short stories for the first time in Mexican literature (Leal 14). Sahagún's Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España (1569) is filled with myths, legends, stories and traditions of the Aztec peoples, as are Durán's Historia de las Indias de Nueva España y Islas de Tierra Firme (1581) and Tezozómoc's Crónica mexicana (c.1598) (Leal 15-16).

SIXTEENTH CENTURY

These and other works give us a good idea of what life was like and what kind of stories people told before the Spanish arrived in what is now known as Mexico and Guatemala. There were numerous chroniclers and writers actively involved in the conquest, both inside and outside the clerical orders and armies. Some were Spanish-born, others were first generation Spanish-Americans, or creoles, and still others were of a mixed Spanish and Indian heritage. They compiled documents and wrote about the events in which they participated. They set down their observations, collected stories from the Indians, and documented their thoughts during the years of the conquest and colonization of Mexico. There are many accounts of battles, descriptions of the ways people lived in various geographical locations, and chronicles of journeys.

It was during the sixteenth century in New Spain that education and learning really began to grow rapidly. Many institutes of learning were established and fields of study were broadened. The first educational institute in America was founded by Fray Pedro de Gante (1479-1572). It was called the School of San Francisco de México. The Academy of Santa Cruz de Tlaltelolco, founded in 1536 by Mexico's first bishop, Fray Juan de Zumárraga, provided a place for higher learning. In an effort to educate the growing class of Spanish-Indian mestizos, Don Antonio de Mendoza founded the Academy of San Juan de Letrán. Two schools for both Spanish and creole children were established: one at Tiripitío in 1540 and another called the Academy of San Pablo in 1575. The University of Mexico was officially opened in 1553 and both the Academy of San Pedro and the Academy of Santa María

were founded in 1573. Spanish writers, now living in the New World, contributed to the growing interest in the study of letters and to the production of Mexican literature.

It was also during the colonization period that Spanish language and culture began to mix with the various indigenous languages and cultures. A uniquely Mexican literary culture, different from both the pre-Hispanic and the Spanish cultures, but with elements of both, began to develop.

Spanish priests from various orders began to teach Spanish to the Indians as a starting point for converting them to Catholicism. At the same time, many of these priests began to learn the Indian languages, and functioned as interpreters. They used their knowledge of the Indian languages to glean information about the Indian cultures, and wrote down what they learned and what they observed about these cultures and about the process of colonization and conversion. They wrote about the conquest, the conquered people, and the legends of the towns of these conquered peoples.

There were many historians and chroniclers in the sixteenth century. Leal notes that many of the stories within these chronicles can be classified as fantastic, supernatural, humorous and popular (Leal 20). Some of these historians and chroniclers were: Fray Toribio de Benavente (died c.1568), known as Motolinía (meaning "poor one", supposedly the first native word he learned in New Spain and thus adopted as his name), Baltasar de Obregón, Fray Bartolomé de las Casas (1474-1566), Francisco Cervantes de Salazar (1514-1575), and Juan Suárez de Peralta (born c.1536), all of whom incorporate elements of the supernatural or the fantastic into some of their writings. Others who contributed to the genre include Fray Jerónimo de

Mendieta (1525-1604), Father José de Acosta (1539-1600), and Fray Juan de Torquemada (c.1560-1624).

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Throughout the seventeenth century historians and chroniclers continued to produce a large part of the literature in New Spain. A strong creative literary atmosphere did not exist and the study and production of letters were dominated by the church. Ecclesiastical writers and theological works abounded, the church controlling the printing presses and exercising censorship on foreign books, even those coming from Spain. During the first part of the seventeenth century, some of the authors from the sixteenth century continued to produce works in the same style that they had used in the sixteenth century. But the latter half of the seventeenth century saw others writing in a newer style known as *culteranismo* or Gongorism. The movement took its name "from its attempt to represent everything refined and cultured, in opposition to the vulgar," and because it schooled itself "in the disciplines that constituted the literary culture of that day--i.e., the classics" (González Peña 99).

The term Gongorism came from Luis de Góngora y Argote (1561-1627), a major Spanish poet who promoted *culteranismo.* In his History of Mexican Literature, González Peña describes Gongorism:

> Gongorism attempted, in substance, the following: to mold the Spanish on the Latin, introducing not only many Latin words but also, in servile imitation of that language, serious syntactical changes; to replace the

> direct meanings of words by figurative senses; to employ artificial metaphors, involving subtle relations and almost imperceptible meanings in the metaphorical terms; and to multiply, finally, the allusions to classical mythology. (99)

This movement found its way to Mexico and many Mexican writers adopted and even expanded upon the style. It invaded not only poetry but historical and religious works as well.

Don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora (not to be confused with Góngora y Argote), another seventeenth-century author, was a Mexican-born Jesuit scholar who was a prolific and influential writer. His fields of study included physics, astronomy, mathematics, languages, history and the customs and life of the ancient Indian cultures. One of his most well-known historical/literary works is Infortunios de Alonso Ramírez, which González Peña says was "written in clear and fluent prose . . . and because of its truly romantic character, it is considered, besides being a great work of history, the first Mexican novel" (134). Later however, he states that "so far as the novel itself is concerned, only the germ of it can be found in colonial literary history. . . . *Misfortunes of Alonso Ramírez* . . . would seem to be a novel but in reality is not" (184-185). Other note worthy authors of this century include the Franciscan Agustín de Vetancourt (1620-1700), a linguist and historian, and Francisco Bramón who published a pastoral romance in 1620.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

There were many chroniclers still recording in the first half of the eighteenth century and the members of the various religious orders continued to increase their knowledge of the native languages and to write about the legends and stories of the Indians. By the middle of the century literary changes began to occur and the somewhat stagnant conditions under which previous authors wrote was coming to an end. The reform movement, which González Peña describes as a "reaction against the classical" (103), took hold and was fueled by weakening censorship, new political ideas and more foreign influences from Europe. The Jesuit teachers advanced this movement in literature, and although their eventual expulsion from Mexico slowed down the cultural movement, it did not stop it. "Open opposition surged against scholasticism", and in 1774 Benito Díaz de Gamarra (1745-1783) published his Elementa Recentioris Philosophiae, a modern philosophy (González Peña 103). The physical sciences were also being studied more extensively in Mexico during this time by such men as Father José Antonio Alzate (1729-1790), Don Francisco Javier Gamboa (1717-1794), Don Joaquín Velázquez de León, and Don Antonio León, to mention just a few. More than just the chroniclers were now writing about the history of Mexico and the conquest and colonization.

A Jesuit historian and teacher, Don Francisco Javier Clavijero (1731-1767) is described by González Peña as the one who "attempted to rout the presumptuous and vacuous Gongoristic style and to bring sacred oratory back to sanity by combating the pompous preachers" (137). He was fluent in many European and Indian languages, and also studied the sciences, producing works outside the field of theology. His

Historia antigua de México "establishes, for the first time, the chronology of the indigenous peoples" (González Peña 138).

There are several other authors of note in this century. The Italian Don Lorenzo Boturini Benaduci (c.1702-c.1756), came to Mexico in 1736, collected documents and began an extensive investigation into the apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe, supposedly seen by Juan Diego in 1531. Don Mariano Fernández de Echeverría (1718-1779) was a Mexican scholar and lawyer who also collected ancient documents and who travelled extensively throughout his life. He became friends with Boturini (they were both exiled from Mexico at the time), and obtained more information from him about the history of New Spain. He used this information, along with his own collections, to write a history of New Spain, which was still incomplete upon his death after many years of work. Father Andrés Cavo (1739-1803), a Mexican Jesuit (also exiled), is important because he is "the only Mexican historian who treated the extensive period of Spanish domination" (González Peña 144).

Luis Leal explains how critics such as González Peña and Castillo Ledón do not admit the existence of the short story as a separate genre during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries because none were published in collections. He points out that it is within the histories and chronicles, and within the writings about legends and myths that one can look in order to find the colonial Mexican short story (Leal 19). I believe that it is also here that we can find the cultural and thematic, if not the structural and stylistic roots, of the truly Mexican short story. Although these

writers did not produce what is known today as the short story, they nevertheless produced (or re-produced) stories that were short and complete in themselves.

NINETEENTH CENTURY

The union of the Spanish race with the Indian race produced a new ethnic group which was called the mestizo class, because of the mix in heritage. This group, in combination with the creoles, began to grow and form a new Mexican society and educated class. The fight for independence from Spain took place from 1810-1821 and the many changes in society which this independence brought about filtered down to literature. In the first part of the century the dominant theme of Mexican literature was political. It contributed to a change in prose style and form, which became more like everyday speech.

In 1805 Jacobo Villaurrutia and Carlos María Bustamante founded the Diario de México, the nation's first daily newspaper. The Spanish Constitution of 1812 granted a temporary freedom of the press which contributed to the production and growth of pamphlets. This was somewhat short-lived at first and subsided between 1813-1819. However, with the re-establishment of freedom of the press in 1819, pamphlets, periodicals and newspapers thrived. This is an important development in Mexican literary history. Not only were these pamphlets, periodicals and newspapers effective vehicles for political propaganda, but they also provided a place for the publication of poetry, scientific articles, travel accounts, and stories.

The short story was still not cultivated as an independent genre, but its seeds

can be found in the gazettes and pamphlets of this era and in the novels of one of the most important and influential writers of this time, José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi, also a revolutionary pamphleteer. Lizardi (1776-1827) founded a newspaper called El Pensador Mexicano, a name which also became his pseudonym. He stopped publishing the paper in 1814, but other publications followed and "in 1820 he organized the Public Reading Society, which supplied books and periodicals by subscription" (González Peña 186). In 1816 he published El Periquillo sarniento in which we find three well-defined short stories. Leal tells us that one of them, an incident which occurs while Periquillo is in the Philippines, has nothing to do with the plot of the novel, and that the story has its own unity and well-developed characters (Leal 29). The characters, the incidents, the language and the atmosphere are very Mexican. Leal states that it is perhaps the first real short story, in the modern sense of the word, in Mexican literature, and he agrees with Rojas González who consideres Lizardi a short story writer because he wrote "little stories" (Leal 29). Lizardi is also considered the first Mexican novelist.

During the period 1821-1867, the era of romanticism and *costumbrismo* in Mexican literature, political unrest was still very prevalent. Independence had not solved all the problems among the conservatives, the liberals, and the traditionalists. Some wanted to preserve colonial rule, others wanted to break it. But both because of and in spite of all the political upheaval in Mexico, literature continued to thrive.

The Academy of Letters was founded in 1836 by José María Lacunza and Guillermo Prieto. A group which included José Joaquín Pesado, Ignacio Rodríguez

Galván, Fernando Ramírez de Aguilar, Calderón and Gorostiza formed around these writers. These young men wrote poetry and drama for the most part, but some of them wrote in the new genres of the short novel and the short story (Leal 33).

The romantic short stories with their themes of impossible love, rebellion, and the collapse of love and honour were sentimental and idealistic. They can be separated from their European roots, however, by their physical descriptions and the language of their characters, who use Mexicanisms in their speech. Some historical Mexican colonial themes were also incorporated. Also worthy of mention here is Florencio M. del Castillo (1828-1863), because he was the first Mexican writer to dedicate himself completely to writing the short novel and the short story.

The *costumbrista* sketches, narratives which dealt with the customs of various regions, the corruption of government, and the deplorable life of the Mexican villagers, provided a transition between those writers mentioned above and those who cultivated the short story shortly afterwards. These sketches also carry an historical importance because they dealt with Mexican themes, locations and characters. Manuel Payno (1810-1894) is well-known for writing such sketches, and his work helped provide the aforementioned transition. Other outstanding writers of this genre are Guillermo Prieto (1818-1897), Hilarión Frías y Soto (1831-1905), and José Tomás de Cuéllar ("Facundo") (1830-1894).

Mexico enjoyed an era of peace between 1867 and 1883, and a period of nationalism began. Literature flourished. Ignacio Manuel Altamirano (1834-1893) urged his fellow writers to put political differences aside, and in 1869 he founded the

magazine El Renacimiento in which all types of writing had a place. In it were seen "poetry, criticism, the novel, short stories, history, literary chronicles, theatrical reviews, and translations of great foreign poets, ancient and modern. . . " (González Peña 261).

The anecdotal short story, which centered on the use of a single and simple subject matter, was perfected by both José María Roa Bárcena (1827-1908) and Vicente Riva Palacio (1832-1896). Leal believes that with them the modern short story was born in Mexico (55). Their stories had truly Mexican themes and exercised a notable influence on the generation to come.

LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY--EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera (1859-1895) was a modernist prose writer who introduced the literary short story into newspapers. He and Carlos Díaz Dufóo founded Revista Azul in 1894. The modernists were not concerned with social problems, they were artesans of the word. Modernism, which originated with the Nicaraguan poet and writer Rubén Darío, was a reaction against romanticism and it fought vulgarity, commonness, inattention to detail and exaggerated sentimentalism. Concerned with revitalizing what they saw as out-dated discourse, the modernists strove for perfection of form with rich, colourful, exotic and sensuous language. Their goal was verbal refinement. Modernism in Mexican literature reached its highest level with a group of writers associated with the Revista Moderna, founded in 1898. Included in this group were Amado Nervo (1870-1919), Luis G. Urbina (c.1866-1934)

and Rubén M. Campos (c.1874-1945). Although modernist ideals and forms were more apparent in poetry, the movement did have an influence on the development of the short story.

Realism, which developed parallel to modernism, was another movement which was reflected in the short story. It has a rich tradition in Mexican literary history, and its influence is seen in the neo-realist movement (1915-1940) and even later, although to a lesser degree, after 1940 in some of the works of Juan Rulfo, José Revueltas and others.

The realists depicted life, people, and nature objectively and factually. They tried to reflect reality with the indifference of a mirror using real situations and characters taken from everyday life. The themes of the realist works were generally social or political and the realist writers tried not to let their own personalities superimpose on the characters they created. There was a desire to know the causes of the problems they studied and to suggest solutions. Some of the Mexican writers were influenced by French realists and naturalists such as Guy de Maupassant, Emile Zola, Honoré de Balzac and Gustave Flaubert. Others were influenced by Spanish realists such as Benito Pérez Galdós and José María Pereda, and still others by fellow Mexican authors such as Lizardi, Cuéllar, and Altamirano. One important Mexican realist short story writer is José López Portillo y Rojas (1850-1923), whose "La horma de su zapato" is considered one of the best Mexican short stories (Leal 73). Other significant authors of this movement include Rafael Delgado (1853-1914), Victoriano Salado Alvarez (1867-1931), and Ciro B. Ceballos (1873-1938).

The regionalist short story, whose themes dealt with specific Mexican regional life, can be seen in the works of Manuel José Othón (c.1857-1906), Cayetano Rodríguez Beltrán (1866-c.1936), José María Barrios de los Ríos (1864-1903), and Abel C. Salazar (1878-1925). These authors, like many other Mexican writers, had other professions which enabled them to travel and to observe Mexican regional life-styles. They were lawyers, professors and politicians. Some of them held official public positions and some of them collaborated in newspapers and magazines in which they published their stories. Although Portillo y Rojas and Delgado also wrote some regionalist stories, their work presents other aspects of Mexican life and is not exclusively regionalist in form like those whose works represent Veracruz and the central region of Mexico (Leal 76).

The impressionist short story combined elements of modernism and realism. It distinguished itself thematically from the modernist short story and it differed from the realist short story by reflecting the author's personality. The most outstanding Mexican impressionist author was Angel de Campo, also known as "Micrós" (1868-1908). He created a different world in his stories, a kind of microcosm in which his characters experienced life. His work was published in both newspapers and magazines such as Revista Azul and Revista Moderna. Another impressionist author of note is Alejandro Cuevas (1870-1940), an author who also played music and painted. He is best known for his collection of short stories, Cuentos macabros.

THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION

At the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century Porfirio Díaz ruled Mexico under a "constitutional dictatorship". In 1890 he had manipulated a constitutional amendment which abolished all limits on presidential terms. The Indians had their lands taken away from them and many Yaqui and Maya Indians who resisted were killed or transported forcibly to the Yucatán. Foreign investors were given all kinds of incentives and concessions, such as tax exemption and protection in the courts. They invested heavily, improving and modernizing many industries, but at the expense of the Mexican people.

The hacienda was the principal form of land ownership and it was also a social system. By 1910 fewer than ten per cent of the Indian communties had any land. Schools were non-existent on the haciendas, so the peons were condemned to illiteracy. In this same year Francisco y Madero and his Anti-Reelectionist Party began to challenge Díaz's presidency. Political unrest was the order of the day, leading up to the Mexican Revolution which began at the end of 1910. The Revolution had a tremendous effect upon Mexican society and therefore also upon Mexican literature.

Although it began as a political movement to overthrow Díaz, the Revolution became a complex social upheaval. The Mexican people had many grievances. For some the issue was land reform, for others it was protective labour laws, public education, or nationalization of utilities; for still others it was restrictions on foreign investment or limitation of church power. There were many different rebel leaders and

groups of fighters plagued with internal dissent and constantly-changing loyalties. Coalitions formed, broke apart, then re-formed with different members. The Revolution became a series of civil wars whoses leaders had different goals and conflicting means of achieving them. It was a bloody revolution with much killing and suffering which lasted until the end of 1920.

All of this social unrest is reflected in the literature of the period. A new literary movement, called naturalism, was introduced into the Mexican short story genre. Like the realists, the naturalists portrayed life in a realistic, objective and scientific manner. But they differed from the realists in that they often emphasized the unpleasant and sordid aspect of the human condition. They did not shy away from graphic descriptions of real human life with all its pain, tragedy and "unsightly" brutality. Their objective was to create a better Mexican society so they were concerned with the social problems of their day. Many naturalist short stories dealt with victims of society, and with the exploitation of the Indians and the peasants. Later in this century stories about the Revolution appear, with obvious roots in these naturalist works. Important short story writers from this movement are Mariano Azuela (1873-1952), Marcelino Dávalos (1871-1923),and Heriberto Frías (1870-1925).

TWENTIETH CENTURY--1910-1945

Between 1910 and 1945 there were numerous literary trends and movements which co-existed and somewhat overlapped. As before, many Mexican short story writers had other professions, wrote in the other literary genres and followed more

than one trend. It was during this period that the essay began to compete with the short story for space in newspapers and magazines.

The reaction against positivism, a philosophical system founded by Auguste Comte (1798-1857) which rejected abstract thought in favour of dealing with positive facts and phenomena, manifested itself in three groups of writers in Mexico. *Los ateneístas*, so named because they formed an atheneum, were mostly philosophers, poets, critics, and artists, but some of them produced short stories. They distanced themselves from French influences and looked to the Mexican people for their inspiration. Some of these authors were Alfonso Reyes (1889-1959), José Vasconcelos (c.1882-1959), Carlos González Peña (1885-1955), Mariano Solva y Aceves (1887-1937), Julio Torri (1889-1970) and Genaro Fernández MacGregor (1883-1959).

The colonialists, like *los ateneístas*, were not interested in foreign influences, and concerned themselves more with Mexican ideas. But they turned away and distanced themselvs from the degrading aspects of life, and in doing so separated themselves, in an idealistic manner, from the very (Mexican) reality they sought to portray. Some of these authors published in the newspapers of the day such as El Mexicano and El Heraldo de México, and many were published in magazines such as Revista de Revistas and Artes y Letras. Writers from this group who produced short stories are Artemio de Valle-Arizpe (1888-1961), Guillermo Jiménez (1891-1967), Jorge de Godoy (1894-1950), Francisco Monterde (1894-1985), Manuel Horta (1897-1955), and Genaro Estrada (1887-1937).

The third group of writers who reacted against positivism were *los contemporáneos*, so named because they centered around the magazine Contemporáneos (1928-1931). Their work did not reflect Mexican reality; they were attacked by members of the Escuela Mexicana, a group they opposed, for being overly concerned with European modernism. They were condemned for not being nationalistic, but they did write extensively about Mexican literature and art. Two authors of note in this group, both founders of the magazine mentioned above, are Bernardo Ortiz de Montellano (1899-1949) and Jaime Torres Bodet (1902-1974).

Most of the short stories which these three groups of writers produced did not portray Mexican reality and the crises which Mexican society was facing. The first few years of the Revolution did not seem to provide material for stories. All that changed however with the next group of writers to be discussed--the neo-realists. After Mariano Azuela wrote the novel Los de abajo in 1915 (a highly acclaimed work about the Revolution and the life of the rebel fighters), an abundance of stories about the Revolution began to appear. These were followed by stories that dealt with the plight of the Indians, stories of social protest and stories about Mexican rural life. The themes of these latter stories continued to be explored well into the second half of the twentieth century, but stories about the Revolution mostly died out after 1940.

There were a great number of short stories, novels, essays, and memoirs which directly exploited the theme of the Mexican Revolution. Leaders and fighters like Pancho Villa, Emiliano Zapata, Venustiano Carranza, and Alvaro Obregón, along with countless others (including women soldiers), provided the writers of the day with a

rich source of material. Their stories explored human nature as it relates to the violence of war and fighting, to the uncertainty of political and social unrest, and to the pain and humiliation of poverty and suffering. Humour and irony are also a part of many of these works which are filled with great passion and executed with skill. These stories were being written "during a time of intellectual rejuvenation and national self-examination in Mexico " when the historians were worrying "about the cultural identity and destiny of Mexico" (Taylor 141). Some of the many authors who wrote novels and short stories about the Revolution are Mariano Azuela (1873-1951), Martín Luis Guzmán (1887-1977), Rafael Muñoz (1899-1972), Gerardo Murillo ("Dr. Atl", c.1877-1964), Mauricio Magdaleno (1906-1986), Jorge Ferretis (c.1905-1962), Nellie Campobello (1909), and Celestino Herrera Frimont (1900). Some writers, like General Francisco L. Urquizo (1891-1969) and Jesús Millán (1882) took an active part in the Revolution. Many of the authors mentioned above also had other professions. Some were involved in politics or education or journalism, and some held public posts. Short stories were published in magazines and newspapers such as El Universal, El Universal Ilustrado, and El Nacional, but they were also appearing as collections in book form.

Stemming directly from stories about the Revolution was the short story of social protest. The themes of these stories dealt with conflicting ideologies and class struggle. They presented the profound difficulties in life with which the Mexican people had to contend. Some stories dealt with the injustices committed by politicians, others were about those who were prospering from the Revolution, and

about the exploitation of entire towns. Again, some of the authors in this group had more than one career and their interests overlapped, making them more aware of the social problems facing Mexican society. Some of these writers were Ricardo Flores Magón (1873-1922), José Manuel Puig Casauranc (1888-1939), José Mancisidor (c.1894-1956), Mario Pavón Flores (1905), Jesús Colín Segura, and César Garizurieta (1904-1961).

Works which dealt with the indigenous peoples of Mexico began to appear after Gregorio López y Fuentes' novel El indio won a national literary prize in 1935. These novels and short stories were told from many different points of view and often dealt with old legends. More novels than short stories were penned about the indigenous peoples, but some of those who wrote in the short story genre were Antonio Mediz Bolio (1884-1957), Ermilo Abreu Gómez (1894-1971), and Andrés Henestrosa (1906).

A resurgence of stories dealing with legends and traditions occurred during the first few decades which followed the Revolution. Writers like Jesús Romero Flores (1885), Gregorio Torres Quintero (1856-1934), and Fernando Ramírez de Aguilar (1887-c.1950) collected legends and traditions about the peoples and lands of their respective regions. Aztec and Zacotecan myths were recovered and published by these and other collectors.

Rural life became the subject of many literary works during that period as well. They reflected a very Mexican outlook on life, depicting national customs and types in regional settings. These depictions of rural life appear much more in the novel than

they do in the short story, but like the indigenous and Revolutionary themes, they were seen in the genre of the short story to some extent. Dramatizations of daily events, traditional customs and Mexican folklore and tradition were exploited to produce stories published in newspapers such as El Universal Gráfico and magazines such as El Maestro. Many were also collected and published in books. Some of the authors in this group include José Rubén Romero (1890-1952), Gregorio López y Fuentes (c.1897-1966), and Francisco Rojas González (c.1904-1951).

The neo-impressionists also left their mark on the genre of the short story. Sometimes their stories personified animals, and life was seen through their eyes. Other works utilized scenes taken from the reality that the Mexican people were living, incorporating descriptions of everyday people, and of people living frustrated lives. Significant writers to exploit this theme were Gilberto F. Aguilar (1888-1959), José de Jesús Núñez y Domínguez (1887-1959), and Antonio Acevedo Escobedo (1909-1985).

TWENTIETH CENTURY--POST WAR

After World War II novels and short stories began to enjoy a new popularity. "A new generation of readers appears in Latin America and determines (by its numbers, by its orientation, by its dynamism) the first *boom* of the Hispanic American novel" (qtd. in Taylor 141). Emir Rodríguez Monegal identifies two central causes for this boom. First, Spanish writers who fled Europe during the war contributed to a cultural re-birth in Latin American countries; second, the population and industrial

growth of many large Latin American cities led to the construction of more educational institutions, libraries, bookstores, and publishing houses (qtd. in Graniela-Rodríguez 12-13).

Ilan Stavans, in the introduction to Pyramids of Glass: Short Fiction from Modern Mexico, states that "as a resut of the immediate availability of translations, literary influences have been crossing linguistic and cultural borders" (xvii). The rapid expansion and availability of air travel, also a direct result of World War II, contributed to literary development by facilitating communication among writers. Many international influences can be seen in the literature produced after the war and up to the present day. Not only are there more stories with international themes and trends, but styles have been influenced by other Latin American writers, and by European, North American, and Asian literary figures.

During the 1960s many Latin American countries (though not Mexico) were under military dictatorships and many writers sought political and social freedom abroad. Many young Mexican writers also studied outside their country where they met other Latin American and European writers and exchanged ideas. For the most part, however, Mexican authors continued to be concerned with their own past and present social, political, and cultural issues. The search for identity and origin, a central theme in many of their stories, has continued to be one of the principal concerns of contemporary Mexican literature.

Between 1947 and 1967 stories with an abundance of styles, tendencies and preferences were published by such authors as José Revueltas, Agustín Yáñez, Juan

Rulfo, Juan José Arreola, Rosario Castellanos, Ricardo Garibay, Carlos Fuentes, Jorge Ibargüengoitia, Elena Poniatowska, Sergie Galindo, Sergio Pitol, José Emilio Pacheco, Juan García Ponce, Salvador Elizondo, Gustavo Sáinz and José Agustín (Kohut 24).

One of the literary currents which appeared after World War II produced the expressionist short story which sought to explore the mind. Its authors, like the anti-positivists, were not concerned with the reality which had preoccupied other groups of writers. Their themes, as seen in the works of José Martínez Sotomayor (c.1896-1980), dealt with intellectual problems and dilemmas. In many expressionist stories, like those of Ricardo Garibay (1923), plot was incidental and served only as a vehicle to delve into the consciousnsess of the characters. Two other significant writers of expressionist literature are Efrén Hernández (1903-1958) and Juan José Arreola(1918).

The short story which dealt with fantastic themes also began to be explored. Until the forties most Mexican short stories were too realistic to deal effectively with the fantastic, although as noted previously, the fantastic was a common theme in many pre-Hispanic writings. Fantastic happenings, including supernatural occurrences, mysterious events, visions, hallucinations and superstitions were predominant themes. These fantastic stories dealt with the limitless realm of the imagination and they explored the boundaries between reality and illusion. Some Mexican writers, including José Emilio Pacheco, were influenced by the highly acclaimed Argentinian author, Jorge Luis Borges, who explored fantastic and supernatural themes at great length.

Francisco Peláez (1911), known by the pseudonym Francisco Tario, was also

influenced by the work of Borges. He wrote stories in which animals and objects thought and spoke. Some of the other authors important to this literary group are Octavio G. Barreda (1897-1964), who founded the magazines Lectura de México, and El Hijo Pródigo, Raúl Ortiz Avila (1906), Fernando Benítez (1910), Bernardo Jiménez Montellano (1922-1950), José Emilio Pacheco (1939), and Rafael Bernal (1915-1972), who also wrote in the next genre to be examined.

Coinciding with the fantastic short story was the beginning of the detective short story in Mexico. This has not been a major genre in Mexico, unlike the situation in North America and Britain, but stories of crime and detection have become more popular in Mexico in recent years. Some of those who published detective stories were Alfonso Quiroga, Antonio Helú (1900-1972), who edited a detective story magazine, Rafael Bernal (1915-1972), José Martínez de la Vega (1907-1954), and María Elvira Bermúdez (1916-1988).

The humorous and the satirical short story had a certain following as well. Luis Leal believes that there were more satirists than humorists in Mexican literature (136), but that too has changed in recent years. Rafael Solana (1915), César Garizurieta (1904-1961), Carlos Villamil Castillo, Octavio N. Bustamante (1903-1966) and Guillermo Castillo (c.1899-c.1952) all explored humour and/or satire in their works.

Agustín Yáñez (1904-1980) is the most renowned author of a small group of writers whose works made use of Mexican provincial city atmospheres. Some of the tales were autobiographical and in many of them a yearning for lost youth was

expressed. They are also important for the descriptions they provide of the very Mexican ambience of these provincial cities. Others who wrote stories of this type were Alfonso Taracena (1899), José López Bermúdez (c.1910-1971), and Roberto Guzmán Araujo (1911-1969).

Ilan Stavans believes that the historical development of the short story took a sharp turn and came of age in 1953, acquiring new stamina and a concise style, when Juan Rulfo published a collection of short stories called El llano en llamas (Pyramids of Glass xviii). Although the production of realist short stories decreased after 1940, some authors continued the movement. They harked back to the themes of social protest, the poor conditions and treatment of the indigenous people, to the concerns of rural life and to the degradation often caused by poverty and the lack of education. These stories often centered on very violent themes or dark, depressing plots. The settings were sometimes desolate and the situations in which the characters found themselves were often hopeless. Death in its countless forms, treated from all angles, was very much a part of this literature.

Many Mexican authors who occupied themselves with such themes were extremely talented, and produced works that are still studied today. Most important are José Revueltas (1914-1976), also a novelist, whose work is dark and complex, and Juan Rulfo (1918-1986), a true master of the word who used dialogue extremely effectively, allowing his characters to tell the story. His novel Pedro Páramo is an example of the search for boundaries between reality and illusion. Other authors in this category are Edmundo Valadés (1915), José Alvarado (1911-1974), José María

Benítez (c.1898-1967), Ramón Rubín (1912), Raul Noriega (1907-1975), Juan de la Cabada (1903-1987), and Héctor Morales Saviñón (1920) . Some of these writers contributed works to the magazines and newspapers of the day such as Revista de Revistas, Pan, Revista de América, El Nacional, and Novedades.

A new literary genre called the testimonial narrative began to appear in the late sixties and into the seventies. It was another form of realism, but it differed from nineteenth-century realism in its attempt "to register directly the human experience and to allow the 'protagonists' of reality to speak" (Taylor 30). It also differed from the realism of the fifties in that its authors attempted to record events and experiences in a journalistic fashion.

Much testimonial narrative had political or social themes. A large quantity was written about a particular event which occurred in 1968, the same year in which the Olympic Games were held in Mexico City. The event changed completely the manner in which an entire generation related to its government. Although Mexico had enjoyed recent economic progress and the government was stable, it refused to listen to any discordant voice or public criticism (33-34). As a reaction against this repression, enforced by the police, the student movement had been growing throughout the summer and by the fall it had the support of many people. On the second of October a huge student meeting in the Plaza of Tlatelolco turned into a massacre when the army fired on the crowd. Hundreds of people died and still more were injured in the resulting pandemonium and chaos.

The literature which was written as a direct result of this massacre served as a

testimony to the horror, confusion, fear and disbelief of those who suddenly found themselves involved in it. It was also an attempt to understand how and why such a thing could happen. Elena Poniatowska (1933), an acclaimed novelist, short story writer and journalist, published an extremely successful testimonial called La noche de Tlatelolco which includes interviews, reports, statements and even photographs in its attempt to document the events of the evening. Luis Leal also wrote about that night:

> The most important consequence of Tlatelolco, in literature, is the deep impression it left in the minds of the intellectuals and creative writers. All of them agree that the year 1968 marks a break with the past, a break with the period characterized by changes brought about by the Revolutuon of 1910-1917 . . . The literature of Tlatelolco revealed that the ideals of the Revolution, so strongly defended by the party in power, had become empty. (qtd. in Taylor 34)

Testimonial narrative was one of a variety of forms and themes that characterized the new narrative of Mexico throughout the late sixties, seventies, and eighties (23). Gustavo Sáinz, José Agustín, Salvador Elizondo, Juan Tovar, and José Emilio Pacheco all produced works which belonged to another movement, named *la onda* by Margo Glantz, in which social protest and rebellion against previously accepted morals was expressed. These stories expressed anti-establishment views and were characterized by their language, that of the youth culture. They reflected the values of the so-called "counter culture", and often the characters in them yearned to attain the desired qualities attributed to the "demi-gods" of rock and roll, sex and

drugs (Kohut 30). Having an effect on social attitudes through a personal message in song and music, enjoying a certain amount of power over a following of peers or fans, living in the fast lane, and experimenting with many new ideas and life-styles were some of these desired qualities. The music of the sixties and seventies with its themes of protest, rebellion, freedom, sex, drugs, peace and love left its mark on the Mexican literature of this generation. Margo Glantz, in Esquince de Cinutra, talks about this musical influence in literature:

> La irrupción de otros medios extraliterarios es evidente: el ritmo y la modalidad de la música de los cantantes roqueros--Beatles, Rolling Stones, Doors, Mothers of Invention--se hallan presentes y el signo mismo de la popularidad parece concentrarse en estos artistas. . . . El lenguaje literario sigue jadeante el ritmo musical intentando dar el salto para convertirse en vehículo de comunicación universal . . . . (203)
>
> [The up-surge of other extra-literary mediums is evident: the rhythm and the musical modes of the rock singers--the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, the Doors, the Mothers of Invention--are present and the very mark of popularity seems to be concentrated on these artists. . . . The literary language breathlessly follows the musical rhythm trying to make the leap into becoming a vehicle for universal communication . . . .]

The literary movement known as *la onda* in Mexico was a direct result of influence from the United States and its "beat generation" with novelists such as Jack Kerouac and poets such as Allan Ginsberg.

There was another movement, which came on the heels of *la onda*, which Magda Graniela-Rodríguez calls *la escritura*. It embraces multiple tendencies in the Mexican narrative of the seventies and eighties. For example, the so-called anti-novel in the style of the French *nouveau roman*, the re-named experimental novel and the cosmopolitan novel are all included in this movement, represented by authors such as Salvador Elizondo, Julieta Campos, Vicente Leñero, Fernando del Paso, and José Emilio Pacheco (23).

Schools and universities in Mexico were becoming more international. The enrollment of foreign students increased and more courses offering the study of other cultures and nations were introduced. But looking at other cultures generates closer scrutiny of one's own. Many Mexican writers were still searching for their own national identity, attempting to define what it meant to be Mexican.

An abundance of literature was being produced. As Glantz explains, this abundance in itself was not significant, but:

> la persistencia que muestran ciertos escritores, su intención de autocrítica evidente, su necesidad de dedicarse a las letras como vocación, revelan la existencia de una narrativa mexicana verdaderamente nueva, nueva porque ofrece otra visión de México, porque esboza o define otros conceptos de escritura, porque recibe influencias distintas de las que hasta ahora habían prevalecido . . . . (214)

> [the persistence that certain authors show, their obvious attempt at self-criticism, and their need to dedicate themselves to writing as a vocation, reveal the existence of a truly new Mexican narrative, new because it offers another vision of Mexico, because it brings together or defines other concepts of writing, and because it receives influences different from those which had prevailed until now . . .]

The public of the seventies and eighties was more open and liberal than ever before. The taboo on obscenities disappeared and sexual scenes were described without the use of euphemisms. A loosening of censorship occurred in all art forms and a greater sense of freedom of expression prevailed. It was somewhat overshadowed, however, by the knowledge gained in 1968. The government had shown what it was willing to do to repress criticism, and this created an undercurrent of tension.

Writers who came on the scene after 1960 betray a new sensibility which shows great diversity in characters, narrative structures and atmospheres (Kohut 28). One of the new trends which appeared presented themes concerned with the "margins" of society, and stories which dealt with homosexual life-styles and characters became more acceptable. Other themes and elements of this literature included erotic obsessions, linguistic games, and social and personal deteriorization (28). Some of the writers who deal with these themes are Juan García Ponce, Sergio Pitol, Salvador Elizondo, José de la Colina, Inés Arredondo, and Elena Poniatowska. Later authors like Hugo Hiriart, Héctor Manjarrez, Jorge Aguilar Mora, Federico Campbell, Alberto

Ruy Sánchez, José Joaquín Blanco, Luis Zappata, Agustín Ramos, Jaime del Palacio, Francisco Prieto, and Ignacio Solares also contributed to this genre.

A new type of naturalism emerged in the eighties, manifesting itself in themes of social resentment and *costumbrista* sketches (33). It differed from the earlier naturalist movement by not focusing exclusively on misery and tragedy. Two basic genres flourished under this banner: literature of the neighbourhood, or the popular communtiy, represented by the work of Armando Ramírez, and the testimonial (already mentioned), represented by Elena Poniatowska, Ricardo Garibay, and José Joaquín Blanco (32).

Contemporary Mexican literature is not as concerned with social realism as it was in the past. The distance between the narrator and the objects of his attention has been eliminated, psychological problems are often the principal concerns generating the action or are the action itself, and a revived interest in the psychology and daily life of the heroes and villains of history has occurred (27).

Carlos Fuentes, an important contemporary Mexican author, better-known for his novels than for his short stories, nonetheless should be mentioned here. He tries to capture Mexico as a whole, not the country, but the common mythology and the entire repertoire of cultural tensions, and he is known for mixing cultured speech with street slang (25). Turning away from rural atmospheres, he places his characters in urban centres. Where his contemporaries such as Yáñez, Revueltas and Rulfo were more concerned with expressing human suffering as a result of nature, in more rural settings, Fuentes chooses the large, densely-populated cities as settings in which his

characters struggle.

As a final note, it is important to point out that women writers in Mexico have had a much stronger literary voice in the last thirty years than ever before. As much variety exists within their work as within the many groups of male authors already discussed. Some of their work can be classified as feminist in nature, says Kohut, because of the moral stance and political convictions of the authors (29), but many female Mexican authors wrote in a variety of styles and trends using diverse themes and subject matter. A few of these women have been mentioned or quoted above, but I include them in the following list of important Mexican women short story writers of the twentieth century: Inés Arredondo, María Elvira Bermúdez, Nellie Campobello, Julieta Campos, Rosario Castellanos, Marta Cerda, Amparo Dávila, Guadalupe Dueñas, Elena Garro, Margo Glantz, Margarita Michelena, Silvia Molina, Elena Poniatowska, María Luisa Puga, and Josefina Vicens.

The previous pages illustrate the many changes that the Mexican short story has undergone, and the numerous literary trends that have contributed to its development. We have seen evidence of a great diversity of styles, themes, and objectives spanning more than 600 years of cultural and political growth. From the time of the pre-Conquest Mayan, Toltec, Texcocano, Aztec, and Tarasco cultures, to the arrival of the Spanish and the subsequent generations produced by the resulting Indian and Spanish cultural mix, the people have told their stories. They have recorded their legends, documented their history, explored their imaginations, expressed their spiritual, social, political, and cultural concerns, experimented with

foreign ideas, and delved into the minds and hearts of their fellow Mexicans. In doing so they have employed a variety of forms, structures, techniques, and plots.

In this thesis I have chosen to examine three short stories by the Mexican author and poet José Emilio Pacheco. In addition to analysing these stories, I have also translated them into English. The next chapter discusses some of the specific problems I encountered throughout the translation project and explains some of the strategies I employed in solving them.

CHAPTER TWO

TRANSLATION STRATEGIES

Translation is not an exact literary science. By necessity, it is often treated more subjectively than objectively. By that I mean that the translation of any single word or phrase is almost always, on some level, subject to the individual translator's opinions, views, experiences, predilections, references, and knowledge. All these factors influence the translation of any given piece of work. (Because of their precise and esoteric language, technical and legal works are an exception to this rule and are not considered in this discussion.) The correctness and appropriateness of meaning of any given word or phrase used in a translation is often open to discussion. The translator must aim for smoothness; for comprehensibility, coherence, clarity of meaning, and readability.

Some of the major concerns in translating literature stem not only from subjectivity, but also from style, technique, and genre. Poetry, short stories, novels and essays all present different sets of problems for the translator. For example, the difficulties encountered in translating certain poetic images require different solutions than do the difficulties presented in translating lengthy dialogues in novels or short stories.

The literary techniques and individual stylistic features of the source text present specific problems for the translator. Format, structure, plot presentation, metaphors, similes, colloquial language, treatment of time, humour, satire, and irony

are some of the elements which may need special consideration by the translator if an appropriate and comprehensive target text is to be achieved.

Many words and phrases, besides having a literal meaning, also carry a connotative meaning. This is any meaning, over and above the literal meaning, that is associated in one way or another with that word or phrase. Translating words and phrases which carry connotative meanings presents special problems which require extra attention and focus by the translator. There are several kinds of connotative meanings. In chapter eight of their book, Thinking Spanish Translation, Sándor Hervey, Ian Higgins, and Louisé M. Haywood identify them as follows:

> **Attitudinal meaning** is that part of the meaning of an expression which consists of some widespread *attitude to the referent.* That is, the expression does not merely denote the referent in a neutral way, but, in addition, hints at some attitude to it on the part of the speaker. (99)

The authors give as an example the problems presented in translating the Spanish word *maricón.* While translating it as *homosexual* accurately captures part of the literal meaning of the word, it fails to supply the derogatory connotation associated with the word in Spanish and expressed through the attitude of the speaker.

> **Associative meaning** is that part of the overall meaning of an expression which consists of stereotypical *expectations* rightly or wrongly *associated with the referent* of the expression. (99)

Here, the example used is the English word *nurse*, a word which automatically brings the female gender into mind. We associate *nurse* with the female gender so much so

that we have had to adopt the phrase *male nurse* in order to counteract this associative meaning. Dates, such as the 4th of July, the 25th of December, and so on can also trigger an associative meaning.

> **Affective meaning** is that part of the overall meaning of an expression which consists in an *emotive effect worked on the addressee* by the choice of that expression. The expression does not merely denote its referent, but also hints at some attitude of the speaker/writer to the addressee. (100)

The examples here involve "features of linguistic politeness, flattery, rudeness or insult" where "the speaker's tacit or implied attitude to the listener produces a different emotive effect in each case" (100). Comparing the English *be quiet* with *shut up!*, or the Spanish *baja la voz* with *¡cállate!* illustrates the different emotive effect created by the choice of expression used.

> **Reflected meaning** is the meaning given to an expression over and above its literal meaning by the fact that its *form* is reminiscent of the completely different meaning of a *homonymic or near-homonymic expression* (that is, one that sounds or is spelled the same, or nearly the same). (101)

To illustrate reflected meaning the authors have chosen what they call the "often-cited example" of the "two synonyms 'Holy Spirit' and 'Holy Ghost'" (101). The word *ghost*, through reflected meaning, could make the reader think about *spooks* or *spectres*, which is not part of the meaning of the expression. Similarily, the word

spirit could call to mind *alcoholic drinks* also not part of the meaning of the expression. The translator must take care not to mar the target text with "infelicitous innuendo, as for example if one wrote 'Holy Spirit' just after a reference to Communion wine" (101).

> **Collocative meaning** is given to an expression over and above its literal meaning by *the meaning of some other expression with which it collocates to form a commonly used phrase.* (102)

Collocative meaning is easily illustrated through the example chosen by the authors. They explain that "in the clichéd expression 'a flash of lightning', the word 'flash' collocates regularly with the word 'lightning', forming such a strong stereotyped association that 'flash' by itself is capable of evoking the meaning of its collocative partner" (102).

> **Allusive meaning** is present when an expression evokes, beyond its literal meaning, the meaning of some associated saying or quotation, in such a way that the meaning of that saying or quotaion becomes part of the overall meaning of the expression. (103)

To illustrate this type of connotative meaning the authors explain that by "saying that 'there are rather a lot of cooks involved' in organizing an event evokes the proverb 'too many cooks spoil the broth', and by this allusive meaning creates the innuendo that the event risks being spoilt by over-organization" (103).

The factors, elements, and examples discussed above give a basic idea of some of the types of problems that can exist within any given text, and which the translator

will have to deal with effectively in order to construct an appropriate text in another language.

Before I began to translate Virgen de los veranos, Parque de diversiones, and La fiesta brava on a word by word basis, making innumerable small decisions about which English synonym best conveyed the intended meaning in Spanish, I had to make some larger decisions concerning the overall approach I intended to adhere to throughout each work. This was important because every time I translated a word, phrase, or sentence, I had to know what my defining boundaries were with respect to setting, tone, and character interpretation.

CULTURAL CONTEXT

I chose to translate these stories with a view to their being read by English speakers who may or may not have some knowledge of the Spanish language and Mexican history and culture. However, I wanted to preserve the very Mexican ambience and flavour of the stories as much as possible. One of the ways in which I chose to do this was to leave all the geographical settings the same as they are in the Spanish source texts. This decision meant that all proper names and place names (those of the characters, towns, buildings, locations, etc.), had to remain in Spanish because it would be incongruous to use English names in a Mexican setting. This practice also helped to achieve the desired goals regarding flavour and ambience. The only exceptions occur in Virgen de los veranos in which I translate the various religious proper names such as *Santa Madre*, *Madre del Cielo*, and *Santo Padre*. I felt

this was necessary for clarity's sake. Although many of these names are close to their English counterparts, some are not. *Virgen del Carmen* is *Our Lady of Mount Carmel* in English.

Another strategy I employed was to keep all political, historical and cultural references the same as in the source text. To aid the reader who has little or no knowledge of Spanish nor of Mexican culture, I explain some of these references in footnotes. I do not explain more widely-recognized and understood words such as *pesos, tortillas,* and *tacos*. An explanation of references to the Vietnam War which occur in La fiesta brava was deemed unnecessary. Nor do I explain the historical and cultural references in the same text to Mayan and Aztec art and to Aztec ritualistic practices. These references are discussed in detail in the chapter which analyses La fiesta brava. Omitting an explanation of these references from the translation contributes to the mysterious tone and to the enigmatic ending of the story. It also helps to achieve the aforementioned goal of maintaining the Mexican flavour and ambience of the stories.

SENTENCE STRUCTURE AND VERB TENSE AS THEY RELATE TO TONE AND RHYTHM

I attempt to remain true to the overall tone and rhythm of the stories by remaining as faithful as possible to the sentence structure and verb tenses of the Spanish source texts, although this is not always feasible. The evident differences between Spanish and English grammar and syntax mean that, by their very nature,

some sentence structures and verb tenses in the source texts, may have to change in the target texts in order to conform to English usage. For example, in Parque de diversiones I render *resulta* (present indicative tense) as *has become* (present perfect tense) in order to produce a sentence which works correctly in English. For this same reason, in Virgen de los veranos, I translate *gane y gane* (present subjunctive) as *winning and winning* (gerund). Only in a very few instances was I forced to change the order of the clauses in a sentence, or to make two sentences in the target text from one sentence in the source text.

In Virgen de los veranos there are many long sentences and speeches. Since this story is basically a monologue, it carries the tone and rhythm of a tale in which orality is a central feature. It has a very "story-telling" quality about it. The long sentences and speeches help to create this tone. Many of these sentences are broken up by semi-colons, colons, and parenthetical remarks between dashes. I try to copy faithfully this sentence structure and length. However, for the sake of clarity and readability I sometimes substitute parentheses for dashes, or change the order of the clauses in a sentence.

This short story is narrated entirely in the past, utilizing all the various past tenses to express the ideas and actions. The principal character (Anselmo), who does almost all the speaking, sometimes switches to present tense during the long telling of his tale, to describe things occurring in the past. This is entirely consistent with the type of tone and rhythm this narrative creates. It reflects the oral tale-telling tradition, adding variety, texture, and even humour. As this is an important part of the sentence

structure that helps to create that desired tone and rhythm in the source text, I preserve these tense changes in the target text.

La fiesta brava is actually two stories; one within the other, both with the same title. These two stories have completely different sentence structures, and therefore completely different tones and rhythms. The short story within the main story is made up of short phrases, separated only by commas and conjunctions, grouped together in blocks similar to paragraphs, but with no indentations. There are no periods to indicate the end of a sentence and the only other punctuation is a few question marks. The style is very similar to stream-of-consciousness, and the phrases are more like thoughts: not always entirely complete syntactically, but nonetheless complete in meaning. I attempt to duplicate this sentence structure exactly in the target text because it is essential for capturing the rhythm and tone created in the source text.

The verb tenses change randomly throughout this short narrative. They fluctuate between present tense and future and from various forms of past tense to present. The story is told in parts and on different levels, so that at times we are not exactly sure of the location of what is really happening because some of the action takes place in the mind of the protagonist, Captain Keller. These verb tense changes are crucial because they indicate time changes in the story, and manipulate the action. For example, the future tense is sometimes used to talk about events that may have happened in the past, or that are perhaps happening in the present. This is a technique that the author exploits to give a commanding, authoritative tone to the narrator. It is as though the narrator were observing the action with the omniscience of a God,

speaking in the future tense to will the action into being by saying it will be so. I was able to reproduce these verb tense changes faithfully and this helped to reproduce, in the target text, the desired tone and movement that flows through the source text.

The main story, about Andrés Quintana who writes the other story, is written in a more traditional manner. That is, the sentence structure is straightforward and similar to that of everyday speech. In places, Andrés ruminates disjointedly, discussing options, formulating questions, and wondering about his own motives and those of his old friend/enemy Ricardo. There is a stream-of-consciousness tone to these parts of the story that is highlighted by the sentence structure. Each thought starts a new line of print and the end of it is indicated by the use of a slash mark. Again I mimic this structure as closely as possible in the target text.

Parque de diversiones also has an uncomplicated, straightforward sentence structure throughout, except for the section numbered III, which is one long sentence with no punctuation at all, and which can also be categorized as stream-of-consciousness. The sentences in most of these sections, I-II and IV-VII, are relatively short and do not contain a lot of complicated, qualifying phrases. The exceptions are sections III and VIII, which contain longer sentences that have more convoluted structures. The predominant simplicity and lack of complexity does not mean that this short story was easier to translate. Where fewer words are used, their meanings are often more precise. The challenge lies in finding words with the same precision and exactitude of meaning in English. Occasionally more words are needed in English to translate fewer words in Spanish, and this is unavoidable. For example, in section IV

the Spanish word *mazazo* requires several words in English (*a blow to the head with a club*) to convey the same meaning and produce a proper translation. Again I try to remain faithful to the sentence structure and verb tenses in each section of the story, but in some cases I make small changes in order to conform to the rules of English grammar and sylistic convention.

PUNCTUATION

Punctuation can also play an important role in creating the tone and rhythm of a narrative, but it is also part of the overall grammatical structure of a language and will therefore differ from language to language. Punctuation marks such as exclamation points, question marks, ellipses, slash marks, and dashes generally have a more significant role in these narratives than do commas, semi-colons, colons, and periods. Exclamation points and question marks help to create the tone and mood of the speaker and place emphasis where it is needed. Ellipsis points can indicate uncertainty in speech or a reluctance to finish a thought. Slash marks and dashes set phrases off from one another, either for emphasis or for clarity. For these reasons, I retain this type of punctuation in all the target texts, but in some cases I add or delete commas, semi-colons, colons, and periods as required by the rules of English punctuation.

Punctuation has a special function in La fiesta brava, in the story within the main story. Here all the commas are very important. Since there are no periods in the story (except for the one at the very end), and no other types of punctuation

(except for a few question marks), the commas function as thought, phrase, and sentence separators. Because of this I include them all in the target text and do not add any other punctuation, allowing the comma to play out its dominant role just as it does in the source text. A different type of print is used throughout this part of the story, distinguishing it further from the main story, and I copied this technique in the target text.

Section III of Parque de diversiones is also a special case where punctuation is concerned because there is no punctuation in it at all. The significance of this is discussed in greater detail in the chapter that analyses the entire short story. It is sufficient to mention here that I did not add any punctuation to this section, allowing its absence to affect the reader just as it does in the source text.

SLANG AND SWEARING

Idiomatic expressions, popular sayings or proverbs, clichés, swearing, and slang words and phrases can be particularly difficult to translate because they often carry certain cultural connotations which are lost if they are simply translated literally. Often connotative meaning must be sacrificed even in a less literal translation if the general or basic meaning of the word or phrase is to be properly conveyed. When these kinds of words and phrases are utilized in the source texts, I try to correspond with the best English counterparts in the target texts, bearing in mind the aforementioned cultural connotations, and the semantic force of meaning behind the words and phrases (in both Spanish and English), as well as the character using them

and the period in which the story is set. All of these factors are especially important where swearing is concerned; it is often more important to convey the actual force of the meaning behind a swear word or phrase than the literal meaning. For this reason, I occasionally use different English words in a target text when the same Spanish word appeared more than once in the source text. In these cases, context also played an important role in the decision-making process. For example, in Virgen de los veranos different forms of the word *joder* are used in four separate places. I render it once as *in such a sorry state*, once as *screw*, once as *fucked*, and finally as *hell*. The factors I take into account when making these individual decisions about translation are Anselmo's particular tone at the time, the action he is describing, the specific point at which he is in the telling of his tale, and the particular Spanish grammatical form of *joder* that is used.

Most idiomatic expressions, popular sayings, and proverbs cannot be translated literally without losing much of their meaning. The expression *pegó con tubo*, in Virgen de los veranos, is a good example. It cannot be translated as *hit with a tube* (which is meaningless in English), but must be rendered as *was a smash hit* if the sense is to be consistent with the intended meaning in Spanish. Another example is the idiomatic expression *qué me cuentas* in La fiesta brava. It sounds stilted to translate the expression literally as *what do you tell me*; I render it as *what's new*, a turn of phrase which retains the meaning and is more in keeping with conversational English.

Slang words and phrases, being almost always metaphorical, present the same

problems as do idiomatic expressions, popular sayings, proverbs, and swearing: they can rarely be translated literally. For example, the slang expression *a toda madre*, used in Virgen de los veranos, means *cushy* because it refers to a job. It could be rendered as a completely different word or set of words in another instance, just as *joder* was translated four different ways in the example cited above. In this same short story there are several slang words for money. I try to translate them by using the most appropriate English slang equivalent which fits the context. Ricardo, in La fiesta brava, also uses some slang words. One example is *padrísimo* which I translate as *really great.*

Virgen de los veranos utilizes a very informal, colloquial type of language. Some of the words and expressions are even particular to the language of Mexico City, such as *la chota* for *the police*, which I translate as *the fuzz*, believing it to be the best English slang word from the same era. The story is filled with an abundance of idiomatic expressions, popular sayings, proverbs, slang, and swearing. This language is one of the most important parts of the central character's speech, helping to develop and add texture to his personality. Because Anselmo is the one who tells the whole story, his language is also central to the tone and flavour of the entire work, adding texture to it, but also adding humour, which provides a counter-balance to the violence and death in the plot. His mode of speech is absolutely crucial in the development of character. In creating the target text, I try to ensure that all the nuances of meaning and tone are reflected in its language, and that this same language works towards developing the character and story on all levels, just as it does in the

Spanish source text. Where idiomatic expressions, popular sayings and proverbs occur in the source text I use the closest, most appropriate English idiomatic expression, popular saying or proverb, and where Anselmo swears in the Spanish text he swears in the English text. I look for equivalent English expletives and curse words, concentrating more heavily on the strength of the word and the way in which it is used, rather than on its literal meaning.

La fiesta brava also contains some slang words and phrases. There are fewer of them than in Virgen de los veranos, but they are important, particularly in the dialogues between Andrés and Ricardo. These words and phrases help to form them as characters. This is especially true of Ricardo; apart from the obviously prejudiced opinions that Andrés expresses about him, the reader has only his dialogue to aid in defining his character. A good example is Ricardo's frequent use of English words mixed with his Spanish, in an attempt to show Andrés how international, experienced, well-travelled and superior he is. I try to highlight and expose this trait of Ricardo's in the target text by printing such words in italics, setting them off somewhat from all of the other English words. There is a kind of 1960's tone to some of the language and attitudes expressed in La fiesta brava, and I seek to mirror that in the target text with corresponding English expressions from the same period. For example, I translate *buena onda* as *cool*, and *quihúbole* as *what's happenin'*.

CHARACTERS--DIALOGUE AND CONVERSATIONS

I try to maintain a broad outlook when translating dialogue and conversations so that they do not sound stilted or contrived. At the same time, I am careful not to over-step the broad boundaries I have drawn and risk altering the meaning too drastically. I keep in mind the general class and type of person speaking and try to equate it to the same class of English speaker. The essential meaning of the words must remain intact, but the images, similes and metaphors sometimes have to be altered to accommodate the English-speaking person's point of reference. For example, in Virgen de los veranos Anselmo describes himself as smelling like a *cacomixcle.* There is no direct English equivalent to this cat-like animal. I translate it as *skunk* because we often use that word in English to describe someone or something that smells bad. The connotation of thief or robber that is attached to this simile is lost (the *cacomixcle* hunts at night by stealing from the hen houses), but the main meaning of the Spanish simile is preserved in the natural-sounding, easily-recognizable English referent.

Certain traits of each character are represented directly through their dialogue: their tone of voice, their choice of words, the length of their speeches, the length of their sentences, and their individual speech patterns. All of these factors join together in helping to form the individual personalities of each character.

Virgen de los veranos

Anselmo is the principal character in this short story, and he tells the whole

story in the form of a semi-monologue, interspersed periodically with short questions from a unnamed listener. Anselmo's speech, then, is a major part of the story because he is basically the only one speaking. The other characters in the story do not speak; we only hear what they say when Anselmo chooses to tell us. Moreover, he paraphrases their words, recalling them from the past and imposing his own point of view on everything they say.

Anselmo has his own particular manner of speaking which is very colloquial. He makes use of popular sayings, idiomatic expressions, slang, and curse words and phrases. He also has several speech patterns which help to indicate his class and his educational level. A good example of how his speech betrays his level of education is when he makes a pronunciation mistake (saying *conlaborador* instead of *colaborador*), that the listener points out to him. True to the strength of his character, already well-established at this point in the story, Anselmo does not accept the listener's criticism. In fact, he challenges it, using another grammatically incorrect word in the process. The other main point illustrated by this exchange is that Anselmo believes in himself; his strong sense of self-worth and self-importance are reflected in his answer. It is critical to Anselmo's development as a character that all these character and personality traits, demonstrated through his dialogue in the source text, work equally towards the same goal in the target text. To this end I duplicate the pronunciation error and mimic the ungrammatical word usage. At the same time, I try to keep the strength and tone of the exchange equivalent, including the humour it generates. For example, instead of translating the phrase *no sea maje* as *don't be a*

pest, I choose the stronger English expression, *don't be a smart ass.*

In order for the character Anselmo to develop as he does and to be represented and identified through his speech in the way that he is in the source text, I had to find some way to duplicate, as closely and as meaningfully as possible, his idiosyncratic speech patterns. For example, he drops all final 'ds'. In the target text, I respond by dropping most of the final 'gs' in the English gerunds, and by dropping the final 'd' in the word *old.* He frequently says *pa* for *para, ai* for *ahí, pus* or *pos* for *pues, onque* for *aunque*, and *ora* for *ahora.* I respond in the target text by using words such as *cuz* (because) and *ya* (you). Anselmo also runs words together sometimes, such as *meiba* for *me iba, patrás* for *para atrás, paquípallá* for *para aquí y para allá,* and *nomas* for *no más.* To accommodate this pattern I utilize words such as *gonna* (going to), *inta* (into), *dunno* (don't know), *doncha* (don't you), *hadda* (had to), and *outta* (out of). There are a few instances where he drops the initial 'es' from a word: *taban* for *estaban* and *pérese* for *espérese.* To compensate in the target text for this final idiosyncrasy, I periodically drop the initial 'h' on the words *him* or *her.*

The final aspect of Anselmo's speech in the target text which I would like to comment on regards the use of the subjunctive mood. There are several instances where Anselmo uses the subjunctive mood in phrases such as *como si me estuviera haciendo un favor; como si él por poquito fuera el Santo Padre*, and *como si de verdá fuera su gato.* I choose not to use the subjunctive in the English text, translating *as if he was doin' me a favour; almost as if he was the Holy Father himself*, and *just as if I was her cat.* I deliberately do not use the grammatically correct *were* in all these

cases. The use of *was* is more consistent with how the character might speak in English. It is a grammatical mistake that an English-speaking person of the same class as Anselmo would likely make, given that the subjunctive forms are not used as commonly in English as they are in Spanish.

The listener is the only other character who speaks directly in this short story, and he only says a few words at a time. His questions are limited and are never more than a line or two. He only asks what needs to be asked to advance the story, and often his questions are not even essential to this advancement of plot. They serve a more important purpose which is to remind the reader that Anselmo is telling his story to someone for a reason. Even though this reason will not become clear to the reader until the very end of the story, the existence of the listener in the overall plot is an important factor. It is discussed in more depth in the chapter which analyses Virgen de los veranos. The listener's language is mostly uncomplicated and straightforward and not difficult to translate.

La fiesta brava

There are no conversations or direct speech in the short story within the main story, but several conversations take place in the main story, all between Andrés and Ricardo. These conversations are important to the character development of both, but they are crucial to the development of Ricardo. Ricardo develops as a character first through his own dialogue, and then through Andrés' thoughts as he reminisces about their younger days together. Once we learn the nature of their history together, we

immediately understand that Andrés' is a prejudiced view and that we must pay particular attention to how and what is said in the conversations if we are to gain a clear picture of Ricardo and judge his motives, which we will be called upon to do by the end of the story.

As well as translating the meaning of the words in these conversations, I try to mimic their rhythm by maintaining the same sentence length and structure, and by considering the tone and strength of the words and phrases. My decisions are based on such things as who the speaker is, what is happening in the story, what emotions appear to be involved, and the epoch of the story itself.

Ricardo tries to present himself as very modern and "with it", as evidenced by his frequent references to the United States, his connections there, his knowledge of how things are done there, and his use of English words throughout his speech. There is a glib, off-the-shoulder tone to his words, not quite dismissive, not quite condescending, but which gives him an air of success, at least in a superficial way. He is self-confident and he gives the impression that he knows what he is talking about. He can be brutally honest, seemingly without rancour, and there is also a kind of forced or false joviality about him (which Andrés notices) that needs to be considered when translating his dialogue. For Andrés, and therefore for the reader as well, Ricardo's words sometimes ring hollow, and his motives for saying certain things and his manner of saying them are sometimes called into question. I try to ensure that all of these character traits and nuances of meaning are as evident in the English text as they are in the Spanish text.

Andrés' character develops more through his thoughts, which are very candidly shared with the reader, than through his speech, but his conversations with Ricardo do reveal certain things about him. For example, in the first conversation with Ricardo, he occasionally hesitates and falters in his speech, betraying his low self-esteem and low level of self-confidence. On the other hand, in his final conversation with Ricardo, his speech carries a strong sarcastic and even bitter tone. He holds his own throughout Ricardo's criticism of his story, but his speech betrays his feelings of inferiority and worthlessness in the eyes of Ricardo. There is a defeatist attitude behind his words that he tries to cover up, ironically, with brutal self-criticism mixed with feigned indifference. Again my principal aim when translating these conversations, aside from making sure they flowed well and sounded natural in English, was to ensure that Andrés' character traits were shown through his speech in the English text just as they are in the Spanish text.

Parque de diversiones

This short story contains neither dialogue nor conversations and character development is not central to it because of its unusual structure. It is made up of eight, very short, separate little stories, all numbered. Each one of them contains different people and/or animals, and their individual plots are not connected except in the most general sense inasmuch as they all take place either in the same park or are describing some aspect of this same park. There are thematic parallels among these stories which are discussed in the chapter that analyses Parque de diversiones.

Character development is achieved through the narrator and, because of the brevity of these individual stories, it is scant. Therefore, each word that the narrator uses when describing a character or situation, is extremely important. My goal in the target text was to achieve the same precision and exactitude of meaning which occurs in the language of the source text by using as few words as possible, but also by paying particular attention to the total contextual meaning of the words. For that reason, in section VIII, where the verb *contemplar* appears five times, I render it as either *look* or *looking*, since it is more contextually correct in meaning than the English word *contemplate*.

TITLES

The final aspect of the translations that requires comment is the titles of the stories. I render Virgen de los veranos as Summertime Virgin. I choose this title over the more literal Virgin of the Summers or simply Summer Virgin because the word *summertime* here holds a connotative meaning in English connected to the cycle of the seasons. The word *summertime* also conveys repetition, a thematic concern of this story.

I choose The Bullfight as the best translation of La fiesta brava, even though it is far from the literal meaning of the words. Within the story itself there is an explanation for the title. The protagonist of the story that Andrés Quintana writes within the main story is Captain Keller. While vacationing in Mexico City, he goes on a tourist excursion called LA FIESTA BRAVA, which takes him to a bullfight.

The bullfight is a symbol here, used to represent violence in humankind and life, but it has a more significant ironic meaning. Captain Keller, who fought and killed brutally in the Vietnam War, is repulsed and horror-stricken by the violence of the bullfight.

The translation of Parque de diversiones as Amusement Park does not require a great deal of explanation since it is basically a straightforward translation, even though it is not exactly literal.

SUMMARY

Although I was able to adhere to the same general method when translating these three short stories, each one presented its own special set of problems, as evidenced in the examples cited above. The particular concerns in Virgen de los veranos were the highly specialized, colloquial, and idiosyncratic speech of Anselmo, and the oral quality of its semi-monologue form. In La fiesta brava, I had to pay particular attention to the rhythm created through the limited use of punctuation, and to the tone created by the tense changes in the story within the main story. In the main story the special concerns were the conversations between Andrés and Ricardo. They needed to sound natural rather than stilted and contrived, but at the same time had to retain the element and the air of tension that exists between these two old "friends". Precision of meaning, brevity, and the poetic style of language and sentence structure were the main problems presented in Parque de diversiones. Its other special problem lay in the instructional, "documentary" tone of its more formal language.

Each of these short stories has its own format, structure, plot, theme, and

presentation. For example, one of the core features of Virgen de los veranos is the development and treatment of its main character, but in Parque de diversions character development is not a principal concern at all, and in La fiesta brava it is the treatment of time and space which plays a central role. These differences, and others, make it necessary to analyse each story separately. Chapter Three begins this series of analyses with a detailed discussion of Virgen de los veranos.

CHAPTER THREE

ANALYSIS OF VIRGEN DE LOS VERANOS

Virgen de los veranos contains many elements: violence, deception, religion, politics, sex, humour, nature, fear, suspense, and luck. It explores the nature of opportunism, greed, and selfishness in survival through a character who is well-aware of what his is doing and who makes no apology for it. To Anselmo, all of his actions are justified and follow a logical sequence. He deals with each situation as it arises, always keeping in mind what is best for himself at the time.

This short story actually tells a story within a story. The principal character, Anselmo, recounts the events of a specific period in his life, fifteen years prior to the present, to an unnamed listener, who also plays the role of narrator in the opening paragraph of the story. Anselmo is the protagonist of both the short story in its entirety and of the monologue he provides within the short story. The only characters directly involved in the telling of the tale are Anselmo and the listener. The worshippers referred to in the opening paragraph, whose existence is important for the ending of the story, are only indirectly involved, they never speak. All of the other characters in the tale that Anselmo tells us do not speak directly either. They only have a voice through Anselmo's memory as he tells his story.

THE LISTENER

Virgen de los veranos is written almost entirely in the form of a monologue. Anselmo is speaking for over ninety per cent of the time. Playing the role of narrator, the unnamed listener opens the story with one short descriptive paragraph. The rest of the story is told by Anselmo. He is interrupted fifteen times by brief questions from the listener. The listener does not contribute to the details of the story that Anselmo tells because he was not involved in the events, but he fulfills five main functions within the short story.

First and foremost he serves as a constant reminder to the reader that the listener is hearing the same story as the reader and that there must be some reason for Anselmo telling it to him. Even though as yet we have no idea what Anselmo's motive is, and will not until the very end of the story, we need to realize, in order for the ending to make sense, that he does have a particular reason for telling his tale to the listener. Since we do not know what that reason is, an air of mystery and curiosity is created. If it were strictly a monologue and there were no listener present, it would be a completely different kind of story, even though it would appear to be almost the same. If we were to omit the first paragraph and Anselmo's final question to the listener, and take out all the listener's questions, it would still be a story about what happened to Anselmo, but the audacity he shows at the end, when his motive is revealed, has an important shock effect upon the reader and is esssential for satisfactorily tying the story together in the end. In this capacity then, the listener's function is to remind the reader that Anselmo has a motive, and to ask the sort of

questions that the reader would like to, but cannot

The listener's second function is a more practical one, involving style and technique. His interruptions break up Anselmo's long speeches, contributing to the overall rhythm of the story. Anselmo speaks for a long time, the listener interrupts with a few words, Anselmo speaks for a long time, the listener interjects again, and so on throughout the story. The rhythm gradually accelerates with Anselmo's speeches and then quickly slows down with the listener's. This rise and fall, peak and valley kind of pattern to the speeches are part of what gives the story its rhythm. This pattern also enhances the element of suspense within the story because the monologue is constantly being interrupted. Also, with these interruptions the listener helps to advance the plot by asking a logical, prompting question, leading Anselmo into the next phase of his story.

The third function of the listener becomes apparent only at the end of the story. He is responsible for the open-endedness of it. It is left up to him to decide where things will go after Anselmo finishes telling his tale, and since Anselmo's proposition to the listener goes unanswered, we do not know whether he agrees to team up with Anselmo to repeat the confidence trick or not. The reader is left to decide whether or not the listener is the type of person who would join forces with Anselmo to swindle money from the worshippers praying near the hut, who are mentioned only twice in the whole story, once in the opening paragraph and again by reference in the final paragraph.

The listener's fourth function is directly related to Anselmo. One of the

exchanges between the two characters allows the reader further insight into Anselmo's character and personality as well as providing some information about the listener. The listener reveals to the reader his superior level of education when he attempts to correct a pronunciation error that Anselmo makes. More important, however, is what we learn about Anselmo during this exchange. He does not accept the correction and quickly counters with an explanation justifying his mispronunciation, revealing to the reader the strength of his self-confidence and his belief in his own abilities and knowledge, even though the reader knows he was in error. Ironically, in the explanation of his mispronunciation he uses an incorrect word, compounding the humour in the whole exchange.

I stated above that the listener also functions as narrator in the opening paragraph of the story, the only place where a narrator of any sort exists, and this is his fifth and final contribution. Anselmo and the listener himself are the principal focuses of this opening paragraph which is less than fifty words long, but filled with crucial information.

THE FIRST PARAGRAPH

> Anselmo prendió el cigarro de hoja y se volvió para mirarme. El sol quemaba los campos secos, pero los que rezaban cerca de la choza parecían no sentir el calor. Anselmo recargó la silla contra el muro de adobes. Pidió que acercara mi asiento y comenzó su narración (José Emilio Pacheco <u>El viento distante</u> 82)

Anselmo's name is the first word of the story, and he is the subject of five phrases in this first paragraph. The narrator makes it clear that Anselmo is the most important character in the story and that he is going to tell some sort of tale. We also learn, through the narrator's use of the personal pronoun "me", that the narrator is also going to be the one to whom Anselmo tells his tale.

This first paragraph tells us all we need to know about the physical setting as well. We learn that it is hot and dry, that the space is outdoors, and that there are people praying near a hut. In the third sentence we learn that Anselmo leaned his chair against a wall and this tells us that he is making himself comfortable, giving us a hint that the narrative is going to be a long one. The final piece of information that the narrator provides is small and sutble, but it serves its purpose well. By telling the reader that Anselmo lit his corn leaf cigarette, distinguishing it from a commercially made one, he is telling the reader something about the economic status and social class of the protagonist.

THE WORSHIPPERS

There are two separate sets of worshippers in Virgen de los veranos: those who are praying near the hut while Anselmo tells his story to the listener, and those who fell prey to the fraudulent trick that Lorenzo set up and that Anselmo happened upon fifteen years earlier. In setting the stage for this semi-monologue the narrator introduces the reader to the first set of worshippers. These are the only other characters in the same time and space as Anselmo and the listener, but unlike the two

main characters, these worshippers never speak, either directly or indirectly. Although their existence is important, they are never mentioned again until Anselmo refers to them indirectly at the end of his tale, whereupon the reason for their inclusion in the opening paragraph and the need for their existence within the story is revealed to the reader. At the end of the story we understand that the worshippers are praying near the hut at the outset of the monologue because Anselmo has set up the same scheme he happened upon years ago, and which is what the tale is all about. He hopes to repeat the confidence trick by fooling a different group of devout poor people into believing that a holy Virgin has appeared to whom they can make offerings and receive indulgences.

This first group of worshippers is also the key to the surprise ending of the story. Anselmo, in the final paragraph, says to the listener: "Ya le dije a lo macho cómo anduvo la cosa hace quince años. Como ve usté, volví a jugármela . . ." (103). In order to understand that Anselmo is referring to the worshippers praying near the hut in the hot, dry weather, when he indicates that he has repeated the deception, the reader must go back mentally to the first paragraph where the listener/narrator states, "El sol quemaba los campos secos, pero los que rezaban cerca de la choza parecían no sentir el calor" (82). Now we see why this first set of worshippers, and the fact that it is hot and dry, are mentioned in the initial paragraph. The ending gives significance to the beginning and vice versa. But only when we have heard Anselmo's tale do these two facts mean anything specific to the reader. Anselmo's statement at the end of the story makes sense out of the scene set in the opening paragraph, and the ending

of the monologue justifies the setting of that scene. Anselmo finally reveals his motive for telling his story to the listener.

Part of the surprise at the end depends upon the reader's having temporarily forgotten about the existence of the first set of worshippers. That is the reason why they are only mentioned once, and at the very beginning. The author deliberately gives these worshippers only scant mention in the text, but as a contrasting technique, he gives their existence within the plot supreme importance. This technique enhances the surprise ending.

Another aspect of the surprise ending which needs to be discussed is its validity in terms of plot. It is not a trick of plot manipulation for two reasons. First, we are given the information about the worshippers and the weather at the outset, and second, the ending fits perfectly with the opportunistic personality of Anselmo as developed throughout the story. At the end of the monologue the reader understands that Anselmo's intention has been to use the listener. The fact that Anselmo has set up the scheme again and that he has chosen the listener as his proposed acccomplice, is completely in keeping with the opportunistic, wily, and brazen character that Anselmo has become in the eyes of the reader. It is not difficult now for the reader to understand that Anselmo had a definite purpose in mind when he began to tell his tale to the listener. Anselmo wanted something from the listener--cooperation and collaboration in a deceptive, fraudulent trick--and because of the successful development of the main character's personality, it is completely logical, reasonable, and believable to the reader.

The second set of worshippers are those who were fooled by Lorenzo,Aurorita, and Anselmo fifteen years before the monologue takes place. Their importance within the plot, however, is more straightforward. They do not play any hidden role nor are they part of any stylistic technique, but they are central to the successful completion of the confidence scheme. They must truly believe that the apparition of the Virgin is a divine miracle and offer real money and gifts of value for favours from her. Anselmo explains why it was so easy for them to believe in the whole affair. "A usté le dicen que se apareció la Madre de Dios, y se tiene fe se lo cree todo y hasta mira lo que otros no ven; me canso que sí" (88). Anselmo seems to be saying that if a person has faith he/she can be made to believe what someone else tells them to believe. "La fama de lo milagrosa que era la Virgen corrió tanto que luego los domingos venían hasta familias decentonas de los lugares importantes" (94). The fact that higher class people from important places began to believe, surely influenced the poor, uneducated peasant land-owners. "La gente llevaba años sin tener a quién rezarle de bulto" (95). The scheme filled an existing vacuum created by the Cristero War; the people were ripe and ready, even desperate, to have something so real to pray to. The church, whose power had been diminished by the Calles government in 1917, a fact which led to the Cristero War, had not yet re-gained its power after that war. Anselmo goes on to explain that it was not the peasant land-owners fault because "nadie los mandó a la escuela y eran todavía más inorantes que ahora" (95-96). Their lack of education, a criticism of government policy and the hacienda system, is seen as being partly responsible for the peasant land-owners' gullibility. Had the government or the

hacienda owners taken responsibility for the education of these people, perhaps they would not have been so easily fooled.

In contrast to the sketchy manner in which the author develops the first set of worshippers, he develops the second set in more depth. Anselmo provides the reader and the listener with certain details about their appearances, their actions, their words, and their reasons for coming to pray to the Virgin. True to his character, these descriptions are vivid and often humorous. He also comments on the general number of believers, which is very large, who came to offer gold or silver charms or money along with their prayers.

THE ABSENCE OF A THIRD-PERSON NARRATOR AND THE PARAMOUNT ROLE OF ANSELMO

The absence of a third-person narrator to give objective information about the characters, their actions and their motives, together with the absence of any interior monologues or thoughts expressed by the other characters, means that there is very little information to draw from when assessing them. Since there is no dialogue re-created within the monologue, these characters never speak directly and we must rely solely upon what Anselmo tells us about them. Because the entire story is told by Anselmo, the development of his own character is absolutely crucial to the story. It is the most important aspect of it; everything else either stems from it or hinges upon it. He is the only one feeding us information, both about himself and his actions, as well as about other characters and their speech, actions, and attitudes.

All information, then, is subjective, and given to the reader through the words and descriptions of one main character, who, to compound matters, is an admitted liar. Anselmo states: "Le conté puras habas . . ." (85), and "Les dije que me llamaba Eulalio Domínguez (nombre de mi abuelito . . .)" (91). Anselmo's is the only perspective given. The other characters function completely at his will; their behaviour, and in fact the entire story, is subject to the quality and the honesty of Anselmo's memory. Does he remember everything exactly as it happened? Is he exaggerating to make a better story? How much does he lie? Is he changing certain aspects of events to make himself look better? Less culpable? Does he give accurate descriptions of the other characters? The reader must try to answer these kinds of questions by looking suspiciously at everything, by reading the nuances of meaning in the dialogue, by using common sense and common life experience as a filter for the data, and by piecing together bits of information and testing them against others. For example, Anselmo provides a rather deprecating description of Lorenzo, but since we know that Anselmo was having an affair with Lorenzo's wife, we can reasonably assume that Anselmo's description of Lorenzo is prejudiced.

It is evident by this example that the reader has a very active role to play in this story. In fact the role of the reader is the second most important aspect of this short story. How each one of us interprets, views, and holds up for inspection the information that Anselmo gives us, will determine to some extent the nature of each character as we perceive him or her, especially Anselmo himself. The manner in which the reader perceives Anselmo's personality contributes a great deal to how the

reader perceives and judges the entire story. Referring once again to the example cited in the previous paragraph: one reader might decide, perhaps drawing upon personal experience, that Anselmo's description is heavily clouded with guilt, and conclude that Lorenzo wasn't really so bad and unappealing a character as Anselmo makes him out to be. Another reader might decide that guilt over the affair would not cloud Anselmo's memory at all, and judge Lorenzo solely according to Anselmo's description. Still another might decide that the truth lies somewhere in between.

The absence of a third-person narrator throughout this story also means that the dialogue of each character assumes a greater responsibility where meaning, motive, and attitude are concerned. The personality and character traits and the attitude, mood, and manner of the speaker must be conveyed through dialogue or explained lexically through dialogue. For example, at one point the listener says "Sí, sí, muy bien, pero me interesa saber qué pasó, cómo acabó todo el asunto" (96). The double use of the word "sí" indicates impatience on the part of the speaker; he wants to find out what happened next, he is hooked on the story now and wants to know how it all comes out.

Anselmo's speech patterns, his word usage, and his manner and tone of speaking not only contribute to the whole tone of the story, they also tell us a great deal about him. His habit of dropping all final 'ds', shortening words or running them together indicates that he does not have a high level of formal education. But what he actually talks about, his experiences and his adventures, tell us that he has had a comprehensive education in real life experiences through various jobs, travels, and

people he has met. In other words, he is street-smart. He has had enough experience with people to be a good judge of them and their motives. For example, he shows his lack of naivety by informing the listener that he believes it possible that some priests, as well as church and government officials, may have been aware of the fraudulent scheme that Lorenzo was running and were receiving money out of it themselves. Anselmo reveals his belief in the existence of real corruption within the organized religious and political systems. He tells us that the whole affair was hushed up and he admits that this may have worked in his favour, in conjunction with his incredible luck.

Anselmo's speech is not refined, sophisticated, and elegant, nor is it couched in subleties and innuendos; it is more relaxed and down-to-earth, a bit rough and coarse but with a touch of humour and a good-natured, easy-going feel to it. His constant use of oaths and swear words is a reflection of the lower social class to which he belongs. He speaks his mind and calls a spade a spade, but at the same time the reader is aware that Anselmo is enjoying telling his tale and is perhaps molding the people and events to put a more favourable slant on certain aspects of his own involvement, or is simply making the story more entertaining by exaggerating or changing details.

His speeches contain an abundance of idiomatic expressions, popular sayings, proverbs, cliches, and slang. This is another indication of his social status. He speaks like the common man from the underprivileged classes, revealing his knowledge of swear words and street slang, unlike those who come from more advantaged

backgrounds and who are more comfortable in learning institutions or in the salons of the elite.

Anselmo also utilizes similes and metaphors to enhance his descriptions and his images often contain humorous elements. Because of all this his speech has a lot of life and energy, a lot of spice and flavour, and this transfers, in the mind of the reader, to Anselmo as a person. Everything about his speech and what he says helps to form his personality in the eyes of the reader. He is made to seem alive and real to us. He is what one might call a "real character": a little outrageous, funny, brazen, wily, street-smart, self-confident, and strong. We can also deduce that he does not waste time on emotions like guilt and remorse--he never expresses either emotion in regard to any of his violent acts or his immoral behaviour. He is opportunistic to a fault, deceptive, cagey, and basically selfish, and yet we like him and are glad when he gets out alive. Why? Because the author makes us *feel* something for him and his predicaments. His violent and immoral acts are softened with humour and with his own justifications. His simplistic, straightforward views on life, his strong belief in luck, his equally strong belief in himself, his economic situation, and his low level of formal education, combined with his ever-present sense of humour, all endear him to the reader.

The contradictions within his personality; deception and violence versus humour, commonness and vulgarity versus sexual prowess, low level of formal education versus extensive real life experience, are exposed to the reader in such a way that they are seen as a reflection of a real person's character and not as

inconsistencies. All people are filled with contradictory and opposing traits; Anselmo is successfully presented as one of them. This dichotomy within Anselmo's personality mirrors the dichotomy within the story itself. Much of what he tells the reader and the listener is concerned with deception, violence, and brutal killings, but he tells it all in a blunt, matter-of-fact, humorous and light-hearted manner.

ANSELMO AS A CHARACTER

The previous paragraphs make it easy to see why the development of the main character is paramount in this story. Everything else is subordinate to it. Absolutely everything has something to do with Anselmo.

The main character gives the reader information about himself periodically throughout the telling of his story. Instead of giving us some sort of chronological background to his life, he mentions previous jobs, friends, and situations he was involved in, as he is reminded of them throughout his monologue. These bits of data, when pieced together, reveal a great deal about the protagonist and help to form his personality for the reader. For example, Anselmo tells us that he once worked as a sacristan, so the reader can then assume that he has some knowledge of religion in its organized Catholic form. He also tells us that he promised the Virgin of Guadalupe that he would crawl on his knees from the vestibule to the high altar of the Basilica if he got away from the angry peasants alive. He even tells us that it was Divine Providence which provided the horse he used to escape. All of this might lead the reader to believe that Anselmo is a religious man, but earlier information contradicts

this assumption: his flight after killing a man in self-defense in a bar fight, his affair with Lorenzo's wife, his belief in luck, his deceptive acts, his lies, and his whole involvement in the scheme to steal from uneducated, devoutly religious, poor peasants. The reader must take all these factors into account when deciding what role religion plays in Anselmo's life and how important that role is.

Anselmo sees religion as a focal point for those who need something to believe in outside of themselves, but he is so confident in his own abilities and in his good luck that he does not see himself as needing it. He has learned that he must rely upon himself. Since Anselmo has been on the "inside" of religion, has actually worked in a church, he has probably seen some form of corruption within the system, and this may have contributed to his attitude. He knows that stealing from the uneducated poor is wrong and he understands their wrath upon discovering the deception, and the further insult of his decamping with their money, but he does not really believe that he will be punished for it. His only concern is to get out alive, preferably with the money, which he does. He never expresses remorse or guilt over the theft, and he tells us how he enjoyed to the utmost the pleasures that the money bought him.

We learn that Anselmo has lived many years in Mexico City, and that he once worked as a travelling salesman. This piece of information explains his "gift-of-the-gab" to the reader. Salespersons are traditionally (as well as steroetypically) good talkers; known for their abilities to befriend people, to sway their opinions, and to convince them to believe things. The fact that he was a *travelling* salesman tells the

reader that he has been to different parts of the country and has seen different life-styles, met all kinds of people, become involved in a diversity of situations, and generally has "been around". From this we can assume that he is a good judge of people's characters and motives, and that he has learned to read people, situations, and events and to act according to his own benefit.

As I stated at the outset, Anselmo's main concern in any situation is himself, and he makes sure that he always manipulates things to benefit himself, even if it means being deceptive. For example, he pretends to be a devout Catholic, kneeling and praying out loud with the peasants in front of the tree with the apparition of the Virgin on it. In fact, he is only playing along in order to obtain food and shelter and a place to hide after fleeing Ixtapalotla where he killed a man.

This is not the only time that Anselmo lies or acts deceptively. When he happens upon the ranch, after fleeing the bar fight and walking for days through rough terrain, he lies to Don Jesús,one of the peasant land-owners, explaining his bedraggled state by telling him that he had been robbed and had gotten lost. He even lies about his real name, assuming that of his deceased grandfather. But Anselmo sees this as a smart thing to do because later, when he is in hiding, the police as well as Don Jesús and his friends are all looking for someone named Eulalio Domínguez, not Anselmo. So instead of the lie comming back to haunt him and causing repercussions, it ultimately works towards saving him. A lie, something that is contradictory to the teachings of Catholicism, helps to provide the protagonist's salvation from a violent death. This is one example among many of ironic humour found throughout Virgen

de los veranos.

Anselmo tells the listener and the reader right at the beginning of the story that he has had problems with the law. It is here, in fact, that he explains his choice of the particular person to listen to his tale. He states:

> La historia es un poco larga, pero ya que insiste con mucho gusto se la cuento. Al fin y al cabo usté no puede andar de hocicón ai nomás chivateándome, porque tiene también sus pendientes con la autoridá, ¿no? (82)

In alluding to the listener's problems with the law, he includes himself, letting both the listener and the reader know something intimate and personal about his life. He is also providing a hint to the trained or suspiciously-minded reader that he has a motive for telling his tale, because he begins by attempting to gain our confidence through the disclosure of a personal detail about himself. This is a tactic often employed by people who are trying to obtain information, favours, or cooperation. This confession also reflects the straightforward, blunt aspect of Anselmo's character. He makes no apologies for his actions, but he does try to explain how he did everything he did in order to survive, and that everything that happened to get him in trouble was not really his fault. He has an explanation or a justification for almost everything he does.

I have stated that Anselmo holds a strong belief in his own good luck. He mentions it specifically four times in his monologue. The first occurrence is at the beginning of the story, during his description of the game of dominoes which leads up to the bar fight: "De pura chiripa yo las tenía todas conmigo" (83). By pure, dumb

luck he has all the good dominoes. The next three occur close together near the end of the story: "'Por puritita suerte, otra vez ya chingastes, pinche Anselmo'" (98-99). By pure luck he has gotten away safely with the money. "Claro que pa mí no encontrarla en la casa grande fue una suerte" (100). Anselmo feels lucky not to have found Aurorita when he was in the process of fleeing with the money. Finally, he tells us: "Nací con reteharta suerte" (102). This is a more general statement confirming his belief in luck throughout his life. He feels he was born with it. There is one more example which can be included here, even though it does not specifically use the word *suerte*. Just after the first mention of luck, Anselmo says: "y de puritito milagro no agarré el paludismo o la disintería o otra de esas cabronas enfermedades." His use of the word for "miracle" here carries an implication of luck, because a miracle is seen as a rare and welcomed experience, just as is good luck. There is actually a double implication of luck in this statement because to experience a miracle is also considered to be a lucky thing.

Anselmo's belief in his own good luck is also partly responsible for softening his character in the eyes of the reader and the listener. It is one of his endearing qualities, making him appear humble. In the instances where he tells us that it was by luck that something occurred to save him, he takes no credit for his own salvation; he does not brag about being saved because of his wits or intelligence. In fact, he *is* sometimes saved by his wits and his ability to act quickly, such as in the bar fight, but he does not actually tell us that, or focus on the fact that he saved himself. On the other hand, whenever he is saved by good luck he makes a point of saying so.

Anselmo is developed through his dialogue, through his own particular manner of speaking, and through what he himself tells us about how he acts and reacts to people and situations. But he is the only one who tells us about his opinions and his views. The information is highly subjective, and although we see him in the action it is only through his own eyes that we view him, there is no third-person narrator to give another opinion, point of view, or perspective and no other character who speaks to the reader about him.

For this reason most of the action is what I call "second-hand" action. All of the interaction between the characters and with their surroundings (except between Anselmo and the listener) is told to us second-hand by Anselmo. We never hear from the other characters themselves. They only speak through Anselmo's memory, which can not be considered a reliable nor an objective source. What they say and do is entirely at the will of Anslemo, and what character traits the reader may attribute to them, stem largely from the reader's subjective response. Because of these factors, I omit any attempt at character analyzation of Lorenzo, Aurorita, and Don Jesús. Each reader will form their own opinions about these secondary characters, based on the subjective information received by Anselmo and on the manner in which they interpret this information, which in turn, to some extent, is based on each reader's own individual life experiences and personalities.

THE ROLE OF NATURE

Virgen de los veranos takes place entirely outdoors. This includes both the space occupied by Anselmo, the listener, and the first set of worshippers, as well as the space occupied by Anselmo and the others characters in his monologue. The only exception is the fight which takes place inside a bar. It is not surprising, then, that some of the elements of nature, and in particular the weather, play an important role in the plot of Virgen de los veranos. In fact, rain plays a pivotal role. ". . .¡rájales! que la lluvia desmadra los techitos de palma y ¡zácatelas! que la Virgen comienza a despintarse" (97). Because of the arrival of rain during a thunderstorm the deception falls apart, resulting in violence, destruction, and death for some. Since Anselmo learned this the hard way, narrowly escaping with his life (and the money, of course), he takes care, the second time, to set up the confidence trick during the summer and to be more aware of when his time is running out. His last line warns the listener: "Que esto de las apariciones es cuestión de purititos güevos, y hay que andarse con prisas proque el verano ya se está acabando" (102). The deception must take place during the dry summer months when there is little or no chance of rain, and the perpetrator of the fraudulent game must be able to predict the end of summer with a high degree of accuracy. The rain is also responsible for creating the mud which makes it impossible for Lorenzo to escape death at the hands of the outraged worhsippers. ". . .seguía lloviendo a jicarazos . . . no había modo de correr entre tanto lodo y pedrerío, y aquel montonal se le echó encima" (99).

Trees are another aspect of nature involved throughout the plot of this short

story. The Virgin herself appears to Aurorita on a tree, and this tree is one of many in an orchard of trees. " Una mañana al cruzar la huerta halló la aparición en el tronco de un árbol del paraíso" (82). The worshippers who fell prey to the confidence trick used palm fronds attached to the branches of the tree to protect the Virgin from the sun. "Pa que no le diera el sol hicieron unos como techitos de palma pegados a las ramas del árbol" (87). The orchard as a whole is used as a point of reference when describing the number of worshippers and the amount of valuables that they brought as offerings over the weeks. "Se dará una idea de cuánta gente no habrá ido a pedirle favores a la Virgen con que le diga que al mes de mi llegada los retablos casi tapaban los árboles de la huerta . . ." (94-95). Don Jesús and his friends hang Lorenzo's dead body from the very tree upon which Lorenzo had carved and painted the Virgin . "A su fiambre lo fueron a colgar en una rama del árbol del paraíso" (99). Finally, the tree is struck by lightning and we see a force of nature destroying a product of nature: ". . .cayó un rayo en el árbol" (100).

Several elements of nature come into play in this short story. Some of them work for Anselmo (in his role as the protagonist of the monologue), and some of them work against him, such as the rain as explained above. In the first example we see a tree again. Anselmo uses a tree, climbing up it to obtain a better view of the position and the progress of his persuers the morning following the bar fight in which he killed a man. "A la mañana, trepado en un arbolote, vi pasar de lejos a varios juanes del destacamento de caballería" (84). Anselmo is now alone and on the run, in a naturally hostile environment, where, over the next few days, he must use whatever means of

survival nature provides him. "Lo más durazno fue andar a pata tantísimos días por estas tierras tan desiérticas. . . . Tuve que tragarme el agua puerca de los arroyos mediosecos . . ." (84). Later, after his escape from the ranch, he is again in a naturally hostile environment and he blames the terrain for the loss of his stolen horse. "Toda la noche traquetié por montes y barrancos encabronados que me jodieron al caballo antes de lo debido" (98). Finally, his arrival at "el cerro pelón que está a la entrada de Santo Domingo Cuixtlahuaca" signals his salvation because he has reached a town with a train station (98).

There are some elements of nature in the Virgen de los veranos which work neither for nor against Anselmo, but which still contribute to a thematic concern of the story, humankind dealing with nature and vice versa. For example, Anselmo tells us about a worshipper who came to thank the Virgin for curing her son who was crippled in a landslide, and the rocky roads are blamed for the continual break-down of cars carrying potential worshippers to the ranch. The elements of nature mentioned or used in this story also serve as symbolic representations of the cycles of life in humankind and in nature. People work both with and against nature, and at the same time nature also works with and against people. The cycle of birth, growth, destruction/death, and re-birth is repeated over and over, on many different levels, in both nature and in humankind.

Animals are mentioned frequently throughout Anselmo's monologue, but they are used almost exclusively in metaphors, similes, idiomatic expressions, popular sayings, clichés and proverbs. Some examples are: *mi manito de gato, bigotito de*

charro montaperros, los dos piojos resusitados, como al ojo del amo engorda el caballo, estas patrullas de gallo, temblando como un perro, and *mil de águila.* The only animal that is used in the plot is a horse. The main significance within the plot, of the horse that Anselmo steals in order to escape, rests upon that very fact: it is his salvation. It is not luck this time, nor any other person, but a creature of nature, in the form of a horse, that is responsible for saving his life. Anselmo's involvement with the horse is another source of irony within the story. It stems from the fact that Anselmo is soon forced to shoot the horse, because of a fall which disables it, before he has gotten completely away, and again he must deal with the naturally hostile terrain on his own.

THE ROLE OF RELIGION

In contrast to the fact that Anselmo himself is not a religious man, religion, and Catholicism in particular, are central to both the plot of the story that Anselmo tells the listener and the reader, and to the plot of the story as a whole. The availablily of people who possess a strong belief in Catholicism, and in the saints and their powers, is the key component of both confidence tricks; the one that Anselmo becomes involved in with Lorenzo and Aurorita, and the one he sets up fifteen years later. (The deception also depends, initially at least, upon the fact that these same people are uneducated and poor.) Irony comes into play again here, since only a person who *is not* truly religious, and yet is well versed in religious rituals and prayers, could play this game out.

Virgen de los veranos contains many religious and holy words and names, and numerous references to Catholicism and religion in general. Some examples are: *milagro, cristiano, Dios, Santísima Virgen, Virgen del Carmen, Santa Madre, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Arzobispo, cuando fui sacistrán, como Dios manda, la guerra cristera, Juicio Final.* There are many, many more. There are three reasons for the use of so many of these kinds of words and phrases within the story. One is that they add realism to the plot, another is that they reinforce the religious theme, and the last one is that they provide a humorous contrast within the personality of Anselmo. He is familiar with all the words, terms, concepts, prayers, and saints of Catholicism and speaks about God, but he is not a religious person, so that the manner in which he uses these words coupled with when he chooses to use them, often provides humour within his monologue. For example, when Anselmo is about to flee the bar fight he says, " 'Andale, Anselmo, cuélate, que ora sí echaste al plato un cristiano' " (84). And later when he first arrives at the ranch he tells us, ". . . onque andaba todo fachoso y comido por los piojos como cualquier animal, me seguí de filo recitando la Manífica . . ." (89). Toward the end of his monologue he explains that don Jesús and his friends " juraron por la Santísima Trinidá que me iban a buscar por cielo y tierra, y que cuando me hallaran me iban a machacar los tompiates y a despellejar vivo y ponerme sal y chile in todas partes" (102).

VIOLENCE

Violence is very much a part of this short story. It is treated almost nonchalantly by Anselmo. He seems to hold the view that it is a naturally unavoidable part of life and he deals with it and talks about it as he encounters it. This attitude on the part of the principal character influences the manner in which he describes violent actions and therefore the manner in which the reader views them. The author creates a contrast: Anselmo's descriptions of violent, brutal and bloody acts are often funny because of the way in which he talks about them. This technique serves to soften the horror of the brutality he describes and thus the repugnance that the reader might otherwise feel towards Anselmo, because his involvement in any of this violence is overshadowed, and the reader is still able to empathize with him.

The first instance of violence occurs on the second page of the narrative and it is the only act of physical violence against another human being that Anselmo is involved in throughout the story. Anselmo, defending himself against a man with a pistol, kills the man with a knife: "agarré el chafalote con que estuvimos partiendo los limones pal tequila; le di por doquier, y lo demás, pos ya se lo imagina: el pendejo ese cayó redondito a dar un chapuzón en su puroia salsa" (83).

The next act of physical violence does not appear until much later on in the monologue, but it is followed by several more towards the end of the story. This second act of violence also involves Anselmo, but it involves a horse rather than another person. "De repente [el caballo] dio el zapotazo y viendo que ya se iba a petatear, saqué la matona y le metí un balazo en la chiluca, pa que no sufriera el pobre

ai tirado . . . si no fuera por el cuaco . . . me cortaron los güevos todos los güeyes que habíamos pendejeado" (98).

Shorty after, we find the description of Lorenzo's brutal death at the hands of don Jesùs and his friends. "Lo bajaron de la camioneta a chingadazos y luego lo machetearon hasta hacerlo picadillo . . . dejaron a Lorenzo hecho puré y colgado de las patas como tlacuache . . . " (99-100).

The next description of physical violence in the story is that of Aurorita's death, also at the hands of the peasants. "Los mismos que hasta hacía un ratito respetaban a la patroncita y la creía mediosanta . . . ahora sólo buscaban modo de desquitarse y le estaban poniendo una pedriza de padre y señor mío" (101).

The soldiers from Cuextepec and the government, respectively, are responsible for the final two mentions of specific violent acts within the story. "Se calmó la trifulca gracias a que un teniente y su escuadrón los dejaron sosiegos cargando contra ellos a sablazos" (101). The soldiers were forced to use violence to calm the angry mob of peasants. "A don Jesús lo fusilaron--entonces había pena de muerte en el Estado--por el asesinato de Lorenzo y Aurorita . . . " (102). The state government shot don Jesús, employing the legal death penalty in existence at the time.

The other violent aspects of Virgen de los veranos stem from the deception and the theft inherent in the conficence tricks. The deception and theft that occur within this story can be labelled as violent acts because they harm those who were deceived and robbed. Not only does the theft of their money affect the quality of their lives thereafter; the deception of the confidence game itself leads to the death of don Jesús

and to the imprisonment of several of his friends. This main deception also leads to the deaths of two of its perpetrators, Lorenzo and Aurorita. And finally, theft, indirectly, is responsible for the death of the horse. By stealing it Anselmo takes the horse on the road to its death.

THEMES

Writers, like everyone else, live in the everyday world; they experience life in the same thousands of mundane and extraordinary ways in which we, the readers, do. And, as all people do, over the course of their lives they come to hold certain views about the problems which confront all people; universal problems inherent in the human condition. The presentation and examination of these problems of the human condition are what constitute the themes of stories and narratives. It is not necessary that a solution to these problems be presented, it is only necessary that the problem be exposed to the reader and discussed, with the aim of creating a better understanding of our world.

There are several themes explored in Virgen de los veranos. I have already mentioned one, that of humankind living with nature, in conjuction with nature's affect on the actions and lives of humankind. Anselmo, Lorenzo, and Aurorita use elements of nature in their fraudulent games and nature, in turn, affects the ultimate outcome of those deceptive games. The peasant farmers and the larger land-owners live in a natural environment on what their land provides, and Anselmo is also forced to live on

what nature provides him when he is on the run.

Another major theme presented in this short story concerns an aspect of human nature. Through the perpetration of the confidence trick, the nature of opportunism and greed are explored. Also examined in connection with these human traits is that aspect of human nature that enables the strong to prey upon the weak, or more accurately stated in this case, the intelligent to prey upon the ignorant. And this in turn leads to an examination of the gullibility of the uneducated, at two different points in time, fifteen years apart.

The issues surrounding religious beliefs and their effects upon humankind in society are another thematic concern of Virgen de los veranos. Anselmo's disbelief in religion and the powers of the saints are pitted against and contrasted with the peasants' devout religious beliefs. The author explores the possible results or outcome of the mixture in society of these two belief/disbelief systems.

The final theme presented in this story centers on money. The author examines the effects of poverty in humankind through his portrayal of the poor living conditions, and their causes and consequences, of the peasant land-owners. At the same time he reveals these same people's generosity through his presentation of their willingness to give away their valuables and money for the salvation of their souls or for specific cures. Through the characters of Anselmo, Lorenzo, and Aurorita the author puts the nature of greed in humankind under the microscope and looks at how it relates to the means of acquisition of money. Wealth is also presented in this story, from two angles: Anselmo is rich at one point and he tells us how he used his money,

and he refers to the attitudes, character traits, and actions of some of the rich and powerful people in Mexican society.

CONCLUSION--THE ROLE OF THE READER

The identification and interpretation of the themes within Virgen de los veranos is highly dependent upon the reader. I stated earlier that the role of the reader is the second most important aspect of this story and I discussed how each reader could conclude different things from the same information, owing to the fact that all the information is highly subjective and presented from only one character's perspective. The themes that each reader identifies, and the importance they are given, are also dependent upon how the reader views the universality of the problems facing the characters in the story.

The reader also plays a central role in deciding the outcome of the story since the author leaves the tale open-ended. Anselmo's question to the listener goes unanswered and the reader must decide for him/herself what that answer might be, taking into consideration all of the information presented throughout the story.

The reasons surrounding the outcome of the following short story to be analysed are also highly dependent upon the reader. La fiesta brava is another open-ended short story, again leaving the reader to piece together information in order to find a satisfactory conclusion.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF LA FIESTA BRAVA

La fiesta brava explores the relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed[1] in both a general historico-cultural sense, and on an individual level, through the main characters of the short story as a whole. In a symbolic fashion it draws parallels between the conquest of the pre-Hispanic cultures by the Spanish, the U.S. cultural invasion of post-World War II Mexican society, and the military invasion of Vietnam by U.S. troops in the 1960s. This short story also experiments with the boundaries between fiction and reality, between the dream world and the tangible world, and between myth and history. In order to accomplish all of this the author creates two separate texts, interrelated and dependent upon each other in many respects, but at the same time so different in plot that they are independent of one another as well.

Andrés Quintana, the protagonist of the main story, at the request of his old friend Ricardo Arbeláez, writes a complete and separate short story which is included within the main story. These two narratives share the same title, take place in the same city, possess some parallel themes, suggest similiar fates for their protagonists,

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[1]Yvette Jiménez de Báez, Diana Morán, and Edith Negrín, the authors of La narrativa de José Emilio Pacheco, use the words dominadores/dominados (152), meaning 'dominators/dominated', in their analysis of this short story. Throughout this thesis I use these words interchangeably with 'oppressor/oppressed'.

and their realities even overlap at one point, but in style, format, and structure they are not alike.

FORMAT AND STRUCTURE IN RELATION TO TIME AND SPACE

La fiesta brava consists of three sections: a newpaper advertisement, a short story written by Andrés Quintana, and a short story about Andrés which explains the circumstances surrounding his creation of the story. The individual and particular formats and structures of the three sections which make up La fiesta brava, in conjunction with the overall structure of the story as a whole, enhance the readers' perception of the time and space in which the characters move and act. The blank spaces between the three sections correspond to the changes in time and space within the overall plot. In addition, many of the double space breaks within the texts of the individual stories are used to block off events taking place within a certain period of time or within a particular space (La narrativa de José Emilio Pacheco 147).

La fiesta brava opens with an advertisement requesting information regarding the disappearance of Andrés Quintana. It is situated at the top of the page and the text is boxed, with a space left in the margin for a photograph. The language used in the advertisement enables the reader to deduce that it was probably published in a newspaper. No other text appears on this page of the story, and no explanation for the advertisement is given. Just as is the case with Virgen de los veranos, the reader does not understand the significance of the beginning of the story until reaching the very end. Even then the information provided regarding Quintana's disappearance leaves

ample room for speculation on the part of the reader.

The newspaper advertisement, which opens the story as a whole and precedes any other information, would have to have been published *after* the events related in the third section of the story have occurred. In contrast to its initial position within the structure of the story, in actual time the advertisement's position within the plot is the final one, since it is only after Andrés disappearance at the end of the story that there is a need for the publication of the advertisement. It informs the reader of the route that Andrés was travelling through Mexico City when he disappeared and gives the time and date of the disappearance: "extraviado el martes 5, en el trayecto de la Avenida Juárez a las calles de Tonalá en la Colonia Roma hacia la 23:30 horas . . ." (El principio del placer 78).

The second page of the story as a whole begins a short story by Andrés Quintana, also entitled "La fiesta brava". It consists of twenty-four blocks of text, each separated by a double blank space. A different type-set is used for this story and it is written without the use of capital letters (except the one which opens the story), or paragraph indentations. The comma is essentially the only form of punctuation; there are no quotation marks, colons, semi-colons, or exclamation points, and only a few question marks are used. The language in this story has a commanding and instructional tone, and the author further enchances this tone by frequent use of the future tense. A period ends this story within the main story, in mid-page, and a new page is used to start the next part of the story as a whole.

The twenty-four blocks of text which make up the short story that Andrés

writes deal principally with a period of approximately one week in the life of the protagonist, Captain Keller, who is vacationing in Mexico City. Only the first two blocks of text deal with occurrences outside Mexico City. They describe events which took place in Vietnam, some time in the 1960s, depicting brutal killings and desecration, and the annhilation of an entire village by invading U.S. troops. Captain Keller is a member of the troop whose activities are described. The next ten blocks of text relate the actions, some considerable time later, of the now retired Captain Keller on vacation in Mexico City.

This segment opens with Captain Keller in the Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City. A unique description of Captain Keller is presented at the beginning of the opening paragraph of this segment: "qué lejos se halla . . . captain Keller . . . camisa verde, Rolleiflex, pipa de espuma de mar . . ." (80). This description is important. It is repeated word for word on page 85, and again at the ending of the third section of the story as a whole. Its importance lies in the fact that it provides information that the reader will use in deciphering the enigmatic ending of the story.

The segment of the story that opens with Captain Keller in the museum documents his obsessive fascination with the Aztec statue of Coatlicue, his attempt to abandon the obsession and re-join the tour by going on the bullfight excursion, his return to the museum, his encounter with the ice-cream vendor who proposes to show him something unforgettable in an underground tunnel of the Metro system, and a description of his journey via the Metro to the designated meeting place below ground. These ten blocks of text describe the actions of Captain Keller over a period of seven

days, from a Wednesday to the following Tuesday. We are able to fix the time span by information provided by the narrator: "suspenderá los tours de jueves, viernes y sábado . . . " (82), and "el martes por la noche . . . estará en Insurgentes . . . subirá al carro final . . . " (85). Almost all the action in these first twelve blocks of text takes place above ground. Only at the very end of block twelve does the protagonist go below ground, beginning his descent into the tunnel systems.

The final twelve blocks of text deal with what happens to Captain Keller after he follows the ice-cream vendor's directions and descends into the underground tunnels of Mexico City's Metro system. In contrast to the first twelve blocks of text, the final twelve cover a time span of only about an hour or two. We are not able to fix this time span exactly, but we know that Captain Keller took the last train, which probably leaves around midnight, then walked for some time through the tunnels, and was sequestered in a subterranean cell. We can reasonably assume that all of this would only take a few hours. Also in contrast to the first twelve blocks of text, the final twelve describe events which take place in one space only, the underground tunnels. Although this space and time occupied by the characters does not actually change, there is an illusion of change regarding both elements.

On two occasions, different times and spaces seem to overlap or cross in the action within these final twelve blocks of text, giving an impression of two worlds colliding. This impression is paralleled in the ending of the story as a whole. The last four blocks of text in the story about Captain Keller are ambiguous with regard to time and space. They seem to describe Captain Keller, sequestered in a subterranean

cell, awakening from a dream, but the ending of the story calls that asssumption into question. The possibility that Captain Keller's dream world has collided with his conscious world is a real one, but the reader cannot be sure which part is the dream; the descent into the tunnel and death, or the awakening in his hotel room:

> cuando al fin entreabre los ojos comprende, . . . ha tenido un sueño idiota . . . qué descanso hallarse despierto en este cuarto del Holiday Inn, . . . extiende la mano, la mano se mueve en el vacío tratando de alcanzar la lámpara, no está, . . . usted se levanta. . . . (88-89)

The second overlapping of time and space, where worlds seem to collide, occurs within the final block of text, which directly follows the piece quoted above. Captain Keller is brusquely removed from his subterranean cell and suddenly appears to enter the ancient Aztec world, where he is ritually sacrificed to the sun god:

> entonces irrumpen en la celda los hombres que lo llevarán a la gran piedra circular acanalada en uno de los templos gemelos, le abrirán el pecho de un tajo, le arrancarán el corazón . . . para ofrecerlo como alimento sagrado al dios-jaguar, al sol. . . . . (89-90)

The most significant aspect of this ending to the story within the main story lies in the fact that Captain Keller, who represents the dominators, dies at the hands of a Mexican ice-cream vendor, who represents all those who have been dominated. The oppressor dies at the hands of the oppressed (La narrativa 153).

The third and final section of the story deals with events which occur during one period of approximately twenty-four hours in the life of Andrés Quintana, a

resident of Mexico City. The format and structure of this part of the story are much more conventional than that of the previous part. This third section contains descriptions by a third-person narrator, dialogue between characters, and interior monologues. In addition, for the most part, the author employs conventional punctuation usage, only deviating slightly in the interior monologues by utilizing numerous slash marks. These slash marks are an important part of the structure of the story because they serve as markers within the text to indicate a change of space in the action, from exterior to interior, through the thoughts which Andrés shares with the reader during the interior monologues. In one of these monologues the question mark is also used in this capacity. The language mimics that of everyday speech and even includes some idiomatic words and phrases in common use at the time in which the story is set. We are able to fix the story's date by information obtained after Andrés receives the telephone call from Ricardo. The narrator states: "Había transcurrido más de doce años desde el 28 de marzo de 1959" (El principio del placer 101). Numerous words, phrases, and even sentences appear in English in the text as well, but their function is generally more connected to the thematic concerns of the story than to its format and structure. However, some of these words and phrases in English, such as the translation that Andrés is working on, are an integral part of the plot and in that sense they do have a structural function.

This last section of La fiesta brava also takes place in Mexico City, both above and below ground, just as does the short story that Andrés writes. Although the story of Andrés covers a period of only approximately twenty-four hours of action, the

interior monologues which take place within this time frame deal with events which occurred twelve years earlier, and with the progression of Andrés' life and career throughout those twelve years. The interior monologues also provide the reader with necessary background information regarding the characters and their situations, and allow the reader an insight into the shared past and history of the two principal characters, Andrés and Ricardo.

Throughout this final section of the story the author uses two lines of blank space to block off events occurring within a certain time or space. In addition, throughout this segment, the first paragraph to follow one of these double blank space breaks is not indented. This structural technique further highlights the change of time or space within the narrative. These same double blank spaces are also used for emphasis, to set certain parts of the text apart (La narrativa 147). For example, the English rock song that Andrés' neighbours are practising, the paragraph in English that Andrés is translating, his tentative rendering of it into Spanish, the newspaper headline he reads, the magazine article (in English) about the luxury resort hotel in Acapulco, and the graffiti scratched over an American cigarette advertisement in the Metro tunnel are all separated from the main text by two lines of blank spaces both preceding and following them.

The first four blocks of paragraphs in this third section of the story are all approximately the same length. Only the final block, which deals with events directly leading up to Andrés' disappearance, is shorter. This format reflects the action in the plot. The final segment is cut off in the middle, at half the length of the other

segments, just as Andrés' life seems to have been cut off in the middle, ending nowhere.

The action in the first segment all takes place in Andrés' apartment in one afternoon. These pages describe his living quarters, his daily existence, his work, and the telephone call he receives from his old friend Ricardo, whose proposal seems to offer the break that Andrés needs. Also in this segment, the narrator indirectly introduces the reader to Andrés' wife, Hilda, through a description of her impressions of Andrés after he has spoken to Ricardo. Two blank lines end this block of text.

The segment following this first break in the text concerns actions which take place throughout the night of the day just described. In this second segment the action again takes place, physically, in Andrés' apartment. The first paragraph tells us that "cuando Hilda se fue a dormir Andrés tomó asiento ante la máquina", and the last paragraph informs us that, "a las cinco de la mañana [Andrés] se fue a dormir . . . pero acababa de escribir LA FIESTA BRAVA" (El principio del placer 96,100). Later, the narrator tells us that "Andrés se levantó a las once y cuarto" (100). If we assume that Hilda went to bed at approximately 11:00 p.m., we can also reasonably assume that this block of text covers a period of approximately twelve hours. Although Andrés remains in his apartment, creating the short story Ricardo asked him to write, most of the action described in this segment does not take place there. This segment is essentially an interior monologue by Andrés who reminisces about the past that Hilda, Ricardo, and he shared, and about the circumstances surrounding his marriage to Hilda. He also talks about his desire to become a short story writer, the

frustration he encounters trying to realize his dream, and his ultimate failure with regard to his literary career. Andrés shares with the reader his justifications and explanations for the type of writing at which he now makes his living.

The third segment, again introduced by a double blank space and no paragraph indentation, begins when Andrés gets up the next morning at 11:15. It ends when Ricardo returns to his office after spending more than two hours with his boss, Mr. Hardwick, discussing Andrés' story. Like the previous block of text, this one ends approximately twelve hours after it began. We know that Andrés arrives at Ricardo's office around nine o'clock because Ricardo says: "Te espero a las nueve en mi oficina"(101), and because the narrator tells us that "[Andrés] Entró a tiempo en la oficina" (101). We also know that Andrés is in Ricardo's office for more than two and a half hours: "habían pasado más de dos horas . . ." (106). This information enables the reader to deduce that Andrés leaves Ricardo's office to return home at approximately 11:30 p.m.

This block of text, unlike the last one, contains a change of space and an interior monologue within it, neither of which are separated by blank spaces. It covers Andrés' actions throughout the day, his trip to Ricardo's office later that evening to deliver the short story, his meeting with Ricardo, and his wait in Ricardo's office, during which time the reader is privy to another of Andrés' interior monologues. Most of the action in this segment takes place above ground; there is only a brief mention of the fact that Andrés takes the Metro to Ricardo's office. However, this brief description of Andrés' route to Ricardo's office is extremely important because it

intersects with the route that Captain Keller takes to the tunnel in the Metro system. This small mention of the details of Andrés' route is a foreshadowing technique. It hints at events which have yet to happen, when Andrés is returning home later that night, and the individual realities of the two stories cross or overlap.

The penultimate block of text separated by two blank lines takes place entirely in Ricardo's office and covers a very short time span of about fifteen minutes. It deals almost exclusively with a conversation between Ricardo and Andrés. They discuss the problems that Ricardo and Mr. Hardwick found with Andrés' short story and the reasons for their rejection of it. Only a few lines of interior monologue by Andrés are included in this block. It ends when Andrés bids good night to Ricardo, after accepting a thousand pesos, a sixth of what he would have received had they wished to publish his short story.

The shorter, final block of text deals with Andrés' departure from Ricardo's office, his descent into the Metro tunnels, his ride on the train, his glimpse of Captain Keller, and his own abduction by three unknown men just as he reaches street level. The action takes place almost entirely below ground. Even at the beginning of this block of text, when Andrés is actually still above ground but on his way to the Metro, the idea of descent is introduced by the narrator's description of Andrés' actions (La narrativa 151). When he leaves Ricardo's office, Andrés goes down in the elevator: "Hundió el botón de planta baja" (El principio del placer 110). From there he goes further down into the Metro system: "caminó hasta la estación Juárez y descendió al andén desierto" (111). And from there he goes still further down: "Descendió en

Insurgentes cuando los magnavoces anunciaban que era la última corrida . . . " (112). The time span of this last block of text can be estimated at approximately half an hour. We can make this deduction because we have already seen evidence that Andrés left Ricardo's office at around 11:30 p.m., and that shortly later, when Andrés is in the underground station, the last train was about to leave. If we assume that this last train leaves sometime around midnight, we can resonably fix the time span at about half an hour.

It is during this last block of text that the realities of the two separate worlds created within the story as a whole collide, or intersect. In the penultimate paragraph Andrés sees Captain Keller: "Andrés vio entre los cuatro pasajeros del último carro a un hombre inconfundiblemente norteamericano: camisa verde, Rolleiflex, pipa de espuma de mar entre los labios" (113). This description of Captain Keller coincides exactly with the earlier ones given within the story that Andrés created. The author attempts to make the intersection of these two worlds more believable by injecting a sense of truth to the facts he provides. He accomplishes this by the careful inclusion and arrangement of certain details within both plots of the two short stories which comprise the story as a whole. And, in order to call further attention to these details, the author repeats them throughout the text.

I have already stated that a description of Captain Keller is provided twice within the story about him. The purpose of its repetition yet a third time at the end of the story about Andrés, is to urge the reader into feeling compelled to believe that at least Andrés, if not the reader, has reason to think that he actually sees Captain Keller.

Another repetition of details which serves the same purpose concerns the routes of travel of both the protagonists. Captain Keller's route is mentioned twice, on facing pages. The first one occurs when the ice-cream vendor gives him instructions and directions: "todo lo que tiene que hacer es subirse al último carro del último Metro la noche del martes en la estación Insurgentes . . . " (84). The second one occurs when Captain Keller follows the ice-cream vendor's directions: "el martes por la noche, camisa verde, Rolleiflex, pipa de espuma de mar, estará en Insurgentes aguardando que los magnavoces anuncien el último viaje . . . " (85). Andrés' route is mentioned three times. The first one is in the newspaper advertisement that opens the story as a whole: "ANDRÉS QUINTANA . . . extraviado el martes 5, en el trayecto de la Avenida Juárez a las calles de Tonalá en la Colonia Roma hacia la 23:30 horas . . . " (78). The next mention of his route occurs when Andrés is travelling to Ricardo's office: "A las ocho y media Andrés subió al Metro en la estación Insurgentes" (101). The final repetition of Andrés' route is provided when describing his trip home from Ricardo's office: "Descendió en Insurgentes cuando los magnavoces anunciaban que era la última corrida . . . " (112).

A review of this information makes it clear that both Captain Keller and Andrés were at the same Metro station, Insurgentes, on the same night of the week, a Tuesday night, and that they were both using this Metro system at the same time, when the last train was leaving that station. The intersection of their realities is not an accident. The author is very careful to include the details of both protagonists' routes, further emphasizing them through repetition. On one level, this overlapping of

realities parallels the earlier one which occurred at the end of the story about Captain Keller. In the main story, a reality created through fiction appears to overlap or collide with the reality, or the real world, of the creator of that fictional reality. In the other, pre-Hispanic time and space appear to overlap, or meld, with modern-day time and space. But the parallel ends here because, in one case, the collision of realities results in death, that of Captain Keller, and in the other, although the protagonist disappears and *may* be dead, the collision of realities is not directly related to the disappearance.

NARRATORS AND LANGUAGE

All three sections of La fiesta brava have different types of narrators. In the newspaper advertisement the author uses a third-person narrator who presents the information about Andrés' disappearance in the formal and impersonal style commonly used in such publications. A passive voice is employed to achieve this impersonality and the language works toward the same goal. It is straightforward, factual, and direct.

The narrator who relates the events in the short story that Andrés writes about Captain Keller is unique. This narrator is very commanding and prescriptive; he speaks as though directly addressing the protagonist, using many second-person verb forms. This technique, along with the previously-mentioned use of the future tense, enhances the air of authority and omniscience which surrounds the narrator. He is aloof and apart from the action, but he is not objective. There is a judgmental tone

created by the techniques the author employs in this narrative, and the reader becomes aware that the narrator does not like or sympathize with Captain Keller. The narrator even accuses Captain Keller: "Usted, metralleta en mano, salta, dispara y ordena disparar contra todo . . . y cuando vuelven a los helicópteros usted, capitán Keller, siente la paz del deber cumplido" (79). Captain Keller is a representation of a dominating force in this description by the narrator, but later, this same narrator describes the retired, vacationing Captain Keller as a much more passive person who indifferently contemplates the museum pieces and is horrified by the brutality of the bullfight (La narrativa 160-161).

The language and the structure of the phrases in this story are much more complex than they are in any other part of the story as a whole. The narrator uses descriptive passages and a large and varied selection of adjectives. Also contributing to the complexity of the language is the fact that it is written with commas instead of periods functioning as thought separators. The language and the manner in which the text is formated are connected to the specific rhythm and tone of this story. The reader feels pulled along or directly guided by the narrator and this helps to give the story the even, steady, almost flat tone and rhythm common to instructional language.

The short story about Andrés is narrated by a third-person narrator who is subjective and closely related to the protagonist. Although it is narrated in the third person, the story is told only from Andrés' perspective, so the information the reader receives is one-sided. Conversations between the two main characters are the only source of objective information provided to the reader. These conversations are not

only an integral part of the plot, they are also important in regard to the character development of Ricardo, which in turn, for some readers, may play a role in deciphering the enigmatic ending of the story. This third section of the short story utilizes conventional language common to everyday speech. It also contains a considerable number of English words scattered throughout it.

English words appear as names of products, such as *Smith-Corona*, *Kimberley Clark*, *Benson & Hedges*, *Viceroy*, and *Raleigh*, and as titles of books and magazines, such as *The Population Bomb*, *New World*, *Esquire*, *Playboy*, *Penthouse*, *The New Yorker*, and *Time Magazine*. They appear as part of the texts of books and magazines, such as the translation that Andrés is working on and the advertisement he reads in Ricardo's office, as the lyrics to a rock song heard through an open window, and finally, as part of Ricardo's speech, with words such as *editor-in-chief*, *american magazine*, *bookish*, *you know*, *who knows*, *office-boy*, and *local*. These words and phrases in English play an important role in the story because they represent the extent of the North American cultural invasion of Mexico (148). In this way they are connected to one of the major themes within the story, the relationships between the dominators and the dominated. Andrés is surrounded by North American influences in Mexican society and his friend from the past, now "North Americanized", adds insult to injury with his successful career and his superior attitude. North American culture is presented as a pervasive and dominating force in Andrés' everyday life in Mexico City. This dominator/dominated theme is reflected twice in the story that he writes about Captain Keller. First, the United States is presented as an invading and

dominating force in Vietnam, and second, the Spanish nation is presented as a conquering and dominating force of the ancient Mayan and Aztec cultures.

ANDRÉS QUINTANA

The author develops the character of Andrés in depth. The reader obtains information about him through the narrator, through Andrés' own interior monologues, and through his conversations with Ricardo.

A great deal of information about the protagonist is provided in the narrator's initial description of Andrés working in his apartment one afternoon, just before he receives the telephone call from Ricardo. In the first sentence we learn that Quintana is writing something: "Andrés Quintana miró la hoja de papel Revolución que acababa de introducir in la Smith-Corona" (El principio del placer 91). By the second page we know that he is working on a translation: "Meditó sobre el término que traduciría mejor la palabra *scenario*" (92). We also learn that he lives in a dismal apartment: "[Andrés] cerró la ventana abierta sobre el lúgubre patio interior" (91), surrounded by the noises of his neighbours: "Lo distrajo un grito . . . en el televisor a todo volumen del departamento contiguo. Enfrente los muchachos que formaban un conjunto de rock atacaron el mismo pasaje ensayado desde las cuatro de la tarde" (91). It is in this first section that the reader learns of Andrés' physical disability: "con el índice de su mano izquierda (un accidente infantil le había paralizado la derecha) escribió rápidamente" (92). Just before Andrés receives the telephone call, we are given a hint that his self-confidence is low when he speaks aloud to himself, criticizing his own

work: " 'que quedaba', suena horrible. Hay dos 'pores' seguidos. E 'ina-ina'. Qué prosa. Cada vez traduzco peor" (93).

Quintana's low self-esteem is exposed to the reader many times throughout the text. In the telephone conversation between Ricardo and Andrés, which directly follows the self-criticism, Andrés is flustered and hesitant in his speech when Ricardo asks him for a short story, and he makes excuses for not having written anything creative for some time: "Hombre sí, claro. . . lo que pasa es. . . es que no tengo ningún cuento nuevo: hace tiempo que no escribo . . . Pues. . . problemas, chamba, en fin, lo de siempre" (94-95). When Ricardo encourages him to sit down and think about a short story for the magazine, Andrés tries to interject weakly with "Pero. . ." (95), but Ricardo continues speaking. When he mentions that the pay for the story will be six thousand pesos, Andrés repeats the amount incredulously,"¿Seis mil pesos por un cuento?" (95), and immediately takes down Ricardo's telephone number and address, thanking him effusively. He refers to the call as a miracle and eagerly awaits the arrival of his wife. The reader now knows something else important about Andrés: his financial situation is not good and the idea of earning six thousand pesos for writing a short story is very attractive to him. Later, we discover that it is more than he earns in months at his present job: "ahora iba a recibir seis mil pesos por un cuento: lo que ganaba en meses de tardes enteras frente a la máquina" (99).

Hilda, Andrés' wife, is used indirectly by the narrator to inform the reader about Andrés' usual state of mind and his behaviour of late: "Su mujer se asombró al no hallarlo quejumbroso y desesperado como de costumbre" (96). His grumpiness and

despondency are signs of guilt and frustration over his failures, and symptoms of his low self-esteem and self-confidence.

In a lengthy interior monologue, the reader learns from Andrés himself a great deal about his past, which helps to explain these present low levels of self-confidence and self-esteem. We learn about the early discovery of his love of the short story, his father's wish that he continue the family tradition in architecture, and his refusal to comply with his father's wishes by secretly auditing Arts courses instead of attending the classes in which he was enrolled. This led to his involvement with the students who published a magazine on campus, and his friendship with Ricardo. The reader learns something crucial about the relationship between Ricardo and Andrés: "Andrés conoció a Hilda que entonces tenía diecisiete años y siempre estaba al lado de Ricardo. Se enamoraron, hablaron valientemente a Arbeláez y decidieron casarse" (97). From this point forward, the reader has a better understanding of the tension that exists between Ricardo and Andrés. Although it was apparently all very civilized, Andrés took Ricardo's girlfriend away from him and married her.

This same interior monologue describes Quintana's frustrated attempts to become a screen writer and to hold a position on a literary magazine, and his ultimate failure to earn a living by creative writing. We learn that Andrés and Hilda were forced to move from a house to a dark apartment, and that Hilda lost her first and only child: "A fines de 1960 el proyecto de vivir de su pluma había fracasado, Hilda había perdido a su primer y único hijo, y más tarde salieron de la casita de Coyoacán para alquilar un sombrío departamento interior en las calles de Tonalá" (98). In

addition, it is here that we learn that Andrés' only published work, a collection of short stories called *Fabulaciones*, sold very poorly and only received one review; a favourable one, ironically, written by Ricardo. Andrés reveals an attitude of bitterness and self-contempt when he shares with the reader his hollow justifications and excuses for the unfulfilling writing he must do now to earn a living:

> las traducciones . . . pueden estar tan bien escritos como un cuento . . . sólo por un concepto elitista y arcaico se puede creer que lo único válido es la llamada literatura de creación . . . no quiero competir con los escritorzuelos mexicanos inflados por la publicidad; noveluchas como ésas yo podría hacerla de a diez por año . . . . en el subdesarrollo no se puede ser escritor . . . cuando se trata de escribir todo sirve, no hay trabajo perdido; de mi experiencia burocrática, ya verás, saldrán cosas . . . (99)

Quintana's low self-esteem is exposed twice to the reader in the initial meeting between the two main characters in Ricardo's office. The first time it is through the narrator's description of Andrés' feelings upon seeing Ricardo after such a long time and upon meeting his secretary: "La secretaria era tan bonita que Andrés sintió vergüenza de su triste saco de pana, su pantalón café, su pequeñez, su mano tullida . . . . Ricardo estaba irreconocible con el traje de shantung . . . Andrés volvió a sentirse fuera de lugar en aquel sitio . . . " (101-02). The second time that Quintana's low self-esteem is revealed is through the few words he exchanges with Ricardo before the latter takes the story off to Mr. Hardwick's office. When Ricardo suggests

that he introduce the two, Andrés feels self-conscious and embarassed about his spoken English, and intimidated at the idea of meeting Mr. Hardwick, who used to work on Time Magazine:

> -No, mejor no me lo presentes: me da pena.
>
> -¿Pena? ¿Por qué?
>
> -No hablo inglés.
>
> -¿Cómo? Si has traducido miles de libros.
>
> -Tal vez por eso; son cosas distintas. (102-03)

The two-and-a-half-hour wait that Andrés must endure, while Ricardo and Mr. Hardwick discuss his short story, is used by the author to further develop the character of Andrés and to throw more light on the nature of the relationship between Andrés and Ricardo. Again, Andrés' low level of self-confidence is revealed in both the narrator's descriptions of his actions and in the interior monologue which takes the form of a series of questions. Looking at the enlarged prints of an older Mexico City displayed on the office walls, Andrés imagines a story about a person going into the prints and observing those who observe him in the picture, but he immediately discounts the idea that the concept for the story could be original, quickly thinking that he must have read it somewhere else and forgotten until just now. He displays a distrust of self by this thought and then immediately compounds it by vacillating, and questioning his own self-distrust. Andrés then asks himself a series of questions which bring to light his many insecurities. He questions the past relationship between Hilda and Ricardo, the success of Ricardo's career, his real motives for contacting

Andrés after so many years of silence, and the real reasons behind his praise of *Fabulaciones*. Andrés also reveals his own feelings of shame and humiliation with regard to his present living situation when he wonders if Ricardo knows about his troubled marriage, his mundane work, his ineptness at that work, and the servile job his wife must endure.

Andrés' low self-esteem is again exposed to the reader in the conversation he has with Ricardo regarding the short story about Captain Keller. Although Andrés holds his own throughout the conversation, discussing the various criticisms and concerns that Ricardo and Mr. Hardwick have expressed, his defenses sound hollow and bitter, and his nonchalant self-criticism and feigned indifference betray his feelings of worthlessness and inferiority. Speaking to Ricardo, Andrés says: "Hombre, no hay por qué dar excusas. Di que no aguanta y se acabó" (107). Later he states: "A lo mejor me puse trampas yo solito para no salir publicado" (109). And finally, when Ricardo tells him that he can still try to publish the story in a local magazine, Andrés comments: "Para qué. No salió. Mejor nos olvidamos de ella . . . " (111).

After Ricardo and Mr. Hardwick reject his story, Andrés loses all interest in it: "abrió su portafolios en busca de algún material de lectura. Sólo encontró la copia de LA FIESTA BRAVA. La destruyó y la echó al basurero" (112). By destroying his own creation, Andrés is in effect negating himself--if others do not see the value of his work then he, because of his poor self-confidence, cannot see it either. From this point forward, Andrés' actions on the train, and in particular his state of mind, are of paramount importance to the plot of the narrative because they help the reader find an

explanation for the abduction which abruptly ends the story. We see evidence that Andrés is feeling depressed, humiliated, worried, angry, and above all preoccupied and distracted by his incessant self-deprecating thoughts. Twice the narrator mentions that Andrés, talking to himself, and in front of the three other half-asleep passengers on the train, took out the thousand peso bill that Ricardo paid him: "Soló había tres pasajeros adormilados. Andrés sacó del bosillo el billete de mil pesos, lo contempló un instante y lo guardó de nuevo . . . . Al ver que los tres hombres lo observaban . . . desvió la mirada y para ocuparse en algo tomó el billete de mil pesos y lo guardó en su portafolios" (112). Andrés reprimands and berates himself out loud:

> Cara de imbécil -se dijo-. Si me encontrara en la calle conmigo mismo sentiría un infinito desprecio. Sólo un pendejo como yo se expone a una humillación de esta naturaleza. Cómo voy a explicárselo a Hilda. Todo es siniestro. Por qué no chocará el tren. Quisiera morirme. (112)

There are only two instances in the short story where Quintana is presented as being positive, confident, and in good humour. The first one occurs when the telephone conversation with Ricardo ends. Andrés is elated, excited, and looking forward to telling his wife all about the proposal: "No quiso continuar la traducción. Esperaba la llegada de Hilda para contarle del milagro . . . Ante tal entusiasmo [Hilda] no hizo intentos de disuadirlo . . . " (95). The second one occurs when Andrés finishes writing the short story, after working on it all night, and telephones Ricardo to tell him about it: "A las cinco de la mañana se fue a dormir, sintiendo una plenitud desconocida . . . Llamó a Ricardo con un sentimiento de victoria" (100). However, as

we have seen, Quintana's good humour does not last. He becomes a victim of the main theme of the story because his chief function within the narrative is to represent the oppressed or the dominated. The author presents Andrés as a person dominated both by North American cultural intrusions into his everyday life, and by the encounter with his "North Americanized" former friend/enemy and his sophisticated boss.

Andrés Quintana is a fully developed character within this part of La fiesta brava as a whole. We have seen how the author, using a subjective third-person narrator, dialogue between characters, and interior monologues, forms and presents Quintana's character to the reader. He is depicted as a person with many insecurities, much self-doubt and low self-esteem, working at an unsatisfying job, and living a troubled marriage in a dismal apartment. Ricardo Arbeláez, in contrast to the main character, is not nearly as fully developed by the author, nor are the clues to his character as easy to find within the narrative.

RICARDO ARBELÁEZ AND ANDRÉS

Ricardo can not be discussed without mentioning Andrés. The only information to which the reader is privy concerning Ricardo comes either from Andrés himself or from his conversations with Ricardo. There are no interior monologues by Ricardo and the narrator does not describe his actions when he is not with Andrés.

In contrast to the author's presentation of Quintana's frustrated and self-critical state in the opening of the story, Ricardo is presented as positive and confident from

the outset. In his conversation with Andrés he is up-beat, jubilant, and full of hope and plans for the future. He states: "Pues ando embarcado en un proyecto padrísimo . . . Vamos a sacar una revista como hay otra en Mexiquito . . . creo que será un éxito sensacional . . . ¿Verdad que es buena onda el proyecto? Hay dinero, anunciantes, distribución, equipo: todo" (93-94).

The reader also learns, through this same conversation, that Ricardo has North American connections, and this establishes his place thematically within the story: he represents the dominators because of his close association with the United States. Even though, as yet, the reader does not know that Ricardo's boss is from the United States, Ricardo's mention of several North American magazines, his sutble put-downs of Mexico, and the money he is offering for the story provide enough information to enable the reader to see, from the beginning, that Ricardo represents the dominators.

Three times throughout the conversation Ricardo uses a diminutive form when referring to his country, and in two of these instances he compounds the insult by speaking poorly of his country: "como no hay otra en Mexiquito . . . ya que la revista se hace aquí en Mexiquito, tiene ese defecto . . . A nivel internacional [el pago] no es gran cosa pero en base a lo que suele pagarse en Mexiquito es una fortuna . . . " (94-95). Ricardo is disassociating himself from his homeland by these comments and is establishing his superior, international knowledge.

During Quintana's first interior monologue certain details about Ricardo are revealed. We learn that he edited a magazine called *Trinchera*, in which he wrote editorials in defense of the railway workers' union and the Cuban Revolution, and

scathing book reviews of current best-sellers:

> A diferencia de Andrés, Ricardo escribía poco: su obra se limitaba a editoriales en defensa del Movimiento ferrocarrilero y la Revolución cubana y reseñas virulentas contra los libros de moda. No obstante, proyectaba una 'gran novela' que, en sus propias palabras, sería para los burgueses de México lo que *a la recherche du temps perdu* fue para los de Francia. (97)

Andrés' tone is important here, because the sarcastic manner in which he talks about Ricardo betrays Andrés' insecurities and his bitterness towards Ricardo. We also learn that Hilda was Ricardo's girlfriend before she met and fell in love with Andrés and this helps to explain his attitude, as well as to cast doubt upon certain aspects of his protrayal of Ricardo.

The second, very short telephone conversation between Quintana and Arbeláez reveals one important characteristic of the latter. His efficient, business-like manner and attitude are displayed in his short, concise comments and instructions.

When Andrés and Ricardo meet face to face in Ricardo's office, Andrés, through the third-person narrator, describes Ricardo as false and insincere: "[Andrés] percibió de inmediato que era forzada esa actitud antinostálgica, de 'como decíamos ayer' que adoptaba Ricardo. La cordial informalidad telefónica iba a borrarse ahora que Arbeláez, en posición de fuerza, había llevado a Andrés a su propio terreno" (102). But the reader cannot be sure if Ricardo's attitude is accurately portrayed here. Since the narrator is so close to the protagonist, and the protagonist has revealed his

insecurities about his relationship with Ricardo, the description cannot be seen as being wholly objective.

During Andrés' second interior monologue, Ricardo's actions and motives are called into question. Although this series of questions reveals more about Andrés' attitude and state of mind than it does about Ricardo's, a seed of doubt is planted in the reader's mind regarding Ricardo. We do not know what has transpired in Ricardo's life to lead him to where he is now, nor do we know what he is really like now, but we are influenced in our speculations by the probing and revealing questions that Andrés asks himself about Ricardo. The reader asks: Does Ricardo want revenge for the loss of Hilda so many years ago? Is he attempting to belittle Andrés by subtly bragging about his important career? Is he trying to help Hilda economically, indirectly through Andrés? Is he discreetly trying to help Andrés himself both financially, and in his literary endeavours? Or did he simply remember that he had a friend who wrote short stories and is calling upon him now for help? These questions, and many more like them, are the by-product of the questions that Andrés asks himself, and the reader asks them in an attempt to understand Ricardo, since factual, objective information about him is not presented.

The final conversation between the two main characters of the story exposes Ricardo's ability to be brutally critical in a straightforward and professional manner. But his comments are also cutting, demeaning, and sarcastic, and are delivered in a patronizing tone:

> Te falta precisión. Tienes algunos párrafos muy enredados, el último

por ejemplo, gracias a tu capricho de sustituir por comas todos los demás signos de puntuación. Tu anécdota es irreal en el peor sentido, muy *bookish* ¿no es cierto? Además, esto del 'sustrato prehispánico enterrado pero vivo' como que ya no. Fuentes hizo cosas muy padres con ello y al hacerlo también agotó el tema . . . . A Mr. Hardwick la trama le pareció baratamente antiyanqui y tercermundista. Encontró quién sabe cuántos símbolos . . . . El final parece sugerir algo que no está en el texto. . . Como si quisieras ganarte el aplauso de los *acelerados* de la Universidad o hicieses una reverencia nostálgica a nuestros tiempos de *Trinchera* . . . Si me perdonas, te diré que te falló el olfato . . . que traer a una revista pagada con dinero de allá arriba un cuento en que proyectas deseos de ahuyentar al turismo y de chingarte a los gringos . . . Pero no psicologicemos porque vamos a terminar descubriendo que tu cuento es una agresión disimulada en contra mía. (107-10)

Toward the end of this same conversation Ricardo tries to compensate for his harsh criticisms by offering Andrés a chance to write another story for a subsequent edition of the magazine and by giving him partial payment for the story about Captain Keller. But again, this tone and the manner in which he speaks betray his superior attitude, and he ends up humiliating Andrés further. Ricardo states:

> No lo tomes así, no seas absurdo . . . Aquí tienes. . . Son mil pesos nada más pero algo es algo. . . Ándale, no te sientas mal aceptándolos.

> Así se acostumbra en Estados Unidos y nadie se ofende . . . Tómate tu tiempo, no te apresures y verás cómo esta vez si tenemos éxito con los gringos. Es que son durísimos, muy profesionales, muy perfeccionistas . . . Oye, el pago no importa: puedes meter tu historia en cualquier revista *local*. (110-11)

Ricardo Arbeláez, with his successful magazine career, his expensive clothes, his North American connections, his constant use of English words, and his general superior attitude, represents the dominators of the world within this short story. He is portrayed as strong, confident, decisive, knowledgeable about international affairs, and professionally successful, but at the same time, because of the subjective quality of all the information concerning him, he can be seen as a condescending, crafty know-all, returned to humiliate and exact revenge upon his old friend/enemy from the past by soliciting a story from him for the purpose of rejecting it.

OPPOSITIONS

Some of the oppositions at work within this narrative have already been explained above, and need not be included in this discussion. They are the oppositions which exist between fiction and reality and between the real world and the dream world. Other opposing elements have been mentioned as well, but they merit further elucidation here because of their centrality to the main theme of the story, the relationship between the dominators/oppressors and the dominated/oppressed.

I have explained the function and the meaning of the opposition between the

dominators and the dominated which exists in several parts and on various levels of La fiesta brava as a whole. The oppressors are presented historically and in the present as violent, conquering, uncaring, invasive forces inflicting pain, death (physically as well as culturally), servitude, and aggression upon the smaller, weaker cultures, nations, and people, who therefore become the oppressed.

I have also already mentioned the opposition between the above-ground world and the below-ground world that exists within the entire story. The higher up one goes in this story, the better things are, and the deeper down one goes in this story, the worse things are. Ricardo's office is high up above the city, with a view looking down upon it. He has worked his way up and is now successful, at the top. When Captain Keller is in Vietnam, he rises above the carnage in his helicopter and escapes the horror he created by going up and away from it. Andrés' state of mind and sense of self-worth sink lower and lower the further he descends, first from Ricardo's office to the street and from there down into the Metro beneath the city, until he finally disappears. Captain Keller meets his end when he follows the ice-cream vendor's directions and goes below the city to the tunnels in the Metro. Captain Keller's death, because it occurs in a subterranean cell, is also a symbolic representation of the death of the Mayan and Aztec cultures which were buried by the conquering Spanish nation. In his criticisms of Andrés' story, Ricardo mocks this symbolism of "pre-Hispanic substratum buried but alive", saying it has already been done by Carlos Fuentes. But this criticism actually reinforces the symbol within La fiesta brava because it validates the acceptance of the concept.

There are other contrasting elements at work within this narrative. They include the opposition between past and present, and between myth and history (La narrativa 154). The shared past of Andrés and Ricardo contrasts with the circumstances of their meeting in the present. Similarily, each of their individual pasts is in contrast with their present situations; both of them have compromised their goals, but in different ways. Quintana muses: "Él ha cambiado / yo también / nadie hizo lo que iba a hacer / ambos nos jodimos pero a quién le fue peor " (El principio del placer 102). Captain Keller's past is also in contrast with his present; he changes from fighting soldier to passive tourist (La narrativa 160). In the advertisement about a resort hotel in Acapulco, which Andrés reads in Ricardo's office, past and present are again mixed together. The advertisement appears in English:

> One of the most spectacular hotels you will ever see, it has a lobby modeled after the great central court of an Aztec temple with sunlight and moonlight filtering through the translucent roof. The 20,000 ft. lobby's atrium is complemented by 60 feet palm-trees, a flowing lagoon and Mayan sculpture. (El principio del placer 103-04)

The significance of this mixture of past and present lies within the fact that the pre-Hispanic culture is absorbed by the imperialist culture in the architecture of the hotel (La narrativa 150). This reinforces the oppressor/oppressed theme of the story. The past is also represented in Ricardo's present office. There are enlarged prints of an older Mexico City hung on the walls so that the present view of the city is in direct contrast with the views depicted in the old prints (151).

Myth and history come together in a contrasting fashion in the story about Captain Keller. As presented to the reader, the circumstances surrounding Captain Keller's death, involving both the men who lock him in a subterranean cell and the cutting out of his heart as an offering to the sun God, are a mixture of rituals based on legend and myth, occurring in a place where history is still alive--Captain Keller sees evidence of the pre-Hispanic cultures among the ruins which exist in the tunnels under Mexico City.

The contrasting elements of dark and light also play a role in this narrative. Andrés lives and works in a "dark interior apartment" with a view of a "dismal interior patio", but Ricardo works in an "excessively lit office" whose panoramic windows overlook the city (150).

All these oppositions and contrasting features work toward reinforcing the principal opposition between dominator/oppressor and dominated/oppressed, explored throughout the short story as a whole. In every case but one, the oppressor comes out on top. In the case of Captain Keller, however, the situation becomes reversed. In a symbolic gesture of revenge by all the oppressed against all the oppressors, Andrés has Captain Keller, who represents the dominators, killed by Mexican peasants, who represent the dominated.

THE ENIGMATIC ENDING

La fiesta brava ends with the unexplained abduction of Andrés by three men: "[Andrés] no pudo ni siquiera abrir la boca cuando lo capturaron los tres hombres que

estaban al acecho" (113). The clue to discovering who abducted Quintana and perhaps why he was taken, lies within this last sentence, in the phrase *los tres hombres*. This is the second time the author uses this exact phrase to describe the three men who were riding on the train when Andrés boards. They are introduced as "tres pasajeros adormilados" (112). In addition to the fact that these three men are referred to twice before the ending, both the references to them are connected to the exhibition of the thousand peso bill that Andrés received from Ricardo. If we put these facts together with previous evidence indicating that Andrés was distracted, pre-occupied, and depressed, we can come to the conclusion that these three men on the train noticed Quintana's peculiar, perhaps crazy-looking demeanor (he speaks aloud to himself and gesticulates), and the thousand peso bill, and simply grabbed him for the money. This appears to be the most logical explanation, but there are several reasons why this answer to, or explanation of the ending falls short. Why the abduction? The three men could have just simply beaten him and taken the money. There does not seem to be any reason for their wanting to take him away. There is no mention of a ransom letter, so the disappearance of Quintana now seems only tenuously connected to the three men.

There are other pieces of information in the story which confuse the reader when trying to decipher the abrupt ending to the story. For example, why does the author include the detail about Ricardo asking for the original copy of the short story? Ricardo off-handedly says to Andrés: "Ah, si no te molesta me dejas unos días tu original para mostrárselo al administrador y justificar el pago" (110). We know that

Andrés later destroys his own copy so that the only one in existence after his disappearance is the original which Ricardo has. We also know that Ricardo stays on at the office to make some calls after Andrés leaves. Did Ricardo want to keep the story for himself, perhaps to try to publish it somewhere else? Does he send the three men to abduct Quintana? Could one of his telephone calls have something to do with arranging it? Could his motive be an attempt to gain revenge upon Andrés for stealing Hilda away from him twelve years earlier? Does Ricardo arrange for Andrés to disappear so that he can now have Hilda for himself? This explanation seems sinister, but given the information provided, it is not entirely implausible.

An even more sinister, but perhaps less plausible explanation for the abduction can be found within the criticisms that Mr. Hardwick expresses to Ricardo about Quintana's short story. The editor-in-chief believes the story to be "baratamente antiyanqui y tercermundista" (109). Could Andrés' story have marked him as a threat to the Vietnam War effort by the United States? Has he been taken somewhere for interrogation? Does Mr. Hardwick have the connections to accomplish such an abduction? Ricardo tells us that Mr. Hardwick "trabajó en *Time Magazine*" (102), so perhaps he has many international connections. However, Ricardo also states that "Mr. Hardwick también está en contra de la guerra de Vietnam" (110).

The reader also wonders about Andrés' glimpse of Captain Keller. Is the hallucination a temporary symptom of his depressed and paranoid state of mind? Since Andrés himself believes that he actually sees Captain Keller, does this fact contribute to his unawareness of his surroundings and his obliviousness to the threat

that the three men from the train pose? Does his reaction to the hallucination, shouting words at Captain Keller, further set him up as easy prey for the three men?

Clearly, there is insufficient information to answer satisfactorily all the questions which grow out of the circumstances surrounding Andrés' abduction. Some questions and doubts remain partially or wholly unanswered, even in the most logical of explanations. As in the case of Virgen de los veranos' ending, the ending to La fiesta brava is left open for each reader to interpret. Also similar to Virgen de los veranos, La fiesta brava ends where it began. Parque de diversiones, the final short story to be analysed here, is marked by the same kind of ending as the two short stories already discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS OF PARQUE DE DIVERSIONES

Parque de diversiones explores a theme common to many of José Emilio Pacheco's works: the progressive dehumanization of man within the capitalist system (La narrativa de José Emilio Pacheco 74). The author deals with spectacular and fantastic symbolic events, with outright cruelty as well as cruelty veiled in humanitarianism, and with apathy, fear, loneliness and oppression. In dealing with these elements the author also utilizes the animal world by making specific animals in the park central to the plots in five of the eight mini-stories which make up this short story as a whole.

Parque de diversiones is a short story consisting of eight clearly defined, separate, smaller short stories. Each of these mini-stories is numbered with Roman numerals and is set apart from the mini-story before and after it by the same method employed in La fiesta brava, a double blank space. These mini-stories do not begin with conventional paragraph indentations, nor do they contain separate paragraphs within them. Although each mini-story has its own separate set of characters and settings within the park, each story is directly connected to all the others not only thematically, but also very generally in terms of plot, because the action in all of them takes place in the same broad environment, a very unique amusement park.

The uniqueness of the park is not fully explained until the ending of the story

as a whole, where the actual architect himself explains the concentric design of the amusement park and ends up exactly where he began, at the beginning of the first mini-story.

A third-person narrator is utilized in all of the mini-stories except one: mini-story III is a monologue. This third-person narrator relates the action in the present tense. That is, the narrator either describes actions which take place simultaneous to his descriptions of them, or describes actions which habitually take place within the park (58-59). Through the narrator's various descriptions and depictions of life within the park, the reader is taken on a verbal tour of this unique amusement park, and ends up back at the starting point again, just as the architect of the park has planned and explains in mini-story VIII.

The language in this text is strong, graphic, straightforward and direct. The narrator relates the facts of a situation or an action impartially, and without excessive descriptions. There are no dialogues between characters and no extensive character development. All the characters, both human and animal, are described only in relation to the specific action or situation which is being narrated. The larger significance lies in the fact that the mini-stories, while dealing with specifics, also speak to the larger, more general concerns of humankind's behaviour within society.

My analysis of Parque de diversiones is linear in a chronological sense. I explain the reasons for the inclusion of the quotation from the French poem which opens the story, then discuss each mini-story individually in the order it appears in the text, and conclude by discussing the links among them and the meaning of their

totality.

THE OPENING QUOTE

The story as a whole is prefaced with a partial quotation consisting of the first two lines of a poem called "Labyrinthe" by the French poet, Henri Michaux. The poem in its entirety reads:

> Labyrinthe, la vie, labyrinthe, la mort
>
> Labyrinthe sans fin, dit le Maître de Ho.
>
> Tout enfonce, rien ne libère.
>
> Le suicidé renaît à une nouvelle souffrance.
>
> La prison ouvre sur une prison
>
> Le couloir ouvre un autre couloir :
>
> Celui qui croit dérouler le rouleau de sa vie
>
> Ne déroule rien du tout.
>
> Rien ne débouche nulle part
>
> Les siècles aussi vivent sous terre, dit le maître de Ho. (Épreuves, Exorcismes 66-67)

> [Life, a labyrinth, death, a labyrinth
>
> Labyrinth without end, says the Master Ho.
>
> Everything hammers down, nothing liberates.
>
> The suicide is born again to new suffering.

The prison opens on a prison

The corridor opens another corridor:

He who thinks he is unrolling the scroll of his life

Is unrolling nothing at all.

Nothing comes out of anywhere

The centuries, too, live underground, says the Master of Ho.]

(Darkness Moves translator David Ball 88)

The author includes part of this poem in his story because it speaks directly to an idea he is imparting to the reader through both the structure of the story as a whole and through the plots and themes of his mini-stories: life and death are like a labyrinth, a maze from which it is impossible to escape. Within this labyrinth one encounters cruelty, violence, apathy, and societal degradation in a repeated pattern throughout humankind and even, because of humans, in the animal world.

Like the labyrinth of the poem, the labyrinthine amusement park is also never-ending. The architect of the park tells us that "este parque se halla dotado de otro parque, el cual . . . permite la entrada--si bien clausura para siempre toda posibilidad de salida . . . (El viento distante 39). He also explains that the park is "una cadena sin fin de parques que contienen más parques y son contenidos en parques dentro de parques . . . (40).

The poem tells us that, once born, there is no escape from the cycle of life, death, and re-birth. Parque de diversiones reflects that doctrine symbolically through the creation of the labyrinthine amusement park, from which, once entered, it is

impossible to leave. A pattern is created, where one always ends up at the same place where one began. The first ten lines of mini-story I are identical to the last ten lines of mini-story VIII: "La gente se ha congregado alrededor del sitio que ocupan los elefantes. . . . La elefante . . . se arroja al suelo, se alza nuevamente" (30), and "La gente se ha congregado alrededor del sitio que ocupan los elefantes. . . . La elefante . . . se arroja al suelo, se alza nuevamente" (40).

MINI-STORY I--THE CIRCUS ACT

The first story centers around a spectacle that resembles a circus act. It contains suspense and intensity and a shocking and surprising ending. It deals with a crowd of people gathered around a cow elephant about to give birth, the entire event lasting about two hours. The narrator idicates the time span by simply stating: "Transcurren dos horas" (30).

The shocking surprise involves the birth, which turns out not to be a baby elephant, but rather a man dressed as a jester: "La muchedumbre . . . admira el nacimiento de una bestia monstruosa, llena de sangre y pelo, que se asemeja a un elefante . . . Súbitamente se parte en dos, se desinfla la cubierta de hule y del interior brota un hombre vestido de juglar . . . (31). The significance of this description lies in its similarity to the Chinese boxes (those which fit one inside the other), used as a metaphor by the architect of the park in his explanation of how the park works. When the designer of the park is speaking about the impossibility of leaving it, he explains that only the visitor who risks dismantling a whole system which applies the theory of

certain Chinese boxes to monumental architecture has any chance at all of doing so: "bien clausura para siempre toda posibilidad de salida (esto es, a menos que los visitantes se arriesguen a desmantelar todo un sistema que aplica a la arquitectura monumental la teoría de algunas cajas chinas . . . " (39-40). Looking at this mini-story as a whole, we can see its similarity to these Chinese boxes. There is a crowd of people in a circle around an elephant; inside the circle is the elephant; inside the elephant is "la bestia monstruosa", and inside that is a man (La narrativa 59).

Suspense and intensity are created in part in this mini-story by the narrator's descriptions of the female elephant's actions caused by the pain she is suffering: "El dolor la enfurece y, barritando, se azota contra los muros de cemento, se arroja al suelo, se alza nuevamente . . . En su furia la elefanta no ha permitido que se acerquen el domador ni el veterinario" (El viento distante 30). The same elements are reinforced by the descriptions of the public: "Sin piedad los hombres riñen y se injurian: buscan llegar a la primera fila con objeto de no perder un solo detalle" (30), and "el grupo de curiosos se ha convertido en multitud . . . La muchedumbre regocijada con el dolor de la elefanta admira el nacimiento . . . " (30-31), and finally "En seguida el público le tributa una cerrada ovación y arroja monedas . . . Hay un nueva salva de aplausos" (31).

The intensity of this mini-story is heightened by the climactic birth, the description of which, though scant, uses strong, vivid words and images in a blunt and direct fashion; for example, the author utilizes highly descriptive words and phrases such as *una bestia monstruosa, llena de sangre y pelo, súbitamente, brota, caer, salta y*

da maromas, and *agita dos filas de cascabeles*. The springing forth of a man from the rubber covering full of blood and hair resembling an elephant is shocking and surprising to the reader not only because of the intensity and the bluntness of the words, but also because of the questions it immediately brings to mind: Where was that man in the rubber covering hiding for two hours? Was he hiding somewhere inside the elephant or was he simply very cleverly strapped onto its underside? Each answer carries its own disconcerting image.

The characters in this story fit into one of two categories: the spectators or the actors (La narrativa 65). The actors include the female elephant at the centre of the spectacle, the juggler who springs forth from the rubber covering, and the male elephant (65). Yvette Jiménez de Báez, Diana Morán, and Edith Negrín, the authors of the book quoted above, also include the tamer and the veterinarian among the actors in the story, qualifying them as "actores passivos"(65). I place these two characters among the spectators because the narrator specifically tells us that they are at a distance and do not participate in any way: "En su furia la elefanta no ha permitido que se acerquen el domador ni el veterinario. Ambos, a distancia, aguardan con impaciencia el desenlace" (El viento distante 30). The other spectators are the multitude of people who have gathered around to watch the event. Although they participate in a minor way by clapping and throwing money, they do not actively take part in the birth itself.

Mini-story I presents life as a spectacle and, through its players, points out the man-animal conversion generating from the farse: from a monstrous beast,

paradoxically, a man is born, the jester with the bells (La narrativa 65).

The placement of this mini-story in the initial position is significant. It begins a series of mini-stories which reflect life, often metaphorically, and this initial story deals with the entrance into life: birth. In this way, mini-story I can be seen as the symbolic birth of the story as a whole.

MINI-STORY II--SCIENCE CLASS

This mini-story takes place in a part of the park which is considered dangerous: "Este lugar resulta peligroso y la dirección del parque ha destinado varios policías para que lo vigilen" (El viento distante 31). A contrast exists within this story because these very policemen who are hired to watch over this part of the park do nothing to prevent the harm which befalls the two children who are punished there.

A teacher leads her primary class into "los límites de la selva fingida" (31), where she singles out two students, Lainez and Zamora, lists their repeated acts of misbehaviour, grabs them by their ears and, with encouragement from the other students and passivity on the part of the guards, places them next to a carnivorous plant which immediately eats them. The narrator bluntly describes the scene: "La planta los engulle y ávidamente comienza a succionarlos. Sólo es posible ver el abultamiento de su tallo y los feroces movimientos peristálticos: se adivinan la asfixia, el trabajo del ácido, la disolución voraz de los huesos" (32). The teacher, "resignada, aburrida" (32), then calmly teaches the botany lesson for the day, explaining how the

digestive action of a carnivorous plant is like the digestive action of a boa constrictor.

The description of the children being devoured by the plant is a shock to the reader, and like the description of the birth in mini-story I, it is short, but filled with strong, expressive, active words and images. A contrast exists between two of the images in this part of the story. Graphic words and phrases such as *los engulle ávidamente, succionarlos, feroces movimientos peristálticos, la asfixia, ácido,* and *voraz,* which are used in the description of the attack, are in direct contrast with the more neutral words *resignada* and *aburrida,* which are used to describe the state of mind of the teacher, who is witnessing the same event. Since most of the participants do not act in a predictable fashion, the scene has a somewhat illusory quality to it.

This mini-story, like the last one, has a shocking and surprising ending. However, in the case of this mini-story, the shock and surprise felt by the reader at the consumption of the children by the plant is partly converted into humour by the irony of the question posed in the final lines of the story by one of the remaining students. One child, raising his hand, asks the teacher what a boa constrictor is. The child's question demonstrates an indifference and complacency towards the act of violence just witnessed, and his focus on the lesson at hand illustrates a tendency to ignore the plight of others in favour of advancing oneself. The student's question, then, contributes to the story both irony and a sense of tragedy concerning the state of humankind. The actions and the attitude of the teacher, as well as those of the policemen hired to protect people in the park, also work toward creating this sense of ironic tragedy.

The characters in mini-story II can also be grouped into actors and spectators because again, a spectacle or a fantastic event takes place that others witness from the side-lines. Jiménez de Báez, Morán, and Negrín explain how the "espesura ficticia" is like a theatrical set, where two children are the object of the spectacle and the rest are spectators (La narrativa 59). Lainez and Zamora belong to the group called actors because they are active, if unwilling, participants in the action. The carnivorous plant can also be considered an actor because it too plays an active role in the event. However, the teacher is the principal actor in this story because she is at the centre of the action and she controls the events, providing the science lesson for the day (66). It is the teacher who physically places the children close to the carnivorous plant, and it is she who then enlarges her role by using the spectacle as an example in a science lesson about digestive action and boa constrictors. In this group of actors I also include the student who asks the question at the end of the story. Although he does not play an active role in the spectacle, he does participate verbally in the story. The spectators include the rest of the class of students and the policemen, all of whom observe the children being gobbled up by a plant, but do not actively participate in the act in any way. It is exactly their lack of action which is important here. It makes a statement about the passivity and the indifference that humankind is capable of expressing in the face of others in danger and in need of help.

Like the previous mini-story, this one also involves a conversion (65-66). The conversion concerns society's conventional attitudes and ideas surrounding education, school, and teachers, attitudes which are in direct contrast with the unconventional

methods of teaching and the specific actions of the teacher involved in this story.

MINI-STORY III--THE CAGED TIGER

The monologue by a caged tiger is written without the use of punctuation marks. This technique helps to create the stream-of-consciousness style of writing effective in such monologues. The reader must separate the phrases and mentally supply commas and periods while reading. Unlike the previous two mini-stories, this one does not describe an event, spectacle, or action, nor does it describe the spacial setting within the amusement park where the story takes place (60). Rather, it provides a glimpse into the mind of a wild animal behind bars, in a zoo in the park, inundated by visitors every Sunday. The narrator here is the tiger, who tells his story in the first person, functioning as both narrator and principal actor (66).

The surprise in mini-story III centers around the fact that it is not until the last few lines of the monologue that the reader realizes that it is an animal, specifically a tiger, telling the story. The first clue to the identity of the narrator is the word *jaula*, used just before the narrator identifies himself outright: "no sé cómo hay quienes llegan ante mi jaula y dicen *mira qué tigre no te da miedo*" (El viento distante 33; La narrativa 66).

Jiménez de Báez, Morán and Negrín identify two inversions within this story: human-animal (visitor-tiger), and spectator-actor (60 & 66-67). The first inversion is two-sided; both tiger and visitor are at once spectator and actor, and human traits and animal characteristics are applied to both humans and animals alike. The spectator-

actor inversion is straightforward: the visitors observe the tigers who simultaneously observe the visitors. It is complicated only by the fact that humans observing animals in a zoo is an accepted point of view, but the reverse is not. A shift of perspective is presented to the reader.

The human-animal conversion is a little more complex. The tiger is given human traits such as the powers to think, feel, and have opinions, and he speculates about the lives of the people he sees, feeling sorry for them. This anthropomorphism is illustrated by the phrases *a mí me encantan, creo estar soñando, volverme loco de tanto gusto y de la alegría, me divierte, todos huelen tan mal, los animales apestan a diablos, creo que ellos al vernos se divierten tanto como nosotros,* and *me da tanta lástima.* This monologue illustrates how animals might observe humans who come to observe them, and in doing so it calls the traits and behaviours of humans into question. The tiger comments that no matter how hard they try to keep the park clean, the human-animals still stink: "lástima que todos huelan tan mal o mejor dicho hiedan pues por más que hacen para tener el parque limpio especialmente los domingos todos los animales apestan a diablos" (El viento distante 33). The tiger ends by saying how sorry he feels for the visitors: "aunque no hubiera rejas no me movería de aquí para atacarlos pues todos saben que siempre me han dado mucha lástima" (33). In this way the visitors to the park are given characteristics often attributed to animals, and the tiger is given human emotions and feelings, thus completing the conversion.

MINI-STORY IV--THE HIDDEN KITCHEN

This mini-story, like the last one, does not describe an event or spectacle being observed by others. Rather, it describes events which habitually take place in a hidden part of the amusement park. Unlike the tiger in the cage, who can at once be observed while observing, the horses are dealt with in a hidden part of the park which the vistitors do not see: "La sección que llaman por eufemismo 'la cocina' o 'los talleres' del parque está vedada a los espectadores" (34).

In this hidden setting the only spectacle is the harsh reality of life and death (La narrativa 60). Outside this hidden area are the false or artificial areas such as the *espesura ficticia*, *selva fingida*, and *lago artificial*, and inside the hidden yard is the area of truth (60).

The entire story is a metaphor for human life and death expressed through the life and death of the horses (60). This metaphor is not veiled or hinted at, but is spelled out for the reader. The narrator ends the story by stating: "Entre visitantes y operarios del parque nadie menciona el tema de los caballos quizá por el miedo inconsciente de unir, relacionar y darse cuenta de que es una metáfora, apenas agravada, de su propio destino" (El viento distante 35).

The opposition in mini-story IV, again human-animal, lies within this metaphor. The life of exploitation the horses live, in an oppressive system, is a metaphor for the life and destiny of man (La narrativa 67).

The habitual action which is described in this mini-story deals with the killing of horses. Horses which can no longer be exploited by their owners for pleasure, for

work, or for show, are bought at discount prices by the park and killed in the large yard closed off from the public. The narrator explains how certain parts of the horses are fed to the wild animals in the park and other, less offensive parts, are either sold to the hamburger and hotdog stands or sold as food for the pets of the wealthy, thereby supplying the director with additional income.

In the introduction to this chapter, I mentioned that the author deals with cruelty veiled in humanitarianism and it is within this mini-story that we see evidence of it. The director is described as a humanitarian man because he has stopped certain brutal killing methods, but at the same time, since his budget does not allow the purchase of an electric pistol,"a humane killer", the horses nonetheless are still killed in a brutal fashion: a blow to the head with a club, or a throat-slitting. Another contrast exists here: there is nothing humanitarian about killing horses that are still healthy.

Humans and horses are both actors in this mini-story. Humans function as the tyrants, exploiters, and executioners of the horses, who function as victims, exploited and oppressed by the other human actors (67). In this way the metaphor is strengthened. Humans in organized societies can often be grouped in a similar fashion, into those who exploit (the oppressors), and those who are exploited (the oppressed). This concept is reminiscent of the one expressed in La fiesta brava, where the opposition between oppressor and oppressed is represented on several levels.

The narrator's approach to the description of the sacrifice of the horses is both direct, indifferent, and frank, as well as sympathetic toward the horses. Many forceful

and graphic words and phrases are used during the description of the killing: *se sacrifica, fieras, prácticas brutales, los matadores, pistola eléctrica, la matanza, mazazo*, and *degüello*. Directly following this passage the narrator expresses sympathy for the horses by recognizing the injustice of the sacrifice: "Aquí terminan todos sin que cuenten su fidelidad, su hoja de servicios, su resistencia para el trabajo. Animales de montura y de tiro, exhaustos caballos de carrera, ponies y percherones se unen en la igualdad de la muerte" (El viento distante 34).

MINI-STORY V--THE TRAIN OF LIFE

A metaphor is again the principal concern of this shortest of all the mini-stories. The important factor in this story is the metaphoric association: train=life, destiny (La narrativa 61). This mini-story has some similarities to mini-story II. The first is that it uses children in its analogy. The train these children travel on is unique because it does not return and if it does, those who were travelling on it are now adults full of fear and resentment.

The second similarity to mini-story II concerns the setting, which is partially contrived and artificial: "[los niños] miran con júbilo la maleza, los bosques, el lago artificial" (35). Jiménez de Báez, Morán and Negrín label the spacial setting as closed because the action takes place first in the train station and then continues in the train (61). But the train does venture away from the station into the woods of the park, the "labyrinth of life", possibly never to return, symbolizing humankind's growth and maturity throughout life in the real world. Therefore the spacial setting must also be

considered partially open. The implication that growth and maturity bring unhappiness, and that the destiny of the children is closed, is strengthened by the fact that when the train does return the children travellers are now resentful and fearful adults (61).

Spectators are not a part of this story. The narrator, who is aloof and distant, and the reader, are the only ones who observe the action; all the other characters or objects are participants in the action. The actors include the children, sometimes their parents, and the train (68).

A third similiarity to mini-story II involves the train. By symbolically devouring the children, it performs the same function as the carnivorous plant (68). And like the teacher, the students, and the guards, the train acts in an unpredictable and unconventional manner, giving an illusory quality to the whole story.

Four sentences make up this entire mini-story, but the language, similar to the language in the stories discussed above, is highly descriptive and emphatic. The third sentence reads: "Suben con entusiasmo y cuando el tren inicia su marcha se sobresaltan y luego miran con júbilo la maleza, los bosques, el lago artificial" (El viento distante 35). Words such as *entusiasmo*, *se sobresaltan*, and *júbilo* are strong, positive words which are in direct contrast with the equally forceful, negative words which end the story: *miedo* and *resentimiento*.

The conversion in this story is neither human-animal nor spectator-actor. It concerns the growth process from childhood into adulthood and represents the loss of innocence involved in the process of maturity. By adding the words *como tales* to the

phrase "y cuando lo hace, los niños que viajaban en él son ya hombres que, como tales, están llenos de miedo y resentimiento" (35), a tone and feeling of hopelessness is created.

MINI-STORY VI--THE PICNIC

Like mini-stories I and II, this story describes an event or a spectacle occurring simultaneously to the narrator's description of it. The whole event takes place during the time it takes one child to go to buy a balloon and return to the site (La narrativa 61). And like mini-stories II and V, this one includes children in the plot.

The spacial setting of this story is not well-defined. We only know that it takes place in a wooded area of the park. It is Sunday and a family of four arrives at their picnic site. One child goes off to buy a balloon, and the three remaining family members spread out their picnic and begin to eat: "Una familia--el padre, la madre, dos niños--llega a la arboleda del parque y tiende su mantel sobre la hierba. . . . Uno de los niños pide permiso para comprar un globo y se aleja. . . . El señor ordena a la señora que empiecen a comer antes que vuelva el niño" (El viento distante 36). Very soon they are surrounded by dogs and ants which they willingly feed, being devoted animal lovers, until the dogs team up with the ants to completely destroy the humans:

> Al poco tiempo se ven rodeados por setenta perros y más o menos un billón de hormigas. Los perros exigen más comida. Rugen, enseñan los colmillos, y los señores y su hijito tienen que arrojar a las fauces sus propios bocados. En tanto los tres ya están cubiertos

de hormigas que voraz veloz vertiginosamente comienzan a descarnarlos. Al darse cuenta de su inferioridad, los perros prefieren pactar con las hormigas antes de que sea tarde. (36-37)

The only spectator in this mini-story is the child who goes off to buy the balloon and returns to see his family literally in pieces. He is witness to the destiny of his family, which is a symbolic representation of man (La narrativa 68). However, he is only a partial witness. He does not see all of what happens to his family in his absence, but the narrator's description of the scene leaves no doubt as to what occurred: "largas columnas de hormigas (cada insecto lleva un invisible pedacito de carne) y una orgía de perros que juegan a enterrar tivias y cráneos o pugnan por desarticular el mínimo esqueleto que finalmente cede y en un instante más queda deshecho" (El viento distante 37).

The actors in this story are the mother, the father, the child who stays at the picnic site, the dogs and the ants. They are mobilized by the existing man/animal opposition which culminates in the destruction of the first (La narrativa 68). This human/animal opposition, seen in mini-stories III and IV in which humans dominate and destroy animals, is reversed in this story where animals destroy humans.

The family takes an active part in its own destruction and some of the actors do not act or react in a predictable fashion. For example, the father demands that they eat before the second child returns, and the parents do nothing to discourage the attack by animal and insect. On the contrary, their action of feeding the animals and their inaction of not leaving the site, encourage the attack. The dogs' joining forces with

the ants is also an unpredicatable and unusual action on their part. Perspective is shifted and the smallest and most insignificant of the actors becomes the most powerful, dominating and destroying the other actors.

The narrator uses strong, vivid, and highly descriptive language to heighten the shock and surprise that the reader feels when the family is eaten. Graphic images are created with words and phrases such as *exigen, rugen, enseñan los colmillos, arrojar a las fauces, voraz veloz vertiginosamente, descarnarlos, orgía de perros,* and *pugnan por desarticular.*

Contrasts exist within this story that relate to the inversion expressed in mini-story II regarding education and teaching. Here, the accepted and conventional ideas regarding happiness and rest occurring on a Sunday in the park, are inverted or turned upside down (61). No member of the family finds either happiness or rest at this picnic in the park. Another inversion concerns the popular adage about dog being man's best friend (68). In this story the dogs are more friendly with the ants, teaming up with them to destroy the humans.

MINI-STORY VII--THE MONKEYS' PRISON

The spacial setting of this story is an island in the shadow of the carnival rides, within the amusement park. This island is described as a prison and its inhabitants, the monkeys, are referred to as prisoners: "Un foso y una alambrada los incomunican de quienes con ironía o piedad los miran vivir. . . El sistema de la prisión se basa en un despiadada jerarquía", and "la primera generación (ya extinta) de

reclusos del parque" (El viento distante 37-38).

Similar to mini-stories III, IV, and V, mini-story VII has, basically, a metaphoric content: the life of the monkeys is a parody of the life of humans (La narrativa 61-62). Life for the monkeys unfolds in an oppressive place characterized by overpopulation, tension, agressiveness, lethal noise, and the lack of space and pure air: "La tensión, la agresiva convivencia, el estruendo letal, la falta de aire puro y de espacio los obligan a consumir toneladas de plátanos y cacahuates" (El viento distante 37). Conditions are so poor that the monkeys' own excrement and garbage threatens to asphyxiate them: "Varias veces al día hombres temerosos y armados deben hacer la limpieza completa de la isla para que la mierda y la basura no asfixien a sus habitantes" (37-38). An intricate system of living has developed on the island which, as seen through the narrator's detailed description, directly reflects systemized human living conditions in organized societies:

> El sistema de la prisión se basa en una despiadada jerarquía, la cual permite que los jefes de la comunidad se erijan en tiranos. . . . Las minorías étnicas. . . viven en atroz servidumbre. Los mandriles se ocupan en reverenciar a los gorilas y nadie cuida de las crías; prostitución y perversiones corrompen a todos desde pequeños, y diariamente aumenta el número de crímenes. (38)

Similar to mini-story IV, the man/animal opposition which exists within this story lies within the metaphor. The monkeys' life of captivity within an oppressive system is a metaphor for the life and destiny of man (La narrativa 67). Also similar

to mini-story IV, the monkeys, like the horses, function as victims, exploited and oppressed by man (67).

The monkeys' previous existence, free in the jungle, is presented as a contrast to the conditions under which they must live in captivity. The narrator refers to their previous existence twice: "En la selva libre que sólo conoció la primera generación", and "Incapaces de rebelarse contra el hombre que al capturarlos destruyó su rudo paraíso. . . los monos se destrozan unos a otros" (37-38).

Their present situation and destiny are inescapable; things were and will continue to be as they are (La narrativa 62). Incapable of rebelling against the humans who keep them in captivity, many of the monkeys "acaban por engañarse y creer que los horrores de la isla son el orden natural de este mundo, las cosas fueron y seguirán siendo así y el círculo de piedra y la alambrada son irremontables" (El viento distante 38-39). However, this statement is immediately followed by one which contradicts the idea of hopelessness. The story ends with just a hint of hope for change: "Pero acaso un solo brote de insumisión bastaría para que todo fuera diferente" (39). This is the only mini-story which ends in this way; the other stories all end with a note of hopelessness, or a sense of tragedy (the exception is mini-story I whose functions are different, and which ends without expressing either hopelessness or hope.) Hanging like a life-line, this small hint of hope for change balances the sense of outcome for the reader. It opens a window for belief in the future, no matter how bleak the present may seem.

There is only one mention by the narrator that the monkeys are the spectacle

here, the object of observation by others (62). In the second sentence of the story the narrator explains that a ditch and a barbed wire fence isolate the monkeys from "quienes con ironía y piedad los miran vivir" (El viento distante 37). The only spectators, then, are these unseen, unheard humans who are not a direct part of the plot. The monkeys themselves are the actors, the narrator holding up their actions for inspection and comparison to the actions of humans.

MINI-STORY VIII--THE ARCHITECT'S EXPLANATION

This mini-story provides the key to understanding the function of the story in its totality (La narrativa 62). The only role of the narrator in this story is to introduce the reader to the architect of the park, who provides an explanation for its design. The park's unique design helps to explain the story as a whole since it reflects the themes presented in the mini-stories: life is like a labyrinth; the cycle of birth, death, and re-birth is never-ending, and once begun cannot be stopped. The architect who designed and built the park explains its concentric structure in an article in the magazine *Life en español*, which the narrator provides as the body of this mini-story:

> este parque se halla dotado de otro parque, el cual . . . permite la entrada--si bien clausura para siempre toda posibilidad de salida . . . ya que este segundo parque está dentro de otro parque en que los asistentes contemplan a los que contemplan. Y el tercero, a su vez dentro de otro parque donde los asistentes contemplan a los que contemplan que contemplan. Y éste dentro de otro parque contenido en otro parque

> dentro de otro parque dentro de otro parque--mínimo eslabón en una cadena sin fin de parques que contienen más parques y son contenidos en parques dentro de parques donde nadie ve a nadie sin que al mismo tiempo sea mirado, juzgado y condenado. (39-40)

Through this explanation by the architect the process of reversibility among the actors and the spectators is explained: the visitors to the park are actors and spectators simultaneously (La narrativa 70). This is a repetition of the same theme expressed in some of the mini-stories.

The language in this mini-story is instructional, straightforward, and repetitive. Unlike the other seven mini-stories it does not contain graphic images, nor does it make much use of highly descriptive words and phrases. Since it is basically an explanation of the design of the park, quoted from a magazine, the tone and the language are similiar to that of a documentary, where one person explains and illustrates something to many others.

As we have seen in the discussion of the opening quotation, mini-story VIII ends with the same words that begin mini-story I. The reader, the narrators, and the architect all end up at the beginning of the story, the beginning of the park. Thus a circle is created whose path becomes a cycle, repeating itself over and over, just as the cycle of life, death, and re-birth repeats itself over and over in nature and in humankind.

SUMMARY

Mini-story I gives birth to the short story as a whole, mini-stories I through VII describe occurrences within the park which symbolize humankind's behaviour in society, and mini-story VIII attempts to explain the other mini-stories through an explanation of the design of the park, which reflects life itself.

The author reinforces his theme by incorporating it into all aspects of the story: the story as a whole ends exactly where it began, presumably to be repeated ad infinitum. The design of the park itself is such that once entered, it cannot be exited, and each mini-story is either a metaphor for life, or a comment upon the behaviour of humankind within the elaborate labyrinth of life.

These mini-stories have many things in common with one other. Many of them use animals and animal life as a metaphor for human behaviour and life, and several of them use children in their plots. Objects, such as a carnivorous plant and a train, are utilized in a unique manner, and many of the actors within the mini-stories do not act in a predictable or conventional fashion. Several of the stories contain shocking and surprising descriptions, related vividly with graphic images, but often, at the same time, with indifference or impartiality. Finally, each story takes place within the same amusement park. These individual stories, then, are linked thematically as well as through plot.

Some of the ideas expressed and repeated in the individual mini-stories which make up Parque de diversiones are common to ideas expressed in the all of the short stories discussed in this thesis. The following chapter, which concludes the analyses

of the three short stories discussed above, deals with links, similarities, and commonalities which exist among Virgen de los veranos, La fiesta brava, and Parque de diversiones.

CONCLUSION

COMMONALITIES AMONG THE STORIES

Virgen de los veranos, La fiesta brava, and Parque de diversiones possess many elements in common. Most of these commonalities appear in all three short stories and they will be discussed first. Following this discussion, other elements that are common to only two of the stories will be identified. As we trace these common elements or aspects we will find that they are concerned with both structure and technique, as well as with theme.

COMMON ELEMENTS AMONG ALL THREE SHORT STORIES

In each of the three short stories selected for discussion, the treatment of time is the same. That is, all the stories are circular, with a cyclical sense of time. They all end where they began and they all present some idea of repetition. This cyclical treatment of time is reminiscent of the Aztec concept of time. In The Aztec Empire: The Toltec Resurgence, Nigel Davies states:

> Yet another problem facing the modern investigator is the Aztec concept of time, and hence of history, so radically different from our own. Basic to their concept is the ever-repeating cycle of fifty-two years . . . . Linear time is a Judeo-Christian concept shared by few peoples in past ages . . . . Among less advanced societies, the notion

> of cyclical time is universal . . . . The Aztecs, while also possessing their ritual calendar, certainly did not live in a timeless present, but their notion of the passing of time was cyclical rather than continuous or linear. In particular, their capital, Tenochtitlán, was viewed as a re-creation of Tula; their empire was simply a resurgence of Toltec power, and this idea of repetition was fundamental to the Aztec world view. (8-9)

Francis F. Berden also talks about the Aztec concept of time in his book The Aztecs of Central Mexico: An Imperial Society: "In their everyday life, the Aztecs were deeply concerned with the passage of time. To them, time was cyclical, with each unit persistently repeating itself" (144).

In Virgen de los veranos, Anselmo's tale to the unidentified listener acts as a hook, drawing the latter into the circle of Anselmo's life. The story opens with Anselmo, the listener, and some people praying near a hut, and it ends with the same set of characters in a similar setting, but with a much different meaning. Through Anselmo's proposal to the listener at the end of the story, the reader is able to see that Anselmo has already begun a repetition of the cycle and, with the help of the listener, hopes to profit from the same confidence trick in which he was involved fifteen years prior to the telling of his tale.

In La fiesta brava, the story begins and ends with the abduction of Andrés Quintana. It ends with cryptic details of the very circumstance about which the newspaper advertisement at the beginning of story is trying to elicit information. The

repetition in this story involves the two protagonists. Andrés seems destined to repeat the end that he created for Captain Keller, and Captain Keller seems destined to die for the many deaths he caused in the Vietnam War. In addition, both the story that Quintana writes and the main story which contains it take place in Mexico City, which is built upon the ancient ruins of the Aztec capital, which in turn was viewed as a re-creation of the Toltec city of Tula.

Parque de diversiones ends with the exact words with which it begins, making an obvious and very complete circle. The design of the amusement park is such that a constant repetition of the same cycle occurs within its boundaries. The architect explains this concentric design of the park, which makes each visitor end up at the starting point once more.

All three short stories are connected to this idea of concentricity in another sense: they all contain a story within a story. La fiesta brava literally contains a complete and separate short story within the framework of the main short story by the same title. In Virgen de los veranos, Anselmo's monologue is a story in itself, separated in both time and space, from the main story surrounding the monologue. In the case of Parque de diversiones, the author uses eight separate mini-stories to make up the short story as a whole, each mini-story dealing with some aspect of the concentrically designed amusement park.

Violence, in various forms, is another element found in these three short stories. In Virgen de los veranos, Anselmo kills a man, the peasant land-owners kill Lorenzo and Aurorita, the state government kills Don Jesús, and the whole confidence

trick can be seen as a violation of the peasants. Quintana's story opens with graphic descriptions of death and destruction in the Vietnam War and ends with the violent death of Captain Keller. Subsequently, Andrés himself is a victim of violence through his abduction at the end of La fiesta brava. In Parque de diversiones, two school children are eaten by a carnivorous plant, horses are regularly killed, a family is eaten by dogs and ants, and the monkeys commit numerous crimes against each other in their squalid existence on an isolated island.

Another commonality already discussed at length in regard to La fiesta brava concerns the opposition between the oppresor and the oppressed or the dominator and the dominated. This opposition is also at work within Virgen de los veranos and within Parque de diversiones. Anselmo tells us that the peasant land-owners, historically uneducated and poor, had been oppressed for many years by the owners of huge haciendas, such as Lorenzo's family. Even as land-owners the peasants are dominated by Lorenzo and Aurorita and this, in conjunction with their lack of education and their strong belief in the powers of the saints, is one of the reasons for their falling prey to Lorenzo's confidence trick. Finally, Anselmo is in a position of dominance over the people praying near the hut because he repeats the fraudulent game in the hope of fooling another set of unsuspecting individuals.

Throughout Parque de diversiones humans and animals alike repeatedly dominate and oppress one another. The teacher dominates the students; the tiger is caged by humans, but at the same time feels superior to them; the horses are dominated and killed by humans; the dogs and the ants dominate the family picnicking

in the park; humans oppress the monkeys by keeping them in captivity and the monkeys, in turn, dominate and oppress other species of monkeys living with them on the island. The architect who designed the amusement park can be seen as the ultimate dominator in this short story because it is he who set up the park to work as it does, allowing entry but no exit, thus manipulating the visitors who come to see his creation.

Related to this idea of dominators and the dominated is the existence of a struggle of some sort which occurs in each of the three short stories. In Virgen de los veranos the struggle involves humans against other humans and against nature. In Parque de diversiones it involves humankind and animal against each other and against nature. In La fiesta brava the struggles are slightly more complex. In addition to humans being pitted against other humans individually, a larger and more encompassing struggle is presented to the reader. This is the constant struggle of the Mexican people dealing with a dual past, and at the same time with a cultural invasion from the United States of America.

In each of these three short stories the tension between wealth and poverty is an important element. In Virgen de los veranos, the aquisition of money and valuables is the object of the confidence trick that Lorenzo and Aurorita, and later Anselmo, employ against the peasants. Anselmo talks about money throughout the story and he also speaks about the poor life of the uneducated peasants and the peasant land-owners. Wealthy people are also a part of Anselmo's tale. He refers to decent families from important places, to large land-owners such as Lorenzo's father,

and to the Governor of the state. Lorenzo and Aurorita, and even Anselmo himself, are also wealthy people, for a time.

In La fiesta brava money is one of the reasons Andrés is so quick to produce a short story for Ricardo. Andrés lives in relative poverty, whereas Ricardo and Mr. Hardwick are the wealthy ones. Andrés earns a meager salary, his wife must work, and they live in a dismal interior apartment. Ricardo, judging from his clothes, his job, his office and his connections, earns a much better living. Mr. Hardwick, since he is Ricardo's superior, must receive an even larger salary. The United States is presented as the rich and powerful nation, and Mexico as the poor one. In Andrés' story about Captain Keller, the Vietnamese villagers and the ice-cream vendor are the poor people and Captain Keller and the United States military represent wealth.

In Parque de diversiones, money is mentioned in the mini-story about the elephant and again in the mini-story about the killing of horses. Poverty is also mentioned in the mini-story about the horses: the park receives only a small subsidy, forcing the director to augment his salary by selling off pieces of the dead horses. The poor living conditions of the monkeys, an analogy for the poor living conditions of many humans, is another representation of poverty. The only wealthy person in this whole story is the amusement park's architect, who is so famous that the Spanish-language version of Life magazine interviewed him.

In every case the physical settings of these three short stories are extremely important to their plots and in some cases to their themes. In Virgen de los veranos, Lorenzo's, and later Anselmo's, confidence tricks must be set up in a very dry climate

in order for them to be successful. In La fiesta brava, Captain Keller's and Andrés' routes through the Metro system of Mexico City must be exactly the same in order for the ending of the story to have any plausibility. The subterranean environment, where Captain Keller is killed and Andrés is abducted, and where there is evidence of one nation built upon the ruins of another, is important to the dominator/dominated theme of the entire short story.

In Parque de diversiones, the physical setting of the park and its unique design are central to both the plot of the story as a whole and to each mini-story, because every mini-story either takes place within the boundaries of this amusement park or talks about it.

Curiosity and mystery are two more elements common to these short stories. Both elements are connected to the endings of the stories because each story, while making a complete circle, is also open-ended. We do not know whether the listener teams up with Anselmo at the end of Virgen de los veranos, and we do not know whether Andrés Quintana's family ever locates him in La fiesta brava. Nor do we know exactly why he was abducted. The open-endedness in Parque de diversiones concerns some of the individual mini-stories rather than the story as a whole. We do not know what, if anything, happens to the teacher who kills two of her students, nor where the children who get on the train disappear to, nor what becomes of the boy whose family is eaten by dogs and ants.

Directly connected to the manner in which these stories end is the paramount role of the reader. The reader of Virgen de los veranos must make decisions regarding

the veracity of the information provided by Anselmo about the other characters and the events in which they are involved, and must also speculate upon the listener's answer to Anselmo's proposal which ends the story. In La fiesta brava, it is left to the reader to decide why Andrés goes missing; we know how and where he disappears, but the reader must try to reconstruct the reasons for his abduction. The role of the reader in Parque de diversiones is to discover the metaphors and the analogies within the mini-stories and to relate them to the present human condition. It is a story that provokes the reader to reflect upon the state of humankind and society.

The final aspect which all three short stories have in common is the absence, rather than the inclusion of an element. In all three short stories there is an absence of strong female characters, and no female character has a direct leading role. Aurorita, the only named female in Virgen de los veranos, is subservient to both Lorenzo and Anselmo, and she is easily intimidated and subsequently beaten to death by the angry peasants. Hilda, Andrés' wife in La fiesta brava, is the only named female in this story. She is never quoted directly and only once are we told something about her thoughts. She is a shadowy figure within the story, but she does have some strength within the plot because she is part of the cause of the tension that exists between her husband and Ricardo. There are female characters in Parque de diversiones, both animal and human, such as the cow elephant and the teacher, but although they sometimes play a dominant role within their own mini-story, they do not play a large role in terms of the totality of the meaning of the story as a whole. The only other female character in this story is the mother of the family on a picnic and she is clearly

dominated by her husband--he *orders* her to spread out the food before their second child returns.

ELEMENTS COMMON TO TWO SHORT STORIES

Virgen de los veranos and Parque de diversiones

The environment, and various forces of nature play a role in both of these short stories. The extensive role which nature plays in Virgen de los veranos has already been discussed in detail in Chapter Three. Nature, in the form of weather, plays a pivotal role in the plot, and Anslemo battles natural elements on two occasions in order to escape with his life. Parque de diversiones takes place within a sinister distortion of a natural setting. There is mention of "el jardín botánico", "el desierto de cactus", "el noveno lago", "una planta carnívora", "la maleza, los bosques, el lago artificial" , and "la arboleda del parque" (El viento distante 31, 32, 35, 36). Young people in the crowd gathered around the cow elephant climb up trees to get a better a view of the spectacle, a plant eats two children, the walls of the yard where the horses are exterminated are eaten away by humidity, and a forest symbolically swallows a train full of children.

Animals also play a role in both Virgen de los veranos and Parque de diversiones. Anselmo refers to animals in many of his idiomatic expressions, metaphors, similes, popular sayings, proverbs, and clichés, and a horse is responsible for saving him from death at the hands of the angry peasants. In Parque de

diversiones, animals play a central role in many of the mini-stories: the cow elephant about to give birth is the center of the crowd's attention, the caged tiger offers a unique perspective on his own life and on the lives of humans, the killing of horses is the focus of mini-story IV, dogs and ants are the real protagonists of mini-story VI, and monkeys living in captivity are the concern of mini-story VII. In many cases, animal life-styles are used metaphorically to talk about the human condition.

Virgen de los veranos and Parque de diversiones both contain humour as well. Anselmo tells his tale in a very funny manner; his idiomatic expressions, sayings, proverbs, clichés and similes add a great deal of humour to his story, as does his timing in the use of them. The reader laughs not only at the humour in some of the situations that Anselmo gets into, his luck, his ingenious manouvers to avoid death, his highly expressive language, but also at the man himself.

Ironic humour comes into play in this story in connection with the contrasts that exist within it. Anselmo, well-versed in Catholic beliefs and rituals, but not himself a real believer, becomes rich by fooling large numbers of devoutly religious people. Anselmo lies about his name, but again, ironically, the lie helps him to escape detection in Mexico City. Anselmo's explanation of an error in pronunciation which the listener points out to him is also ironic in that he compounds the error in his attempt to show how well-educated and well-read he is. The final irony in this story lies in the fact that Anselmo, who only happened upon Lorenzo's confidence trick by chance, is the one who ends up getting away with all the money, whereas Lorenzo, Aurorita, and even some of the exploited peasants all end up dead.

Although there is a certain element of irony in some of the humour within Parque de diversiones, the humour in this story is different from the humour discussed above. The description of the birth of the elephant/jester brings strangely incongruous images to the reader's mind, and some of the individual mini-stories, as we have seen, contain morbid, black humour.

Virgen de los veranos and La fiesta brava

Dialogue and conversation play an important role in these two short stories. Anselmo's manner of speaking and the way in which he tells his tale, are crucial to the delineation of his character, which in turn is the most important aspect of Virgen de los veranos. In La fiesta brava, the conversations between Ricardo and Andrés are also of paramount importance in the differentiation of characters. They are especially crucial to the development of Ricardo's character because they provide the only direct information about him; all other information comes from Andrés' tainted perspective.

Each of these two short stories also contains repetitions based on, or brought about by, events in the past. In Virgen de los veranos, Anselmo, learning from past experience with Lorenzo and Aurorita, repeats the confidence trick fifteen years later. In La fiesta brava, the shared past of Andrés, Hilda, and Ricardo partly precipitates the present communication between the two men, and there is even reason to believe that now, just as in the past, Hilda will go to the winner.

La fiesta brava and Parque de diversiones

These two short stories both deal with the concept of observing while being observed. In La fiesta brava, Andrés, contemplating the prints of a younger Mexico City on the walls of Ricardo's office, imagines himself inside the paintings, observing those on the outside who observe him inside it. In addition, while observing Ricardo's office, Andrés is painfully aware of, and worries about, the observations that Ricardo's secretary is making. In Parque de diversiones, the cow elephant observes the spectators who have gathered around to observe her, and the caged tiger observes the humans in the park who come to observe him.

SUMMARY

The three short stories translated and analysed in this thesis present a circular and cyclical concept of time reminiscent of the Aztec concept of time. They all contain a story within a story; violence, money, curiosity, mystery, and some sort of a struggle are important elements, and they are noteworthy for the absence of strong female characters. In addition, they all deal with the general theme of the oppressors and the oppressed, and they all require the reader to play a role in deciphering their endings and their meanings.

There is a clear message within these short stories concerning the human condition and humankind's prospects for the future. The strength of the notion of repetition in these stories, within both the human and the animal world, as well as within nature, supports the contention that humankind is destined forever to repeat the

past, to be forever struggling against one another and against nature, all the while moving closer and closer to the inevitable, to the ultimately unavoidable--death. Although this seems a rather pessimistic out-look, it is not completely so, because it also offers a measure of hope: the equally strong notion of re-birth is inherent in the notion of repetition, and the author stresses this idea in many parts of his stories as well. Wherever there is re-birth, there is hope, because life is being given another chance. This does not contradict the earlier statement about humankind's destiny to forever repeat the past; rather, it provides a contrast within the message and acts as a counter-balance to the negativity created by the idea of constant repetition. The numerous contrasts that exist within the stories are a reflection of a greater, more encompassing contrast that appears to exist within the author's perception of the human condition and which he imparts to the reader through his short stories. By offering the reader a significant role in deciphering the meanings and the endings of his stories, he is inviting us to place the meaning of the story within the realm of our own beliefs and views regarding humankind and society.

The contrasts explained above can also be seen as part of an even greater duality that exists within all humans, animals, and nature. All, by sheer virtue of being alive, are at one time or another both dominator and dominated, oppressor and oppressed. The degree of each mode of being, the length of its duration, and even the extent to which the participant is aware of it, are not necessarily crucial to the experience--this duality exists within us and in our world, and as Pacheco seems to imply, may be insurmountable.

SUMMERTIME VIRGIN

Anselmo lit his corn leaf cigarette and turned around to look at me. The sun burned the parched fields, but those who were praying near the hut appeared not to feel the heat. Anselmo leaned his chair against the adobe wall. He asked me to bring my chair closer and he began his narrative:

" Ya' know, it was Aurorita who was the first one to see the Virgin. One morning while going through the orchard, she found the apparition on the trunk of a Paradise tree. And then they say she ran to tell her husband the Mother of Heaven had just appeared to her. Lorenzo called the peasant land-owners[1] so they could be witnesses to the miracle. I dunno exactly how it was; the fact of the matter is that when I arrived at the ranch the people from thereabouts had already been worshipping the Holy Virgin for months."

"And how did you find out?"

"It's a bit of a long story, but since you insist, I'll be glad to tell it to ya. After all, you can't go around bein' a blabbermouth and squealin' on me, cuz you have unfinished business with the law too, doncha?

Yeah, well, that's how it goes. I wound up in those parts because in Ixtapalotla I killed some guy. All because of a stupid bar fight. We were calmly sittin' around, throwin' back a few tequilas and playin' a few rounds of dominos. By sheer luck, I

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[1]*Los ejidatarios,* the Spanish word used here, refers to farmers who received land previously belonging to the large landowners, given to them after the post-revolutionary land reforms.

was the guy who had all the right ones and right off the bat began winning and winning. The other guy didn't have a single good one and outta sheer anger he was gettin' more and more riled up; while we were playin' he downed a jug of tequila all by himself. And this guy was among his friends, in his own town, and was some big fuckin' wheel on the town council.

By 'round about two, three in the morning, I'd already won around four hundred pesos off the asshole. I said goodbye and was gettin' up when, wham! he grabs me and with one shove throws me back in the chair. 'Put up your dukes,' he says, 'let's see who's who.' I wasn't plastered (though I'd had a lot of booze myself), so I cold-cocked him with one blow. And the yellow bastard takes out a pistol. Now that's not fair. I didn't have anything to defend myself with. But instead of backin' off, I grabbed the blade we'd used to cut up the limes for the tequila, and I gave it to him wherever I could, and the rest, well, you can just imagine it: that cock-sucker dropped dead, splashing down into his own juices. And the other dummies in the dive were left speechless, didn't let out a peep, and they didn't even try to grab me. The only thing I remember is saying to myself: 'Get goin', Anselmo, get outta here, cuz now you've really screwed things up.'

I peeled outta town at full speed. In the morning, from up in a big tree, I saw various guys from the cavalry detachment pass by way off in the distance. They were after my hide for sure. Not because they really felt like doin' justice. After all, what difference does one less make, and what does it matter if another scoundrel is skinned alive? No, only cuz the little dead guy was sort of a big shot, and they might even

have put up a reward.

It paid off that I knew so many shortcuts and paths from my good days when I was a bit of a tinker and sold trinkets all over the place. The toughest part was goin' on foot for so many days through such barren lands. It was the dog days at that time and there wasn't even a chance drop of rain. I hadda drink filthy water from the half-dry streams and it's only by a pure miracle I didn't catch malaria or dysentery or any of those god-awful infections. "

" And what happened in the end? Did they find you?"

" No way, man! Even then I managed to screw the fuckin' army, eh? Around here there's tons of crimes and after a while they don't even remember 'em. Yeah, well as I was tellin' ya, one afternoon (when I was already pretty fucked up cuz my sandals had broken on me; dying from hunger and thirst, with my clothes in tatters, full of sores and bruises, all bearded and smellin' like a skunk), I saw the ranch, the cornfield and the trees in the orchard down in the plain. I cautiously made my way closer (cuz who knows, maybe the soldiers were still hunting for me down there), until an old guy who came out of his hut greeted me, takin' off his hat. He invited me in and asked me why I was in such a sorry state.

I gave 'im some cock and bull story: said I'd been assaulted and robbed of my suitcase full of cheap watches, little ball-point pens, cough syrups, razor blades, fly-bite ointment and crap like that. And since I wasn't from around there, I'd gotten lost and didn't know how to find my way.

The ol' coot swallowed the whole story. Gave me nice fresh water from the

well, shredded meat, chilies and tortillas to make myself some tacos. They were leftovers from his main meal but even so, you appreciate the favour, right?

The ol' guy was anxious to tell me about the Great Big Miracle, about the Holy Virgin who'd appeared because the end of the world was at hand; our wars and carnal sins were gonna speed up the Final Judgement and God wanted to test us, to see our faith in his Holy Mother.

I was gonna tell the ol' geezer (don Chucho[2] was his name) not to be an idiot, that when I was a sacristan in Cuernavaca I was taught by Father Diego Arroyo--a Spanish priest, ruddy faced, one of those guys who talks funny but knows everything--not to believe in apparitions like that, since they're superstition, pure and simple, which God punishes, witchcraft or figments of the imagination of the ignorant. Or rather: they're tales told by con men to screw even more those who are already truly screwed. . . . But I figured I'd lose a chance to hide while the other mess blew over, so I played the believer and reluctantly went along with him.

I can almost hear the windbag now. I only paid attention to 'im for the pleasure of hearin' a human voice after so much time hacking around alone with my soul and my damned conscience. Don Jesús got all enthusiastic and the stupid idiot even wanted to make me feel like I had the honour of speaking with Juan Diego himself.[3] Finally, as if he was doin' me a favour, the ol' guy asked me to go and pay my respects to his Holy Patron Saint.

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[2]Chucho is a nickname for Jesús.

[3]Juan Diego is the Mexican Indian to whom the Virgin of Guadalupe was supposed to have appeared in December of 1531.

Upon seein' the number of Indians who were prayin' in the orchard, I said to myself: 'You've hit the fuckin' jackpot here, Anselmo. Just you wait and see, this could turn inta somethin' good.' I went closer to the little shrine. There was a heap of burning candles, flower arrangements that looked like death wreaths, and a great big sign: DOENT TUCH THE VERJIN. So the sun wouldn't shine on 'er they'd made something like little palm roofs stuck to the branches of the tree. So I put on the face of a poor simpleton and knelt down to pray out loud so they'd see how many blessed prayers I knew."

" And what was the Virgin like? "

" Ah, well, a bit crude, if you'll pardon the expression. Like Lorenzo had carved her on the trunk of the Paradise tree and then painted her with very cheap paint, slapdash and in the dead of night, so nobody could catch him red-handed and the whole damn show fall apart on him before it even got started.

She looked rather like Our Lady of Mount Carmel but the tunic and the crown were more like Our Lady of Guadalupe. O.K., but that's the least of it. They tell you that the Mother of God appeared, and if you have faith you believe it all, and you even see what others don't see; that's for damn sure.

Out there in the orchard Aurorita had set up a place to mount candlesticks, wax candles, valuables and little silver offerings. Next to the tree were two big clay pots for the believers to throw their loose change in and receive indulgences. If some of these guys wanted to go right on past without coughing up any coins, Lorenzo or Aurorita, keepin' a sharp eye on their business, wouldn't move away from the little

altar, and the whole time would keep chanting: 'Alms for the Shrine of Our Miraculous Virgin of the Paradise Tree. A penny to build her chapel. Give whatever you wish, Our Lord God will give you more.' They reminded the poor bugger of his obligation to share in the cost of the church they were going to build for the Virgin. Anyone who didn't fulfill her Blessed Wishes wouldn't receive her blessing and who knows what he would reap."

" And what did you do?"

" Me? Well, I swam along with the rest and even though I was all odd-lookin' and eaten up by fleas like some ol' animal, I followed the line, reciting the Magnificat, kneeling, with my arms crossed and the whites of my eyes showin'. And that's how I was when a little old lady arrived, crying heavily, to give thanks for something. Behind her came a sick man draggin' crutches and with a very large offering made of pure gold which he went to fasten on a blue rug that hung at the feet of the Virgin. A helluva shout rang out and I hardly got to hear anything. It seems the old bag was gonna thank Our Lady for curin' her son, crippled in a landslide. They both got so worked up that right then and there the two of them fainted.

So then some bastard of an Indian porter went up to Lorenzo and told him that since the Virgin was so miraculous, he should advise the archbishop as God commands, like they did in Zapata's time when the Virgin appeared around Ajojonutla.

Lorenzo ignored the meddling bastard and astounded us by answering that the Saviour's Holy Mother didn't wanna know anything about priests--Spaniards or locals--'till she actually had 'er little church all set up. You should've heard 'im, the ignorant

fool, making himself look important by saying he had just finished talking to the little Virgin right over there, almost as if he was the Holy Father himself.

Don Jesús put water on the fire so I could have a bath and get shaved. Then after I got kinda' cleaned up, the ol' fart lent me clean clothes, and with a wide hat, and with white pants off I went so he could do me the honour of introducin' me to his bosses.

Lorenzo had the face of a son-of-a-bitch I can still see today: very slick, very obnoxious, hair plastered back and greased up to the fuckin' hilt, little dog-humpin' Charro mustache,[4] and great big sideburns. Aurorita wasn't exactly what you'd call a babe: she wasn't too bad, sexy, but a bit chubby and she looked a little worse for wear. I think before she got married she probably walked the streets. The fact of the matter is that the two upstarts really thought they were the cat's meow and they wanted all the rest of us to feel like we were a pack of poor, stupid Indians, only because the bastards were a little bit whiter than us.

But I'll tell ya' this: as soon as they heard my blarney they found out who they were dealin' with, yes siree Bob, that's for goddam sure. Even though I might've been dressed like that, you could tell from miles off I'd been in the city for years and years, that I wasn't a useless, ignorant, country hick like the others.

I told 'em my name was Eulalio Domínguez (my grandpa's name, may he rest in peace), and I told 'em the same tall tale about being a pedlar of crap, stripped of my things by the thieves, and lost. They made like they believed me and when all the

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[4]Large mustache worn typically by Mexican Mariachi musicians.

worshippers had gone away, they invited me to dinner. Good Lord, what a great dinner we had: cured ham, loin, chorizo, Dutch cheese. Then a tinned fruit cocktail from Clemente Jacques and a bottle of Spanish brandy. Again I said to myself: 'They're havin' the time of their lives, but they're gonna meet their match. Damn rights, they are.'

When to make a good impression I told them, just as a matter of fact, that I was a sacristan when I was young, they asked me to stay and lead the Rosary, and deal with the pilgrims, and keep an eye on the alms. They asked how much I'd wanna earn. Just for the helluv it I said, 'a thousand pesos a month.' And since I saw 'em as such tightwads and cheapskates like all the other bosses the revolution screwed up so bad, I was real surprised when they answered, 'O. K.' Just think about how much a thousand eagle heads was worth at that time. Imagine what the sons-of-bitches would have to be rakin' in, at the cost of exploiting the starving, to be able to have the luxury of paying a thousand bills to their conlaborator."

" That would be coll-ab-or-a-tor. "

" Don't be a smart ass. I speak really good cuz I listen to the radio and I read newspapers. Don't tell me you think you were the only one who went to school. It's 'conlaborator' because it's 'conlaborate with,' right?

Anyway, as I was tellin' ya, Don Chuchales (who, so far, was a very good guy) made a spot for me in his shack. And since I'm quite likeable and very chatty, I became good friends with all the peasant land-owners. They trusted me, and since I'm such a sly one, well, I simply got in line with them so they'd like me and I never

showed my true colours. Also, in front of Lorenzo and Aurorita I always acted dumb."

" And did they tell you the truth about the Virgin? "

" Ah no, not one word. There were things among us that were better left unasked. I kept my trap shut, so did they, and so everyone was happy. I delivered every little bit of the alms to 'em and I didn't even pinch coins when it was my turn to personally pass the plate. Lorenzo and Aurorita had faith in me; they knew with a good salary nobody gets greedy. Besides, just between you and me and in strict confidence, I'll tell you that when Lorenzo used to go into San Dimas to exchange the metals for bills, I got my over-time by screwin' around with Aurorita. In those days I wasn't in such bad shape. I wasn't that good lookin', ya know, but I was still kinda youngish and I didn't have this big beer belly that sticks out on me now, nor this double chin, nor these crow's feet. The only thing I still have left is the urge, but you can bet that there are still plenty of dames goin' around swooning for me to do them the favour.

That sure was the life, eh? A real cushy job with a lot of screwin' thrown in, right? I have a way with women, I soon cut 'em down to size, the bitches. All haughty in front of her husband, the little bitch: even humiliating me and ordering me around all over the place just as if I was her cat. But when I was givin' it to 'er real good she sure came off her high horse all right and all she could say was, 'More, Daddy, more.'"

" Listen, changing the subject, didn't the state government send anyone to

investigate what was going on? "

" I don't even think they found out, the stupid blockheads. Or if they did know they pretended not to. Because the *cristero* war[5] had just ended and so the policy was to turn a blind eye to religious matters. It's still the same today. Then they get involved and all hell breaks loose. . . . Though now I really think about it, I reckon Lorenzo had pull with the head honchos. For all we know he had an arrangement with the governor and gave 'im a cut of the cash.

O.K., well to make a long story short, the weeks passed and the Virgin continued performing miracles. The natives from around there stopped goin' to the churches in order to just come to the ranch."

" And the priests didn't protest? "

" No way. They were chickenshit or maybe they believed in the miracle too, God only knows. Fact is the apparition was a smash hit; word of the miracle-working Virgin spread so far that later even well-to-do families from important places came on Sundays. And that was when there wasn't a highway nor anything like it: only a donkey trail, so rocky that the cars were always falling to pieces. Nobody picked up on the scam.

You'll get an idea of how many people went to the Virgin for favours when I

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[5]The *cristero* war was fought in Mexico from towards the end of 1926 to the summer of 1927, between armed Catholics aided by large land-owners, and the Calles government. One of the provisions of the constitution of 1917 diminished the power of the church and growing resentment against this provision finally resulted in armed conflict. The *Cristeros*, those who fought against the government in the war, took their name from their slogan: *Viva Cristo Rey* (Long Live Christ the King).

tell ya' that a month after my arrival the altarpieces almost covered the trees in the orchard. The silver and even the gold offerings didn't fit in the little altar anymore and we started to put 'em under lock and key in the main house. The cheaper ones we re-sold right away, without even givin' a shit if anyone noticed. Aurorita would go to Mexico City to sell the gold ones and the special ones on the sly, outside the Basilica. Pretty slick, eh?

So of course by then everything was all in an uproar over the appearance of the little Virgin. Although religious persecution had ended, many churches--especially the churches in the countryside--remained closed. For years the people had been without someone so real to pray to. Everything was in a mess; they had just divvied up the haciendas. Lorenzo and Aurorita were left with just the bare bones of what was once the huge hacienda of Lorenzo Senior. Just imagine, after so many years of war and strife and centuries 'n centuries of not even havin' a straw mattress to drop dead on, overnight the useless peons had become land-owners, and were the owners of the little plots of land they used to farm for their bosses. They didn't really know what to do. Course, it wasn't their fault. No one sent them to school and they were even more ignorant than they are now. And when they least expect it, there they are saddled with a miracle, with the apparition of a Virgin who can tell 'em how to get rid of their problems.

Fine, well that's more or less what the newspapers said later on. But be that as it may, things were turning out so well for us I said to myself (there's no one like me when it comes to hunches), 'Look out, Anselmo, watch your step, cuz this ain't gonna

last for long. You're about to see the shit hit the fan.' Anyway, everything has to come to an end sometime and you can have too much of a good thing. Good Lord!"

" Yes, yes, very good, but I'm interested in finding out what happened, how it all turned out."

" Hold your horses. Don't get your shirt tail in a knot, my friend, and hang on tight cuz here comes the good part. I don't think I'll ever forget the damned afternoon that Lorenzo went to San Dimas to buy 'imself a new truck. After gettin' it on with Aurorita (who stayed in bed, tired but satisfied), I was out next to the tree lookin' after the alms, without a care in the world. Suddenly I saw big black clouds over the mountains. I couldn't believe my eyes. I didn't think it'd rain for years in land as dry as that. What do you know but all of sudden, crack! there's a clap of thunder and, whoosh! down comes the rain. And while the ol' women wrapped themselves up even tighter in their shawls and the guys whipped their great big hats back on, crash! the rain wrecks the little palm roofs and, holy shit! the paint starts to run off the Virgin.

So then I thought, 'I'm fucked. The jig is up. The party's over.' And thinking about it made my skin crawl. I promised the Virgin of Guadalupe if she got me out of this mess okay I'd crawl on my knees from the vestibule up to the high altar of the Basilica.

The people were flabbergasted when they saw how the colours ran down the trunk and the only thing left was the figure Lorenzo'd carved with his knife. And (all in less than a minute, I swear!) I answered myself, 'Better shake a leg, Anselmo, an ill wind is blowin' up a storm. Better that they say, here he ran, than here he died.'

And takin' advantage of the fact that everyone was so dumbstruck, not believing what they were seeing, I ran to the main house, looked all over the place for Aurorita (who knows where she'd gotten to?), and since I didn't see anyone, pocketed the pistol Lorenzo kept in the desk, forced the cupboard open, and naturally, grabbed the money--Lorenzo, the stupid idiot, without meaning to, had done me the huge favour of changing it all into big bills-- and off I go to where the pilgrims'd left their horses and I jump up onto a horse and high-tail it the hell outta there, scared shitless; man, if those guys'd gotten their hands on me, I wouldn't be around to tell you the story, that's for sure.

All night I rattled along through the hills and rough ravines which fucked up the horse on me before its time. All of a sudden he took a fall and seeing he was about to kick the bucket, I took out the piece and put a bullet in his head, so the poor thing wouldn't suffer stretched out there. When all is said and done, if it wasn't for the horse Divine Providence put within my reach, all those suckers we'd taken in would've cut my balls off.

Later, with a rotten pain in the you-know-what, I set out walking with my big bundle crammed with piles of dough, hiding from whoever might cross my path, until the next day I saw, with a sigh of relief, the bare hill that's at the entrance to Santo Domingo Cuixtlahuaca. And then I said to myself, 'By pure, dumb luck, you've fucked 'em again, bloody Anselmo.' "

"Incredible! And then? "

" I waited a few hours dozin' off among the freight cars in the station and got

the chance to grab a train that was goin' in the direction of Mexico City. Sayin' I was sick, I shut myself up in a hotel in the Obrera district for several months, without even goin' out to the corner. I sent out for the newspapers and found out Lorenzo'd been killed by the peasants who'd been his peons, headed up by Don Jesús, the same old guy who'd had me in his house.

Lorenzo arrived in the new truck; he honked the horn three times to let them know he was back and, although it was still rainin' cats and dogs, the stupid cock-sucker didn't pick up on what was happening right over there just behind the main house in the orchard. When he heard the ruckus, he soon caught on. He put it into first gear, wantin' to peel outta there. But there was no way to drive in so much mud so he got stuck, and that angry mob fell on him. They beat the shit outta him while dragging 'im from the truck and then they made mincemeat out of 'im with a machete. They hung his carcass up on a branch of the Paradise tree. When all is said and done, poor bastard, if it hadn't been for him the scam would never've occurred to me.

You're not gonna believe me, but on my word of honour this is exactly what the newspaper said: as soon as they'd chopped up Lorenzo and left him hangin' by his feet like an opossum, a bolt of lightning struck the tree. The Indians got scared, and Don Jesús shouted that it was revenge from heaven because of the theft and the sacrilege, and the Lord demanded more blood to wash away the offense made to the Holy Mother.

So then they went off to look for me, and to look for the loot. When they see that there isn't any cash left in the drawers--the coins they themselves saved through

so much work and gave so willingly, taking bread out of their own mouths--Jeeze! What can I say? That was the last straw. They were so devout, and so hoppin' mad that they destroyed everything in their path."

" And Aurorita? "

" In the middle of all that slashing and cutting, some little girls found her hiding in the corn fields, trembling like a dog. She was paralyzed with fear and besides that the dummy didn't know how to ride a horse. Of course, me not finding her in the main house was a great piece of luck, because if I had there'd have been no way to run cuz, well, Aurorita was pregnant, and they would've killed me for sure. And if I saved myself, sure as shit I'd've had to carry her hide, and later what the fuck would I do with her and the kid? "

" Yes, yes, but what did they do to her? "

" Poor thing, when she saw the whole mob was approaching, first she insulted them and called them low-life Indians. And when they started to stone her she asked for forgiveness and promised to pay back every last cent. As if they were gonna listen to 'er. The same ones who up until a little while ago respected the boss lady and believed her to be almost a saint because of having been the first to see the apparition, were now only lookin' for some way to get rid of 'er and they were stonin' the hell outta 'er.

Someone among them got scared seeing them so enraged and grabbed his horse and took off to blow the whistle for the troops at Cuextepec. The newspaper said how if it hadn't been for the cavalry arriving, they'd have killed each other all by

themselves. The ruckus calmed down thanks to the fact that a lieutenant and his squadron quieted them by charging them with sabres. Aurorita was alive but bleeding to death when the troops lifted 'er up; beaten to a pulp by the stoning, a rag doll, the poor devil. Though the vet from the barracks (who was the only kind of doctor on hand) did everything he could for her, Aurorita croaked right there in the cornfield. "

" How horrible! And did they know that it was you who had taken the money? "

" Well man, who else? No one else would've had the balls. They say Don Jesús and my other buddies from the ranch swore by the Holy Trinity they were gonna look for me high 'n low, and when they found me they were gonna crush my balls, skin me alive, and put salt 'n chili all over me.

But they screwed it up. I was born with a shitload of luck, I swear to God. They shot Don Jesús (they had the death penalty in the state then) for the murders of Lorenzo and Aurorita, and they locked up for I don't know how many years several of his accomplices who didn't have the dough to pay for a bribe. I'm not kidding, Mister. Some of us always land on our feet, but the poor country Indian is always the one who pays the piper."

" And they didn't hunt for you in Mexico City? "

" Never. The assholes never found hide nor hair of me. The fuzz believed my name really was Eulalio Domínguez, that I was a travelling salesman, and that I only knew the useless towns around there. Besides, right away the authorities hushed up the whole affair, like they always do. It could've involved those in very high-up

places. And who the fuck was gonna imagine the biggest of all con artists was hidin' out right there in Mexico City. But that was how it was: I was living the good life with only the finest booze and first-class hookers, til I sucked the last bit of the alms dry, and was left dirt poor again, worse off than ever."

" How awful. And then? "

" Well," concluded Anselmo, " now it's your turn to decide. I've already told ya straight out how things went fifteen years ago. As you see, I played it out again, and, if ya lend me a hand, I swear to ya I'll get rich again and you'll get a big piece of the action. No fuckin' around! But if ya try to pull a fast one on me, I'm outta here right now, my pal. This apparition business is a question of pure balls, 'n we hafta hurry cuz summer is comin' to an end."

REWARD

TO THE TAXI DRIVER or to any person who has information pertaining to the whereabouts of MR. ANDRES QUINTANA whose photograph appears in the margin, missing since Tuesday the 5th, en route from Juarez Avenue to the streets of Tonalá in the Roma District around 11:30 p.m., and whose whereabouts is still unknown. Direct any information to the following phone numbers: 511-92-03 and 533-12-50.

THE BULLFIGHT

a short story by ANDRES QUINTANA

The land appears to rise up, the rice paddies float in the air, the trees, eaten by defoliants, are magnified, beneath the concentric chatter of the cross blades the helicopter touches down vertically, another fifteen land in the surrounding area, and you, submachine gun in hand, jump, fire and give the order to fire on everything, everything that moves and even that which doesn't, no bamboo hut will be left standing, not one survivor will remain, there will be no witnesses to what was once a village,

hand, bullet, knife, bayonette, flamethrower, grenade, cannon breech--everything has turned into an instrument of death, and when you return to the helicopters, you, captain Keller, feel the peace of a mission accomplished, among the ruins burn the corpses of old ones, children, raped and tortured women, there wasn't a single guerrilla left in the village or rather, as you say, all the villagers were guerrillas, the mutilated bodies, burned, broken, they get to know the process of decomposition while all of you fly back without one bowed head, with a feeling

opposite to the repulsion and the horror of the first battles,

how far you find yourself from all that now, captain Keller, when, with a veteran's pension, green shirt, Rolleiflex, meerschaum pipe, you listen to the explanations of the girl who describes in English how the tomb of the Temple of Inscriptions was discovered, you find yourself in the Maya Room in the Museum of Anthropology, thousands of kilometres away from that hell which you contributed to unleashing so that the entire world might become poisoned,

you contemplate everything with the obligatory wonder and the easy admiration of one who visits a museum that is part of an inevitable itinerary, in reality nothing has impressed you, the best pieces you've seen in reproductions, of course, in real life they're different but in any case, the vestiges of a world annihilated at the hands of an empire as powerful as yours, do not produce great emotion in you, captain Keller,

but you all leave, you cross the patio, the wind brings drops of water from the fountain, you enter the Meshica room, here, the guide says, is almost everything that survived the destruction of Mexico-Tenochtitlan, just a tiny percentage of what they calculate the Aztec artists produced, the static violence of that sculpture provokes an answer in you which

the finesse and ornamental abundance of the Mayan art didn't manage to wrest from you,

unexpectedly the acrid monolith looms up, in which a nameless sculptor, preserving an obsession in stone, fixed the sacred image of Coatlicue, you remain mesmerized by it, there is no other word but mesmerized, you will skip the Thursday, Friday and Saturday tours in order to return to the Museum every morning, to sit yourself down there in front of the Goddess of an infernal heaven and recognize in her something which you have always sensed, captain,

such persistence has provoked suspicion among the museum attendants, in order to justify yourself, in order to disguise that aberrant fascination, you bought yourself a sketch pad and began to make a detailed drawing of Coatlicue, you who have hardly drawn a line since you left high school,

on Sunday the beginnings of resistance will appear, instead of going back to the Museum you will spend the morning in the markets and by afternoon you will sign up for the Bullfight excursion along with friends from other tours who will ask you why you weren't with them in Xochimilco, Puebla, Teotihuacan, what you've been up to these last few

days,

you will respond, I am sketching the best pieces, and them, what for, you can buy books, postcards, slides, miniature reproductions, they continue conversing, now in the Plaza México, the bugle sounds, the matadors and their teams appear in the arena, out comes the first bull, they play it with their capes, they pierce, they place the banderillas and they kill, out comes the second one, you are horrified by the spectacle, savage Mexicans, how can they torture animals like that, what a country, this explains their backwardness, their misery, they servility, their aggressiveness, you abandon the bullfight, you return to the Museum, again you contemplate the Goddess, you go back to sketching her even for the short time the room remains open,

they close the doors, you cross the street and wait for a taxi at the sidewalk next to the lake, the man who sells ice cream pushes his metal cart, he draws near and says, excuse me, Sir, you're very interested in all these Aztec things, aren't you?, do you want to see something you'll never forget?, don't worry, it won't cost you a cent, you in your difficult Spanish respond, what is it, what's it all about,

I can't tell you now, Sir, but I'm sure it will interest you, all you have to do

is to get on the last car of the last Metro Tuesday night at Insurgentes station, the train will stop between Isabel la Católica and Pino Suárez, get off and walk east through the tunnel until you find a green light, I'll be waiting for you there,

the vendor will stop a taxi, he will give the driver the name of your hotel and he will almost push you into the car, on the way you thought that it was a joke, a stupid Mexican game to pull the tourists' legs, later you will change your mind, captain Keller,

and Tuesday night, green shirt, Rolleiflex, meerschaum pipe, you will be at Insurgentes waiting for the loudspeakers to announce the last trip, then you will get on the last car with two or three workers who are going home to Nezahualcóyotl City, you will see the stations pass by, the train will stop, to the surprise of the passengers you will get off in the middle of the tunnel, you will walk towards the only light still left on down the Metro tunnel, the green light, the yellow shirt shining eerily beneath the green light, the man who sells ice cream in front of the Museum,

now the two of you go into a stone gallery together, open, to judge by the leaks and the odour of slime on the bed of the dead lake on which the city is built, you put a flash in your camera, the man stops you, no,

don't waste your shots, soon you will have plenty to photograph,

the passage is lit by torches made of an aromatic wood, you ask its name, they answer, pine, then you ask: why have you brought me here?, to see the Painted Stone, the biggest Aztec sculpture, the one that commemorates the triumphs of Ahuizotl, the one they couldn't find during the excavations for the Metro, you will be the first white man to see it since the Spanish buried it in the mud so it wouldn't remind the vanquished of their past greatness, so they would submit more readily to the branding iron, to the whip, to the forced labour, so that they'd lose their memory, their pride in their land, their self-respect and could be converted into beasts of burden and toil,

although you sort of understand, the man's language surprises you, captain Keller, the eyes of your speaker seem to shine in the semi-darkness, you have seen them before, where?, slanted eyes although in another form, the New World is also Asiatic, but you are not afraid, the automatic pistol rests in your pocket,

you hope to see a subterranean city which reproduces in detail the Tenochtitlan that appears in the models in the museum, this is nothing like it, only every so often, ruins, fragments of temples and Aztec

dwellings which they used four centuries ago as a base and a filler for the new Spanish capital,

the smell of mud gets stronger, you begin to sneeze, you have caught a cold from the dampness, I'm getting out of here, you say to your companion, wait, we are about to arrive, he insists, almost spelling it out, I want to leave here immediately, you give orders, an inferior has to obey them, and in fact the other one answers, we'll be coming to an exit soon,

after some fifty or sixty steps he shows you a door, he opens it and, go in, he says, and you enter without thinking twice about it, a second later you find yourself enclosed in a stone chamber without any illumination or ventilation except that which is produced by an opening of undecipherable form, the glyph of the wind?, the glyph of death?

unlike the tunnel, here the floor is firm and even, in one corner there is a mat, you stretch out on it but you don't sleep, you take out the pistol, you aim at the door, everything is so unreal, it seems so illogical that you can't make sense of what you see,

you are put to sleep by fatigue, the smell of slime, the rythym of remote

conversations in an unknown language, footsteps in the dank subterranean corridor, when finally with half-open eyes you understand, last night you shouldn't have eaten that atrocious Mexican meal, you have had an idiotic dream which was at the point of turning into a nightmare, how the unconscious can plunder reality, the Metro, the ice cream vendor, the Museum, and give it a different order or disorder,

what a relief to find yourself awake in this room at the Holiday Inn, did you shout out in the dream?, thank goodness it wasn't the other one, obsessive, the one about the Vietnamese who come out of their graves in the same condition in which you left them but worsened by the rotting, thank goodness,

you wonder what time it is, you stretch out your hand, your hand moves in the emptiness trying to reach the lamp, it's not there, they've taken away the table, you get up to turn on the main light in your room,

then, into the cell burst the men who will take you to the large, circular, grooved stone in one of the twin temples, they will open your chest with one stroke, they will rip out your heart (below they dance, below they play their very sad music) in order to offer it as sacred nourishment to the jaguar God, to the sun which travelled through the jungle of night and

which shines now (while your body, captain Keller, your disjointed body rolls down the bloodstained steps), now it is re-born in Mexico-Tenochtitlan, eternal, unbeaten between the two volcanos.

Andrés Quintana looked at the sheet of cheap paper which he had just fed into the Smith-Corona. He wrote the number 78 in brackets and turned towards the left in order to read the page of *The Population Bomb.*[1] A shout from the blaring television from the apartment next to his distracted him: " FBI: put your hands in the air, don't move." Across the way the boys who formed a rock band tackled the same piece they'd been rehearsing since four in the afternoon:

Where's your momma gone

Where's your momma gone

Little baby don

Little baby don

Little baby don

Where's your momma gone

Where's your momma gone

Far, far away.

He stood up, closed the open window over the dismal interior patio, sat down again and re-read:

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[1] Italics throughout denote words and phrases which appear in English in the source text.

SCENARIO II. In 1979 the last non-Communist government in Latin America, that of Mexico, is replaced by a Chinese-supported military junta. The change ocurrs at the end of a decade of frustration and failure for the United States. Famine has swept repeatedly across Asia, Africa and South America. Food riots have often become anti-American riots.

He thought about the term which would best translate the word "scenario." He consulted the English/Spanish section of the New World.[2] "Libretto, script, plot." Not in this context. Perhaps "possibility, hypothesis"? He left a blank space. He re-read the first sentence and with the index finger of his left hand (a childhood accident had paralysed the right one) he quickly typed:

> In 1979 the government of Mexico (the Mexican government?), the last non-communist one which was left in Latin America (Latinamerica?) is replaced (overthrown?) by a military junta supported by China. (with Chinese support?)

When he finished he read his paragraph out loud: "left in Latin America" sounds horrible. There are two "l's" together. And "ed-ed". What prose. My translation gets worse and worse. He took out the sheet of paper and held it against the table under his right forearm in order to tear it with the index finger and the thumb of his left hand. The telephone rang.

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[2]Underlined words throughout substitute author's italics in the source text.

"Hello."

"Excuse me, could I speak with Mr. Quintana?"

"Yes, speaking."

"Hey, what's happenin' Andrés? How are you? What's new?"

"Pardon me...who's speaking?"

"Don't you recognize me? Of course, it's centuries since we spoke. It's Arbeláez, giving you a hard time like always."

"Ricardo, man, what a pleasure. To what do I owe the honour?"

"Well, I've got this really great project on the go and I want to know if I can count on you."

"Sure, why not? What's it all about?"

"Look, it's a question of getting together and having a chat. But I'll let you in on part of it to see if it grabs you. We're going to produce a magazine like no other in little ol' Mexico. Although it's always difficult to predict these things, I believe it'll be a sensational success."

"A literary magazine?"

"Yes, in part. It's going to be a type of Hispano American Esquire. Or rather, a mixture of Esquire, Playboy, Penthouse, The New Yorker, but with a Latin flavour."

"Hey, well, great."

"Isn't it a cool project? There's money, advertisers, distribution, equipment: everything. We'll print in Panama, putting in different advertising for each region. We'll have reports, chronicles, interviews, regular features, two or three nudes of

course, and also, we want to print an original short story in each edition."

"Sounds really great."

"For the first one we thought about buying one of Gabo's. . . but I insisted that we should start off with a continental flavour, a Mexican author, since the magazine has the disadvantage, no two ways about it, of being made here in little ol' Mexico. Naturally, I thought about you, maestro. Will you do us the honour?"

"Thank you, really, thanks a lot."

"Then you accept?"

"Sure, man, of course. . . the thing is. . . I don't have a single new story; it's been a while since I wrote anything."

"And why is that?"

"Well. . . problems, work, you know, the same old thing."

"Look, sit down and think about your story right now and when it's ready, bring it to me. I don't suppose it'll take you too long. We want to get the first issue out as soon as possible."

"But. . . "

"Listen, I should tell you that they'll be paying well for literary work. On the international level it's no big deal, but compared to what one gets paid in little ol' Mexico it's a fortune. . . I've asked for six thousand pesos for you."

"Six thousand pesos for a short story?"

"Not too bad, eh? Anyway, my dear maestro, I hope you get cracking on your writing. Take down my address and phone number, O.K.?"

Andrés wrote down the particulars on the upper right hand corner of a newspaper which read:

IT IS NECESSARY TO STRENGTHEN THE PRIVILEGED POSITION WHICH MEXICO OCCUPIES IN WORLD TOURISM

He thanked Ricardo effusively and said good-bye. He didn't feel like continuing the translation. He waited for Hilda to come home so that he could tell her about the miracle.

His wife was surprised not to find him grumpy and despondent as usual. In the face of such enthusiasm she made no move to dissuade him, although to Hilda the idea of beginning and ending the story in one single night seemed excessively ambitious.

When Hilda went to bed Andrés took a seat in front of the typewriter. For years he hadn't worked at night, on the pretext that it would bother his neighbours. In fact it had been a long time since he'd written anything that wasn't a translation or bureaucratic prose. Andrés discovered his vocation as a short story writer when he was a child and decided to become a writer and devote himself solely to this genre. As as an adolescent, his library consisted, for the most part, of collections of short stories. Unlike his friends who had diverse interests, he prided himself on practically

never reading poetry, essays, novels, plays, or political books and he devoured instead the great short stories that the world had produced.

But his father wanted to leave him his business and he made him study architecture. Andrés enrolled and pretended to go to classes. In fact, he audited Arts, where he hung around with Arbeláez's group who published the magazine Trinchera.

Unlike Andrés, Ricardo wrote little. His work was limited to editorials in defense of the railway workers' movement, the Cuban Revolution and virulent reviews against current best sellers. Nevertheless, he was working on a "great novel" which, in his own words, would be for the Mexican bourgeoisie what A la recherche du temps perdu was for the French bourgoisie.

A little before literary strife and political differences broke up the group, Andrés met Hilda, who at the time was seventeen years old and was always at Ricardo's side. They fell in love, they spoke bravely to Arbeláez and decided to get married. Andrés would never forget that afternoon, the twenty-eighth of March, 1959, when Hilda acceped his marriage proposal. Demetrio Vallejo was arrested and the army and the police began their occupation of the railway sites.

Andrés's parents told him it would be a bad idea to interrupt his studies since he wasn't going to be able to make a living as a writer. In the end they didn't oppose the marriage and they gave them some money to help them survive the first months. Andrés, though he continued writing every night, tried to make his mark as a screen writer for the national film board and as a literary contributor to newspapers. Towards the end of 1960 the ambition to live by his pen had failed, Hilda had lost her first and

only child, and later they left the little house in Coyoacán to rent a gloomy, inside apartment in the streets of Tonalá.

Later Hilda found work in her sister's boutique in the Zona Rosa and Andrés, who had studied for a year and a half in the Institute for Mexican-U.S. Cultural Relations, found work as a translator in a publishing house specializing in books which promoted Panamericanism and the Alliance for Progress. When inflation crushed their tenuous budget, his father's good friends found Andrés the position of copy editor in the Department of Public Works.

In the first years of his marriage Andrés published his only book: Fabulaciones. It sold 127 copies--they printed 2000--and had only one review (favourable), written by Ricardo, who had never, ever gone back to see the couple. A little bit later Mexican magazines stopped publishing short stories and the rise of the novel made few interested in writing them. Andrés competed in vain for two scholarships. He became discouraged, and he indefinitely postponed his plans for a new series of stories.

After all--he would say to Hilda at night--my vocation was to write and in one way or another I am fullfilling it/

when all is said and done, translations, pamphlets and even bureaucratic correspondence can be just as well written as a short story, right?/

only with an elitist and archaic attitude can one believe that the only valid work is so-called creative literature, don't you agree?/

anyway I don't want to compete with the third-rate Mexican writers whose egos

are inflated by publicity; I could turn out ten pulp novels like that a year, don't you think?/

Nevertheless, now he was going to receive six thousand pesos for a short story: as much as he earned in months of entire afternoons in front of the typewriter, translating what he called "non-books." He could pay his office bills, get all the things he needed, take a vacation, eat in restaurants. For six thousand pesos then, he had recovered his extinct literary vocation and had left behind the excuses which hid the real reason for his failure:

in underdevelopment one cannot be a writer/

the book has died: what interests me now is the *mass-media*/

well, when one tries to write, everything is useful, there is no lost work; you'll see, things will come from my bureaucratic experiences/

what fault is it of mine that I was born in this shitty country and belong to a generation of imbeciles and eunuchs/

look, when all the books that are sucessful today in Mexico are long-forgotten someone will read Fabulaciones and then/

With the index finger of his left hand he began to write non-stop. Never before had he done it with such fluidity. At five o'clock in the morning he went to sleep, feeling an unaccustomed fullfilment. He had smoked a package of Viceroy and had drunk four Cokes, but he had just written THE BULLFIGHT.

Andrés got up at eleven-fifteen. He had a quick bath and shave. With a victorious

feeling he phoned Ricardo.

"Impossible. You had it written already."

"No, I swear it. I did it last night. I'm going to correct it now, and clean it up. I think it's good. Let's see what you think. I hope it'll do."

"Of course it'll do."

"When should I bring it over?"

"Tonight if you like. I'll wait for you at nine o'clock in my office."

Andrés spoke with the head of department at the Public Works to excuse himself for his absence. He made some corrections, re-typed the text, and at five o'clock began a final version without erasures or superimposed letters, on bond paper from Kimberley Clark. Hilda told him that she would go to the movies with her sister so that she wouldn't be alone while he went to deliver the story.

At eight-thirty Andrés got on the Metro at Insurgentes station. He changed trains at Balderas and got off at Juárez. He entered the office on time. The secretary was so pretty that Andrés felt ashamed of his poor corduroy jacket, his brown pants, his small stature, and his crippled hand. He waited a few minutes before going into Ricardo's overly-lit office. Ricardo got up from his desk to give him a hug.

More than twelve years had passed since the 28th of March, 1959. Ricardo was unrecognizable in a turquoise blue Shantung suit, large sideburns, Zapata mustache, and Schumann glasses. Andrés started to feel out of place again in such a setting (windows overlooking the Alameda, walls covered with photo murals which were enlargements of old prints of the city).

He immediately perceived that Ricardo's anti-nostalgic attitude of "as we were saying just yesterday" was phony.[3] The cordial informality of the telephone conversation was going to disappear now that Arbeláez, in a position of power, had gotten Andrés on his own territory. They studied each other for a few seconds:

He's changed / so have I / neither of us did what we were going to do / we both screwed up but who was the worse off for it /

Ricardo hastened to break the tension. He invited Andrés to sit down on the sofa, he sat down next to him, offered him a Benson & Hedges, and leafed through the manuscript which Andrés had taken out of his briefcase.

"The length is perfect. Now, if you'll excuse me just a minute, I'm going to read your story with Mr. Hardwick, the *editor-in-chief* of the magazine. Then I'll introduce him to you. He's a real cool guy. He worked for Time Magazine."

"No, you better not introduce him to me: I'll feel ashamed."

"Ashamed? Why?"

"I don't speak English."

"What? But you've translated thousands of books."

"Perhaps because of that; they're two different things."

"You're such an oddball. I won't be long."

Left alone, Andrés began to leaf through a magazine which Ricardo had left on

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[3]This is a reference to an anecdote attributed to Fray Luis de Leon, a sixteenth-century professor at Salamanca who was imprisoned for years by the Inquisition on suspicion of heresy. When he returned to the university upon his release from jail, he is supposed to have begun his first lecture with the words "Cómo decíamos ayer. . . "

his desk. He stopped at an advertisement:

> *Located on 1,500 feet of Revolcadero Beach and rising 16 stories like an Aztec pyramid, the $40 million Acapulco Princess Hotel and Golf Club opened as this jet set resort's largest and most lavish yet. Its 200 acres of gardens, pools, water-falls and fairways are ten minutes by car from International Airport. The Princess has 777 rooms with private terraces overlooking either the palm-tree dotted golf course or the truquoise Pacific. Guests specify either a green (golf) view or blue (Pacific) view when making reservations. One of the most spectacular hotels you will ever see, it has a lobby modeled after the great central court of an Aztec temple with sunlight and moonlight filtering through the translucent roof. The 20,000 ft. lobby's atrium is complemented by 60 feet palm-trees, a flowing lagoon and Mayan sculpture.*

But he was restless, he couldn't concentrate. He went towards the window and looked into the depth of the city down below, its indecipherable lights. He spent a long time looking at them and smoked too many cigarettes. The secretary came in to offer him instant coffee, later to serve it to him, and finally to say good-bye.

Andrés contemplated the enlarged prints. He felt an impossible nostalgia for that Mexico, dead decades before he was born. He imagined a story about a man who stared so long at a print that he ended up inside it, moving among those characters from another world, looking at his contemporaries who saw him from the Twentieth

Century. Later, like always, he thought that the story wasn't his, someone else had written it, he had just read it somewhere or other.

Or maybe not: he had made it up right then and there, in that strange office across from the Alameda--hardly a suitable spot for the publication of the kind of magazine with money and pretensions that Ricardo spoke about. He still hadn't made sense out of the meeting with his enemy/friend from the old days:

had he stopped thinking about Hilda?

if he saw her, would he like her as much as he did twelve years ago?

what kind of a relationship did they really have?

why had Hilda spoken to him only in vague terms about it?

and

had Ricardo written his novel?

would he manage to write it in the future?

why was the former director of Trinchera in that office?

is the country so terrible, is the world so terrible, that in it everything is corrupted or corrupting and nobody is safe?

and

what did Ricardo think of him? Did he hate him, did he despise him, did he envy him?

his praise of Fabulaciones, was it a show of magnanimity, a subtle dig, a coded message for Hilda?

and

did the six thousand pesos pay for his talent--that of an obscure narrator who published a mediocre book justly forgotten--?

or was it a way to help Hilda?, knowing

(from whom? from Hilda herself?)

about their marital difficulties, the stale and desolate co-existence, the bitterness of failure, the humiliation of punching a time clock at the Public Works, the increasingly inept wording of his translations, Hilda's schedule in her sister's boutique, the rich clients she was a servant to.

Andrés stopped making up questions. He looked at the clock on the wall: more than two hours had passed and Ricardo was still in Mr. Hardwick's office--discussing the story? The delay could only be seen as the worst possible sign. Because of that, when Ricardo re-appeared with the text in his hands, Andrés felt that he had already lived through the moment and could tell what was coming.

"Listen, sorry, I was gone for ages. It's because we were going over and over your story."

Also, in the dark reaches of Andrés' memory, he heard Ricardo say "story" and not short story. An anglicisim, of course, it wasn't important; a mental translation of the English word story. Timidly, without hope, sure of the answer, he said:

"So what did you think of it?"

"Well, I don't know how to tell you, maestro. I like your story, it's interesting, it's not badly written. It's only that, unconsciously, thinking that you were writing it

almost on demand for a magazine, you lowered the level. You know what I mean? It turned out very linear, very *American magazine*. Don't you think so?"

An anxious look instead of an answer/

Andrés reproaching himself for the fact that the loss of the six thousand pesos hurt more than his literary failure/

but Ricardo was speaking again:

"Believe me, really, the situation leaves a bad taste in my mouth. I'd have been delighted if the boss had accepted it. Remember, it was you I called first."

"Hey man, you don't have to make excuses. Tell me you can't stand it and that's it. No problem."

The tone offended Ricardo. With an effort he controlled himself and added:

"Yes, there are problems: the character doesn't stand out. It's not tight enough. You have some very convoluted paragraphs; the last one for example, thanks to your penchant for substituting commas for every other type of punctuation mark. Your anecdote is unreal in the worst sense of the word, very *bookish*, wouldn't you say? Besides, all this about "pre-Hispanic substratum buried but alive", no, not anymore. Fuentes did some really cool things with that, but he exhausted the theme in the process. Of course, you approach it from another angle but just the same. . . And the story gets complicated by the use of the second person singular. It's a technique that's already lost its novelty and it accentuates the similarity to Fuentes, *you know*."

"Everything has already been written. Every short story comes from another short story, right? But anyway, say no more: your objections are irrefutable. . . except

that stuff about Fuentes: I've never, ever read one of his books. I don't read Mexican literature. . . for mental health reasons." Andrés noticed that he was being pathetic, his arrogance as a loser sounded hollow.

"Well, you're doing wrong by not reading those who write along side you. . . Look, it also reminded me of a short story by Cortázar."

"La noche bocarriba?"

"Exactly."

"Could be."

"And now that we're talking about influences or predecessors, whatever you want to call them, I thought about a short story by Rubén Darío. . . Huitzilopóchtli I think it's called. It's from the last book he did, he published it in Guatemala."

"Darío wrote short stories? I had no idea. I thought he was only a poet. . . Fine, well. . . I'm going."

"Just a minute, I haven't mentioned the clincher. Mr. Hardwick thought the plot seemed cheaply anti-American and third-worldish. He found who knows how many symbols."

"Symbols? But there isn't a single one, everything is very direct and very clear."

"Not quite so. The ending seems to suggest something which isn't in the text. A political metaphor, let's say, a well-meant desire, but slightly deceptive nonetheless. As if you wanted to earn the applause of the university radicals or make a nostalgic bow to our days with Trinchera: 'Mexico will be the tomb of Yankee imperialism,

just as a century ago it buried the ambitions of Napoleon the Third' -- isn't that it? If you'll forgive me for saying so, your intuition failed you. Mr. Hardwick is also against the Vietnam War, of course, and you know that deep down my position hasn't changed: the world changed, which is a completely different thing. But look, to bring to a magazine, paid for by money from up there, a short story in which you reflect desires to drive away tourism and to fuck the gringos. . . "

"Perhaps you're right. Maybe I set a trap for myself so I wouldn't get published."

"It could be, *who knows*. But let's not psychoanalyse because we're going to end up discovering that your story is a concealed aggression towards me."

"No way, man, why do you think that?" He pretended to laugh along with Ricardo, paused and added, "Well, I'll disappear now, thanks a lot anyway."

"Don't take it like that, don't be absurd. Naturally, I'm hoping for something else from you although it won't be for the first issue. Apart from that, this magazine doesn't work Mexican style: we pay for what we commission. Here. . . it's only a thousand pesos but it's better than nothing. . . Go ahead, don't feel bad about taking it. That's how it's done in the United States and nobody gets offended. Oh, if you don't mind, leave me your original for a few days so I can show it to the administrator to justify the payment. Then I'll send it to you in the mail or with an *office-boy*."

"Very well. Thanks again and I'll drop by with another little story for you."

"Terrific. Take your time, don't hurry and you'll see; this time we'll be successful with the gringos. They're so tough, very professional, very much the

perfectionists. Some days they get you to re-do a book review six times. Now imagine a creative text. . . Listen, the payment isn't important, you can submit your story to any one of the *local* magazines."

"What for? It wasn't any good. Better we forget about it. . . Well, are you staying?"

"Yes, I have to make some calls."

"At this hour? It's a bit late, isn't it?"

"Very late, but while we're launching the magazine we have to work non-stop. Well, my dear Andrés, I thank you for finishing the job and please give my deepest regards to Hilda."

"Of course. My thanks to you. Good night."

Andrés went out into the darkened hallway where the only lights were on the elevator pannel. He pressed the call-button and soon after the offensively lit cage opened, the elevator operator's seat empty. He pushed the ground floor button. A sleepy watchman, his face hidden behind a scarf, opened the door to the street for him. Andrés went back out into the Mexican night, walked towards Juárez station and went down to the deserted platform.

While he waited for the Metro to arrive he opened his briefcase in search of some reading material. The only thing he found was the copy of THE BULLFIGHT. He tore it up and threw it in the trash can. It was hot in the tunnel. Suddenly he was bathed by the fresh air displaced by the train, which immediately stopped without

a sound. Andrés got on the second car, again made the change at Balderas and took a seat on an individual bench. There were only three drowsy passengers. Andrés took the thousand peso bill out of his pocket, contemplated it an instant and then put it back again. In the window panes of the door he saw himself reflected by the play of light from the car and the darkness of the tunnel.

"Idiot face," he said. "If I met up with myself on the street I'd feel an infinite scorn. Only a stupid fool like me would expose himself to a humiliation of this nature. How am I going to explain it to Hilda? Everything's a mess. Why doesn't the train just crash? I want to die."

Seeing that the three men were observing him, he realized that he had been speaking almost out loud and gesticulating. He looked away and in order to occupy himself with something he took out the thousand peso bill and put it in his briefcase.

He got off at Insurgentes when the loudspeakers announced that it was the last run and that the station doors were going to close. Nevertheless, Andrés stopped to read a notice scratched with the point of a compass or a nail on a Raleigh advertisement:

MURDERERS, WE WON'T FORGET

TLATELOLCO AND SAN COSME

"It should've said 'nor San Cosme'," Andrés corrected mentally, mechanically, while he advanced towards the exit. The train that was going in the direction of

Zaragoza started up. Before it built up speed Andrés saw, among the four passengers in the last car, an unmistakably American man: green shirt, Rolleiflex, and meerschaum pipe between his lips.

Andrés shouted words which captain Keller never got to hear and which were lost in the tunnel. He hastened to climb the stairs, craving the fresh air of the plaza. With his one good hand he pushed the revolving door. He couldn't even open his mouth when he was grabbed by the three men who were lying in wait for him.

THE AMUSEMENT PARK

Labyrinthe, la vie, labyrinthe, la mort

Labyrinthe sans fin, dit le Maître de Ho.

-Henri Michaux[1]

I

The people have gathered together around the place occupied by the elephants. The men argue and scuffle mercilessly: they're trying to get to the front row for the sole purpose of not missing a single detail. Some, the youngest ones, have climbed up the trees and from there they view the spectacle of the birth. The female elephant is about to bear a calf. The pain infuriates her and, trumpeting, she bashes herself up against the cement walls, she throws herself onto the floor, and she gets up again. The bull elephant and the people limit themselves to viewing the process. In its fury the cow elephant has not allowed either the tamer or the veterinarian to get close to her. At a distance, both of them impatiently await the outcome. Two hours pass by. Finally (when the group of on-lookers has become a crowd), from the dark, old body a new body begins to emerge. The crowd, delighted with the elephant's pain, admires the birth of a monstrous beast, full of blood and hair, which resembles an elephant. The animal staggers, it seems about to fall. Suddenly it breaks in two, the rubber

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[1]For the significance of this quotation see Chapter Five, pages 130-32.

covering deflates and from inside springs a man dressed like a jester who, when he jumps and turns somersaults, shakes two strings of bells. The audience immediately gives him a thunderous ovation and throws coins which the man hurries to put into his pockets. There is another burst of applause. The man thanks them with a deep bow. The bull elephant and the cow elephant bend their trunks and lift up a foot. Some among the audience start to whistle--but they're told to keep quiet.

II

At the other end of this park is the botanical garden. Past the greenhouses, beyond the cactus desert and the ninth lake, the imitation forest looms behind a bend. This place has become dangerous and the administration of the park has assigned several policemen to watch over it. It's ten o'clock in the morning and a primary teacher heading up a procession of small children enters the confines of the simulated jungle. The nasty little woman greets the policemen by their names and then in a voice which tries to be martial, she orders the children to line up on the right. She asks the students Zamora and Lainez to step forward. The teacher speaks about their poor conduct, about their lack of interest in their studies, the orange peel that Zamora threw at her with a slingshot, and the obscene gestures which Lainez made when the teacher had turned her back after she'd finished pointing out the errors of an addition on the blackboard which the boy didn't know how to do. Immediately after, the teacher takes the children by the ear, and deaf to their bawling, stimulated by the applause and the approval of the rest of the children and the indolent attitude of the guards, she brings

Lainez and Zamora right up to the tentacle of a carnivorous plant. The plant gobbles them up and avidly begins to suck them in. Only the swelling of its stalk and the fierce peristaltic movements can be seen: one imagines the asfixiation, the work of the acid, the voracious dissolution of the bones. The teacher--resigned, bored--gives *in vivo*[2] the botanical lesson corresponding to that day and explains to her students how the workings of carnivorous plants are like the digestive action of a boa constictor. A small boy raises his hand and at the same time as he is looking distractedly at the plant, in which not a single movement can now be seen, he asks the teacher what a boa constrictor is.

III

I love Sundays in the park there are so many little animals that I think I must be dreaming or going crazy from so much pleasure and happiness of always seeing such different things and wild animals that play or make love or are always at the point of killing each other and I enjoy seeing how they eat what a shame that they all smell so bad or rather reek well the more they do to keep the park clean especially on Sundays the more all the animals stink like the devil nevertheless I believe that upon seeing us they enjoy themselves as much as we do because of that I feel so sorry that they are always there their life must be very hard always doing the same things to make others laugh or pester them and I don't know how people can come up to my cage and say *look what a tiger doesn't he frighten you* because even if there weren't any bars I

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[2]Latin meaning 'live' or 'first hand'.

wouldn't move from here to attack them since everyone knows that I've always felt so sorry for them

IV

The section of the park that they euphemistically call 'the kitchen' or the 'repair shop' is banned to spectators. Allowing such sights could cause sudden attacks of guilt and even subversive outbreaks. In a large yard with walls eaten away by humidity, horses bought at giveaway prices are sacrificed to feed the wild animals. A humanitarian man, the director has suppressed the brutal practices in common use by the slaughterhouses. In spite of that, since the subsidy that the park receives just barely covers the salary, the benefits and the daily expenses of the director, he has not acquired the electric pistol and the killing is accomplished by traditional means: a blow to the head with a club or a throat-cutting. Old horses less than twenty years old are liquidated continually in the yard. They all end up here; their loyalty, their service records, their endurance for work don't count. Riding horses and draft horses, worn out race horses, ponies and work horses are all united in the equality of death. When they can't exploit them anymore, their owners sell them to the bull ring. If they don't meet with a frightening death there, which would be an act of compassion taking into account the aforementioned and their prospects, the horses get the slaughterer's knife as payment for their efforts and their hellish lives. Only bones, nerves and hides end up in the carnivors' cages. In order to supply additional funds to the director, the least repulsive parts are either sold to the hamburger and hot dog stands in the park, or they

feed the idle class of castrated cats and dogs who dwell on English lawns or on large Persian pillows. Among the visitors and the park workers nobody mentions the subject of the horses, perhaps because of the unconscious fear of putting two and two together, making the connection and realizing that it is a metaphor, only slightly exaggerated, for their own destiny.

V

Behind the cages stands the train station. A good number of children get on the train, sometimes accompanied by their parents. They get on with enthusiasm and when the train starts its run they're startled and then they look with joy at the underbrush, the forests, the artificial lake. The only peculiar thing about this train is that it never returns--and when it does, the little boys who were travelling in it are now men who, as such, are full of fear and resentment.

VI

A family--father, mother, two children--arrives at the wooded area of the park and spreads a tablecloth out on the grass. The long-awaited day in the country is finally happening this Sunday. One of the children asks permission to buy a balloon and he moves off, stepping on the crumpled leaves of the footpath. The man insists that they begin eating before the child returns. From a basket the woman extracts bread, butter, meat, mustard. It's not long before some dogs gather around, and as always, a line of ants advances towards the crumbs. The man and the woman both like animals very

much and they have instilled this same love in the child. So they just start to hand out crusts of bread and pieces of meat among the dogs and they don't do anything to prevent the ants from getting at the basket which holds the flan[3] and the candies. Very soon they find themselves surrounded by seventy dogs and more or less a billion ants. The dogs demand more food. They howl, they show their fangs, and the couple and their small child have to fling their own mouthfuls into the jaws of the dogs. Meanwhile the three of them are already covered by ants which giddily, greedily, like greased lightning begin to strip the flesh from their bones. Realizing their inferiority, the dogs prefer to join forces with the ants before it's too late. When the first child returns to the wooded area, he looks for his family and all that he finds is the spoils already divided: long columns of ants (each insect carrying an invisible little piece of flesh), and a welter of dogs who are playing at burying tibiae and crania or struggling to disarticulate the tiny skeleton which finally gives way and in an instant is left in pieces.

VII

The monkeys' island rises in the shadow of the carnival rides. A ditch and a barbed wire fence isolate them from those who, with irony or compassion, watch them live. In the freedom of the jungle which only the (now extinct) first generation of prisoners of the park knew, the monkeys used to live in scarcity and in peace and without

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[3]Flan is an egg custard dessert of Spanish origin commonly eaten in Mexico and other Latin American countries.

oppressing the inferior orders of their species. In over-populated captivity they enjoy whatever they feel like. The tension, the agressive co-habitation, the lethal din, the lack of pure air and space obliges them to consume tons of bananas and peanuts. Several times a day armed and fearful men are supposed to do a complete cleaning of the island so that the shit and the garbage don't asphyxiate its inhabitants. Thus, first the monkeys have their survival guaranteed: there's no need to worry about looking for food and the veterinarians attend (when they can) to their wounds and their illnesses. Nevertheless, existence on the island is wretched and short. The prison system is based on a heartless hierarchy which allows the bosses of the community to set themselves up as tyrants. Skilful at their game but cowards by nature, the chimpanzees' only role is that of buffoons for the amusement of those on the inside and those on the outside. The ethnic minorities, like the saraguato[4], the titi monkey and the spider monkey, live in atrocious servitude. The mandrills spend their time worshipping the gorillas and no one looks after the young; prostitution and perversion corrupt them all from an early age, and the number of crimes increases daily. Incapable of rebelling against man, who by capturing them destroyed their crude paradise and transported them to the park in iron coffins, numb and half-suffocated, the monkeys destroy one another, and many end up deceiving themselves and believing that the horrors of the island are the natural order of this world, things were and will continue to be so and there's no escape from the circle of stones and the barbed wire fence. But perhaps a single outbreak of insubordination would be enough to make everything different.

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4 A species of ape.

VIII

The architect who planned this park had read the novel about the man who was on display in a zoo, and he decided to do something much more original. His idea has had such success that they have tried to copy it (uselessly) everywhere, and the magazine *Life en Español* dedicated eight colour pages to him. The architect's statements published in *Life en Español* are transcribed here: "The amusement park with which I have endowed my city is certainly not original but perhaps it is surprising. In appearance the park is like all others: people who want to contemplate the three kingdoms of nature come to it; but this park is enriched by another park, which (reversing the process of certain bottles which can be emptied but not re-filled) allows one entry--although it closes off forever all possibilty of exiting--(that is, unless the visitors risk dismantling a whole system which applies the theory of certain Chinese boxes to monumental architecture), since this second park is inside another park in which the visitors look at those who are looking. And the third, in its turn inside another park where those who are in it look at those who are looking at those who are looking. And this one inside another park contained in another park inside another park inside another park--a tiny link in an endless chain of parks which contain more parks and are contained in parks inside parks where nobody sees anybody without being seen, judged, and condemned at the same time. To illustrate what I say let's take a simple and immediate example. Look: The people have gathered together around the place occupied by the elephants. The men argue and scuffle mercilessly: they're trying to get to the front row for the sole purpose of not

missing a single detail. Some, the youngest ones, have climbed up the trees and from there they view the spectacle of the birth. The female elephant is about to bear a calf. The pain infuriates her and, trumpeting, she bashes herself up against the cement walls, she throws herself onto the floor, and she gets up again...

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