1968

Political and Social Aspects of the Indianista Novel in Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador

Avelline Quinn Gibbs
Loyola University Chicago

Recommended Citation
https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses/2391
POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE INDIANISTA NOVEL IN PERU, BOLIVIA AND ECUADOR

A Thesis
Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School
Loyola University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Avelline Quinn Gibbs
June 1968
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>RECOGNITION OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>ANALYSIS OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>THE NOVELIST AS POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVIST</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>THE INFLUENCE OF THE INDIANISTA NOVEL</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.</td>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PREFACE

This thesis will analyze the political and social aspects of the *indianista* novel in Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador from 1880 to the early 1950's. Representative examples will be studied to demonstrate how this type of novel articulated reform aspirations on behalf of the Indians of these countries. The novel's positive influence on the growth of a social consciousness and the enactment of reform legislation will be traced.

The most important sources of material are the *indianista* novels from Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador. The works of Ricardo Palma, Juan León Mera, Clorinda Matto de Turner, Alcides Argüesas, Jorge Icaza, Enrique López Albújar and Ciro Alegria are among those who have contributed to the political and social *indianista* novel in these Andean countries. The more important critics of the *indianista* literature will be noted, such as, Arturo Torres-Rioseco, Concha Meléndez, Fernando Alegria, Jefferson Rea Spell and Pedro Henriquez-Urena.
The approach to an analysis of the Indianista purpose will be to define the elements or characteristics of the Indianista novel from its romantic beginnings in the nineteenth century through its evolution to a political and social document in the twentieth, and its effects still in progress today.

The term Indian was first used by Christopher Columbus; thinking he had landed in the Indies, he called the natives, Indians. The Indian appears in Spanish American literature from the moment of discovery: the Mayan and Nahua codes testify to this, and perhaps one day the Quechua quipus will confirm it. The works of Padre Bartolome de las Casas (Brevisima relacion), Don Alonso de Ercilla y Zúñiga (La Araucana), Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, Juan de Castellanos, Balbuena, Barco Centenera, Pedro de Oña (1570), Díaz del Castillo, Núñez de Pineda y Bascuñán, Landívar, and Labardén, were full of illusions, protests, eulogies and diatribes, referring to the Indians. The letters from Cortes and before

him, Columbus, mention the Indians. The writers, Montaigne (Des cannibales), Rousseau, Marmontel (Las Incas, 1777), St. Pierre, Chateaubriand (Atala, whose first translation to Spanish was made by Fray Servando Teresa de Mier, dated 1801), Olmedo, Cooper, Humboldt, Vitoria, Sepúlveda, Torquemada, Diderot (in his eulogy of Olavide), Vizcardo, the Abbet Reynal, Robertson, Miranda, Fréau, Crévecœur, Bryant, Longfellow and Voltaire (in his tragedy, Alzire (1736) and in his Candide 1759), all speak of the Indians.

The term indianista here will be used in connection with the novel. The indianista novels portray Indians as main themes and treat them as a social problem.

The Elizabeth M. Cudahy Memorial Library on Loyola University's Lake Shore campus in Chicago and the Deering Library of Northwestern University's Evanston campus, were the two principal institutions for source materials, plus a trip to Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador in 1967, as a gift of my husband, Mr. Edward A. Gibbs.

---

The author wishes to acknowledge the aid of Dr. Joseph A. Gagliano whose direction has brought this study to completion. Further thanks are extended to Reverend James Gillis, S.F.M., and Mrs. Donald (Angela) Ambrose, whose comments and criticisms have enabled the author to improve this thesis, and to my children, Catherine, Edward, Joseph, Daniel and Margaret, for encouragement and interest in the progress of this work.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The romantic period (1830-1895) produced an **indianista** novel, often called realistic, sentimental, historical or indigenous, presenting a native person, man or woman; scenery, a forest, a river and a **llanura**, or plain. The theme was the tragedy of the fight of races and the exploitation of the Indian. The style used dialects or at least what the author believed to be native dialects. Legends, authentic or thought to be authentic, were used in quantity. The Indian, reduced to an outcast by the continual enslavement of the white master, appeared in a heroic role. He often was given the "characteristics and attitudes of the medieval gentleman or the hero of the *Iliad."1 Sometimes he appeared as a philosopher and poet. The Indian dazzled with his beauty, with fineness of temperament and honor. The forest was frequently a delightful retreat, charming with bird-songs and the murmur of clear currents.

The tragedy in the novel is of the heroic type, with sentimental Indian and white relationships. For example, a

---

Spanish soldier will be in love with a pagan native girl, or a non-Christian cacique with a Christian woman. The Indians often used words that could only have come from some Calderón drama, as most all the writers continued imitating the Spanish models.  

The Peruvian Ricardo Palma played a background role in the development of the Indianista novel. Born in Lima in 1833, he remained there for most of his life, absent only for brief trips and political exile. His interests in literature, journalism and politics pulled him from his university studies before graduation. Palma was a liberal, and anti-clerical in his life, and it showed in his work.  

The later Indianista novels are also anti-clerical. His first verses, Poesias, were published in 1855, followed by the historical study, Anales de la Inquisicion in Lima in 1863. Armonias, libro de un desterado, was his poetical work for 1865, published in Paris, and in 1870 in Le Harve, a third book of poetry, Pasionarias, was printed. Tradiciones peruanas, Palma’s most significant works, were produced in eight series between 1872 and 1891.

---

2Arturo Torres-Rioseco, La novela en la America Hispano (Berkeley; University of California Press, 1949), p. 162.


They preceded two more volumes in 1899 and 1906, and *Apendice a mis últimas tradiciones*, 1910. *Las mejores tradiciones peruanas*, 1918, was published before his death in 1919.

Palma's home and manuscripts were destroyed during the war with Chile (1879-1883). Following this war, he undertook documents and works of the Biblioteca Nacional. In addition to this preservation of Peru's past, Palma also created the tradición. Perhaps Palma's tradición could be called a short novel, or a picaresque one, having humor, real observation of life and pathos. It can have a moralizing effect, but humor is essential, as is exact observation. If not true to life, it presents no pathos and thus becomes buffoonery. He became best known for this short narrative form, which contained both historical and fictional elements. Palma's observations were written in a graceful, sound and anecdotal manner. This inventor of a new prose genre expressed good humor, was witty and sharp, and highly responsive to the comic aspect of man and society. His commentary on an historical event, a legend, or a simple fantasy, revealed a character, created an atmosphere or untied an historical knot. *Tradiciones*

---

presented a picture of the social, religious and popular history of the Peruvian nation.

The romantic literary tendency of the time was an influence, and his treatment of the Indians was in this vein. The unabridged social and economic chasm of the colonial period was reflected in Ricardo Palma's treatment of the two great social groups, the rich and the poor (the Indians); the rulers and the ruled. He used an Indian theme, however, in Los tesoros de Catalina Huarca, Orgullo de caciques, Los caciques suicidas and La muerte de Manco Inca.

Ricardo Palma, a President of the Peruvian Academy, realized a national synthesis with his Tradiciones. Robert Bazin, a French literary critic, has called him one of the most authentic founders of perunidad. Palma maintained that the epoch of national integration had arrived, and he offered his country a clear interpretation of itself. However, he did show sympathy for the caudillos Santa Cruz and Salaverry, who represented aspects truly opposed to Peruvian national orientation. His nationalism was a part of the indianista background, reflecting the large proportion of Indians in his country. The weakest part of the Tradiciones is on the Indians, however, but this was normal for the times, as not much interest was shown in the

---

7 Robert Bazin, Historia de la literatura americana en lengua española, p. 217.
Indian world. As the Puerto Rican Concha Meléndez points out in her *La novela indígenista en Hispanoamérica, 1832-1889*, Indian themes were not widely amplified in novels in the romantic epoch. The fact that Palma used the Indian as a main theme in several of his *tradiciones* was a contribution to the rise of the *indígenista* novel.

The Ecuadorean Juan León Mera sympathized with the Indians, presenting an idealized picture of their life. This literary man of talent was a scholar, poet, antiquarian, novelist, and excellent in all. Mera, born June 28, 1832 in Ambato, a small town south of Quito, received no formal schooling. His mother deserted his father before he was born and he grew up on a secluded estate which hid their poverty. His mother taught him to read and write but the rest of his education was self-taught. He was too poor to attend the university but read all the books of the family's well-stocked library. At the age of twenty-six Mera published his first volume of poems and romances in which he showed his love and knowledge of Indian traditions and the lore of his country.

Mera turned to the more profitable painting and selling of watercolors to tourists. He was offered an opportunity to enter the studios of some celebrated Quiteños, and went to

---

study under the painter Antonio Salas. His friends were the young writers of the capital, especially the poet, Julio Zaldumbide, who became a life-long friend.

Politics were Mera's general preoccupation and the cruelties of the civil war impressed the young man, and the injustices of the authorities found him writing that the pen above all ought to serve to defend liberty. He timidly alluded to the political situation, writing fables and satires in order not to bring harm to himself. He wanted to give new models to society and to the state. Juan León Mera believed that the Ecuadorian Indian had been the victim of the whites during the conquest, the colonial time, and now the republic. From the days of Bartolomé de Las Casas' writings, the Indian had been recognized by some as the slave of his European conquistador, and el repartimiento, la encomienda, and la mita had become enslaving instruments. Garcilaso de la Vega in his Comentarios reales (1782) commented on the Indians who had lost all personal liberty and had become beasts of burden for their Spanish masters. The royal decrees to the encomendaros to take spiritual and temporal care of the Indians were disregarded, and the

---


Indians were enslaved for generations.

Mera was influenced by the politics of the era, especially the political thoughts of President Gabriel García Moreno. This dictator entrusted Mera with several responsible governmental posts, in which Mera showed great integrity and acted as a champion against abuse and injustice. He remained a conservative in politics and a romantic in literature. He was a fervent Catholic, controversially holding to his religious and political beliefs. Earlier he had become a teacher because he believed he ought to begin the public education of the youth of his country.

He liked the homely virtues, wrote on education; roamed the country-side, and gathered the popular songs of the campesinos. Political journalism and the editorship of the official magazine, El Diario Oficial, preceded his Governorship of Tungurahua and Leon. He became a Deputy to Congress, a militant conservative, the President of the Ecuadorian Senate and twice Minister of the Tribunal de Cuentas, a post which he held shortly before his death, on December 13, 1894, in Ambato.

11Fernando Alegría, Breve Historia de la novela Hispano-Americaná (Mexico; Ediciones de Andres, 1959), p. 84.

12Angel F. Rojas, La novela ecuatoriana (Mexico; Fondo de Cultura Economica, 1948), p. 46.
The Congress of 1865 adopted a hymn of Mera's for the national anthem; Himna Nacional Ecuatoriano. He founded the Academy Ecuatoriana Correspondiente de la Real Academia Española in 1875 which retained "respect for the normal rhetoric and spirituality of the Royal Spanish Academy."\(^{13}\) Literary societies sought his contributions as his reputation spread. Among them were the Reales Academias Españolas de la Lengua y de la Historia, those of Buenas Letras of Seville, of Barcelona, and others of Belgium and Argentina.

Mera also prepared an edition of the poems of the celebrated Mexican poetess, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, which contained a biography and a literary criticism of her works. He edited the letters of the Ecuadorian poet, Joaquin Olmedo; wrote fables, articles on life and manners, and a series of novelettes which could be called "ejemplares", models or examples.

Mera's works were dedicated to improving public education. He used the Indian theme in Las Melodías indígenas (1885), a book of verses on native subjects, with the Indians as heroes. His La virgen del sol, a legend in verse, was the story of the Indians who lived in peace, adoring the sun in their temples, until the conquistadores arrived. Published in Quito, 1861, this work was an example for the youth of Ecuador.

\(^{13}\)Concha Meléndez, La novela indianista, p. 156.
to exalt the past and nourish the future. This study was divided into two parts, written in cantos, in varied meters. ¹⁴

Mera also distinguished himself as an erudite critic, devoting his knowledge and literary genius chiefly to the study of Ecuadorian literature. His great desire was to popularize his country's literature among his compatriots and the people of other countries. His Ojeada historico-critica sobre la poesía ecuatoriana, a history of the Parnassus of his country from its beginning to the opening of the nineteenth century, was published in 1868. The work begins with the primitive Quechua poetry and concludes with the poets of the new generation. It also contains letters written to the Spaniard Don Juan Valera and to his countryman Julio Zaldumbide, concerning the poet Olmedo, the intellectual progress of Ecuador, and Americanism in poetry. The very important problem, of America's own literature was also a subject of these letters. Through these letters, especially the Cartas literarias written to Don Juan Valera in 1893, Mera became well-known in Spain and Spanish America. The same letters attest that the indianismo of the nineteenth century was not always picturesque. ¹⁵ Mera wrote indianista literature because he sincerely thought that


¹⁵Concha Meléndez, La novela indianista, p. 156.
by doing so he contributed proper character to Ecuadorian art.

No other person devoted so much time and effort as Mera did to calling attention to Ecuadorian culture. For many years he was the dean of Ecuadorian writers and the compiler of their literary achievements. On the occasion of the fourth centenary of the discovery of America, and at the request of the Academy of Quito, he wrote *La Antología ecuatoriana: Cantares del pueblo*, the first folklore compilation of its kind in the country. Years after his death, his unedited writings were printed. His *La dictadura y la restauración* was a history of the republic. Possessing enormous knowledge, his interests and studies were as varied as they were extensive. For four years he contributed one or more articles or poems to every issue of *Revista ecuatorina*.

His *Cumanda o Un drama entre salvajes*, was written in appreciation of his appointment as a Corresponding Member of the Royal Spanish Academy on March 10, 1877. He wanted to present a novel as a token of his gratitude. *Cumanda* was first published in 1871, and this untraceable copy was followed by the Quito edition of Guzman Almeda of 1879. The editorial Heath and Company of New York, published an edition of *Cumanda*, as noted by Dr. Pastoriza Flores.

Cumanda is a romantic novel of extraordinary beauty dealing with the Indians and missionaries of Ecuador during the colonial period. The descriptions of nature, and of the life of the savages are unsurpassed. The festivities, wars, intrigues and superstitions of the natives are vividly depicted, and the story has an inimitable solemnity, freshness and rare beauty.

This novel was the most important of the early indianista group. It has as its picturesque setting the Ecuadorian countryside, admired by the author from his country home in Atocha. His house was situated before the grandiose view of Mt. Chimborazo. Mera said in the preface of his story that Cumanda was a heroine of the Oriente region of his republic. Her tale had been affirmed by an eye-witness traveler, an English friend of Mera's.

Mera sought the remote incident of the uprising of the jivaro Indians, which caused the tragedy that he narrates. The Pragmática Sanción de Carlos III had expelled the Jesuits from America in 1767. Abandoning the now deserted missions, the Indians fell into their former primitive conditions; fomented hate against the whites which led to revolt. Some of the missions, as the one of Andoas that figures in Cumanda, were

17Juan León Mera, Cumanda, p. 85.
18Concha Meléndez, La novela indianista, p. 155.
turned over to the Dominican friars.

Mera worked into his novel the bloody uprising of 1709 in Guamote and Columbe, following the conspiracy of Lorenza Huaymanay and the Indian Tubón. Mera wrote in a letter to the Director of the Royal Spanish Academy that, although the French viscount Francois Rene de Chateaubriand (1768-1848) and the American James Fenimore Cooper had written about American savages, he felt there was enough difference between the Northern and Southern Indians, to justify his writing a work which he hoped would be original. Neither industrialists nor scientists had studied the virgin forests of the Oriente region, nor had poets nor philosophers dissected the life and customs of the jívaros, záporos, and other Indian tribes which inhabited those solitary lands removed from civilized contact.

The plot of Cumandá centers on the Spanish family of Don José Domingo Orozco. Six of the children and Orozco's wife, Carmen, perish in a fire of retaliation set by a jívaro, Tubón. Tubón's aged father had been cruelly punished by Orozco for a trifling fault. Carlos, the oldest son, is saved because he is away studying in Riobamba. Orozco becomes a Dominican priest, repents of his cruelty to the Indians, and dedicates himself to the missions.

19Juan León Mera, Cumandá, p. 19.
20Ibid., p. 15.
21Ibid., p. 183.
Although the natives possess very curious customs and ideas concerning religion and marriage, there exist among them primitive ideas of a Supreme Being, of the Deluge, and of Christ; their ideas due no doubt to the influence of the missionaries. 22 His Provincial sends Father Domingo to the old Reducción of Andoas, situated in the heart of the Oriente region. Cumánda's tribe lives near the Pastaza river, which flows into the Amazon after rising between the eastern and western cordilleras in the basins of Latacuga and Riobamba. 23

Carlos, accompanying his priest father to the interior, meets Cumánda, a beautiful girl, whose name symbolizes life. Her only fault, her father claims is that she seems like the hated white man. 24 They fall in love but the parents of Cumánda, the záparos Pona and Tongana, after trying in vain to destroy their daughter's love for the foreigner, offer her as a seventh wife to the seventy-year-old cacique Yahuarmaqui. 25

Carlos, made prisoner, has to be delivered to an ally of the chief's, to be put to death. Cumánda escapes and takes refuge in Domingo's fifty-family mission. According to Indian

22 Ibid.
23 Juan León Mera, Cumánda, p. 182.
24 Ibid., p. 5.
25 Ibid., p. 69.
custom, Cumanda ought to die with her husband; and if she does
not return, Carlos will be executed, and the mission destroyed.
She gives herself up so that he might be freed, although she
knows that she will be sacrificed. 26

Watching the priest opening the amulet Cumanda had given
to Carlos, Pona reveals that she is the old family criada, the
wet nurse for Cumanda. She had carried her to safety after
Tongan (Tubón) had fired the hacienda in revenge for his long
captivity in the workshop and the harsh punishment given his
father. A gold reliquary was enclosed in white muslin in the
amulet. Inside it is found a carefully wrapped picture of
Orozco's wife, Carmen, who Julia (Cumanda) resembled. 27
Carlos
and Domingo rush to ransom their sister and daughter, but find
her still form, tied to a tree by the side of the dead cacique.
She had been suffocated with an infusion of aromatic grasses,
in order that the cacique's most beautiful wife could accompany
him in death.

The customs, manners and national habits of the Indians
form the costumbrista tradition of the indianista novel. The
indianista novel had as an essential element the nationalistic
passion which dominated romantic Europe, perhaps even more
intense in emancipated Spanish America. They sought their own

---

27 Ibid., p. 163.
ways to express themselves. The novel now managed two traditions; el costumbrismo and indianismo. The indianismo that flourished in Ecuador culminated in Cumanda by Mera. This first great indianista novel has been called excessive and inexact, but Mera upheld that hispanoamerican literature ought to try to define itself, be original, and use typically national themes. As Ecuador's population majority is Indian, it was necessary to study the psychology of the Indian, his beliefs and his customs. In the sierras almost pure Quechua is spoken by the illiterate and miserable slaves. How was Mera to make the ragged Indians heroes? He searched them out in the almost inaccessible interior, where they were foreigners; unknown and socially non-existent. Chateaubriand's Atala may have been his model, but he went to see the virgin forests, to collect the memories of the nomad tribes and the traditions of the colonial epoch. He lived with them, as he wished to use the Indians for a literary theme.

This first indianista novel has been compared to Chateaubriand's Atala, but in reality, it presented a new position. It considered the Ecuadorian problem with its relation to the eastern territories. The rights of all of the provinces

28Ibid., p.
29Concha Meléndez, p. 10.
31Ibid., p. 110.
of the nation were not recognized and this was Juan Leon Mera's constant preoccupation. The description of the wood, episodes of savage life and the self-denial of the missionaries who tried to civilize the natives, were all described in Cumanda. These themes have not lost importance and the novel continues to be read in any study of the Indianista novel.

Mera himself explains the social intention of Cumanda. In Chapter Five the author shows his interest in a civilized society for the Ecuadorian tribes, instead of their sad condition of savagery. He laments that the governors of the regions do not hear the cries of the savages being exterminated but are only attentive to their own social and political world.32

Concha Meléndez compares Mera and Chateaubriand, the latter influenced by Rousseau according to his studies. She writes that Mera remembers his model, Atala, and although he does not approach the artistic perfection of the Frenchman, he approximates him by his poetic quality. The two novels begin with similar descriptive moments. The trees, rivers and mountains sketched are almost Humboldt-like in their details.

Dr. Meléndez compares Mera to James Fenimore Cooper,33 espec-

32Concha Meléndez, p. 164.

33Ibid.
cially in the care taken with descriptions and customs, again the *costumbrista* aspect.

Fernando Alegria has called Mera's *Cumanda* artificial with melodramatic surprises, his "decorative figurines" moving in poetic surroundings. The declarations of love, the literary primitivism, and the theatrical final sacrifice are conceived in romantic idealization. The savage is grand and excellent, and Christian! The "green hell" has changed itself into beautiful forests. The basic factor of the drama is the tragedy of Orozco, which is the result of the tyranny that the head of the family exercises over the Indians. The *indianista* novelists of the twentieth century do not emphasize their literary tendencies, but their sentiments of social recovery and economic justice.

Through this novel, Mera's name became well known in Hispanic letters, and won for him Spanish praise. The Spanish critics, Valera, Pereda, Alarcon, and Menendez y Pelayo were enthusiastic. Valera wrote to Mera that *Cumanda* was a most beautiful narrative, more exact than Chateaubriand and Cooper. Mera's work was more a product of observation and knowledge than the other two writers. Don Pedro de Alarcon in a letter

---

34 Fernando Alegria, p. 84.

of May 17, 1886, proclaimed that Cumandá had a most profound feeling for Ecuadorian nature.

Mera was criticized by the brothers Amunagegui, Miguel Luis and Georgorio, for his use of Quechua terms.36 His bilingualism however was a natural part of his life. In Ambato, Quito, Cuzco, Cochabamba, Santiago del Estero, Oruro, Riobamba and Cuenca, Quechua was routine or natural in daily conversation.37

Arturo Torres-Rioseco has called Mera's greatest work, Cumandá, an anti-indigna work; his Indians not of flesh and bone. He added that the author failed in psychology, in style, in a novelistic climate, as well as not establishing a necessary balance needed for a work of art.38

Juan León Mera was praised for his description of native life in the forest, untainted by civilization. He has been called the literary man of most universal talent yet produced by Ecuador. Despite his descriptions and judgment of a social system that swallowed the jívaros, Angel F. Rojas criticized Mera for defending the social and political stagnation of his

---


37Such as illapa, ñusta, Bachacas, initi, etc.

38Arturo Torres-Rioseco, Ensayos sobre Literatura Latinoamericana, p. 195 (University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1953).
country; the domination of government by the Catholic church and the land-owners. 39 Mera believed the salvation of the Indians ought to be through the liberal formula of liquidating feudalism. Rojas concludes that the tranquil and amable Mera had made a circumspect work. He had served his government well, defending and sharing its ideas.

This sentimental novel, Cumandá, delights with its charm and the description of the Banda Oriente, but more important, it is the beginning of the modern indianista novel of social character. 40 The regionalistic tradition is solidly documented by Mera; his ethnographical knowledge surprising. Customs, traditions, and even the language of the jívaros and záparos live in all their primitive color. A world of romantic idealization however detracts from the general effect of the authentic base. The central personages may be literary abstractions but the novel lacks psychological dimensions. Don José Domingo Orozco, nevertheless, is a typical character of the twentieth century indianista novel, a despotic latifundista, landowner, abusing and exploiting the Indians, convinced of his right of life and death over them. 41

39 Angel F. Rojas, La novela ecuatoriana, p. 66.
40 Fernando Alegría, p. 85.
41 Ibid.
The transition to the **Indianista** novels of the twentieth century now approaches. The recovery sentiment of the greater part of the **Indianista** novels after 1890 will overcome the picturesque and beautiful "savagery" of Mera. With the discovery of native themes the once-scorned landscape becomes a subject. The definitely authentic background, the result of the **Costumbrista** vogue, is the element in these novels that interest, not the overly sentimental characters.\(^4^2\)

CHAPTER II

RECOGNITION OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM

Clorinda Matto de Turner

The early chivalric vision of the Indian in Cumanda and similar romantic novels was rudely dispelled in 1889, with the Peruvian Clorinda Matto de Turner’s novel, Aves sin nido.¹ This writing provoked a sensation and its open denunciation of the brutal enslavement of the Indians took into consideration the “mass personage” concept of the pre-dominantly Indian populated Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador. Two principal lines of approach were used by the indianista writers: some chose to see only the picturesque aspects of Indian life, while others wrote impassioned protests against the abuse of the whites. Clorinda Matto de Turner made of the indianista novel a social document, leaving far behind the sentimental indianism of Juan León Mera’s Cumanda.²

The loose and rambling plots, overly sentimental characters, and the authentic background, probably the result of

¹An Outline History of Spanish American Literature. F. S. Crofts and Co. (ed.), 1941, p. 84.
costumbrista vogue, were still there, but the plea for social justice, enlightenment and honesty in politics was the emphasis now. This about-face from romanticism to a more realistic feeling sifted from the top downward until it permeated the social, economic, moral and political structures of the Andean countries. The romantics had observed the Indian in danger of disappearing, persecuted by the cruel extermination of the "civilized", but now the pendulum swung to the weight of the Indian's unfortunate injustice.

Clorinda Matto was born on November 11, in Paullu, in the province of Calea, about twenty miles from Cuzco. Her parents were Ramón Matto and Grimanesa Usandivaras, both of Spanish heritage. Finishing the Colegio de Educados in Cuzco, she married a wealthy English land-owner, Dr. Joseph Turner, in 1872. She became known in the social and literary circles of Cuzco before their move to Tinta, where the sharp contrast between the life of the white overlords and the poor Indians was even more evident than it had been in the pueblo Paullu of her youth. Her social and literary influences in Cuzco were

---

3Mario Castro Arenas, La novela peruana y la evolucion social. Ediciones (Lima Cultura y Literad, 1964).
4Robert Bazin, Historia de la literatura americana en lengua espanola, p. 318.
5An Outline History of Spanish American Literature, p. 84.
6Mario Castro Arenas, La novel peruana y la evolucion, p. 112.
Narcisco Arestegui, the novelist, Pío Benigno Mesa, the author of Los Anales del Cuzco, the poet, Abraham Vizcarra Echave, and his wife, Adelaida Yepez de Vizcarra. She edited with Vizcarra the literary novel, El Pensamiento, and she herself founded the newspaper El Recreo, Cuzco, (1876). Trinidad Enriquez, the founder of the Society of Artesans, was Clorinda's ideal of an enthusiastic social activist. Doña Turner's own grandfather, Manuel Torres Matos, Prefecto del Cuzco, had intervened before the ecclesiastical governor of the city, and had been somewhat of a social justice advocate. These associations with Cuzco and its foremost writers were an important factor in her literary and social development. Cuzco, once the seat of Inca culture, made possible a keener appreciation of the Indian character and a greater awareness of the Indians' anguish and sufferings. Señora Turner believed that the Indians had lived far better under the Inca rule than the nineteenth century after nearly four centuries of Spanish civilization.

Clorinda moved to Lima in 1877, joined the Circulo Literari of which Manuel González Prada (1848-1918) was

---


8 Pedro Henriquez-Urena, Las Corrientes, Literaturias en la America Hispanica, p. 256.
president; published her *Aves sino nido* and dedicated it to him. Prolific writer, Dona Turner wrote *Indole* (1891), another novel censuring the provincial priests for their conduct with the serran women.  

Herencia, using the central characters of *Aves sin nido*, tried to prove that men were formed more by education than inheritance. The lives of Fernando, Lucia and Margarita, the protagonists of *Aves sin nido*, were now continued in city surroundings. *Hima-sumac* was a drama of the epoch of the conquest; *Tradiciones cuzquenas*, Arequipa, (1884), Lima (1886) followed the style of Ricardo Palma’s works on Lima. She also wrote *Bocetose a Lapiz*, a costumbrista novel of the coast, *Analogia* (grammatical questions), *Bibliografia Quechuz*, Daniel Matto, *Cenizas del Hogar*, *Boreales*, and *Viajes de Recreo* (1902). Following the death of her husband in 1887, Clorinda Turner edited *La Bolsa* in Arequipa, and later in Lima, an illustrated liberal political sheet, *Los Andes*.  

The Peruvian Mercedes Cabello de Carbonera, and Argentinian Juana Manuela Gorriti have been called direct influences on Clorinda Matto de Turner’s writings, but by far the greatest influence was Manuel Gonzalez Prada. Shortly

---


after he initiated his campaign of social protest, Aves sin nido was written, describing the social system that made of the oppressed Indian of Peru, the prisoner and victim of all kinds of rapine. Echoing González Prada's reform movement, following the War of the Pacific (1879-1884) Mrs. Turner attacked the social evils of her country without thought of the consequences. She has written that she "began early to think with seriousness of the country and of how to remove the injustices from politics." 12

The war with Chile, a rout for Peru, was a great national awakening. The Circulo Literari had to transform itself into the political party, Union Nacional, and the new group reflected the surroundings of the country, in realistic terms. At the time of the war with Chile, Doña Turner's popularity among her compatriots enabled her to carry out a successful public subscription to equip a regiment of soldiers known as the "libres de Cuzco". Peruvian González's doctrinary protest, Nuestros Indios, (1904) for the improved lot of the despised Indian was the result. Prada maintained that Peru was formed by the masses of Indians in the Banda

14 Carlos Hamilton, Historia de la Literatura Hispano- americana, p. 130.
Oriental of the cordillera as well as the criollos and foreigners. The Indian was now firmly planted in literature as a social problem.

The Indians' strong roots with their own land\textsuperscript{15} was affirmed by Clorinda Matto de Turner in her novel, Aves sin nido. The natives had become a rich source for literature, as demonstrated by Señora Turner, but we must add that her interest was one of justice, not literary source material. The Indian was a part of the Andean nation now.\textsuperscript{16} Doña Clorinda Matto de Turner inherited the bitter tone of reproach of Gonzalez Prada, and it shows in her Birds without Nest.\textsuperscript{17} The theme was recovery of the Indian, and the attack began on all the vestiges of colonial aristocracy and clerical domination.\textsuperscript{18}

\textit{Aves sin nido} was an angry denunciation of the trinity of the clergy, the gamonal (village bosses) and the governor. The authoress knew well the scene in which the Peruvian Indian lived, having seen many pueblos like the novel's Killac, in and around Cuzco. Many of the characters were taken directly

\textsuperscript{15}Luís Alberto Sánchez, \textit{Proceso y Contenido de la novela Hispanoamericana}, p. 548.

\textsuperscript{16}Luís Alberto Sánchez, \textit{Proceso}. P. 549 says flatteringly, and in \textit{Historia de la lit. amer.} same author contradicts himself and refers to him as a cruel latifundista, p. 403.

\textsuperscript{17}Aida Cometta Manzoni, \textit{Indio en la novela de America}, p. 18.

\textsuperscript{18}Luís Alberto Sánchez, \textit{Proceso y Contenido de la novela Hispano}, p. 548.
from life, and she even described her spouse.\textsuperscript{19} Her work, which now seems quite mild, awakened a civil conscience and contributed to advance a revolutionary social alarm. She says in the prologue of her work that she loved the Indians with a tender love, having observed their lives and their customs at first hand; and had to take pen in hand to say "I accuse" to the tyrants who dominated the miserable slaves. The Indians were mistreated and molested in hundreds of ways. The corruption of the masters brought dishonor and disgrace to countless Indian families.

The appearance of \textit{Aves sin nido} had extraordinary importance, for the Indian appeared as the central element. The daring with which Señora Turner presented the problem of the oppressive life of great masses of humans in Peru produced a scandal, but today Clorinda Matto de Turner is a heroine of Peru. She had courage and was not afraid to show in detail "the Indian as a human person."\textsuperscript{20} She wrote that she hoped God would destroy the Indian race if they could not have any dignity or a chance to exercise their rights.

\textsuperscript{19}Some sources say Lima.

\textsuperscript{20}Aida Cometta Manzoni, \textit{Indio en la novela de America}, p. 18.
The book paints with allcrudeness a realitywhich had never been put down on paper before, that the Indian was the equivalent of the white person, and desperately needed help out of his awful existence. *Aves sin nido* was first published in Buenos Aires in 1889, later in Spain. The second edition has been impossible to trace, although the second edition was reprinted in 1948 for the Second Congress *Indigenista Interamericano*. It was referred to as the classic work within Indian social literature for Peru by the National University of Cuzco's Gutiérrez de Quintanilla. It contained the original prologue of Emilio Gutiérrez de Quintanilla.

Opprobrium came to Clorinda Matto de Turner because of her attempts to obtain justice for the Indian. Like other pioneers, she met harsh and stupid criticism from the defenders of the status quo. Her thesis in favor of native recovery was compared to Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Clorinda's shout of protest was for Indian slaves in contrast

---


23 Mario Castro Arenas, *La novela peruana y la evolucion social*, p. 221.
to Harriet's cry for the Negro slaves of North America. We note that Clorinda had a much more difficult task, since the Indians theoretically already had liberty, thus enabling them to enjoy social and economic benefits. Mrs. Turner must be accorded an important place in Peruvian social history for her attempt to transform economic, social and racial attitudes.

The third edition of Aves sin nido was edited by Francisco Sempere, without date, published before 1908 however when the authoress had visited Spain. Viaje de recreo contained the English version of Aves sin nido, made by a Miss Hudson and published by a Mr. Thynee in London, with the title Birds without Nest.

With this one book Clorinda Matto de Turner put an end to her calm life in Peru. Although other books were written and well-received, her family only tolerated her, and she received fierce attacks and poisoned satires. She was excommunicated by the Archbishop of Lima, for her anticlericalism which was very pronounced in Aves sin nido, and her books were burned. Her anticlericalism was evident especially in the application of the clerical law of celibacy, which is a major issue in Aves sin nido. Its strict observance among Peruvian

---

clerics is still a problem today. Her attitude was undoubtedly a factor in her excommunication from the Church. *Aves sin nido* was the first real attack on the clergy and the abuses which the Church tolerated. In her introduction she wrote that perhaps the idea of marriage for the clergy will be recognized after reading the last page of her work.

She was exiled by Nicolás de Piérola at the first possible moment.25 Piérola it will be recalled was the one, who in theory, protected the Indians. The May 1880 Decreto Dictatorial established the protectorate of the Indian race, with the proviso that they could appeal to him, Piérola, for help against any outrages. He called himself the Supreme Chief of the Republic, the Protector of the Indian race.

On the thirtieth of October, 1893, in conjunction with the reclamation of the Indians of Cabana, the Congress received that the Indians legitimately owned the lands they occupied and were not obliged to pay unless the rents did not reach $100,000,000 soles annually. The Indians, however, were murdered by fire and sword, and Piérola's edict remained a dead letter.26

---


During the government of Piérola the massacre of Amantini occurred on one of the islands of Lake Titicaca. The Indians killed the gamonal, and the bloody act was punished by bombing the island. Troops killed all in sight from a line near Pomata, Chucuito, to Puno. The extermination was a warning for the rest of the provinces of Puno and Apurimac, to precipitate the conversion of the ayllus into latifundios. After 1895 the ayllus had disappeared in many provinces. The Mision Maquina sent in 1901 to Puno to investigate the causes of the Indian revolt of Chucuito and the social situation of the campesino, pointed out abuses of fines by priests, governors and village bosses, the caciques. Clorinda Matto de Turner had courageously denounced the abuses in 1889. Until her death in 1909 she lived in the Argentine republic, following the burning of her newspaper, Los Andes and the plundering of her home in Lima.

The story of Birds without Nest stresses the injustices of priest, judge and governor. The Indians of the novel are pictured in all their sadness; their excessive

27 Ibid, p. 43.
repartimientos, the usurious prices charged them when they can't pay their forced debts; the exorbitant fees for funerals which makes it necessary for them to give time and work to the priest (la mita), and the cleric's contemptuous and immoral treatment of the women of the community. The justification of the priest and town leaders is that custom has the force of law, and the Indians have always been treated this way, in order to keep them in their place. The idea is to keep their servitude of the Indians from being challenged by others.

The authoress spares no words in describing the priest's wretchedness, although she has a character say that she knew clerics who practiced charity and had a social conscience, and that the clergy could be a definite influence for good in their communities. The priest, Padre Pascual, collapses from drink and mental illness. He goes to a monastery in the sierra, regrets all, and dies after returning to drink and women. He bemoaned the fact that his own children, regalitos (little

29 Ibid, p. 42.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid, p. 43.
33 Ibid, p. 71.
34 Ibid, p. 57.
gifts of the priest) in the town did not know him.35

An Indian couple is offered help by a white couple, the Maríns, and the Indians are astonished that the whites are not afraid to help them.36 How pathetic is the Indians' suffering and what little faith they have in their recovery. The Indian couple die in a fight to save their protectors' home when it is attacked by the priest, the sub-prefect, the governor and the secretary of the juez de paz, the judge. The sub-prefect is also portrayed frankly. He had come to the village of Killac (really Tinta of Señora Turner's youth) to make money and had no scruples about obtaining it in a short time. These plotters picked an innocent Indian as a scapegoat for their assault on the Maríns; his fine was not the usual one for infractions of the law, four chickens, but four head of cattle,37 one for each of the principal authorities.38 The Indians became slaves of the governor, slaves of the cura, slaves of all.39

Aves sin nido lists abuse after abuse of the Indians: the whip,40 the cold water laxative,41 overtime not paid, wives

36Ibid, p. 44.
37Ibid, p. 171.
38Ibid, p. 218.
40Ibid, p. 216.
41Ibid, p. 194.
and daughters seduced, the pongos (Indians serving forced service in the hacienda), and always el cobrador arriving with his list and his retinue of ten or twelve mestizos at times disguised as soldiers; \(^{42}\) to use their false scales, \(^{43}\) to torture, to destroy the huts of the Indians who hide in the mountains in order not to have to pay el reparto, and to threaten to take their children to sell in Arequipa. \(^{44}\) The tata cura, as minister of Christian justice, seizes the harvest to pay for taxes; the justice of the peace charges taxes on the delinquent harvest payments, and steals the Indians' cattle. The Indian in fact, lives outside of all civil and natural law, and more convinced than ever that if independence was happiness for the criollo, then there is no possible happiness for the Indian but the peace of the sepulcher. \(^{45}\)

Margarita, whose Indian parents have died saving the Maríns' home, goes to live with them in Lima. She falls in love with Manuel, the son of the governor of Killac. Manuel has been told that the governor is not his real father, but the former cura of the village, now a bishop. He goes to study law

\(^{42}\)Ibid, p. 265.  
\(^{43}\)Ibid, p. 63.  
\(^{44}\)Ibid, p. 192.  
\(^{45}\)Ibid, p. 196.
in Lima, deciding that his thesis will be on the theme that celibacy for the clergy is wrong, as his own father could not recognize him. The novel ends with Manuel’s arriving at Margarita’s door with an engagement cross of agata only to discover that she too is a child of the bishop, Don Pedro Miranda y Claro, his own father! The two siblings are birds without a nest.

Perhaps Clorinda Matto de Turner had read Cumandá as she used the same theme in Aves sin nido that Juan León Mera did in his Cumandá. Both Carlos and Cumandá turn out to be sister and brother as do Manuel and Margarita, although the latter were only half brother and sister.

Señora Turner’s personality was judged by national critics, and foreigners, among them: Emilio Gutiérrez de Quintanilla, Luís Alberto Sánchez, Augusto Tamayo Vargas, Drs. José Gabriel Cosio and Alfredo Yepez Miranda. Carlos Hamilton called Aves sin nido a poor novel, of ordinary style and romantic bad habits. He added that its merit was in its frankness in denouncing the maltreatment of the Indians, and he called the author the founder of the literature of social recovery in Hispanoamerica. Concha Meléndez traced the Indian theme in Hispanoamerica, and called Aves sin nido the first literary expression of Indianism recovery in America, despite
its sentimental remainders and imperfections of technique. Ventura Garcia Calderón, less kind than some of Mrs. Turner's critics, wrote that she would never have been remembered if she hadn't written *Aves sin nido*. He criticized her affectation of Ricardo Palma and then gave her the most serious reproach he was able—that she seemed like a man.

She loved her country with its sixty-five percent pure Indian population. Her material presented Indians as real persons; they were exploited, persecuted, and assasinated by *patrones, gamonales, or soldiers*; their daughters and wives violated, their houses destroyed. Due to the slavery in which they lived, they were ignorant, dirty, barbaric; due to their ignorance they spoke a slang language. This sub-man of ugly and miserable surroundings is there in all his shameful reality in *Aves sin nido*. The authoress of *Aves sin nido* captured all the themes of *indigenismo*, and Luis Alberto Sánchez, competent literary critic, notes the effect of the Limena centralization which resulted in a lack of interest in the provincial Indian up until the time of *Aves sin nido*.

---

Indianism changes direction now and acquires sociologi­cal transcendency in the novel of rehabilitation, Aves sin nido. The Indian is now a social character rather than a liter­ary one. Clorinda wanted to expose the deplorable treatment of the Indians by their Peruvian landlords and she claims that her portrayal is realistically accurate. She boldly condemned the village bosses, governors and priests, but she can be criticized for poor organization of her material, a weakness seen in many Spanish American indianista novels. Aves sin nido may not have been well-written but it has great historical significance: it was the first to protest aloud the conditions that reflected the culture of Peru, the absolute oppression of the Indians. The book was based on facts, taken from real life by her own witness. The Indian was no longer regal, marvelous and impressive, but a person of economic inequality and a pitiable political reality.50 The political-social essence of Aves sin nido's author was explained by her friend, Manuel González Prada. He wrote that she was a woman emancipated from all prejudice, moved profoundly by the war of '79, and full of "informed social emotion."51

50 Ibid, p. 213.
51 Ibid, p. 248.
The social preoccupation of Mrs. Turner was the stoning of the oligarchy. She believed that rehabilitation by means of education, and the incorporation of the Indian into Peruvian nationality and culture by civil equality, was an answer to the Indian problem. The degradation of the Indians by the whites ("mistes") was lustful, repacious and arbitrary.

Clorinda penned that the novel should be the photograph that stereotypes the vices and the virtues of the town with corrective lessons for the former and praise for the latter. Aside from presenting the Indian as a human being for the first time as well as his sufferings, it is the first portrayal of the interaction of Indian life with the other components of Peruvian society. In Aves sin nido sentimental romantic passages are mixed with more realistic parts. The literary shortcomings of the novel may be overlooked for the realism of conditions actually existing in Peru, which set important precedents in the history of the Peruvian novel. Clorinda Matto de Turner gives the answers of education, more schools, fair markets, better diet, improved transportation and the interest of the Church in the Indian, but her approach is more of protest and

---

52 Ibid, p. 259.
the one of systematic development of the above ideas. At the end of the book the question is asked--who will free the Indian? The Indian is not able to do it alone.
CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF THE INDIAN PROBLEM

Alcides Arguedas

The theme of Aves sin nido of Clorinda Matto de Turner, and her strength in the face of the debates that followed, probably gave inspiration to Alcides Arguedas of Bolivia. Using the same elements and the identical intention of the Peruvian, her neighbor wrote his recovery novels on Andean Indian life.

Alcides Arguedas (1879-1946) was educated in La Paz, and studied further in Paris at the Ecole Livre des Etudes Sociales. He represented Bolivia as consul in Paris,¹ and did diplomatic service in London and several South American capitals.² Arguedas, unlike some of the other indígenista novelists, belonged to the privileged ten percent minority of the whites, who incidentally controlled all the wealth of his country. He had had the advantage of a university education, had completed the law course, and spent many years in Europe. He was a

¹Uriel Ospina, Problemas and Perspectivas de la novela americana (Bogotá; Ediciones Tercer Mundo, 1964), p. 121.

deputy, senator, and minister of agriculture as well as diplomat. His intellectual life was greatly influenced by his contact with European thinkers, and his foreign friendships and travels made him all the more aware of Bolivian problems.

A journalist, sociologist, historian and novelist, he joined Clorinda Matto de Turner as a precursor of the new Indianista literature, in which the Indian is presented as a pressing social problem. He continues the dual tradition of the Indianista novels, with a true cry of protest, and at the same time a work rich in picturesque color and native lore.

He wrote his first novel, Pisagua, "on the port conquered by the Chileans" in 1903. He himself titled it an essay, and later wrote in a signed article in a La Paz magazine that he had burned this "sin" of his youth. It was his attempt to write a novel of true national surroundings, and he included the fall of Melgarejo, the war of 1879 (War of the Pacific), and other episodes of Bolivian history.

In 1904 Arguedas published Wuata Wuara edited in Madrid, in which he presented the miserably poor life of the

---

3 An Outline History of Spanish American Literature, p. 42.

4 Carlos Hamilton, Historia de la literatura hispano-americana, p. 116.
subjugated Indian race, as well as excellent material on Indian customs and character. This short novel lacked the digressions and the interpolated material that the author put into his later Raza de bronce. In Wuata Wuara, Arguedas commented on the graft of the clergy, showed his anticlerical feeling as he saw the priests as accomplices of the blancos in their oppression of the Indians. He came from a Catholic family, although his ideas on the Church in relation to the Indian were negative. He felt the Church had missed its calling by not giving the Indians a sense of dignity. He also deplored the poor leadership and government inferiority, not the structure, but the corruption in high places.

The plot of Wuata Wuara is expanded later in his Raza de bronce which followed Vida Criolla (La Paz) in 1905. His press called Vida Criolla a psychological novel of the city. A second amended edition was published in 1911, and referred to the novel as a critique of customs. An amplification of Wuata Wuara brought more literary renown than did his historical work on Bolivia. However, in the Historia General de Bolivia, he analyzes penetratingly Bolivia's unhappy tragic century of independence, torn by anarchy and civil and foreign wars. He listed the lack of many national resources, Bolivia's isolation through absence of means of communication, the concentration of
its wealth in a few hands and its tremendous social problems, which have all conspired to make any working solution of its ills staggering.5

Raza de bronce (La Paz), 1919, was followed by a second printing in 1923, presenting the life of the Aymara Indian living on the Andean plateau. The action develops the conflict between the whites, the mestizos and the oppressed Indians. What makes the problems of the Bolivian Indian particularly poignant is that his oppressor is not only the white man, but also the mestizo. The mestizo is the Indian's natural oppressor, usually personified in the mayordomo, or overseer. The realistic impressions of the dark existence of the Aymaras begged justice for this work of redemption, but no one had dared begin. The Indian himself opposed it by distrust and conformity, and the problem was not only cultural but economic.6

Raza de bronce was preceded by his Pueblo enfermo (Barcelona, 1909), Hispanoamerican essay, which actually analyzed the Indian problem in more detail than did his novels. The sub-title of his long essay, a volume of 251 pages is


Contribución a la psicología de los pueblos hispanoamericanos, and in it, Arguedas exposed the soul of the Bolivian Indian, cholo and blanco. It is perhaps the best attempt of a Spanish American to explain the people of his country. In this work he pointed out the need for economic reform, as well as educational and military reform, assimilation of the Indian into the collective Bolivian life, ideological orientation and the use of religious institutions as a means of social reform. His social analysis of race and nationalism is treated in his *Pueblo enfermo* and *La Danza de las Sombras*.

Arguedas, revealed a profound interest in the problems of his country and of the continent in general, and with rare courage laid bare the social sores. His depressing picture of Bolivia's native masses made others well aware of Bolivia's problems. In *Raza de bronce* the surroundings and the characters are intimately tied to the same reality in which the Indian appears as sculptured in the granite of the grandiose mountains. The work is composed of two parts: the valley and the treeless plain. Nature is present in all its radiant

---


beauty. Arguedas depicted with profound reality and sensibility the imperceptibility of the Indian soul. The central character is a race, that at one time was strong and powerful, but now lived under the dominance that enslaved without pity.

In the first part of *Raza de bronce* Arguedas relates the odyssey of some altiplano natives traveling from the heights to the valley to sell their products. The journey takes them across mountain torrents and through treacherous quicksand. Arguedas tells typical native episodes and describes the Andean landscapes and the daily part the elements play in the Indians' lives. The second half of the novel is a somber exposé of the greed of the *patrones* and the veritable enslaving of the bronze race. Arguedas realized that the forgotten man, the hewer of wood and the drawer of water, was exploited, oppressed, degraded, and had absolutely no share in the wealth of his country's mines. In fact, the Indian was a slave to the ten percent of Bolivia's white population. The martyrdom of the enslaved Indian can be read in the pages of his novel.

*Raza de bronce* is the tragedy of a beautiful Indian Aymara, Wuata Wuara, killed by the white man Pantoja, the

---

9 Aida Cometta Manzoni, *Indio en la novela de America*, p. 35.
10 Ibid. p. 35.
Arguedas as almost all the writers of such novels, exaggerates the colors and the contrasts. There is no good white man and no bad Indian in his Raza de bronce. From all points of view, the Indian servitude is all-inclusive, economic, military and personal. Arguedas wanted to call attention to the Indians' miserable living conditions and the exploitation of his customs and superstitions. The Indians' vices, sufferings, fights against nature, and above all, against the whites, were detailed in Arguedas' novel.

The story of the Indian maid, Wuata Wuara, daughter of Coyllor-Zuna, is the immemorial one of the countries of heavy-populated Indian population. She was victimized by the young patron and his city friends after they saw her bathing in the lake. Her death was the result, and the Indians rebelled against the blancos on the estate and killed them in a cruel vengeance.

In the first part of the work, after the despedida of the lovers, Agiali and Wuata Wuara, Agiali leaves for the

---

12 Luis Alberto Sánchez, p. 552.
valley to help the patron's brother plant seeds. 14 The long trip is full of dangers that await the traveler unaccustomed to this rugged terrain. 15 The Indians leave in caravan, encounter numerous difficulties, and loss of life, when Manuno is killed in a tragic scene. 16 The first part also contains the colorful episode of the conder hunt. 17 In the second part the story describes the beautiful picture of the ceremony of Wuata Wuara's marriage. The scenes that follow, outside of the lovely description of the lake, are a succession of somber pictures, in which the pathetic form of the abuse and arbitrary misery with which the Indian is treated begs retribution. The martyrdom of Wuata Wuara that shows the concupiscence of the white master and lack of feeling for his treatment of her, is difficult to forget and shows the frightful life of the Bolivian Indian, subjected and exploited.

Raza de bronce is a most vigorous and human picture of the Aymara that live on the plain near Lake Titicaca. The

15 Ibid, p. 31.
16 Ibid, p. 43.
17 Alcides Arguedas, Raza de bronce, p. 60.
proper psychology of the Indian is faithfully portrayed in such scenes as Agiali’s encounter with Wuata Wuara when she returns from serving at the hacienda. She tells her sweetheart she has lost her virginity in the arms of the mayordomo, who has, by law, exercised his rights over her. Agiali loves her, according to the author.

*Raza de bronce* may be uneven in interest and narrative force, but it is typical of the *indianista* novels. It is almost a textbook on native lore and superstition. Arguedas’ painting in words of the back-drop of the Indian life, the rugged terrain, the valleys, the great lake, and the aspects of the Andes is realistic. Even today flying over the *cordillera blanca* for hour after hour, the traveler can see tiny, isolated villages clinging to craggy sides, fighting the forces of nature; the rivers, the cold climate, the treeless land, and above all, the mountains themselves.

Arguedas makes manifest the poverty and degradation of the Indian, as well as the rapacity of the clergy. *Wuata Wuara* and *Raza de bronce* established a vogue in Bolivian letters, just as they also gave rise to the "anti-arguedismo" of those who resented the championing of the underdog Indian. It is easy to imagine the furor caused by Arguedas’ works. He must have been repeatedly attacked as a sensation-monger and "Indian-lover."
Arguedas himself wrote that he had no concept capable of piercing the suffering of the Aymara, once a great race but now reduced to a sad condition. Arturo Torres-Rioseco had criticized Alcides Arguedas for not succeeding in fathoming the Indian soul. 18 Robert Bazin in his Historia de la literatura americana has acclaimed the Bolivian over the best of the Peruvian writers. 19 He adds that he perceives in him a pro-Fascist attitude and a pessimistic interpretation of his country. The Colombian Uriel Ospina believes that Arguedas had all the defects of the good Hispanoamerican narrator, including an uncontrolable tendency toward decorated prose. 20 He compares him to the later Ciro Alegria, in his descriptions of the mountains, the lake, and cold breezes that sweep the meseta. Ospina, Arguedas' strongest critic, takes him to task for being the "typical case of the Latino-Americano who scorns his country, his people and their traditions." 21 He objects to Arguedas' lengthy stays in Europe, avoiding the dark America,

18 Arturo Torres-Rioseco, La novela en la America Hispano, p. 226.
19 Robert Bazin, Historia de la literatura americana en lengua española, p. 321.
20 Uriel Ospina, Problemas y Perspectivas de la novela americana, p. 41.
21 Ibid, p. 121.
not accepting his own people, his own country, and their true life. He adds that his thoughts are at Versailles; drinking champagne and using a Madrid accent. Ospina ridicules Raza de bronce and Vida Criolla and condemns Arguedas for having been on the Simón Patino payroll for more than forty years—the Patinos who exploited the misery of the Bolivian Indian miner. Although Arguedas has been classified as one of the builders of America, Ospina says he is not.

Arguedas' Raza de bronce is Bolivia's first novel that speaks of the Indian's state of servitude. In his Historia de la Literatura, Enrique Finot, points out that Alcides Arguedas was the first to concentrate on the capital problems of national life, and the first one to speak of the reality of a Bolivian nation. Finot adds that Arguedas failed to find the core of the problem. Arguedas' documentation and his consolidation of the reaction against romantic idealization of the Indian is praised by Fernando Alegría. He notes too the first buds of the indianista literature of political-social tendency with its examples of modernista researching. This critic also compares Arguedas to the later Ciro Alegria of Peru, also a protestor. Aida Cometta Manzoni, in her Indio en la

novela de América recognizes Alcidos Arguedas' costumbrista emphasis but she rejects the words he puts into the Indians' mouths as not corresponding to their psychology.  

Carlos Hamilton agrees with Arturo Torres-Rioseco that Arguedas is an outstanding *indianista* novelist. This observer noted Arguedas travels to Spain, and his friendships with these modern critical spirits, Maetzu, Unamuno, Rafael Altamira and Díez-Canedo. He recognizes the Bolivian's treatment of the Indian as a collective subject in the *indianista* and that his life is not an adventure but one of survival. Hamilton wrote that Arguedas had helped to awaken the national conscience after the War of the Pacific.

*Raza de bronce* is a social novel of sadness, bitterness, gloominess and hardness. The Indian suffers without grumbling but it is not an exaggeration to say that the smallest thing can bring joy to his face, such as burning candles: yet when sad, it's the saddest resigned face one has ever seen. Arguedas treated his theme with unusual human sympathy, and literature discovered that there were grave problems in the

---


Bolivian and American social life. The sub-human life of the coerced Indian evolves as a native theme and this realism anticipates the later social novel. His works are cleverly executed in technical and descriptive aspects, however, done in a sober parsimony. Sadness and despair show themselves in his vigorous and human work. The presence of the countryside, of the land that is later considered inseparable from the life and mentality of the Indian, is perhaps the essential contribution of Arguedas to Indianism.

*Raza de bronce* is, without doubt, a bitter novel; a sharp book showing how a lecture of social injustice arouses to indignation. He awakens in the reader the notion of a problem of a suffering, oppressed race, anguishing but not yet conquered. He writes in a terse, limpid, almost aloof style, but underneath one feels a plea, not so much for an impersonal social justice, as for a Christian justice, a sense of brotherhood of all men.

In the last edition of *Raza de bronce*, Arguedas employs Indian names, the first edition used Spanish. In this last edition, that of 1945, the prologue advised that the condition of the three and a half million pure Indians had changed somewhat.26

Education is one of the important problems that Bolivia has attacked.\textsuperscript{27} In the 1961 constitution, education was proclaimed the highest function of the state with specific instructions on such matters as organization of the educational system; as to who is to teach and how much he is to be paid, and how much aid should be given to needy students. Children in cities must finish six years of primary schooling and in rural areas four years must be completed. Parents can be fined or imprisoned for letting their children stay out of school, and businessmen and farmers may not employ children during school hours for purposes not connected with education. School enrollment however is low and the drop-out rate high. Illiteracy, once estimated at 70\% is slowly decreasing, although about 20\% of the republic's school youngsters leave by the third year.

The hacendados have shown no enthusiasm for mass education or for educational reforms. Educated Indians would demand higher wages, or move to the cities; new schools would bring additional tax revenues for the hacendados to pay. Some parents regard education as a luxury they can't afford and their children are expected to tend the sheep, cattle and llamas as well as do other chores. Many children do not see the need for

\textsuperscript{27}Sixth Annual Review of the Alliance for Progress, prepared by the Office of Public Affairs Bureau of Inter-American Affairs. United States Department of State.
education as a large percentage of the schools have poor teachers and poor equipment. There are no audio-visual aids and newspapers and magazines are in short supply with about sixty copies of newspapers for every one thousand persons.

Language is another obstacle to education, as Quechua, Aymara and Huancha dialects as well as many other Indian dialects are spoken. Teachers prefer to work in the central school systems that have higher pay and more social life than in the remote Indian villages of the upland regions. The Indians are also suspicious of the white man who has victimized them and taken away their best lands. They fear that education will lead the young Indians away from their traditions. Money and teachers are needed for schools as one-third of the teachers in primary and secondary schools do not have teaching certificates. Practical arts are emphasized in the elementary schools and young boys learn how to read, write, do simple math and memorize; rote learning is stressed. Bolivia needs teachers trained in farming and industry, but in spite of the need, more than half of the students who have finished secondary schools have taken general courses and want to have white-collar jobs.

---

Bolivia is trying to learn more about herself; land resources are being developed and manpower reserves built up. People are being encouraged to move into the tropical lowlands; roads are being built from this pioneer land to market towns. The Indians are learning about new farming methods, new tools and new seeds. The Indians are also being taught to think of themselves first as citizens of Bolivia and second as members of a community; however, Bolivia's tropical rain forest creates gigantic problems of communication and transportation.

The recent death of Ernesto (Che) Guevara has allowed President René Barrientos Ortuno of Bolivia to turn his attention from Communist guerrillas back to the republic's economic and social programs. The power-swollen army keeps Barrientos agreeing with armed forces chief Ovando Candía that military spending must remain at the present level of 17% of the national budget, vs. 8% in previous administrations. Economic and social development slowed with the guerrillas' arrival and probably will remain slow unless Barrientos displays remarkable political acumen. Economics are also affected by the state mining corporation of Comibol which expects

---


a cash deficit of two million dollars this year, although they operated in the black last year. The world price of tin, Bolivia's chief money-maker, has almost hit production costs and if Comibol reduces the Indian work force by three thousand to cut costs, the dynamite-throwing miners will probably react as violently as they have previously when wage and personal cuts were made. Cheap transistor radios have been given to the miners by revolutionaries who want to overthrow existing governments and take over private property. Since 1952 the government has operated the tin mines because of serious trouble between the mine owners and the miners. The miners, Aymara Indians, found they were being exploited—low wages and long hours. Angry at this they frequently went on strike and smashed equipment. Government ownership has not brought peace to the mines, however.

Bolivia's land-distribution program is lagging31 but the campesinos like Barrientos because the production of cotton, sugar, wool, alpaca and vicuna has increased. Some oil is now being exported from Bolivia. Foreign aid gives Bolivia 80% of its working investment capital, and thus the country is not yet on a sound economic and political footing.

31The Crisis of the War on Hunger, p. 17.
The indianista theme takes a new tack in the 1930's and Ecuador's Jorge Icaza is representative of this group of militant novelists. They devoted themselves to exposing the horrendous aspects of Indian slavery, often with more righteous indignation than literary artistry. If the nineteenth century novelists accepted the ideal of progress as the common objective of all men, of all classes of society, the twentieth century writers concluded that positive science and the new techniques had benefited only a few. Ecuadorian writers demanded a better life for the Indians and thus helped to awaken the national consciousness. The country's newspapermen created a program for eradicating illiteracy in the hope of raising their country's social and economic level.¹

These young writers have exhibited a decided lack of interest in style, grammar and choice of words. Their literary

guides have been Dostoievski, Proust, Gorki, John dos Passos, and Hemingway, but this group has its own vigor and originality. This literary movement had its origin in Guayaquil, the principal seaport of Ecuador, and centered around Aguilera Malta, Enrique Gil Gilbert, Fernando Chavez, Gallegos Lara, and Jose Icaza, among others. Their books presented a real and frightful reality; for example the Putumayo scandal, brought to light by Sir Roger Casement, gave the news to the world that the rubber promoters in this region had conducted one of the bloodiest massacres of the twentieth century. The horrible cruelties were denounced by mankind: hunting the Indians like rabbits in the forest, ejecting them from their lands, killing them or forcing them to kill one another in the most barbarous manner. Because of such events, we can understand why these novelists treated their subjects with outrageous brutality. They present not the individual but the social group and in conflict, in discordance with its surrounding medium or in rebellion against the status quo. The novels of ethnic and social protest were black and crude, and the writers aimed not at aesthetic but political and sociological goals.

3 Ibid.
Jorge Icaza, deeply concerned with events and conditions, is possibly the best representative of this new type of **indianista** writing. His *Huasipungo*, vulgar but rich in human sentiment, is typical of the whole genre; shocking, sanguinary, dark as the night. It is one of the best known novels of Indian theme, and in it Icaza emphasizes his belief that the Indians' degradation comes from conditions forced upon them by sadistic overlords and not from inborn depravity. Many of his fellow writers joined Icaza in being rampant Marxists, and not afraid to show "hot indignation and biting indictment of those in power." The tendency in these writers is to consider the story **minor** in comparison with its social significance. A lack of plot does not divert the reader's attention, but characters are types and not individuals. All either defend power and authority or are in rebellion against it. The struggle against Nature and overlords or class distinctions, brings conflicts with government, Church, economic conditions, slavery, and social conventions of sex, class or race. In all of Icaza's novels, the peones are in rebellion against their masters. In

---


Huasipungo and En las Calles, Indian laborers struggle endlessly against their employers. This "school" of writers may lack harmony between subject matter and poetic expression but its writing reflects the environment and times. The "school" is the mirror of the masses, the theme of the social struggle of the Indian. The writers live in close contact with the man of their time, are consistent in their regionalism, and are factual, avoiding all fantasy. The thoroughly native works use obscene language and dialectical arguments in their forceful portrayals of social injustice. This Indianista novel is revolutionary and "plants the problem of the emancipation of the man of the earth, to be freed from feudalism."6

This Indianista novel is the novel of property: the man and his understanding of the concept of property.7 The Indianista literature uses the themes of communal Indian lands, the ever-growing mestizo land capitalism, the exploitation of the autochthonous men and women not as racial individuals but as field and mine workers; the gamonal system that takes the Indian's lands and sells it to foreign capital, the Church protector of the centralist government and the politician and, the

7Fernando Alegría, "Una Clasificacion de la novela Hispano-Americana contemporanea" from La novela Iberoamerica, (ed.) Arturo Torres-Rioseco (Alburquerque; University of New Mexico Press, 1952), p. 64.
newspaper of the intellectuals in reform politics and economics destined to recover the Indian.

Jorge Icaza was born in Quito in 1906 on June 10th. His secondary education at a Jesuit school preceded his study of medicine at the University of Ecuador. His father's death forced him to leave his studies in order to make a living. After various jobs, among them one of senior public official of the Treasury of the province of Pichincha, he went to work in the national theater. He played a juvenile lead in the Compañía Dramática Nacional, and met the actress Marina Moncayo, whom he later married.

He wrote El intruso (1929), La comedia sin nombre (1930), Por el viejo (1931), ¿Cual es? (1931), Como ellos quieron (1932), and Sin sentido (1932) among other plays.\(^8\) One of his plays, Icaza told Jefferson Rea Spell, raised such a furor that the authorities closed the theater.\(^9\) Icaza did not succeed in having the ban removed, but was asked to be the censor of the national theater. He refused the appointment and decided that his play-writing days in Quito had ended.\(^10\)

---

\(^8\) Fernando Alegría, Breve Historia, p. 236.

\(^9\) Jefferson Rea Spall, Contemporary Spanish American Fiction, p. 246.

Jorge Icaza turned to fiction. In 1933 at twenty-eight years of age, he published a series of short stories, *Barro de la Sierra*. The stories told of the injustices which Icaza had observed first hand on some of the great estates near Quito. The wrongs committed by the Church and the hacendados against the indigenous population were treated in the six narratives of the book; "Cachorros", "Sed", "Exodo", "Interpretación", "Mala Pata" and "Desorientación". They portrayed the abuses that the Indian woman suffers, and in consequence her family; as well as a problem that is typical of all of the indianista literature: the unjust distribution of water among the latifundistas and campesinos. "Mala Pata" was a political story dramatizing the persecution that follows an organization of a workers' syndicate. In "Interpretación", a psychological study of a personality is started, later to continue in Icaza's novel, *Cholos*. "Desorientación" concerned birth control. Following this writing, the state, that is, the large land-owners and the industrial producers, opposed his work since they needed a continuous supply of "slaves" for their projects. Aida Cometta

Manzoni, an authority on the Indian in the novel before 1889, has called these stories of intense social emotion, a revolutionary proposition, full of the anguish of the Ecuadorian Indian. The base of sordidness of the Indian life is a horrible vision of the world in which the Indian vegetates. The vision is drawn with all possible realism, and shows that the author’s intention is not towards creating an artistic work but rather a denunciation. The pen is keen, full of bitter irony and has a profound intent of psychoanalysis guided to show a social defect, racial prejudice.

Jorge Icaza gained international fame with his **Huasipungo**, published in 1934, and translated into French, English, Russian, Chinese, Italian, Portuguese, German, Czech and Arabic. The sad story, **En las Calles** was published in 1935, was followed by **Choles** in 1936, and **Flagelo**, a comedy in 1938. **Media vida deslumbrados** was written in 1939 and **Huirapamuschas** in 1948. **Seis veces la muerte**, a collection of six shockingly violent tales of death, appeared in 1952.

In 1937 Icaza bought a book store that had been founded in Quito by, the then exiled Peruvian politician Genaro Carnero, and the Ecuadorian poet Pedro Jorge Vera. The

---

shop exists today on the Calle Mejía, facing la Pensiòn Dapsilla, with a sign: "Agencia General de Publicaciones". He has changed neither the site nor its appearance. He has remained there since his days at the Treasury, living, writing and selling books. However, Icaza has traveled extensively; a trip to the United States came following an invitation by Nelson Rockefeller, then Franklin D. Roosevelt's Coordinator of Interamerican Affairs. Following this appointment La Casa de la Cultura Ecuatoriana sent him to Lima to organize an Ecuadorian week as a good will gesture toward Peru.

Icaza was interested in his country and his activities were many and varied. He had founded with Alexander Carrión and other writers, el Sindicato de Escritores y Artistas de Ecuador of which he was Secretary General. Their publishing house, Atahualpa, began with an edition of Jorge Icaza's Huasipungo. Icaza felt drawn to politics now, in order to do something more for the Indian and for his country. He had considered himself a socialist but began a party of open peronista inclination, Concentracion de Fuerzas Populares (CFP), to be directed by the demagogue Carlos Guevara Moreno. This party has changed its mind on several occasions and it is difficult to trace all their stands, but in the 1960 Presidential

13Angel F. Rojas, La novela ecuatoriana, p. 219.
elections they were aligned with the Communists. Icaza went to Russia and China with other Ecuadorian artists, and contracted for book editions. He has visited Fidel Castro in Havana and other Communists in China. Recently his party declared itself anti-Communist. Icaza himself has been an unsuccessful candidate for municipal councilman several times.

His Huasipungo depicts the massacre of the natives and the burning of their huts at the orders of the gringo promoters. In his Historia de la Literatura Hispanoamericana, Carlos Hamilton declares that Huasipungo has the force of insult, and this serves a political party, the Communist. 14 "The Indian remains the prisoner of Marxist theory, without the possibility of a free will," is Arturo Torres-Rioseco's comment on Huasipungo. 15 He adds that the characters in the novel are forgotten and the reader only remembers an injustice, a violence, a violation of the elemental rights of man. Luis Alberto Sánchez maintains that Icaza's novels have been developed into socialistic propaganda for his Russian readers. 16

14 Carlos Hamilton, Historia de la Literatura Hispanoamericana, p. 131.

15 Arturo Torres-Rioseco, Aspects of Spanish American Literature, p. 80.

Agreeing with him, Angel F. Rojas, declares that the purpose of Huasipungo is to show the socialistic party's investigation of national life. 17 This pure Indian voice, Huasipungo, reflects the principles of Haya de la Torre, and the politics of the A.P.R.A., according to Uriel Ospina. 18

Icaza is interested in all of his country's social horizon, although he is the defender of the Indian of the sierra, he relates to the mestizo, and to the man of the coast, in their milieu of the cruel landscape and the oppressive geography. His cold fury is never meant to be a work of art, but a proclaiming of the enslaving of the Indian. 19 Icaza's descriptions of the suffering Indians deal with "abominable latifundistas, miserable peones from the coast and the sierra, dirty cities, disasters and epidemics. 20 The Indian moves mechanically with a pathetic acceptance of his animal-like destiny. The Indian family doesn't understand its enemy, and is not able to oppose it without receiving a savage punishment. 21

17 Angel F. Rojas, La novela ecuatoriana, p. 7.
18 Uriel Ospina, Problemas y Perspectivas de la novela americana, p. 105.
19 Robert Bazin, Historia de la literatura americana, p. 341.
21 Fernando Alegría, Breve Historia de la novela Hispano-americana, p. 246.
The virtual servitude of the Indian from all points of view is the central theme of Icaza, and Pedro Henriquez-Urena's *Las Corrientes Literarias en la América Hispanica* points out that the military and economic are the main problems. Critics contend that Icaza overreaches himself with morbidity, ultra-realism and incessant superlatives. Luís Alberto Sánchez believes that Icaza's reader's sensibilities may become dull to the outrages because of his incessant passages of tortuous episodes. Sánchez feels, however, that Icaza's true revolutionary work is a valiant cry for the social and economic betterment of that human phalanx of outcasts. Icaza describes the poor wounded beast in his *Huasipungo* and his fight against the cruel, cowardly, abusive amo. This sad history presents the same Andean theme: the rich criollo and the foreign imperialists exploiting the Indian. Icaza paints with frightful realism the life of the peón and the means by which the white utilizes and subjects him. Aida Cometta Manzoni calls *Huasipungo* a photograph of the desperate reality of the Indian trying to conserve his miserable dwelling and his small

---


parcel of land that the latifundista seeks. \(^{25}\) She calls this "tragedy of hunger", one that will make a savage outcry when it expresses itself in rebellion. \(^{26}\) Several authors have compared the North American _Grapes of Wrath_ by John Steinbeck with Jorge Icaza's _Huasipungo_. Jefferson Rea Spell contends there are differences between the Joads and the family of Andrés Chiliquinga, but that they do share an eviction from the land always considered their own, to which any legal proof would be impossible. \(^{27}\) _Huasipungo_'s essence does breathe tragedy because the life of the Indian from Ecuador is a steady stream of needs, miseries, disgraces, sufferings, humiliations and ridicules.

_Huasipungo_'s theme is the expose of the relations in Ecuador between the poverty-stricken, starving Indian families and the more fortunate Caucasian property-holding class. Don Alfonso Pereira of Quito exhibits the character of the latter. \(^{28}\) Pereira's debts lead him to decide to build a road between his estate and the capital. This is in order to sell

\(^{25}\) Aida Cometta Manzoni, _Indio en la novela de America_, p. 53.

\(^{26}\) Ibid.

\(^{27}\) Jefferson Rea Spell, _Contemporary Spanish American Fiction_, p. 240.

the land to a Mr. Chapy, a North American saw-mill capitalist. On a visit to his hacienda Pereira has the Indians carry him around on their shoulders, and he spurs, brands and whips them. He plots with the priest, taita cura, to force the Indians to help build the highway. The entire Indian village on the ranch is tied in some way to Pereira's lands and the villagers live like hogs in their tiny, filthy huts, the huasipungos. Icaza's description of the native man's condition is telling: the Indian ever has the "shiver of malarial fever, the languor of chronic anemia, the itch of an incurable mange, or . . . the grimace of a stomach pang."

Andrés Chiliquinga, an incarnation of his race, and his young wife Cunshi, are victims of the violation and humiliation by the priest, Pereira, and the cholo mayordomo Pelicarpo who "know the Indians' laziness, and brazenness and how to cure these ailments by the whip, the club and the bullet." 

\[29\] Ibid, p. 8.  
\[30\] Ibid, p. 12.  
\[31\] Ibid, p. 15.  
\[33\] Ibid, p. 30.  
\[34\] Ibid, p. 18.  
\[35\] Ibid, p. 37.  
\[36\] Ibid, p. 34.  
is separated from his family and sent to cut wood on a distant part of the estate; Cunshi is ordered to the main house to wet nurse the master's young child. Andrés with bitter despair battles the drizzle, the marsh, the cold, his malaria, his fatigue, and his prolonged separation from his longa (Cunshi) and his guagua (baby). The inhuman treatment in the wood-cutting camp appalls the reader. Andrés is crippled by the "curandero's" treatment of an ax wound: he is whipped, kicked, and the gash treated with worm-infested mud.

Pereira decides now to organize a "minga", a custom dating from Inca time, to get his highway built by the "inferior race." The "minga" adopted by the Spanish to construct roads and public buildings, consisted originally of a great many people who came together to work without pay on a project of general community interest. The cura offered a thousand days' indulgence for every meter of the road built.

Don Alfonso, the priest, and the police isolated the Indians in the plaza and of course "nobody refused to go to such a patriotic and Christian labor." The Indians hoped the great

38 Ibid, p. 42.
39 Ibid, p. 44.
40 Ibid, p. 56.
41 Ibid, p. 66.
42 Ibid, p. 88.
43 Ibid, p. 91.
labor would bring bread and progress to their area, but maybe
they "know in their heart's blood, with a kind of sullen resig-
nation, that the patrón, the priest, and the sheriff ruled
their destiny and that, at the end of it all, their entire
work and sacrifice would remain in the hands of these three." 44

Pereira, an engineer, overseers, and a great body of Indians,
among them Andrés and Cunshi, begin the perilous "minga". The
engineer's safer but time-consuming plan is refused by Pereira,
and many of the Indians perish in the quagmires of the
swamps. 45 Many of the mingueros become ill, for they spend
hours in the cold swamp waters, 46 have no protection from the
chilling rains, and are whipped if they show any signs of
fleeing. The cheap guarapo liquor, and the cockfights help the
Indians to forget their cramps, fear, and malaria!

The Indians that die are not mourned by Pereira, since
"the Indians cost me very little," 47 and he can't remember if
they were five or ten sucres apiece. The road completed,

44 Ibid, p. 97.
46 Ibid, p. 112.
Pereira is extolled as a patriot by the press of the country. Praises are printed for the heroic feat of the landowner, the engineer, the parish priest, the sheriff, One-Eyed Rodriguez, the cholo workers, but never the Indians. 48 Ecuador's resources would be developed by opening up areas to foreign capital, and roads like Don Alfonso Pereira's would be a step forward. The entrepreneur of immaculate virtue now turns to harvesting his abundant grain crop, and the Indians look forward to the traditional chugchi, the inferior grain gleanings. 49

The patron now decides that despite the fact that the year had been good, and he had ordered more fields than usual sown, he will discontinue this custom. 50 The cholo mayordomo warns against taking away the Indians' right, but Alfonso says he will beat them, or do anything he wants with them as they are his Indians. This direct threat to the starved Indians, whose winter had been usually lean due to the flood caused by the patron's deliberate lack of care, alarms the overseer. He sees the men bent over the "earth with that slowness that bites into kidneys already mouldering with fatigue." 51 The workers are

48 Ibid, p. 129.
49 Ibid, p. 142.
50 Ibid, p. 144.
51 Ibid.
given extra drink to help them work and to let them forget that, the one and one-half bushels of corn (socorros) or barley with the huasipungos loaned to them and ten cents a day wages, was their annual pay for their labor. Naturally the Indians never saw the money. It went for the hereditary debt of all living huasipungueros for the tribute for the Virgin's feast days or the Saints', and for the taita cura's other money-making ventures; fighting cocks, trucks to rent and a bus.

Icaza now returns to the story of Andres, Cunshi and their son, who like the other villagers are desperately hungry. The angered Indians go to beg grain from Pereira, and then as if someone had "opened the floodgate of the physical needs of the sullen dark mass, all suddenly found their tongue to tell of the hunger of their babies, the sickness of their old people, the increasing boldness of the Indian girls, the tragedy of the devastated huasipungos, of the endurable misery of the present one." The patron threatens the crowd with his whip and the priest calls to heaven to send punishment on the ungrateful mob. Dogs are turned loose and Don Alfonso sends to Quito for troops because the mayordomo warns that the

---

54 Ibid, p. 150.
starving Indians could be dangerous, despite the fact that the patron possessed the power of life and death on his hacienda. The author's powerful words about his people paint a picture of their terrible hunger: a hunger of the stomach, the throat, the salvia, the teeth, the tongue; hunger of the lips, the eyes, the fingers . . . he describes the wailing children, the begging, the withered breast that gives blood not milk, and the young girls forced into prostitution for food.56

Icaza continues the story of Andrés and Cunshi in their miserable hut, weak from lack of sustenance. The child never has enough to eat, but then some must be saved for his working father. Andrés steals some rotted meat from a diseased ox and their need vaults rapidly over the fact that the ill-smelling meat has maggots, and the shiny sponginess of decayed meat.57 The family becomes violently ill but Andrés and the boy recovered. Andrés watches Cunshi die in their poorly-lit and evil-smelling hovel. With a choking bitterness filling his breast, Andrés asks to borrow money for a decent funeral for his wife. The amo says no because he stole his ox, and disobeyed by eating meat. The Indians were not allowed to get

---

56 Ibid., p. 154.
57 Ibid., p. 156.
used to the taste of meat, because they would want it all the time. Andrés goes to see the priest to find out how much the Mass responsories and burial will be. The priest tells him that he will have absolute liberty to choose a place for Cunshi, but then the first rows are closer to the high altar, and in the back rows one can hear the wailing, and smell the putrefaction of the condemned souls. The thirty-five sucre fee forces Andrés to steal and sell a cow. An investigation traces the deed to him, and he is strung up by his thumbs for a public whipping in the patio of the main house. The Indian is beaten by the sheriff with Don Alfonso Pereira presiding over the "court of justice" from the porch of his home. Andrés' son is also beaten because he bites the sheriff who is flogging his father.

North American capitalists appear at the property and Mr. Chapy decides to buy the Pereira lands on condition that the Indians leave. The Ecuadorian Indian has a profound attachment for his huasipungo, despite its filth, and the surprise attack of the hired outlaws of Pereira is a traumatic

---

60 Ibid, p. 192.
61 Ibid.
experience for the community. The natives beg to be allowed to take out their goat skins, the old ponchos and the earthenware pots before their homes are burned. This is denied them and the machete blows smash the thatched roofs; the adobe walls are broken by crowbar and pick before the Indians' eyes. As the Indian walked among the "sticks, the straws, the heaps of earth that still stank of the misery of his bedding, of his food, his sweat, of his drunken orgies, and of his lice," he becomes crazed with grief and with a throbbing in his being, he anguishes over what to do and where to go. How could he uproot himself from the piece of earth which up until a few moments ago he had believed to be his own?

Andrés brought all the Indians together with a horn; to rebel against the unjust destruction of their huts and the taking away of their land. The cry of "Nucanchi huasipungoo!" (our huasipungos belong to us), "rolled down the hill, knifed through the mountain, whirled across the valley, and ultimately pierced the heart of the group of houses of the hacienda." The Indians led by Andrés free the huasicamas

63 Ibid, p. 201.
64 Ibid, p. 205.
65 Ibid, p. 207.
and the pongos (Indian caretakers of the manor house and Indians who work about the manor house without pay) but the bullets of the government authorities quell the rebellion. Women, children and their men are shot in cold blood, but later in the capital, Pereira was praised as a national leader who built a road to help his country, and get rid of the Indian bandits for the peace of Christian homes.\textsuperscript{66} Andrés and his son are slaughtered but the Quechua words "Nucanchi huasipungo" become an outcry for all ambitions, a shout of rebellion, tragedy but hope too, even though the Indian uprising results in the death of hundreds of desperate and degraded natives.

Jorge Icaza's \textit{En las Calles} was published in 1935 and won the Premio Nacional de Novela de Ecuador that year. If \textit{Huasipungo} is the compendium of the suffering Indian, \textit{En las Calles}, comprises the bitter tragedy of an incipient democracy. The rebellion that ends \textit{Huasipungo} with the cry of "Nucanchi huasipungo"\textsuperscript{67} is the revolutionary shout of the Indian struggle. The protagonists of \textit{En las Calles} are Indians of \textit{Huasipungo} who have abandoned the field to seek in the city the end of their economic problems. The characters again do


not have any individuality but are symbols of their class, and again the theme of taking advantage of the Ecuadorian Indians by their white masters, is the central one. This second novel is the story of the rise to power of an industrialist whose wealth, earned for him by the Indians on his country estate, enables him to enter industry. Hopelessly, the Indians move from the patron's estate to work in his factory, but conditions are even more squalid, if conceivable. En las Calles has the ever-present brutality and foulness of his first novel. It is difficult to find a trace of human decency on any page. Even the humor is low, and the tone of both books is one of hopelessness, wretchedness, degradation and sub-human existence. Icaza attempts to portray the miserable existence of the Indian realistically.

Literary critic, Arturo Torres-Rioseco calls this book a social novel from a social pen, a fight between capital and labor in a barbaric farce of democracy. The Indian in the streets (En las calles) fights to serve interests he does not always understand. Icaza portrayed the life of the Ecuadorian police as no one before ever had; he penciled its corruptness,

---

68 Arturo Torres-Rioseco, La novela en la America, p. 235.
its problems, its bitterness, and its sordid existence.\textsuperscript{69} \textit{En las Calles} also contain a paragraph from Ecuador's history: the battle of four days that occurred in 1932 serves Icaza for the conclusion of the novel.\textsuperscript{70} The \textit{gamonal} Luis Antonio Urrestas constructs a dam which cuts off the life-line water of the Indian community. The Indians appeal to the President of the Republic, but since the latter is a friend of Luis nothing happens. Icaza's obsession to convince by horror is used in both of his first novels; the personalities are crushed and hardened, and are but figures of clay in tragic gesture. The reader begins to think that the Indians of Jorge Icaza are beings without souls, lacking expression and even a human source.

Jorge Icaza, recognized for his excellent dialogue, details the tension growing between Don Luis and the Indians. Troops are sent to intimidate the Indians and the leader is arrested in Chaguarpata. Yanez, a shoemaker, flees to Quito after his wife has been killed by soldiers, and takes a neighbor, Francisco, with him. The modern shops make diffi-

\textsuperscript{69}Arturo Luis Monguio, "Reflexiones sobre un aspecto de la novela Hispanoamericana actual" in \textit{La Novela Ibero-Americana} (ed.) Arthur Torres-Rioseco (Albuquerque; New Mexico Press, p. 131).

\textsuperscript{70}Ibid.
cult competition for the country man; he becomes a drunkard and his family goes hungry. Dolores, his daughter, goes to live with Francisco, now a policeman. Their union is not for love but to help each other keep from starving. An attempt to unionize the hatmakers involves Francisco, who is beaten and shot. Don Luís has the leader arrested, pronounced a leper, and has the man, sick with influenza not leprosy bound on top of a box car, where he dies before reaching the leper colony.

Don Luís, who like Pereira in Huasipungo, always manages to further his own interests under the guise of progress for civilization, climaxes his career with his candidacy for the Presidency as a choice of the land-owning faction. The Indians of the hacienda are brought, unwillingly, to Quito to celebrate his honor. It occurs to Urrestas that if they were fired upon while parading, it would be a perfect excuse for a dictatorship; his. Francisco's final plea is for them all to cease being tools of their oppressors, the vicious practitioners of those always in power in Ecuador.

This novel of the masses uses Francisco as a symbol. He suffers resignedly from a series of needs, humiliations, and oppressions, as does all the pueblo. Francisco falls in a pool of his own blood after being utilized ignominiously by the latifundista and the political caudillo. Francisco glimpses in his last moments the true cause of all his problems and
shouts to his companions not to shoot themselves but to aim
at them!

This is a national work, not needing to copy another,
but authentic in its own veracity. Icaza has found by looking
at his own surrounding that he has been able to truly see the
campesino life of his country. The country-side scenes affect
the reader profoundly and shock sensibilities by their sad
truth.

Icaza's third novel, Choles, printed in 1937 in Quito,
represents another step in the interpretation of the Indian
problem. The protagonist is a mestizo, son of the white patron
and a dark Indian girl, and his hybridity is evident from
childhood. In Choles, the awakening of the Indian character
begins.71 He paints the ruined latifundista, the capitalist
and the intellectual whom misery transforms into social agita-
tors. El cholo is a piece of clay in the hands of the power-
ful, but a hero after the revolution, while the Indian remains
the martyr.72 In Cholos, the gamonal will appear in the abu-
sive and cruel cacique, Braulio Peñafiel, as a degenerate type.
The cholo, Alberto Montoya, wavers between one attitude and

71Fernando Alegria, "Una Clasificacion de la novela
Hispano-americana contemporanea," p. 64.

72Ibid.
another because he is a victim of a complex mixture of Indian and white. The gaucho Leopoldo understands the Indian José Changa because they are united in a common misfortune. This book seems more sober and dispassionate than Icaza's previous two. It is diffuse, and lacks coordination of the varied topics. Much of the story concerns Braulio Peñafiel and Alberto Montoya, both of whom have land close to the Indian village of San Isidro near the capital.73

Braulio, poor white who loses his Indians to his neighbor Montoya, symbolizes for Icaza the disintegration of Ecuadorian aristocratic society based on Spanish blood. Alberto Montoya exemplifies the new mestizo aristocracy. It is interesting to watch him change as his wealth increases. This half-breed had treated the Indians with a certain amount of consideration, was anti-clerical, and had no family pride. He now becomes more conservative, marries his mistress, moves to Quito and leaves the estate to be managed by overseers. The central interest shifts to the Indian whom Montoya leaves in charge. Guagche, natural son of Don Braulio and Consuelo, fleeces his fellow Indians and blames one of them, José Changa, for a murder he himself committed. Guagcho's attitude changes

73 Luis Alberto Sánchez, Proceso y Contenido de la novela Hispano-americana, p. 557.
completely when Braulio legitimate school-teacher son remarks that an Indian is a human being. Guagche, determined to right his wrongs, risks himself to free José and places him in safety.

Jorge Icaza's fourth novel, Media Vida Deslumbrados, was written in 1939 and Huairapamuschas in 1948. The latter is a story of the huairapamuschas, or "sons of the wind" (devil), miserable and wretched, who are the twin sons of the white señor and the longa, Juana. The Indian later marries the native Pablo Tixí, and the boys are considered Indians, although their looks reflect the white blood of their father. Tixí hates them because they are cholo, and the twins feel intensely this hatred. They kill their step-father and flee. In Huairapamuschas, Jorge Icaza shows technical improvement as a writer of novels, but his theme is repetitious.

Seis veces la muerte is another negative picture of Ecuadorian living, the bureaucracy. Icaza has presented all the crudity of the Indian's debased life again, but now he uses a psychological searching into the intimate life of the

---

74 Jorge Icaza, Huairapamuschas (Quito; Casa de la Cultura ecuatoriano, 1948), p. 99.
75 Ibid, p. 98.
76 Ibid, p. 99.
Indian; his passions and his reactions. This panorama bares the soul of his characters and the vision of the Indian is complete. He has shown the external aspect of the geography, the world in which he acts and moves, and the social conditions under which he suffers the role of outcast. In these stories the proper feeling of the Indian's reality is seen from within. Icaza shows the complexity of the Indian's inferiority that activates him with a fear that his Indian ancestors discovered. Icaza gives the complete story of the Indian, deformed by the conditions of utilization in which he tries to live.77

The novel, El Chulla Romero y Flores of 1959 preceded Viejos cuentos in 1960. The former dwells on the inferiority complex of the half-breed of mixed white and Indian blood. This man imagines himself superior because of his father's blood and degraded through his mother's Indian heritage. It takes him a long time to realize that he "belongs" to his own cholo group, and that happiness or material success will not come from trying to force himself into the white world. Icaza was criticized for writing in this novel, that the cholos in Quito are also a marked class. The choice for the cholo is to try to battle up the social ladder to a world not really his, or to have a better chance for peace of mind living in harmony with

77Aida Cometta Manzoni, Indio en la novela, p. 57.
his own. Racial prejudice does still exist in these Andean countries, such as Ecuador, and this is the theme in Icaza's *El Chulla Romero y Flores*.

Jorge Icaza is fundamentally absorbed in the Indians of Ecuador and of all of his work he will be remembered more as a reformer than as a novelist. His success as a writer lies not at all in his plots or characterizations but in his vigorous, cryptic style that details every scene of the Indian pains. Readers are aroused by his own spirit of indignation, his brutal frankness, a total lack of idealism, and the use of words that up to the time of his writing seemed prohibited by social usage. From the standpoint of technique, Icaza disregards form, and his almost plotless novels consist in a series of scenes loosely connected, but abundantly detailed. Icaza's greatest fault as a novelist may be his lack of interest in people as individuals, letting his characters represent the psychology of their class, not flesh and blood. He has not been concerned with creating the singular personality, but his hero is the mass man, the symbol of a social class. Andrés Chiliquinga is the patient subject, and it is not his personality that interests the author to characterize or distinguish, but the awful deeds. His dialogues tell what this dedicated writer wants to say.
Reformer Icaza wanted to pinpoint the self-centered existence which forgets others' sorrows and his plea is for equilibrium, a harmony. He sees incredible conquests of space, but still the Indians live like animals. He wants all to feel the essential and existential truth of the Hispano-American countries. His goal, to distinguish for all, where lies the reactionary falseness of the political bosses, landowners, military leaders, and oligarchs wearing masks of heroism, holiness, knowledge and sacrifice. He believes the authentic, creative, cultural and emotional force could be found in the great city and rural majorities. Icaza has said that since the moment of conception of Huasipungo, he has sought to stimulate the courage and hopes of the Indian. He has found common suffering in the coastal peoples, the cholos, the peones and in all the humble peasants of the Ecuadorian land. He demands understanding, love, and communication for those who earn their corn digging in the soil.

In 1959 Icaza stated that unhappily the effect of his most famous novel, Huasipungo had not helped. It was an illusion that his book with its tremendous protest had helped to redeem the huasipunguero by making known his sorrow, his loneliness and his despair. He added that the Indian in Ecuador lives in the same situation and Huasipungo's message is still absolutely pertinent even now. Icaza stated that
Huasipungo had been his great literary success but also his bitterest disappointment, something like the shattering of a dream. Icaza tells us that among his sources for this novel had been his own witness, experiences after the first world war, some ideas from the Russian Revolution, and especially scientific advances of the epoch. Communication, agricultural machines, and better seeds would help the Indians. Rebellion has to be wisely led and directed or it will surely fail.

Icaza manifests versimilitude by accurately mirroring the beliefs, customs, and even the Quechuan speech of his characters. Personal profit and prestige were not this writer's aim, but deep compassion for social, political and economic injustices impelled him to write Huasipungo. Most of the serious indianista novelists use their material as fearful weapons in a continuous warfare against the misery of the lower classes. Through the eyes of Icaza the Indians and half-breeds share the inability to base their actions and their thoughts on anything beyond their immediate problems or personal needs. There is no unity among the downtrodden even though they are the majority of the country. Astute cholos obtaining petty power, try quickly to forget their Indian heritage.

Icaza's government officials and latifundistas have their price, as do the petty officials, but bribes are beyond the emaciated purse of the Indian. We note that Icaza's
Indians are human too, and far from models of virtue themselves. Their situation ethics force them to petty crimes to stay alive and their women are often forced into prostitution or concubinage to exist. This is not the noble savage of the romanticists but the real Andean native in all his unwashed affliction. They suffer from malnutrition, superstition, ignorance and alcoholism. The latter is a common vice in Ecuador, and the Indian knows that alcoholism may cost him his livelihood or his life in a drunken fight. The illiterate peon drinks to forget his distress, pain, hunger, unemployment, and finds himself sunk even deeper in the depths of despair, if not crime. Icaza would view these vices as consequences arising from centuries of exploitation.

In comparing the first indianista novel, Cumandá by Juan León Mera of the nineteenth century, with Jorge Icaza's Huasipungo of the twentieth, we note the change from a romantic, pastoral or caballeresca work to the later indianista novel of proletarian disposition. Huasipungo is the antithesis of Cumandá, and more than literature, Huasipungo is a denunciation, a red flag of protest, called forth from anguish, to all men that still believe in justice, goodness, and in the ideals of Christianism and civilization.

As in the novels of Peruvian Ciro Alegría a few years later, Icaza finds the Indians in a constant battle that readers
their social sense. Icaza is essentially a propagandist, a reformer, an artist, an intellectual who is using his words to improve the socio-economic state of the lower classes. Is not the first step toward making Icaza's country well the recognition that it is sick? Icaza is hopeful that by exposing the poisonous sores of his country a cure can be found. He is much more than just pro-Indian. He is pro-justice, equal justice, and for opportunity for all of his countrymen. Ecuador's needed social revolution might not be a bloody revolution, but there is no doubt that it must entail a drastic change in the social and political thinking of the governing minority.

Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia's problems of geography, education, agriculture, land reform and social structure,78 are issues for the Indianista novelist of the present and the future. Each of these three republics are alike in many ways; each has high land in the central Andes; each has low land on one or both sides of the mountains with more people living on the highlands than the lowlands. Since Inca days the Indians have planted corn, wheat, fruit, and potatoes in the terraces cut into the mountainsides. In Peru for example, more than two-thirds of the population live in the cool highlands, and of

78José A. Mora, "Hacia una nueva America Latina, Progreso Marzo/abril del 1968, p. 66."
the 10,000,000 people more than half are Indians. Transportation and communication are made difficult by the rough terrain and many Indian villages have no contact with the rest of the country.

Agriculture and land reforms are important problems. A small number of the hacendados own most of the farmland, and they want their accustomed slow, easy-going way of life to continue. They like their large estates to go along smoothly; they do not care too much about large profits. The hacendados' farming costs very little, and the Indians are poorly paid. They plant, tend and harvest the crops and the hacendado seldom bothers to learn about productivity per acre, per worker or per man-hour employed. Modern machinery and tools are not bought and as a result crop yields are low per acre and per worker.

The hacendados have actually held back the economic development of their countries using the above practices; land, the most important of resources, has lain idle in spite of the demand in the cities for more agricultural products. The hacendados concentrate on cash crops which can be sold on the national and world markets, their countries having to import foodstuffs at heavy costs.79 This is most unfortunate

with most of the population engaged in agriculture.

Immense haciendas have been handed down in the same families for generations, and the hacendados have never paid a cent. With so few people controlling so much land, it has been impossible for small farmers to get land. Government has bought land from the hacendados, resold it in small parcels to lower-class families but the results have not always been what the state had hoped for. Some hacendados sold poor land to the government at high prices, and in turn the over-priced lands were sold to unsuspecting dirt farmers who, because the poor land did not produce, were not able to make the high mortgage payments. The natives lost their land with the improvements they had made on it, and the improved lands were bought back by the hacendados who profited by both sales. The determination of the hacendados to protect their interests at all costs has aroused anger. Good farmland has now been distributed to the Indians, and limits have been placed on the amount of land that can be bought up. An untrained farmer cannot be changed by giving him land; he needs agricultural training and loans. Ownership of land is the first step of many which can result in better use of farmland.

The old, land-owning group forms the backbone of the upper class. This exclusive circle usually tends to intermarry. The hacendados have a firm grip on the wealth and
power in the country and their children grow up in a world of privilege; many attend foreign universities studying arts and humanities and neglecting lectures on crop yields. During their school vacations, they learn to manage the ancestral estate; the hacienda is practically a self-sufficient community: residence, fortress, bank, hospital, school and a cemetery. The Indians regarded the haciendas as a cornerstone of their security but it blocks social change. The hacendados fear political movements that call for the breakup of the estates, and to protect their vast holdings have organized powerful groups that help elect members to the national congress and try to prevent legislation that would hurt the landed class. In the past few years the hacendados have gone into politics, accepted posts in the national ministries, and invested their profits from their land in banks, industries and railroads.

The lower class in Ecuador is not powerful; most cannot read or write and don't know about political issues. Not one of these people in a thousand is familiar with the teachings of Simón Bolívar or San Martin, or for that matter, Fidel

---

A strong sense of class exists, and a person born into a lower class family is very different from a person born into an upper class. They differ not only in money and possessions, but also in the way they regard their government and in their hopes for the future. Dress is an important sign of a social status as is language; millions speak nothing but an Indian language dialect. The plateau Indians dress in heavy scarves and cloaks, speak an ancient Indian language, and live in thick-walled houses without windows. They can't read or write any language. Their average-life expectancy is thirty-two years. They chew coca leaves mixed with lime to help them endure the conditions of their lives, and this practice dulls their minds and effects their bodies. Coca is the great assuager of sorrow. Men from the lowlands sell this native plant, as it flourishes in the heat of low elevations on the eastern slope of the Andes. The leaf gives relief from hunger, cold or weariness, the cocaine drug deadening the nerves. Few of the people heat their houses, because wood and other fuels are scarce, and it is even difficult to find enough firewood for cooking meals.

Programs of health, sanitation, agriculture and education are in progress. Specialists from foreign countries

---

81 Lynn Smith, "Hunger and Antiquated Farming in Latin America," The Catholic World, p. 268.
have been invited to work with these countries. To promote good health, for example, water supply and sewage systems are being built. Ditches along side of the road that have furnished water for cooking and dishwashing, bathing, and irrigating, are now being replaced by a water supply that has to eliminate the spread of many diseases. Campaigns against disease are being instigated and health workers are being sent to the mountain villages. They teach mothers how to care for children, and develop good health habits. Hospitals and training schools for nurses have been started. The country is building schools, buying school equipment and training more teachers. So at present only four or five Indians out of ten are able to read. The farmers are receiving help in agriculture. At special farms, agricultural experts show the Indians the benefits of crop rotation. They demonstrate that cultivating a slope on the contour prevents erosion. Loans for seed, fertilizer, plows and hand tools are being arranged.

In Ecuador a six-year program to completely rehabilitate the 280 miles Guayaquil-Quito link of the State Railway Enterprise has begun at a cost of some $20 million dollars. Contract awards totaling $13 million will buy locomotives,

---

freight cars and a pipe line from Duran to Quito, with the addition of freight wagons, gondolas, cattle cars and platform cars being supplied by the builder.

A sense of dignity of the human person has been imposing itself more and more deeply on the consciousness of contemporary man. If the dignity of man consists in the responsible use of his freedom, a human social revolution is evolving. Among the structures that have hindered the Indian have been the legal system and the Church, either of which at one time could have exerted its influence for the betterment of the Indian. They haven't but will have to change. A role in the Church now might be that of a dissenter, not claiming some divine charisma which guarantees correctness; nor a more sincere dedication than those who work through the ordinary structures of the Church, but rather as a group which asks for the rights of a "loyal opposition" who protest any smugness or compromise by these in the majority position in the Church. Several bishops in neighboring Brazil and Argentine in the last year gave excellent witness to a new social position, only to be forced to resign, however.


If the classic, textbook illustration of the situation which breeds revolution is exploitation and frustration without hope, then the first ones to storm the barricades are those who feel they have nothing to lose but their lives. If we take men's birthright from them, and force them to give their lives to what is not a form of making but a form of dull, half-human doing, then they will be unhappy, and sooner or later there will be explosion. They will enlarge themselves by force and in hatred and blindly not knowing what they want, we shall have crimes of cruelty and violence, economic unrest, political horrors of nationalism, hatred and war. The line between hunger and anger is a thin line, and the anger begins a ferment.

Progress can never occur in a land where almost all the wealth is owned by only a few people. Great wealth and great poverty exist side by side. Try to get some freedom to do something; you're just as free as you have money to pay for it! If a man owns a little property, that property is him, it's part of him, and it's like him. It gives him a greater sense of his own reality then he has ever known in all his life. The great weariness you see in the Indians' eyes isn't just because the law is being used against the Indians, but they're working away at the Indians' spirit, trying to break it. They're working on the Indians' decency but the
native men's hostility will unite and weld them together; and the little towns will group and arm as though to repel an invader; squads with pick handles, shotguns, guarding the world against their own people, citizen rebellion against authority to correct abuses and get freedom. Revolutions can only be quelled or channelled, they cannot be "administered" by merely tinkering with the bureaucratic machinery.

To the Indians the world is a bad dog that will bite if one gives it a chance. The Indian woman looks sixty but she isn't yet forty years old. Even the Indian children look old, and it is difficult to guess their age. An Indian woman can be a farm worker who labors all day in the field, all day means sunrise to sunset. Afterward, she'll go back with her family to spend the night in a one-room tin shack that many people in other countries wouldn't let their dog live in. Nothing seems to be gained by her suffering and deprivation; she never gets ahead financially. The small amount of money taken in is already owed for back groceries. She needs a lot of medical care she'll never receive. Her husband is just as much a beast of burden as she. Their children seem already to be caught in the same vicious circle of exploitation. There is still a vision a humanity inside her mind and soul, although her body is broken and her face is wasted. Should she nourish any glimmer of hope, or would it be better for
her to erase hope from her consciousness? What happens to a society which takes such a toll in human life and doesn't care? The family is hungry, and these persons have no opportunity to break out of the grinding, desperate life in which they have been prisoners since birth. The alteration of political and economic facts will help these victims.

The Indians know they are fully citizens yet don't have authentic freedom or full civil rights. They don't want any part of white values, which in the light of their experience, seems to be sick and corrupt. Now they don't believe either white promises or white declarations about love and justice. Must they continue to be broken in body, mind or spirit; must they be imprisoned or jailed for their cause? Must they see loved ones martyrs themselves? A ten year old boy sees his father struck in the face, and sees that his father cannot defend himself without being attacked by a group of white men, so just stands there silently and takes it. The young child is silent, too, for a moment, then starts to cry. He screams in a terrible shame and fear, because his father has suffered pain.

The indianista novel will continue to be written for the equality, justice and humanity of the Indian life. Will the Indian of tomorrow have a chance at education; will a school, if built, be hopelessly overcrowded? Will it be a place that breeds despair? Will their life change the
beautiful children's happy smiles into angry sullen masks they'll have to wear for the rest of their lives? Will their faces become hard and their hearts cynical? Have they got a chance? Will they know anything about dignity or love or health? The Indian is beaten down by every force and circumstance around him, but he stays human. He doesn't become a category or a thing for the sake of making it. He gambles making it on his resolution to be a man. No joy but only the will to die; darkness of futility, mere existence, and the horror of casual human cruelty is their lot. The problem is to build a world where every man, no matter what his race, religion or nationality can live a fully human life, freed from servitude imposed on him by other men or by natural forces over which he has not sufficient control; a world where freedom is not an empty word and where the poor man Lazarus can sit down at the same table with the rich man. This demands great generosity, much sacrifice and unceasing effort on the part of the rich man, the hacendado. Is he prepared to support out of his own pocket, works and undertakings organized in favor of the most destitute? Is he ready to pay higher taxes so that the public authorities can intensify their efforts in favor of development? Is he ready to pay a higher price for imported goods so that the producer may be more justly rewarded? When will the hacendado recognize that the
sufferer exists, not only as a unit in a collection, or a specimen from the social category labeled "unfortunate," but as a man, exactly as the haciendo is? It is indispensable for the haciendo to look at the Indian in a certain way; be attentive to the Indian in his moment of supreme need. Attentiveness is opening up of oneself to the reality of other men and of the universe—human needs. No matter what material coercion is brought to bear against them, the individual and community must confront and refuse to participate in hypocrisy and propaganda, commercialized ugliness and meaningless work, brute destruction of the physical or spiritual lives of others, or whatever else gives the lie to the dignity and destiny of every man.

Hacendados must re-invest money they've made in their own countries and not sent it off to a Swiss bank. Social consciousness is essentially part of ourselves as persons and humans. Human degradation will not continue to be either universal or inevitable. Whether the revolution will be bloody or characterized by rapid, democratic social change is the question. The Communists really do not have to offer anything of their own. All they have to do is to identify themselves with the complaints and miseries of the local people. The indianistas speak for the potential of the humble man: the man handicapped by poverty, ignorance, lack of opportunity,
frustration and disease. The novelist makes literature an expression of life around us: he paints the vacant face of humanity betrayed, the poor people of the world over who patiently and humbly live in the midst of sorrow and frustration and drudgery. The novelist teaches us, generation after generation, that each man is his brother's keeper. Fundamental equality among all peoples and all classes is the novelist's objective, and to point out the obstacles to the attainment of this equality. The basic fact is that the social and economic changes must come to the Indians. There is a choice. The struggle to build a new society, such as Cuba's, is being studied by the novelists today. No doubt as they continue to use the novel as a political and social weapon, they will realistically evaluate peaceful reform and evolution versus armed struggle. Nations like Ecuador will grow in strength and effectiveness as more and more people begin to take part in the conscious economic, social and political processes that the *indianista* writers have demanded.
CHAPTER V

THE INFLUENCE OF THE INDIANISTA NOVEL

Enrique López Albújar

Ciro Alegria

Between 1930 and 1937 literature experimented more than ever. An intense social preoccupation appeared at the root of this change begun in 1931. Many returned emigrées used prose and poetry to debate philosophical, political and social problems. A civil poetry made up of phrases of proclamation and combat mottos oriented the movement.¹

Enrique López Albújar (1872-1966) wanted to "socialize" natural narrative themes that reflected the social drama and the eclectic aspirations of society's progress.² This regional narrative chose the sierras for his background; the high, cold sierras of the Andes where Indian life predominates. His Cuentos andinos (1920) and his Nuevos cuentos andinos (1937), were situated in the region around the Andean city of Huanuco, in more or less the central part of the country. Although López Albújar was one of the first

¹Estuardo Nuñez, La Literatura peruana en el siglo XX (1900-1965), p. 126.
Indianistas, he wrote short stories and only one novel, Matalaché, which concerned the tragic relationship between the son (Matalaché) of a female Negro slave and, presumably, a white aristocratic landowner; and María Luz, the daughter of white aristocratic landowners. The whole thrust of López Albujar, like other Indianistas, is one of social protest, and his name has to be mentioned in any list of Indianistas. Episodes in his novel such as the disinheritance of Matalaché, the lack of recourse in redressing the injustice of the overseer, the chattel aspect of the slaves in their sale, the callousness of the musical contest, and the life and death power of the master over the slave, underlines the injustices of the Peruvian social system. López Albujar shares with Clorinda Matto de Turner and her Aves sin nido, and Abraham Valdelomar (1889-1919), the distinction of having begun the regional trend in Peruvian letters. In 1935, Ciro Alegria's La serpiente de oro, the first great work to depict Peruvian jungle life, continued this initiation. López Albujar died in 1966, having lived a long life in a suburb of Lima. He left a vast number of written words to his credit.

3Ibid, p. 255.
4Ciro Alegria, El mundo es ancho y ajeno (Madrid; Aguilar, 1959), p. 335.
Ciro Alegria was also a regionalist and the dominant figure in contemporary Peruvian literature until his death in 1967. His seat in the Senate is presently awaiting an election. This social commentator was born in 1910 in Cajamarca, in the sierra of the north. In his youth he absorbed the Indian country life which forms the essence of his novels.5 His secondary studies and university education were undertaken in Trujillo near the sea coast, although his writings were of the sierra not the coast. He worked as a foreman in the construction of a main highway and a bridge before he entered the political arena.

While still a student in his native city, Alegria became a leader in the Aprista movement. This party, Alianza Popular Revolucionara Americana, was organized in 1930 by an altruistic group of intellectuals headed by Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre. Greater social justice for the Indians was one of the main aims.6 The government began to crush the organization immediately and in December of 1931, Alegria was jailed. He was freed by his Aprista friends in the July of 1932 by means of an armed revolt. After the bloody uprising

5 Fernando Alegria, Breve Historia de la Novela Hispano­americana, p. 252.
6 Ibid.
was suppressed, Alegria was again made a political prisoner, condemned to ten years in prison, and sent to the Lima penitentiary. This passage from his later El mundo es ancho y ajeno has real meaning:

As they talked the sun shone upon their backs and warmed their flesh, loosening up the rusty hinges of their bones. Prison teaches many things, among them, what a bit of sun means, or a little light filtering through a clouded sky. Light, the friend of life and of the precious gift of sight. When one comes out of the darkness one realizes all that the eyes have been denied. In the light there is form and color, therefore the world is all its existence, even though for the moment it is hedged about by the black barriers of walls.7

In 1933 President Oscar Benavides granted freedom to Alegria, whose health had been seriously impaired while in prison.8 He had lived under the dictatorships of Augusto B. Leguía and Sanchez Cerro. Economically, the country had been converted into a semi-colonial nation of European and North-American enterprises. These imperial enterprises counted on the protection of the criollo authorities who did not hesitate to quiet the public protests by means of violent repressions. The political and economic situation of Peru has always aggravated the nation's enormous social problem of the Indians. The natives saw their lands submitted to

7 Ciro Alegria, El mundo es ancho y ajeno, p. 335.
8 Fernando Alegria, Breve Historia de la Novela Hispano-americana, p. 252.
a shameful exploitation. That the Indians, illiterate, superstitious and fatalistic, needed a new life was the cry from the intellectual sectors of Peru. This consciousness of individual was now awakened at the end of the 19th century. This consciousness of individual responsibility gave birth to a movement for improvement of Indian life, that although liberal and positive in the beginning, oriented itself later toward Marxist socialism.

Essayists, poets, novelists, and leading politicians grouped each other into organizations for combat, as well as for cultural publications. The Grupo Amauta, the most celebrated, was directed by José Carlos Mariátegui (1819-1930) whose Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana gave the revolutionary thought of the time. From the political agitation provided by the leaders, especially among the students and the working classes, came the Aprista party, which was to play a dominant role in the fight against the dictatorships of Leguía, Sánchez Cerro and Benavides. The basic proposition was the social, political and economic improvement of the Indian; defense of the national riches against the advance of the imperialistic interests, and a government of authentic popular representation.

Leaving prison, Ciro Alegría took refuge in Santiago, Chile, and wrote three prize-winning novels: La serpiente de
oro (1935), Los perros hambrientos (1938) and El mundo es ancho y ajeno (1941). With the resumption of his Aprista activities, Alegria was soon in trouble once more, and with other Peruvian intellectuals was forced into exile. He had published in various periodicals in Peru in the early thirties, and his verse and short stories had attracted attention. His international fame however was built on his novels, his interpretation of sierra and forest life.

La serpiente de oro was Alegria's first novel on the life of the Indians of the selva and valley that bordered on the river Maranon. Carlos Hamilton has called it the most beautiful Peruvian novel of an artistic pastoral, tragic drama.9 Its structure suggests the earlier La voragine,10 with two or three characters giving unity but little continuing connection. Alegria knew well his sources of the sierra and the selva of Peru, and the length and breadth of the Maranon, the upper course of the Amazon river. He had known the Indians that he wrote about, their miseries and sicknesses, their fights against inhospitable nature, and

9 Carlos Hamilton, Historia de la Literatura Hispano-americana, p. 129.

10 Arturo Torres-Rioseco, La novela en la America Hispana, p. 228.
their superstitions: "Whoever expects to get anything from the mountains must be prepared to suffer." 11 Alegria had become a social fighter, using his pen to picture the tremendous drama of the hard, cruel mountain, jungle and river. 12 When the native was faced by primeval savage nature he unconsciously came to imitate her, and there came a moment when even carrion was good, if it could prolong life in its struggles with a medium that admitted of no bargaining or evasion. 13 Alegria's observation of reality gave definitive form to the existence of the regional novel. He presented the human conflict on the summit of the mountain: the choles versus their dependency upon the river Marañon as a life-line. His sincerity and emotion paint indelible characters whose existence unites itself to the central character of the work, the river, the golden serpent. 14 In the jungle it rained hard every month of the year. It is one thing to imagine it, but another to have been there among the wild animals, the insects, the snakes and the never-ending rain. Worst of all

12 Ibid, p. 65.
13 Ibid, p. 72.
14 Ibid, p. 65.
is the jungle itself, all that overpowering vegetation, always
that tormenting confusion, that inextricable mingling of
autothonic tree trunks, branches, brush and leaves holding
one back, catching, tripping and imprisoning.\textsuperscript{15}

La serpiente de oro, probably begun in prison, won the
first prize of the Society of Writers of Chile\textsuperscript{16} in a con­
test fostered by the Nascimento publishing house in
Santiago.\textsuperscript{17} The cholos of the Marañón valley are an impor­
tant element here; the Indians are mere passersby in the val­
ley. The author has written that a harmony exists between
man and nature, and in the valley the native chatters away
like the river and the trees, but as he ascends the uplands
he becomes taciturn like them.\textsuperscript{18} Few of the Indians accli­
mimatize themselves, and their melancholy is represented in
their music. Their songs show their mistrust of the whites
and the cholos, and voice the tribulation that wells from the
deepest springs of the long-suffering patient race, that is a
victim of slavery and of the heartless Andes.\textsuperscript{19} The ferry­
man's songs seem like supplications of religious prayers.

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid, p. 72.
\textsuperscript{16}Estuardo Nuñez, La Literatura peruana en el siglo XX
1900-1965, p. 125.
\textsuperscript{17}Jefferson Rea Spell, Contemporary Spanish-American
Fiction, p. 225.
\textsuperscript{18}Estuardo Nuñez, La Literatura peruana en el siglo XX
1900-1965, p. 125.
\textsuperscript{19}Jefferson Rea Spell, Contemporary Spanish-American
Fiction, p. 225.
The protagonist river is the monster Colluasch with a hundred hands waiting to devour the unwary. The author himself, using the name of Lucas Vicas, a raftsman (balsero) of the Marañon, tells the story. The omnipresent river isolates the natives far from commerce and culture, and its undertone accompanies all the music of the valley. This is the valley where man's life depends on the water, where the years are counted by the floods, and here even love is the song of the river. Their fiestas are dedicated to the river: in the plaza of the pueblo of Shicún, the songs and dances are offered to the water. Two men use their machetes to cut poles to cross the river, walking on another rope. The river is brave but the men are braver!

Ciro Alegría used episodes he had heard from infancy, in his La serpiente de oro. He has told us that when he was exiled in Chile, he found himself in a modern country compared to his own Peru. Strengthened by his social preoccupation he first wrote about his own vital experiences. No one would publish the novel about the river Marañón and its balseros until it had a minimum of two hundred pages and a title change. The powerful river regulated lives and

---

20 Mario Castro Arenas, La novela peruana y la evolución social, Lima, 1964, p. 220.
haciendas, alternately beneficially or maliciously. Trying to get the better of the river means death sometimes for the men, but they don't flee from it, "because we are men and we have to live on the terms life offers." The raftsmen reverenced the river as the great giver of life and death. As the lightening flash and the puma, the Marañón imposed its presence as a terrible deity: "God was the river." The selva competed with the river to master the native man: the fruitful selva that could be agriculturally successful. Avocado, guava, mango, and orange trees, balsa and sycamore, and of course, the deceiving coca, grow well. Coca plays a major part in the Indian's life; they question the bitter leaf, ask counsel from it, and it helps them through the bad hours as well as the good. The young engineer in La serpiente de oro begins his journey declaring that the coca stupifies the Indians and keeps them in a daze. He felt that a big part of the Indian and half-breed psychology came from their condition . . . years and years of sapping their vitality.

22 Ibid, p. 102.
23 Ibid, p. 212.
24 Ibid, p. 98.
25 Ibid, p. 76.
use a lime gourd as the natives did, before his return jour­
ney began. The selva is prodigious and productive with its
tortuous marshy jungle and poisonous reptiles waiting in the
fruit trees.

The central story is united with the river and the
selva: old Matías and his sons Rogelio and Arturo are daring
balseros of the Maranón. A young engineer from Lima, Oswaldo
Martínez de Calderón, making a trip through the jungle; looks
down on the yellow river from the Cerro Campana and calls it
a yellow snake (La serpiente de oro). Finding gold, he plans
to return to the capital, form a company, get dredges and
mine the metal. He will call it La serpiente de oro. He
tells old Matías that his people will make money selling
their yucca and bananas and working as miners. The native
leader answers that the idea sounds good, "unless you mean
that people would have to work all the time."26

Organizing his company he would show by example, con­
structive purpose, to the men of Lima who were always hanging
around trying to get government jobs, and spending their
lives bent over a desk or bowing and scraping to their
political chiefs. Through "pull" a friend was holding down a
job in Lima as a commissioner of a road which did not exist.27

26Ibid., p. 203.
27Ibid., p. 204.
Fables, legends and various episodes are incorporated into the novel in the characteristic narrative style of *Alegria*. The story-teller tells the adventures of Rogelio and Arturo; Arturo kidnap\ing his future wife Lucinda at a fiesta; the history of the "utoses", Indians sick with facial ulcers common in the Andes, and all the travelers and traders that risk their lives to try to cross the roaring waters of the Marañón.

Many in the Indian community make their living as raftsmen or ferrymen, balseros. They are fearless, hard-drinking men who pit their skill against the sand-bars, rocks and whirlpools. The brothers make a trip on their raft to Shicún on the Marañón and disagree on the time to return in order to pass a dangerous spot in the river by daylight. 'Rogelio has his way, the raft runs aground, and Rogelio plunging into the river to push it off, is sucked down to his death by a whirlpool. Arturo remains with the raft until a flood comes, and he is able to float home, sick and utterly exhausted.

The narrative returns finally to the engineer who dreams of his fortune, but has fallen in love with a village.

---

girl; likes the people of the community, and has learned to use their coca. The decision to return to Lima or stay is never made because he is bitten by a small, deadly snake while forging for gold on the sandbanks of the Marañón.

The social environment of the people of Calemar, their attitude toward life and certain civil institutions, their manners and customs are described well in Alegría's novel on the golden serpent. One chapter tells of the yearly visit of the priest for baptisms, marriages and masses for the dead. The priest is portrayed as an overbearing, thieving drunkard, charging the poor villagers much more than they can afford to pay, using rum and ale to consecrate, and saying one Mass while charging for twenty.29 Another story is of a priest who lets a woman that he had been living with, be burned as a witch in order to take a new woman.30

Fights often occurred at their fiestas but on the whole the people were peaceful and good at heart. They expressed contempt however, with those who were responsible for law and order. One of the reasons was the way the villagers were treated by those in authority. One incident

---

29Ibid, p. 128.
involved the state troopers who had planned to set fire to the canebreak, until the people begged them not to, since they would have no way to thatch their houses.31

Not only did they shield their own people, but often gave aid and shelter to strangers pursued by the law. Alegria records the life of an outlaw who though innocent was pursued by the state. Bullets were his defense, because "the poor man is respected only when he can kill."32

In the face of constant danger, their attitude is philosophical. Old Matias sums up their viewpoint: pure goodness is not to be found in this world, and we don't run away from the river even though we curse it, because we are men and have to take life as it comes and for us life is the river.33 The novel ends with Matias telling his people not to be discouraged with their hard life although the years are like a slow whirlpool which grows deeper, dragging people into it.34 We were born here, he tells them and we feel in our veins the powerful, magnificent surge of the earth. He points to the cliffs of the river that rise to the heaven "to point out to the Christian of this valley where life is really life."35

---

31 Ibid, p. 58.
32 Ibid, p. 221.
33 Ibid, p. 231.
34 Ibid, p. 240.
The humanization of the country-side in Alegría's *La serpiente de oro* demonstrates the fusion of the cholos and the river in a great allegorical image. The metaphysical plan has abundant examples throughout the book; the symbiosis of nature and man is perfect, man and river proceed in a perpetual, flowing parade. On the social plane, Alegría has revealed the unfortunate, heroic existence of the native of the lower selva of the Marañón. The balseros in their abandoned orphanage represent to Alegría the crisis of centralism, or better the indifference of the official centralistic facade to the desolate vitality of the provinces.

Ciro Alegría renders tribute in his portrayal of the engineer Martínez de Calderón to all the pioneers who throughout the length of the republic have died trying to incorporate the selva into the nation's wealth. Old Matías alludes to others who would have developed their country in a bold, rebellious and solitary intention. With his *La serpiente de oro*, Alegría begins to structure the message of the Andean men and the selva forged in the incessant combat against nature and an unjust economic, legal and social order.

36 Mario Castro Arenas, *La novela peruana y la evolución social*, p. 221.
La serpiente de oro, Alegria’s first novel gives a realistic picture of Andean customs with the river Marañón as the hero. Man succumbs in the search for unity with nature. Ciro Alegria, in contrast with Jorge Icaza has a human quality. If there exists idealization, perhaps it is that the characters are more "campesinos" than "indios". In any case a more advanced step of civilization than Jorge Icaza’s Huasipungo is realized in Ciro Alegria. Alegria tried to paint the society of his time from within the exploited campesinos, Icaza had done the exterior picture.

Alegria’s second novel, Los perros hambrientos, 1938, was written in a sanatorium where he went to recover from his prison experiences. The book won the second prize offered by the Zig Zag Company. The author again uses northern Peru as the area setting, however, not the tropical region but the cordillera highlands where droughts often peril both man and beast. Again Alegria pictures a rural community, but these people make their livelihood from sheep and grain and depend upon these for food.

---

37 Fernando Alegria, Breve Historia de la Novela Hispanoamericana, p. 254.

In *Los perros hambrientos* as in *La serpiente de oro* the narrative centers on the combat between the natural forces: river, Ande, drought and cold northerly wind, versus the man of the interior. Man emerges quaking.\(^{39}\) Carlos Hamilton counts this book’s message, “the etched plate of fatalism that hangs on the Indian village.”\(^{40}\) Luís Alberto Sánchez in his *Historia de la literatura americana* puts *Los perros hambrientos* among the best South American books for its animation, intensity and style.\(^{41}\) The regional backdrop of the high, inhospitable and miserable meseta overlooks the nucleus that is the Indian community, that affirms its will to live, fighting against the cold and the drought.

This novel carries terrible sarcasm; the title, The Hungry Dogs, refers to the men of the Andes as well as the animals.\(^{42}\) The miseries of both men and dogs are united in time of hunger in the same sorrow and similar anguish.\(^{43}\) The dogs acquire human dimension; they love and hate as men; they suffer, feel deeply, fight, offend, survive and die as do the

---


\(^{40}\) Carlos Hamilton, *Historia de la literatura Hispanoamericana*, p. 117.

\(^{41}\) Luís Alberto Sánchez, *Historia de la literatura americana*, desde los orígenes hasta nuestros tiempos (Santiago; Ediciones ercilla), p. 599.


shepherds and robbers. This literary humanization of the animals produces a forceful epic as dogs and humans are whipped by the blizzard and the drought, devasted by hunger and the tempest. Alegria is as familiar with highlands as he is with the lowlands; he interweaves the existence of the campesinos, pastores, comuneros, hacendados, and the bandeleros, who people the vast Andean solitude.

As in his La serpiente de oro, Alegria uses a family to typically show the community; Simón Robles, Juana his wife, Antuca, a twelve year old girl who herds the sheep, a grown girl, Vicenta and a son Timeteo. The dogs are just as important as the family: Wanka, Gueso, Zambo, Pellejo, and Sharpa, who help Antuca guard the sheep. In a series of biographies of the dogs, the recipients of the pups play important roles in the story. One goes to Robles' son-in-law, Mateo Tampu, whose small son Damían names his pup Manu. Cipriano Ramirez, wealthy owner of a large estate secures one for his young son. Two bandits, Julián and Blas Celedón lassos Gueso when he is guarding the sheep with Antuca.

44 Mario Castro Arenas, La novela peruana, p. 225.
45 Ciro Alegria, Los perros hambrientos, p. 45.
46 Ibid.
become bandits when they killed a hacendado for mistreating them. The law couldn't capture them so had them poisoned.

Mateo Tampu is carried off by government officers for military service. They appear one day at his home, accuse him of avoiding military service and knock down his wife when she protests. The dog Manu is left to take care of Martina, Mateo's wife, Damian and the sheep. The author protests here the social injustice in the treatment of Mateo; the seizure for military service. Another incident concerns a typical Alegria government official, the sub-prefect. In Los perros hambrientos, Ciro Alegria shows us Don Fernandez Frias y Cortes, who "pardons" a part of the fines that he inflicts on his subordinates, scorning the men of the coast as well as the miserable villagers. When the mail from Lima brings news that could menace his position he plans an attack on the bandits of his region, putting his Lt. Chump in charge of the forces of order. The cunning Don Fernandez will direct the operations without leaving the office.

Perhaps the most impressive feature of Los perros hambrientos is the account of the drought that brings great

---

suffering to all of the community. This tragic phenomenon of the Andes breathes thirst and death. The interminable black nights, the parched, dusty days show in the eyes of men and animals. These tremble in agony while their eyes throb with life which does not wish to end. Wheat had failed to sprout, or withered in the fields for lack of water, and there is no food for man or animal. The starving Indians who had been expelled from their lands by the legal trickery of a neighboring landowner, find a leader in the Indian Mashe. This comunero (jointholder of a tenure of land) Mashe resembles the stoic Rosendo Maqui of Alegria's later El mundo es ancho y ajeno. He implores a little barley for his people from Don Cipriano but to no avail. Cipriano lets the Indians settle on his lands in order to use their manpower. The Indians pray to their Lady of Carmen for rain while both men and beast slowly starve: hunger takes away good humor so the religious procession is mournful. Robles' son Timotee loves Jacinta but has nothing to feed her or himself. The infant Damian dies of hunger while Martina has gone in search of food. The dog loyally takes the body to the grandfather's house, guarding it against the rapacious condors who greedily attack the body. The desperate Indians after pleading with

49 Mario Castro Arenas, La novela peruana, p. 226.
Cipriano without result, try to storm the landowner's full barn, but they are driven off by armed men.

Rain comes and the dogs return to guard the few remaining sheep. The author writes that the dogs comprehend that the rain has put an end to their expulsion from the sheepfold, now they return no longer an enemy of men. Alegria shows his concern in the tenderness of the human transfiguration of the dogs. The stolen Gueso sees his old sheepfold one day, and hesitates about staying with the Celedón brothers: but the dog decides that his destiny lies side by side with the brave men whose life is one of chance and violence. Gueso later dies, shot by the gendarmes pursuing his masters.

In Alegria's *Los perros hambrientos* we see a more advanced step in the *indianista* novel than we found in Jorge Icaza and his *Huasipungo*. Alegria, an original interpreter, leaves the violence, the psychological primitivism and the local dialectism of Jorge Icaza's Ecuadorian school, and his narration describes without hurry, and lyrically, the folkloric richness, traditions and stories opening tenderly into the Indian soul. If the Ecuadorian excelled in expressive force, Alegria is more profound, lighting the Indians' faces,

---

actions and words with a philosophical dimension. Ciro Alegria's effusiveness and human sympathy are qualities of universal signification.51

Los perros hambrientos contains embryonic elements from the social viewpoint as does Alegria's last novel, El mundo es ancho y ajeno. There are the comuneros evicted from the old communal land by the hacendado in Los perros hambrientos and this theme is followed step by step in El mundo es ancho y ajeno. Los perros hambrientos is more original than either La serpiente de oro or El mundo es ancho y ajeno but the latter is more famous.

The expulsion on the part of the influential landowner, of a community of Indians from lands they had worked in common and according to socialistic principles is a minor incident in Los perros hambrientos. A similar case becomes the main issue in Alegria's next novel, El mundo es ancho y ajeno. The family of Matias, the raftsmen in La serpiente de oro and Robles, the dog-breeder in Los perros hambrientos, share in the struggle against nature, overlord, and class distinctions. Communal landholding Indians are engaged in struggles with overlords in El mundo es ancho y ajeno.

51Fernando Alegria, Breve Historia, p. 253.
Alegria uses a certain sequence; *La serpiente de oro* mentions hungry dogs, and this becomes the title for his second book, *Los perros hambrientos*. In his second novel, the author places the name of his third, *The World is Broad and Alien*.52

His third book contains the "best sociological elements", and is constructed from the author's personal remembrances.53 His *El mundo es ancho y ajeno*, was awarded first prize in the Latin American novel contest sponsored by Farrar and Rinehart of New York, and organized by the Oficina de Asuntos Interamericans of the United States.54 There have been different language translations, French, German, Dutch, Portuguese and Russian; in English the version is translated *Broad and Alien is the World*.55 Alegria was in exile in Chile when the Pan American Union convoked a continental novel contest for the best hispanoamerican novel. A group of Chilean friends made a collection for a six-month "scholarship" for Ciro, enabling him to write a book for the contest.56 *El mundo es ancho y ajeno* is considered Alegria's

masterpiece, and the sum of the Indianista novel. Arturo Torres-Rioseco has written that no serious study of the Indianista novel would be complete without Huasipungo of Jorge Icaza and El mundo es ancho y ajeno of Ciro Alegría.\(^\text{58}\)

If novels give us the reaction of the author toward life, not as an impartial spectator but as an expression of an individual in his medium, Alegría often pouring out his innermost feelings without reserve, shows his concern for the recovery of the native in the difficult Peruvian geography. Panagra and Faucett airlines may have helped to close the physical gaps but the spiritual distances are more intractable.

In El mundo es ancho y ajeno, Ciro Alegría plants the Indian problem of the constant struggle between the camonal, generally the proprietor of the serran latifundia, and the working Indian. It is a hard, cruel, barbaric conflict of a dispossessed people versus a privileged proprietor, exploiting without measure.\(^\text{59}\) This powerful novel uses a language that contains much of the earth's true savor, is consistent in regionalism, deeply ensconced in a social theme, and written


\(^{58}\)Estuardo Nuñez, *La Literatura peruana*, p. 126.

\(^{59}\)Arturo Torres-Rioseco, *New World Literature*, p. 212.
by a man who lived in close contact with the man of his time. 60

This authentic Indian novel, El mundo es ancho y ajeno, begins with the description of the community of Rumi where the people lived "the truth of having asserted their mastery over the land, for the good of all; and over time, for work and for peace." 61 The alcalde, or mayor, Rosendo Maqui is a wise old man, governing his people in peace, knowing that the sowing, plowing and reaping of the corn and wheat were the two pivotal points of the community's existence. 62 The Indians work hard "but the notes of the harp and the laughter of their voices tell they are happy, and without trying to understand why they were." 63 Rosendo's hope is to build a school 64 so that the "children will learn to read." 65 The villagers are insulted and harassed by the neighboring wealthy landowner who wants their labor. Alegria writes that there was no reason for Don Alvaro Amenabar to "insult them like this, poor and ignorant though they were,

60 Ciro Alegria, El mundo es ancho y ajeno, p. 131.
61 Ibid, p. 143.
62 Ibid.
63 Ibid, p. 130.
64 Ibid, p. 138.
they had never done wrong to anyone and were trying to get along as well as their meager resources and their backwardness permitted."\textsuperscript{66}

The rich latifundista who had so much and still wanted more,\textsuperscript{67} removes the stone boundaries,\textsuperscript{68} bribes false witnesses and gets a judgment against the helpless Indians of Rumi.\textsuperscript{69} The terrifying power of Don Álvaro extended through the whole region\textsuperscript{70} and the law could "split the most honest truth like a piece of poorly tempered steel."\textsuperscript{71} Alegria wonders why his native land permitted so many corrupt authorities, so many abuses by the wealthy and powerful, so much thieving; and that there was no one who would testify in favor of the community. The poor were afraid, and some of the wealthy who could have, found some excuse not to get involved.\textsuperscript{72} The judge himself who had seemed so upright had not moved a finger to impose respect for the law when the poor were afraid to come and give honest testimony, for fear of arousing the wrath of Aménábar. The Church didn't help

\textsuperscript{66}Ibid, p. 58.  
\textsuperscript{67}Ibid, p. 63.  
\textsuperscript{68}Ibid, p. 170.  
\textsuperscript{69}Ibid, p. 165.  
\textsuperscript{70}Ibid, p. 186.  
\textsuperscript{71}Ibid, p. 187.  
\textsuperscript{72}Ibid, p. 191.
Ru.mí either. Money and evil were triumphant! The community is now forced to move to Yanañahui, a stony and less fertile area, where more work would be required for less advantage. The Indians are frugal by nature and have little need for their personal satisfactions. On the other hand, the Indian feels the vital need for land; it is something substantial in his existence. The natives' happiness is the earth; they understand and have understood for many centuries that happiness is born of the good of all. Thus, time has established the force of tradition, the will of men. The comuneros of Ru.mí had been content with their life. The Indian Rosendo as all of his race, humanize the mountains, consult them from their heights and hope for prophetic voices. Alegria describes Rosendo, the bond of the union of man and land, using vegetables and geographic images. He humanizes the ox here as he did the dogs in Los perros hambrientos. Mosco, El Barroso, el Cholito, el Granizo, and Choloque are the oxen, and some are good like some men, and some bad like other men. Now the natives, "scourged by reality, their faith broken, their visions faded, marched off to the fields and bent over the furrow."  

74Ibid, p. 203.  
75Ibid, p. 125.
The Indians are hurt by the taxes while Alvaro never pays any. The coca tax was very hard on the poor. Each resident paid a sol for each animal that grazed on the community lands, but Don Alvaro never had been willing to pay a cent, alleging that it was the community business. The rich get military exemption while the Indians were taken whenever needed, and their stock lost in storms was always taken and not returned.

Alvaro moves on Rumí and the community makes an exodus to Yanañahui. Alegria writes that the villages suffered all the agonies of the Exodus; not only a mental anguish, but a physical suffering at having to leave the land where they had learned to walk. The Indians' hands were denied the gift of the plow and the seed, and this, for a man of the earth, is the negation of life itself. Alvaro had stolen the brief that a young idealistic lawyer, Correa Zavala, had drawn up in favor of the Indians. He maintained that the law was obliged to protect everybody, but the few laws favorable to the Indians are not fulfilled.

76 Ibid, p. 160.
78 Ibid, p. 137.
79 Ibid, p. 256.
81 Ibid, p. 234.
82 Ibid, p. 258.
83 Ibid, p. 254.
Some of the comuneros, were forced to leave the community since the living was even poorer than Rumi had been. Alegria tells the stories of the members who go out into the broad and alien world. Some become bandits and join Fiero Vázquez, the bandit with enough heart to feel the suffering of the poor, for he had once been poor himself.84 Fiero is the nickname given to persons in the northern highlands whose faces are pitted by smallpox. Fiero used to tell his companions; my life is black, my sufferings are black, my fate is black!85 Amadeo Illas seeks work in the coca fields in the tropics; the work isn't so bad but his treatment is horrible.86 His wife is violated by two overseers;87 he contracts debts and becomes virtually a slave. Calixto Paucar meets death in Navilca in a miners' strike the day he arrives; Augusto Maqui, Rosendo's grandson, goes to the low country to work in the rubber fields, and his experiences there equal in oppression and cruelty those told in La Veragüe. He is not given any goggles and is blinded when the boiling rubber explodes.88 Overseers strike the men with

84Ibid, p. 249.
86Ibid, p. 92.
heavy sticks, use the Indian porters like animals, heads are cut off, and a Maibi is tied to a tree for the insects to eat; even the children are whipped if they don't bring back enough rubber. It was a dog's life, and no matter how hard they worked there were few who managed to save anything in order to leave. Debts piled up because they had to buy from the overseer who charged more than they made. There was never enough quinine to cure the malaria. The savage tribes were massacred and all became a prisoner of debt, jungle and river. Nobody lived in the jungle without getting scarred by boiling rubber, whip, bullet, claw, fang, or arrow.

Now the newcomers to Yananahui discover that all life seemed tortured by the severity of the rocks, the heavy mist, the piercing cold, the sun so grudgingly giving of its warmth, and the unceasing wind. They understand how much life has changed. The community spends over a thousand

---

90 Ibid, p. 310.
91 Ibid, p. 309.
92 Ibid, p. 298.
93 Ibid, p. 290.
94 Ibid.
95 Ibid, p. 302.
97 Ibid, p. 312.
soles on stamped paper, a lawyer and judicial proceedings. A newspaper article calls Rosendo a famous Indian agitator. As he joins the dirty, starving Indians in the jail, Rosendo sees nothing but prison life ahead, as what is justice? What is the meaning of the law? He has known only abuses, taxes, despoilment, fines and collections. If you believe in the law, watch them tangle it. Rosendo tells his fellow prisoners. The wise alcalde tells a delegation from his village not to do anything that would give an excuse for the community to be destroyed by force.

As the cold of the prison eats into his bones, Rosendo Maqui sees other Indians arrested unfairly. One innocent man accused of stealing is given three years. He sees some regain their freedom by the payment of five soles. Fiero Vázquez escapes with the aid of friends.

Where is the equality before the law? You can get out with

100 Ibid, p. 323.
102 Ibid, p. 326.
103 Ibid, p. 324.
104 Ibid, p. 325.
money not law or justice.\textsuperscript{111} Rosendo is beaten by his jailers and to Alegria, the kneeling, bleeding old man seems a symbol of his people.\textsuperscript{112}

Benito Castro, Rosendo's adopted son, now returns to Rumi;\textsuperscript{113} having worked on ranches as a vaquero, helped to harvest grain on haciendas, cut cane on plantations on the coast, worked in Lima, and Callao, then traveled from Salaverry to Trujillo where he served in the army, advancing to the rank of sergeant. He too has discovered the cruelty and exploitation that is suffered outside the community. His return in 1925 finds the pueblo empty and Rosendo, his foster father, unjustly taken prisoner by false accusations of Don Álvaro Amenábar. Amenábar has returned from Lima and after aiding in his son's election to Congress, prepares to run the Indians out of Yanañahui as he had forced them out of Rumi. Benito is elected the new alcalde of Yanañahui when Rosendo dies in jail.

After several years of hard work the Indians make Yanañahui into a livable area with crops, pastures and

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{111}\textit{Ibid}, p. 322.
\item \textsuperscript{112}\textit{Ibid}, p. 399.
\item \textsuperscript{113}\textit{Ibid}, p. 420.
\end{itemize}
houses. Benito Castro tells his people that man ought to be free, strong and happy. It would require a struggle, but the reason good Rosendo had wanted a school was undoubtedly because he had some inkling of a world from which he was barred. They would disregard the superstition that planting around the lake would bring evil spirits; they would have a better crop as the land nearer the lake was more productive. Amenabar begins to take Yanana hu1. Benito calls his people together and tells him the Indian is a Christ nailed to the cross of injustice. The village assembly has decided to defend themselves against Amenabar and his army forces from the capital. Benito asks them to do their best otherwise "we will be slaves rotting underground in Amenabar's mines or be planting coca in his Oores valley working from morning until we die of malaria." What did he do with the land he took from us? There it lies waste, growing weeds and brush, never knowing the loving hand of the sower. The houses are falling down and our beloved old Rosendo's home is now a pig-pen. He doesn't want the lands of Yananahui either. All he wants is to get us in his power. The law gives

114 Ibid, p. 423.
116 Ibid.
out land, and then pays no attention to what happens to the people on these lands. The law does not protect them. Those who are in charge of things justify themselves, saying "Go somewhere else. This is a big world." Yes, it is big. But villagers, for us, the poor, it is big but it is not ours...

Benito goes on to tell his people that the ones who have left have not come back, and can be mourned as dead or slaves. The poor go from place to place, getting nothing, not even a decent wage, and die with faces against the ground soaked bitter with tears. He begs them to defend their land, which is the only way to defend their freedom and lives. The fate of the poor is the same everywhere and the poor everywhere must join together, for that's the only way they'll win. Many have rebelled and lost, but it is better to die than be slaves. The alcalde tells the comueros that then maybe the government will come to understand that injustice is not good for a country. Taking away the communal lands from the Indians to develop a sense of private property is their justification for taking away the only thing the Indian has. We're defending our lives, and our lands! 118

117 Ibid, p. 434.
118 Aida Cometta Manzoni, Indio en la novela de America, p. 30.
The latifundista's powerful friends in Lima who direct the country, order out heavy forces. A small army hastens to the sierra to protect the feudal señor. Truckloads of soldiers come, machine guns cut the Indians down as they throw their rocks. The Indians' revolt of Yanañahui is quickly smothered and as the dying Benito appears at his wife Marguicha's side, he begs her in a frantic, pleading voice to take their child and go away. Marguicha with frenzied eyes looks at her husband, at her child, at the world, at her loneliness. El mundo es ancho y ajeno ends with her despair of not knowing what to do; Benito is already dead and the crack of the guns is coming closer and closer.

This forceful novel of the socially-conscious Ciro Alegria, in his defense of the down-trodden, has set forth a fundamental and vital problem of the people of Peru, and he has treated it both energetically and fearlessly.

The method of Ciro Alegria is to describe the campesino from within, and as he tells us, each of his three novels are always accounts of the possible. In a special questionnaire on his sources, he said that as much of the real as the fictional are combined.¹¹⁹ Rosendo Maqui does

¹¹⁹Mario Castro Arenas, La novela peruana y la evolucion social, p. 219.
dyers, gamonals, and women of his novel. Senora Turner was an exterior observer for the Indianist novel; Alegria shows the "inside" and the "outside" of the characters which he openly sympathizes with and those he repudiates as well. He tells us that the name of the community, Rumi, means stone; this was a world of stone in which one could survive only by becoming stone.\textsuperscript{122} Rosendo believed that the Andes knew the emotional secrets of life. Geography molds the American Adam, and Maqui is the incarnation of the native community. When the venerable patriarch goes to jail for the community,\textsuperscript{123} the community is transplanted to Yanañahui, but it fails and dies. The ancestral communistic organization staggers without its natural leader, its caudillo. Alegria pours out his native idealism in his historic nostalgia of the wise Incan government first described by the Spaniards. Maqui has something of the peaceableness and the pacifism of Atusparia, the Indian cacique.

\textbf{El mundo es ancho y ajeno} illustrates in a masterly way the problem of the economic and human conditions that

\textsuperscript{122}\textit{Ibid}, p. 21.

\textsuperscript{123}\textit{Ibid}, p. 323.
still exist today in Peru. The social reality of the Indian groups, diminished and impoverished from all viewpoints in general and in particular in the usurpation of their lands by neighboring hacendados is portrayed. Ciro Alegria has placed the action of El mundo es ancho y ajeno between the end of the last century and the beginning of the present one. He notes the war with Chile and the arrival of the guerrilla fighters of Andrés Avelino Cáceres. Rosendo observes from a hill the fighting between the "blues and the reds" the armies of Cáceres and Iglesias, and wonders what part the Indian plays in all this.

More examples from Alegria on his sources in particular show that although Benito Castro is a fictional character, his discourse is the message of the novel. Some names of the haciendas are non-existent, but some are real. The story of the dead man that was revived, the case of the soldier, Silvino Castro, "Bola de Coca", the history of Rumi, Don Teodoro Alegria, his grandfather, Doña Elena Lynch his grandmother, and Piero Vázquez were all people that existed.

124 Mario Castro Arenas, La novela peruana y la evolucion social, p. 230.
125 Ciro Alegria, El mundo es ancho y ajeno, p. 158.
127 Ibid, p. 92.
128 Mario Castro Arenas, La novela peruana, p. 232.
The latter lived in an earlier time, but Alegría advanced him into a period in which his figure seemed characteristic. *El mundo es ancho y ajeno*’s time is about 1912, and Fiero had died at the beginning of the century. The revolt of Rumi and Umay, the massacre of Llaucán and the names of the victims are exact. Alegría gets them from the newspaper *La Autonomía*, and the discourse of Pajuelo, a real person with the same name, was published in *La Tribuna*; Alegría later found the speech among his papers while exiled in Chile. The other characters of the novel, if not real in the sense of Alegría’s having known them, are authentic in the sense that there are many such as these in the regions of the sierra.

From the sociological view, *El mundo es ancho y ajeno* recognized the attitude of insurgency present among the Andean Indian groups between the end of the past century and the beginnings of the present one. As a consequence of the abandonment in which the Indian found himself, and of the outrages committed against him, Nicolás de Piérola issued the dictatorial decree of the 22nd of May of 1880, in which he established himself as a protector of the Indian race. In the text of the dictatorial decree he accepted as a fact the injustice of the native condition. That the native had been and was still an object of violence, and a victim of exactions contrary to justice, demanded reparation.
Revolts of the campesinos in different parts of the country began because the titular and legal positions of the Indians remained a dead letter. These insurrections were controlled by blood and fire. During Pierola's time a massacre took place on Amantini, one of the islands of Lake Titicaca. The Indians rebelled and killed a hacendado; the rebellion was subdued with the bombing of the island. Next the Coalición line army massacred Chucuite in order to speed the conversion of the ayllus into latifundios. After 1895 the latifundios had been transformed to the point that the ayllus had disappeared completely in many provinces. 129

El mundo es ancho y ajeno is set in the north of Peru, in the region of Cajamarca, but the conditions described apply to other parts of the country as well. Alegria used his novel as an example, and he made Rosendo Maqui an incarnation of all the virtues of native wisdom. Ciro Alegria presented the two types of hacendados. The "buen patrón", protector of the bandit Fiero Vázquez, was molded after his own grandfather, Don Teodoreo Alegria. 130 The bad patrón

129 Francois Bourricaud, Poder y Sociedad en el Peru Contemporaneo, p. 23.
is Don Álvaro Aménabar y Rodan, señor of Umay, owner of haciendas for twenty surrounding leagues. He is cruel, miserly, and dedicated to despoiling the community lands of Rumi of which the wise old Rosendo Maqui is chief. Alegria gives the history of the Aménabar family. Don Álvaro is the son of Don Gonzalo who had gained Umay in a judgement against a convent. An opportune marriage with Paquita Boldán had advanced the well-being of both. Alegria describes Álvaro as an unscrupulous and clever worker, knowing when to use money and when to use his gun for what he wanted. How did the territory of Umay grow. Don Gonzalo used boundary judgements and enlarged his lands with haciendas, manors with out-buildings for farm-hands and communities. He then wanted the bordering Cordova lands, and he came with his people, a judge, the sub-prefect and some armed men, to his neighbor’s home. A fight lasted two years with several intermissions. The sub-prefect was powerless to intervene, not even reproaching the hacendados, but asking forces and orders from the prefecture of the department. The prefect not daring to oppose the powerful senores, asked instructions of Lima. The ministers, senators and deputies of Lima did not respond, and the assaults and deaths continued. The gamonal Cordova

131 Ibid, p. 25.
imported an excellent marksman from Spain, a native of the Pyrenees; built a rocky fort with spying port-holes, and posted soldiers. Practical Don Gonzalo was momentarily stopped but obstinate Gonzalo begins to expand toward the north. Death takes him, but his son Alvaro carries on until he has reached the borders of the community of Rumi, facing one of the sectors of his ranch; an open and disarmed prisoner.

The gamonal whom tradition has identified with the oligarchy is described by Ciro Alegria as having four typical characteristics. He is above all one that gathers lands, inferring that the great lands are of recent origin. The gamonal in the second place is a monopolizer, cunning and violent. The origin of the fortune of Don Gonzalo is an obscure process conducted with a religious order, as we have noted. Then the gamonal begins a series of processes that uses mounds of stamped paper. When the legal proceedings crumble, the gamonal has recourse to force. The third characteristic of the gamonal is that he is a patron that mobilizes public forces to his will and for his benefit. The gamonal is outside, above or over the laws; they simply cease to exist for him as soon as they begin to hinder him. The

132Ibid.
sub-prefects have no weight against the *gamonal* and prudence advises the central authorities not to interfere. The only power that can stop the *gamonal* is not the power of the laws but one of the other *gamonals*. Don Gonzalo is stopped by the Córdovas because they are stronger than he is, and he fears a costly and dangerous fight. The fourth characteristic of the *gamonal*, and perhaps the most important, is that the *gamonal* acquires and increases his power at the expense of the native communities. The source of his power is the exploitation of the Indians. *El mundo es ancho y ajeno* shows how the people are deceived in a legal trap, then fired upon as their lands are snatched by the *gamonal*.

The *patrón* can either be abusive and tyrannical as shown above or protecting and mediating as Alegria projects in Don Teodoro and his dealings with Fiero Vázquez. In *El mundo es ancho y ajeno*, Don Teodoro has to dispense justice for his community when they ask him to deal with the corrupt sub-prefect. Teodoro has him run out of town, noting that if they had complained to the capital, nothing would have happened. From Lima are sent racketeers to fill the provincial government jobs. Don Teodoro represents the good *patrón* who utilizes his power in the interest of the *pueblo*. His protection of Fiero ends when he is elected a senator and goes to live in Lima.
When the comuneros of Rumi have to defend themselves against Álvaro, Alegria writes that the diligent functionaries almost never function, delegating their work to their inferiors or superiors.133 What could a community do? The judge disappears behind mountains of stamped paper connoting the sense of justice that characterizes the Peruvians.134 The comuneros are to be defended by the pettifogger, Bismark Ruiz who Alegria describes as a mediocre libertine with small eyes clouded by alcohol, smelling of brandy, and wanting fifty soles before he would begin with his clients.135 Alegria says it would take too long to list all the lies and promises of this rascally lawyer who takes his clients' money and abandons them to their adversaries.

Alegria uses Rosendo to illustrate the relation, or rather the absence of relations, of the traditional Indian with the political authorities. Rosendo remembers that in 1879, the time of his youth, there had been a disastrous war with Chile.136 The comuneros did not see the war, not being

133 Francois Bourricaud, Poder y Sociedad en el Peru Contemporaneo, p. 63.
134 Ciro Alegria, El mundo es ancho y ajeno, p. 68.
135 Francois Bourricaud, Poder y Sociedad en el Peru Contemporaneo, p. 63.
136 Ibid.
near it, and believed that Chile was a general. The national authorities were represented to the Indians by the sergeant, the recruiting officer, the tax-collector and the justice of the peace, all of whom always pronounced against the community and in favor of the gamonal. Episodes of the War of the Pacific, of the revolution against militarism in 1895, the unpredictable manifestations of the mounted revolutionaries and old soldiers of the Brena changed into occasional "banditos", parade through Alegria's pages.137

From time to time when a native rebellion exploded in one point or another of the territory, it almost always had a local or particular cause. The repression was relatively easy. One of the most famous episodes was the revolt led by the native chief Atusparia in 1885. Ciro Alegria records that the Indians grieved under their yoke of a personal tax of two soles twice a year, and forced labor on the republic's works, such as road construction, barracks, cemeteries, churches, and public buildings. The gamonals obliterated the ayllus and when the native chiefs presented their grievances to the prefect of Huaraz, he wouldn't hear them. Pedro Pablo Atusparia, who had led the objectors, was jailed, whipped and

137 Luis Alberto Sánchez, Proceso y Contenido de la novela Hispano-Americana, p. 574.
censured. Fourteen alcaldes presented themselves to protest the abuse. They were also jailed, beaten and censured. The Indians pretended to yield to this pressure but on the first day of March, using machetes and broad knives hidden while working on a public works project, they besieged the town Huaraz. The following day, Huaraz was captured and the revolution grew. The Indians attacked Yungay by surprise; all the villages were taken, although the natives had few guns. The Indians were now attacked and died as ants; and finally, Atusparia, wounded in the leg in the fight of Huaraz fell, and over him fell the bodies of his guards.

Ciro Alegria's explicit testimony is that the Indian was a forgotten man; a lethargic force that needed awakening. The Indian's significance in Peruvian society in the decade of the 1930's was nil. The author uses Rosendo Maqui to illustrate the life of his countrymen: his life is a series of calamities. He does not succeed in protecting the community against the attacks of Don Álvaro and the subterfuge of the pettifogger Bismark Ruiz. When he dies in jail, the community is despoiled and his family and friends are dispersed. Benito is destroyed; the last pages of El mundo es ancho y ajeno reveal his violent death. Riding about the wide world on his mule, Benito has learned the essentials of criollo wisdom, that one ought not attack someone stronger than oneself. The native movement of the 1931's left the
Indian a victim, descending from the mountain subdued.

The progress and influence of the Indianista novel has grown since Clorinda Matto de Turner's realistic Aves sin nido in 1889. Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre had spoken in the name of the national majority, the Indian population of the sierra. The number of Quechua-speaking natives was of the majority, and for most of these, Quechua was their only tongue. The interest of the intellectuals always was one of pity for the Indian and the injustices of which he was a victim. This orientation was begun by Señora Turner who had added native customs and folklore, to her protest in behalf of the Indians. The native movement continued to combine those two tendencies with a revolutionary hope of recovery. Carlos Mariátegui had written in the Prólogo of Luis E. Valcarcel's Tempestad en los Andes, that the faith in native resurgence does not originate in a process of "occidentalization" of the Quechua land. It is not the civilization nor the alphabet of the white man which raises the Indian, it is the idea of the myth, the idea of the socialist revolution. The native hope is absolutely revolutionary. The same myth and the same idea are decisive agents in awakening other old pueblos... the Incan village idea has to be reconstructed
in its socialistic organization. For Ciro Alegria, as well as Valcarcel and others, many of whom were collaborators of Carlos Mariategui's magazine *Amauta* (1925-1928), the Indian's return to native tradition constituted the revolutionary myth par excellence.

*El mundo es ancho y ajeno* uses Quechua and Aymara words as well as Spanish, and this has been an influence of hispano-american nationalism, encouraged by Ciro Alegria as well as other *indianists*. The *latinoamericans* rediscovered their countryside, despite the "europeizing" of their architecture, music, and literature. The American man passes from copyist and pupil to that of creator and lord of himself. Following the principles of Haya de la Torre, the literature of Jorge Icaza and Ciro Alegria inculcated the politics of the A.P.R.A.

With his introduction of the Indian soul, Ciro Alegria in his *El mundo es ancho y ajeno*, succeeds in a major work of analysis. Very few books written in the continent contain a greater penetration of the native Peruvian soul

---


than Alegría's, according to Uriel Ospina in his *Problemas y Perspectivas de la novela americana*. In *El mundo es ancho y ajeno* the author has written action for those who must have action in a novel; varied personalities for those that prefer to see many people pass through a book; and a social thesis presented with sharpness, for those that seek to read social documents between the lines when they have a novel in their hands. Besendo Maqui, a character of international category is a universal personality who could be found in a Brazilian *selva*, on the Venezuelan plain, the Siberian tundra, the Algerian desert or in Communist China. If the universal succeeds from the particular than perhaps one of the greatest merits of Ciro Alegría's work is that it is able to interest the Norwegian reader as well as the Israeli, the Argentinian and the Portuguese. If we seek Rosendo's human significance before his local worth, his definite place in the actual world before shutting him off in a lost village in the Andes, we can define him not only as of the hispanoamerican soul but hispanoamerican social class. Rosendo could be from anywhere, not just a man of America but a citizen of the world. These suffering, dispossessed,

---

140 *Ibid*, p. 133.
miserable men assure the economic well-being of others. In *El mundo es ancho y ajeno*, Ciro Alegria has focused on the Indian *pueblo* of the Peruvian Andes. In each one of the sad words of his characters there is also an entire *pueblo* that lives in the Andes. This is a logical reflection of Indian psychology, the community rather than the individual the protagonist, and character, for the Indian as an individual often lacks initiative and is helpless; his heritage has trained him for group cooperation rather than for individual enterprise.

A complete panorama of Indian life in the Peruvian sierra is presented in *El mundo es ancho y ajeno* of Ciro Alegria. All the misfortunes of the Indian, laid low by the avaricious *gamonales* and *latifundistas* who work in connivance with the civilian chiefs and functionaries of the white master, are painted.¹⁴² This is the eternal history of the Peruvian Indian who suffers even though he lives in a country that is called free and democratic. Apathy reigns until life becomes unbearable, then rebellion is crushed by the Indian's omnipotent enemies and his visage of liberation is stifled in his own blood as was Rosendo Maqui's community.

Alegria's dramatic force, his intense love of the land and its race that he feels tied to by fraternal affection, can excuse some technical imperfections. He narrates generally in the first person and one feels his personality not the usual impersonality and objectivity of the contemporary novel. Carlos Hamilton insists that the principal merit of El mundo es ancho y ajeno, may be the rare synthesis of art and socio-political themes. His plots are generally disorderly but despite his limitations, Alegria represents an important step in the process of the indianista novel, and has fulfilled the mission begun by Enrique López Albújar of "socializing" the themes or affairs that reflect the social drama, the social world, the aspirations of social progress. Alegria has perspective and a view of his country's different worlds. His plea for justice for the Indians and their incorporation into the national life is artistically done, with his beautiful language. His art surpasses his cry, although Alegria may have only been interested in his thesis, his characters live, a must for a good novelist.

143Estuardo Nuñez, La Literatura peruana en el siglo XX 1900-1965, p. 126.

144Carlos Hamilton, Historia de la Literatura Hispanoamericana, p. 129.
Alegria's work transcends his Peru and becomes the tragedy of all despoiled of their few possessions, their dignity and their hopes. Luís Alberto Sánchez has written that Thomas Mann, John dos Passos and Jack London have visibly influenced Alegria. 145 Fernando Alegria has called Ciro, "fundamentally a poet who writes prose." 146

El mundo es ancho y ajeno follows a pattern similar to another indianista novel, that of Raza de bronce of Alcides Arguedas of Bolivia. The rich picture of Indian life is followed by the destruction and enslavement of the Indian by the white man. These two trends characterize the genre as a whole, as we have previously noted. Sympathy or violent fury and an equally strong feeling for the positive features, the values of the aboriginal life, combine to make the indianista novel as in El mundo es ancho y ajeno, one of "the highest expressions of the Spanish American novel of the land." 147 Alegria is primarily interested in documenting the miseries of the Indians and promoting social reform. The

146 Fernando Alegria, Breve Historia, p. 253.
147 Arturo Torres-Riuseco, The Epic of Latin American Literature, p. 191.
fact that his novels possess literary merit and universality is a bonus.

Peru is progressing; the desert coast is being made habitable by water from fifty Andean rivers, brought down for irrigation. President Fernando Belaúnde Terry has requested Peru's Congress to vote for a salary boost of 450 soles a month for government employees making less than 10,000 soles a month. Living costs have risen by 19.17 percent\(^{149}\) this year since the sharp drop in the sol, and private employers must make up the remuneration of all their employees earning less than 10,000 soles a day, by an equal percentage, retroactive to September 1, 1967. There are optimists and pessimists for all of Peru's problems; progress vs. revolution; hopes vs. fears.\(^{150}\)

\(^{149}\) Noticias, National Trade Council, New York, October, 1967.

\(^{150}\) Francois Bourricaud, Poder, etc., p. 357.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In tracing the indianista novel from its beginnings with a romantic, picturesque and sentimental theme, to the present day socialistic trend, we note the continuation of the Indian theme as an important subject for novelists of Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia. From romanticist Juan León Mera's Cumanda to realist Clorinda Matto de Turner's Aves sin nido, the indianista novel has mirrored native life. The romantic novelists have reflected a class to which they didn't belong. Jorge Icaza followed Alcides Arguedas with his violent protest against the Indian's miserable reality. Enrique López Albújar and Ciro Alegría's ideas have been taken up by the novelists of today in these three Andean countries. The indianista novel is still being written in these countries and without change in plot. We find the same themes used by Jorge Fernández, a journalist and an ambassador; Gerardo Gallegos, who wrote for the newspaper; Enrique Gil Gilbert, writer of indianista novels and liberal revolutionary; Jorge Icaza, bookstore owner and a member of the Concentracion de Fuerza Popular Sindicato; José Alfredo Llerena, professor of
the national library; Gonzalo Montesinos Malo, a member of the United Nations organization, Adalberto Ortiz, author of Juyungo; Alfredo Pareja Diezcanseco, member of the socialistic democratic revolutionary communist cause, Angel Felicisimo Rojas, Comtraler General, following the May 1944 revolution; Humberto Salvador, director of the municipal department of education; Pedro Jorge Vera, Secretary General of Nacional Assocacion; Gonzalo Zaldumbide, diplomat; Cesar Vallejo, writer and Jose Maria Arguedas, present day novelist. All these men show by their activities, as well as their writing, interest in their countries' progress.

The indianista novel since 1915 carries the repetition of the same themes year after year showing diverse examples of latifundista oppression; state and ecclesiastical spoilation and brutalization of the Indian by the whites. Does the constant subject matter lessen the force of denunciation and protest? It does not seem humanly possible to reproach these writers their insistence in presenting these themes, even if it seems at times that if one has read one indianista novel one has read them all. The Indians' problems still exist, and although they have denounced them again and again, the results are negligible. Many of these novelists write for the country's benefit, not their own livelihood, unlike writers of other countries. The world they see does not please them; they want to see it altered from a social,
ethnic, and philosophical point of view. If the Indianista novel twenty years from now still presents the same subject matter, it will be because the real world surrounding the novelists is the same as their predecessors; not fundamentally changed since their years of discontent.

The aim of the Indianista novels is to try to help the Latin American man recognize his real circumstances and his own potentialities in order to change them. Hope remains in all the Indianista novelists, as they care about the people they write about. These novels remain the reaction of their authors facing the stimulus of reality, and their drama is for whatever color, race or nationality that lacks human dignity. Is the Indianista novel a prophecy as well as a protest? Despite the repetitive aspect, it is a moral instrument in the sense that it is a philosophic propaganda, the novelist not being able to hide his true voice. He is an intense companion for the misery of the human race. As he precedes for better or for worse, it is impossible to maintain for the length of the novel a voice pitched at a false level, and therefore we find a movement of events through time and space with an interplay of social forces between individuals; vices and virtues, and the modulation of one by the other making a plot that produces the morality of the novel. This literature becomes the manifestation of a social state and in it is reflected the constantly changing perspec-
tive of progress which is the law of social movement. The social movement becomes the product of the institutions in which are incarnated the intellectual activities in the public activities of public and private relations. Literature thus is the expression of a people's intellectual, artistic and spiritual personality.

The nature of all writers seems to be to confide their own experiences, and in fiction they can tell more truth than in non-fiction. A writer can be franker when he says this didn't happen to me; his confession is not presented to the reader as a personal one. The novelist believes he is protected by a mask and that makes it much easier for him to tell the whole truth. We understand the life of the Indians; we listen to his conversations, we are admitted into his silent deliberations and we can know what he says to himself in the darkness of the night.

The indianista novelist has no wish to entertain, as do other novelists; he wants to disturb, to frighten and to provoke to action now. Do the repetition and violence engender disgust? The indianista novelists feel they must function not only socially but as missionaries, historians and agitators. Since the circumstances have not changed neither have the indianista novels, and they will continue until the Indian has gained an understanding of the forces
at work in his environment, and with the aid of this understanding to shield himself from the negative forces and to capitalize on the favorable ones.
The Man with the Hoe (written after seeing Millet's world-famous painting of a brutalized toiler) Edwin Markham:

God made man in his own image
in the image of God made He him. Genesis.

Bowed by the weight of centuries he leans
Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground,
The emptiness of ages in his face,
And on his back the burden of the world.
Who made him dead to rapture and despair,
A thing that grieves not and that never hopes,
Stolid and stunned, a brother to the ox?
Who loosened and let down this brutal jaw?
Whose was the hand that slanted back this brow?
Whose breath blew out the light within this brain?

Is this the Thing the Lord God made and gave
To have dominion over sea and land;
To trace the stars and search the heavens for power;
To feel the passion of Eternity?
Is this the dream He dreamed who shaped the suns
And marked their ways upon the ancient deep?
Down all the caverns of Hell to their last gulf
There is no shape more terrible than this
More tongued with censure of the world's blind greed
More filled with signs and portents for the soul
More packt with danger to the universe.

What gulfs between him and the seraphim!
Slave of the wheel of labor, what to him
Are Plato and the swing of Pleiades?
What the long reaches of the peaks of song,
The rift of dawn, the reddening of the rose?
Thru this dread shape the suffering ages look;
Time's tragedy is in that aching stoop;
Thru this dread shape humanity betrayed,
Plundered, profaned and disinherit,
Cries protest to the Judges of the World,
A protest that is also prophecy.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
BIBLIOGRAPHY


La Cultura y La literatura Iberoamericano. Ediciones de Andrea, Mexico, D.F., 1957.


Manzoni, Commetta Aida. Indio en la novela de america.


Nuñez, Estuardo. La literatura peruana en el siglo XX (1900-89). Editorial Formaca, Peru, 1965.


Sanchez, Luis Alberto. Historia de la literatura americana, desde los origines hasta nuestros tiempos. Santiago: Ercilla, 1940.


ARTICLES AND PERIODICALS


Mora, José A. "Hacia una nueva America Latina," Progreso Marzo/abril del 1968.


The thesis submitted by Avelline Quinn Gibbs has been read and approved by the director of the thesis. Furthermore, the final copies have been examined by the director and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

[Signature]

Aug. 8, 1968

Date

[Signature of Adviser]