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LOST-BODY WRITING IN LATIN AMERICA'S CONTEMPORARY HISTORICAL NOVEL

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ABSTRACT

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Latin America's new historical novel contrasts with the historical novel of previous periods in its more complex conception of the formation of individual and collective identity. This dissertation explores how the contemporary historical novel's expanded formulation of identity--which encompasses an individual's bodily experiences as well as mental processes--transforms conventional notions of cultural interaction and history, and confronts the issue of who participates in the process of historical change. Most importantly, the body's emergence in the discourse of the new historical novel signals its desire to explore ethical concerns about writing and its relationship to power. Lost-body writing, a term coined but never explicitly defined by Michel de Certeau, describes the new historical novel's ambiguous attitude toward language, writing and the bodies it inscribes, while it points to an ethics of writing, an alternative to more violent forms of discourse.

Chapter 1 establishes a theoretical framework with which to study textual bodies in the new historical novel. I analyze The Practice of Everyday Life in which de Certeau argues that discourses of power, such as historiography, must suppress bodies in order to shape the knowledge inherent in the activities of individuals into meaningful patterns that are productive and reproducible. At the same time, de Certeau's text shows how the reemergence of the body can destabilize and subvert these discourses of power, and in

doing so, return agency to the individual. De Certeau's Practice provides this study with a broad overarching theory with which to articulate the relationship between body, writing and violence; however, the analytical chapters that follow also engage the thinking of other body theorists such as Mikhail Bakhtin, Michel Foucault, and Elaine Scarry.

Chapter 2 examines how the emergence of the carnival body in Edgardo Rodríguez Juliá's La renuncia del héroe Baltasar (1974) destabilizes hegemonic historical discourse and clears a way for new interpretations of Puerto Rico's past, free from the gaze of the colonizer. Chapter 3 studies (dis)embodiment in characterization and in the creation of fiction in Mario Vargas Llosa's La guerra del fin del mundo (1981) as it undermines the dichotomy barbaric/civilized and asserts the necessity of awareness of the body to moral action. Chapter 4 explores the narrator's construction of self through the process of writing the history of the cannibal other in Juan José Saer's El entenado (1983). This metafictional narrative also examines the human impulse to "write" and the violent nature of writing as it inscribes bodies--our own and other's--to produce knowledge and to endow our existence with meaning. The Conclusions summarize the way the emergence of the body in each of the three novels undermines traditional notions of self, history and writing. I argue that this reemergence of the body signifies a change in the conception of language, and a restored belief in its capacity to represent and act on the material world, even as it admits the inevitability of writing's violence and alteration.

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Introduction: "Lost-Body Writing" in Latin America's Contemporary Historical Novel

> El pasado nos da el presente, el pasado como lo vemos hoy es lo que nos da la forma que tenemos.
> --Carmen Boullosa, "La destrucción de la escritura" (218)

> In the chronicles we learn about the roots of our problems and challenges that are still unanswered. And in these half-literary, half-historical pages we also perceive--formless, mysterious, fascinating--the promise of something new and formidable, something that if it ever turned into reality would enrich the world and improve civilization.
> --Mario Vargas Llosa, A Writer's Reality (38)

The surge in publication of historical novels in Latin America over the last three decades attests to the continuing impulse to examine the relationship between the region's colonial period and its present and, particularly, to explore the roots of Latin American identity in its controversial past.[1] Seymour Menton, who wrote the first book-length study concerning the proliferation of new historical novels, Latin America's New Historical Novel (1992), accounts for the phenomena in terms of such cultural factors as the celebration of the Quincentenial of the "discovery" of the New World, and in terms of such socio-political factors as the return to dictatorial rule and human rights abuses throughout the region during the decade of the seventies. According to Menton, the Quincentenial celebration led to a greater awareness of historical bonds among Latin American countries, while the failure of democracy led many intellectuals to search for answers to contemporary problems by exploring their nations' pasts (27-30). In Memorias del olvido (1996), María Cristina Pons concurs with Menton's linking of the voluminous production of historical novels to recent political events and a reexamination of national goals, as she concludes that the contemporary historical novel recuperates the past from a present of crisis in order to continue the traditional search to redefine national identity (259).

However, the contemporary historical novel contrasts with the historical novel of previous periods in its more complex conception of the formation of individual and collective identity. The new historical novel rejects the notion of identity as theorized solely in terms of abstract mental consciousness, as determined by racial, ethnic, or national belonging, or as polarized by a series of dichotomies in mutually exclusive opposition--civilization/barbarism, European/indigenous, conservative/liberal.[2] Instead, as will be seen shortly when I contrast how the body appears in the traditional and in the new historical novels, these texts conceive of an evolving subject within a changing social context whose body is inscribed by the colonial experience and its many conflicting discourses.

This ontological move seems to run parallel to similar tendencies in colonial studies and to correspond to Rolena Adorno's urging to move "beyond the lineal model of how cultures supplant one another in succession, which is the very assumption that has guided literary and intellectual historical studies of Spanish America" (173). Adorno proposes instead that we attempt "to understand cultural interaction in far more disquieting ways: in patterns of mutual influence and penetration..." (173). By theorizing identity as constituted by the various social and material discourses and practices that are inscribed on the body, the contemporary historical novel challenges traditional representations of the colonial period as simply a European "conquest" of the "Other," bringing about the erasure of the subalterns' culture and the sentencing of their history to the realm of the forgotten. This positioning of the body alongside the mind to form a new material subject allows the reader to question traditional notions of identity as homogeneous and monadic, and to analyze the impact that cultures have on one another

through mutual marking and inscription, revealing the impurity of terms like "Other" and "identity," as it sets forth other ways of "knowing" history.

The hypothesis of this dissertation is that the contemporary historical novel's expanded formulation of identity--which encompasses an individual's bodily experiences as well as mental processes--transforms conventional notions of cultural interaction and history, and confronts the issue of who participates in the process of historical change. In addition, I hypothesize that the body and body practices emerge in this recent historical narrative not just as a force disruptive to theories of identity and traditional historiographic discourse, but also as a way of exploring ethical concerns about writing and its relationship to power. I will analyze how bodies emerging in writing subvert hegemonic discourse, the knowledge it produces and the control it attempts to exert over individuals and groups in society. Nevertheless, where bodies appear in discourse there is always danger. Linguistic representations of bodies can never fully capture the effects of suffering, discrimination and violence, which is progressively removed from reality as image is based on image, representation on representation. At what point do bodies in discourse lose their connection to humanity? At what point do they simply become verbal representations and violence purely literary? These are some of the questions and paradoxes I will explore in this study of Latin America's contemporary historical novel.

The three historical novels I have selected to study are not, I believe, unusual in their focus on the body, but rather representative of the new historical novel in general. In each of the three novels the body emerges as a prominent player in deconstructing traditional notions of identity, in questioning official representations of history, and in examining the violence of writing. In addition, the three novels span the first decade of the genre's renewed popularity, represent three different Latin American countries, and

dissimilar subject matter: La renuncia del héroe Baltasar (1974), an historical reconstruction of a violent and, yet, fictitious slave rebellion, by the Puerto Rican novelist Edgardo Rodríguez Juliá; La guerra del fin del mundo (1981) an epic narrative dealing with the revolt of a group of religious fanatics in the backlands of Brazil, by the Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa; and, El entenado (1983), the fictional autobiography of a former captive of a cannibal tribe in Río de la Plata, by the Argentinian novelist Juan José Saer.

To begin a discussion of the relationship between the historical novel, identity, and the body, I will first define the basic terms. Defining the genre of the historical novel has proven problematic since Georg Lukács first attempted to do so in his seminal text, The Historical Novel (1937, English trans. 1962).[3] Lukács' prescriptive definition lists characteristics derived from the novels of Sir Walter Scott, and thus, is overly restrictive, not allowing for variation or change over time, and effectively excludes many modern and contemporary historical novels.[4] Although Avrom Fleishman's study, The English Historical Novel (1971) still employs Lukacs' definition, recent studies of the genre formulate more open definitions that embrace the significant changes the genre has undergone since the Romantic period.[5] For the purposes of this study, I adopt Elisabeth Wesseling's broad concept of the historical novel as formulated in Writing History as a Prophet: Postmodern Innovations of the Historical Novel (1991): she simply asserts that a historical novel is "fictional narrative which incorporates historical materials" (27).

Attempts to define the term "identity" also provoke considerable controversy and my own use of the word reflects this quarrelsome history. John Locke's definition from his Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690) states: "The identity of the same man consists... in nothing but a participation of the same continued life, by constantly

fleeting particles of matter, in succession vitally united to the same organized body" (210). The concepts of sameness and continuity that stand out in Locke's definition of identity also stand out in Erik H. Erikson's 1968 formulation of the term as "a sense of personal sameness and historical continuity" (17). However, the very concepts that form the basis of these most commonly used definitions of identity are what are now under attack by researchers in various disciplines including psychology, philosophy, history, sociology, anthropology, as well as literary studies—specifically under attack are the notions that identity is unchanging over time and that one's identity is determined by who or what one is *not*. Also by examining more deeply these established definitions of identity, we discover their strong connection to traditional dichotomies such as self versus other, and mind versus body, as well as other related dichotomies, all of which have come under attack by contemporary theorists of self. Thus, as identity is the term most frequently used by literary critics studying the historical novel in Latin America, I use it with a keen awareness of the difficulties that it presents and the contradictory meanings that it incorporates. The term I prefer in referring to the contemporary historical novel is "embodied subjectivity," to be defined further on, as it resolves the problems associated with the term "identity."

Furthermore, the term "national identity" is closely related to the notion of individual identity; thus, it presents many of the same problems. By "national identity" I mean the sense of sameness that binds a group of people together with a common history and shared goals for the future. This sense of unity and continuity at a national level is also now questioned by academics across the disciplines. National identity is clearly a social and historical construct used to maintain territorial boundaries and, ultimately, power, by homogenizing differences within a nation, whether they be racial, religious, or

ethnic. As with the term identity, the concepts of sameness and continuity implicit in the idea of national identity are not sustainable. In fact, this dissertation argues that the contemporary Latin American historical novel aims to undermine the very of notion of national identity.

Finally, my use of the term "body," once again admits a number of complexities and ambiguities. The body is the physical, material, or biological entity of animals and humans. But, in addition to performing basic biological functions it also allows us to move about, to think, to imagine, and even to remember. The body is both a given, in that we are genetically determined to a certain extent, and it is a construct, in that as individuals we can transform many aspects of our bodies through discipline, eating habits, or surgery. The environment and society can alter the body, but also the body can transform its surroundings. Thus, my concept of the body is not as a finished product, but rather as a work in progress, that at times expresses agency and other times is determined, that marks the social and biological environment, as it is marked by it.

As this study analyzes the body's relationship to identity in the Latin American historical novel, it is useful to briefly summarize the genre's connection to notions of identity. The historical novel has been closely linked to themes of nationality and to the process of the formation of national identities and consciousness, beginning in the mid-nineteenth century with the emergence of the first historical novels in Latin America. To be sure, the Romantic period in general, the era in which the historical novel first takes hold both in Europe and Latin America, is marked by a zealous devotion to the ideals of freedom and nationalism. Works from all of the various literary genres of the time reflect these ideals to a certain extent. But the historical novel, in particular, is associated with the forming of new nations and patriotic sentiments. According to Lukács, national

development and the awakening of a sense of national identity throughout Europe led to the consciousness of history as a mass experience, and to the appearance of the historical novel as a genre (19-30).

In Latin America, where new nations were emerging from the devastation of the Wars for Independence, intellectuals hoped to bring about a feeling of nationalism by breaking with their Spanish past and Spanish colonial rule, and by offering new models of heroism from among their own countrymen and regional histories (Franco 47; Rojas Mix 55-56). It is not surprising then that many essays and literary works take as their theme the misdeeds, corruption, injustice or inefficacy of Spanish administration of the American colonies (Varela Jácome 100-1). Similarly, in order to underline the uniqueness of Latin American culture and its divergence from Spanish tradition, Romantic writers bring to the forefront characters who were previously marginalized, figures who are uniquely American and who were once considered to be unsuitable as protagonists: native Americans in what has been called "Indianista" literature, gauchos in the Gauchesque, and African-Americans in abolitionist literature (Franco 63).[6] Miguel Rojas Mix contends that among the most important tasks of post-war intellectuals trying to build new nations, is the reassessment of the past through the rewriting of history (56).

Although this reevaluation of history is evident in the Romantic literature of Latin America across the board, the historical novel was viewed as an especially appropriate medium for teaching the reading public about its nation's past and to instill a sense of national belonging and patriotism.[7] Jean Franco convincingly argues this point by quoting from the prefaces of several historical novels of the period, such as that of Bartolomé Mitre, the Argentine statesman and intellectual. Mitre believes that the novel's appeal to the masses allows it to disseminate cultural information throughout the region,

and serves as a didactic tool that can be used to arouse feelings of patriotism necessary to the constitution of new nations. He writes in his preface to the novel Soledad (1846), that "la novela popularizaría nuestra historia... [the novel would popularise our history...]" and "pintaría las costumbres originales y desconocidas de los diversos pueblos de este continente..., [it would paint the original and unknown customs of different peoples of this continent...]," (Franco 56, translation from Franco's text).

Similarly, Vicente Fidel López explains his motivation for writing a series of historical novels about colonial times in the letter-preface to La novia del hereje (1870). He also argues the importance of historical knowledge to nation building:

> Parecíame entonces que una serie de novelas destinadas a resucitar el recuerdo de los viejos tiempos, con buen sentido, con erudición, con paciencia y consagración seria al trabajo, era una empresa digna de tentar al más puro patriotismo; porque creía que los pueblos en donde falte el conocimiento claro y la conciencia de sus tradiciones nacionales, son como hombres desprovistos de hogar y de familia, que consumen su vida en obscuras y tristes aventuras sin que nadie quede ligado a ellos por el respeto, por el amor, o por la gratitud. Las generaciones se suceden unas a otras abandonadas a las convulsiones y a los delirios del individualismo. (López 13)

López contends that people who are unfamiliar with their nation's traditions and past are in a sense homeless, in that they have no ties to those around them, and that this isolation is passed on through time. The historical novel functions then as a sort of social glue which binds diverse groups of people together with a common love of country.

Doris Sommer takes this notion of unifying through teaching love of country one step further and posits in her study Foundational Fictions (1991) that tales of love and romance in the narrative of the Romantic period, including several historical novels, are, in fact, allegories of national consolidation. Erotic love and love of country become inextricably linked in these novels, so that the obstacles confronting the lovers can only be overcome in a state that unites the different contingencies represented by them (47). Sommer argues that the new nations must form alliances between rival regions, economic classes, racial groups and political parties in order to establish their legitimacy. These novels provide a model for successful national reconciliation and patriotism as well as exemplary patriotic heroes. In the new nations concentrating on establishing the civil institutions of government and commerce, the fictional heroes' more feminine characteristics were preferable to the militaristic tendencies of many potential leaders emerging from the recent wars for Independence (14-16). Sommer clearly demonstrates that national romances, many of which are historical novels, provide models of coalition building and guidance on proper civil behavior necessary to the construction of national identity and new nations.

The explosion in production of the historical novel in Latin America over the last three decades has led contemporary critics in the field to affirm, once again, the link between the historical novel and the formation of national identity and consciousness. As we have previously seen, Menton and Pons agree that contemporary political and cultural events function as a catalyst that foments writing about the past. In addition to the failure of democracy and the reemergence of military dictatorships in the decade of the 1970's mentioned by Menton, Pons also points to unsuccessful experiments with socialism and the distancing of the Latin American literary vanguard from the increasingly dogmatic

and closed Cuban establishment as factors contributing to the search for the roots of identity in history (20). This notion that the historical novel searches a nation's past in order to better understand its present is a theme that has been explored widely in recent studies of the genre and confirmed repeatedly by writers of the historical novel as the two epigraphs to this chapter reveal.[8] The epigraph from Boullosa also subtly underlines a closely related theme: "El pasado nos da el presente, el pasado como lo vemos hoy es lo que nos da la forma que tenemos" ("Destrucción" 218). According to the Mexican novelist, it is not the past itself, but rather our current reading or interpretation of the past that shapes contemporary identity.

Some critics have underlined important differences between the way the traditional historical novel and its contemporary counterpart formulate notions of identity. For example, Pons argues that, while the historical novel of the nineteenth century affirmed identity by *exclusion* of the silenced and forgotten, the contemporary manifestation of the genre proposes the formation of national identity to *include* those repressed in the past, and actually does so by remembering history from this marginal perspective (259-260). Without denying the link between national identity and the new historical novel, Fernando Aínsa emphasizes the dissimilarity on this issue between it and traditional works. Aínsa maintains that one of the new historical novel's salient characteristics is "la fragmentación de los signos de identidad nacionales a partir de la desconstrucción de valores y procesos ideológicos" ("Nueva novela" 5). According to Aínsa, Latin American novelists' rewriting of history using anachronism, irony, parody, the irreverent and the grotesque, dismantles the myths, symbols and beliefs that traditional historiography had instilled, and, ultimately, breaks down totalizing notions of national identity. Aínsa quotes the Mexican novelist, Fernando del Paso, who says that

Latin American novelists' mission is "asaltar la historia oficial," or to assault official history ("Reescritura" 18). For example, Aínsa points to del Paso's José Trigo (1966), in which the narrative present confronts Mexico's revolutionary past from the perspective of the capital's main train station, from whose wagons emerge the marginalized masses. These homeless men and women represent, for Aínsa, the failure of the Revolution, and del Paso's narrative, the dismantling of its values and mythic successes ("Reescritura" 20).

Aínsa's concept of the deconstruction of national identity in the contemporary historical novel most closely conforms to my understanding of the genre through the study of the body. In fact, when Aínsa refers to the grotesque and the irreverent, he too is implicitly taking note of the way bodies are represented differently in this new manifestation of the genre. For example, the critic examines the way the epic distance of traditional historiography is destroyed in the new historical novel, by pointing not only to literary techniques, like first person narration, interior monologue, and colloquial dialogue as ways of breaking down the otherness of past events ("Reescritura" 19). Aínsa also asserts that the intimate descriptions of historical figures, such as the ailing Simón Bolívar in García Márquez's El general en su labertinto (1989), or the sexually inadequate Francisco Miranda in Denzil Romero's La tragedia del generalísimo (1983), overshadow and undermine the symbolic value of these figures by rehumanizing them ("Reescritura" 19). This irreverent portrayal of these heroes from the struggles for Independence that focuses on the illness and decay of their bodies brings their mythic status into question, showing them to be all too human and corruptible, a portrayal which ultimately destabilizes the myths of national identity which these figures helped to form.

It can also be argued that the contemporary historical novel's emphasis on body, which is as at times grotesque and carnivalesque, has the impact of reinserting humanity

and the individual experience of the past into history. For example, in Fernando del Paso's Noticias del Imperio (1994), the former Empress of Mexico, Carlota, is not allowed to retreat in a dignified manner from the world stage into her silent insanity. On the contrary, the aging Carlota cackles, through several hundred pages, her past indiscretions and those of her dead husband, Maximiliano, as well as a range of her current vulgar and even obscene behaviors, from willfully drooling to embarrass her visitors, to biting her caretakers, and consuming her own excrement. Although critics such as Lukács, as well as many of his followers, claim that the personal and the private have no place in the historical novel, the recuperation of the human dimension may be at the core of the genre's recent revival in Latin America.[9] Aínsa affirms that parody and irony in these novels have the effect of deconstructing historical figures who in traditional historiography have become "hombres de mármol," figures cast in stone. He concludes:

> Ésta es la característica más importante de la nueva novela histórica latinoamericana: buscar entre las ruinas de una historia desmantelada por la retórica y la mentira al individuo auténtico perdido detrás de los acontecimientos, descubrir y ensalzar al ser humano en su dimensión más auténtica, aunque parezca inventado, aunque en definitiva lo sea. ("Reescritura" 31)

By demolishing the "hombre de mármol" and then rummaging irreverently through his remains, the contemporary historical novel dislodges fixed historical "truths" and sets history and bodies in motion. These historical figures whose contributions and meanings were once "legible" or determined, are now destabilized, moving about and open to new readings and interpretations. The personal histories portrayed in these novels include major historical figures whose lives and accomplishments are familiar to all, secondary

figures who have faded into obscurity, and fictional characters whose stories have been passed along through centuries of oral tradition.[10] What continually stands out in each of these novels is the presence of the individual's body as it experiences the world. Bringing the individual to the forefront and laying bare the body as a text to be read and interpreted are two important strategies that distinguish the contemporary historical novel from traditional historiography's depiction of the mass experience of history, and simultaneously demonstrate that there are other ways of knowing history, other ways of reading and writing, and other ways of envisioning ourselves as individuals and as communities.

Although I also agree with Pons' assertion that part of the strategy in dealing with identity in these novels involves the inclusion of silenced and forgotten voices, taking my cue from Aínsa, I will argue that, in fact, formerly marginalized voices, speaking from revitalized and, at times, vulgar bodies, subvert traditional notions of national identity and the possibility of collective memory, on which identity relies. History is no longer the portrayal of "public" events that affect the life of a nation as Lukács envisioned, but rather the intimate thoughts and private details of the lives of figures, both historical and fictional, from the past. Likewise, the formulation of identity in the new historical novel as an embodied notion of self represents a challenge to traditional conceptions of subjectivity. To clarify then, for the purposes of this study, the term "new" historical novel is used to designate the recent proliferation of historical narrative that incorporates changing perceptions of history and of the way history is reconstructed through writing and remembered experience, and that deconstructs traditional notion of national identity by moving the body to the forefront of discourse. [11] In the novels of the nineteenth century the body was depicted more subtly and its subversive impact was neutralized in

those novels' discourse. In the new historical novel, however, the body dominates their description and narration, undermining essentialist notions of identity and revealing the, at times, whimsical participation of the individual in the process of history. A brief comparison of the representations of the body in the traditional and new historical novels allows us to discover the impact of the changes in bodily representation on our notions of identity, writing, and history.

Few novels embody so fully the notion of the traditional historical novel in Latin America as Enriquillo (1882) by the Dominican writer Manuel de Jesús Galván. A product of the Romantic period and its melodramatic battles between good and evil, the novel narrates the personal history of Guarocuya--baptized as Enriquillo by the Franciscans--the Indian hero who rises up against the injustices and abuses of early Spanish colonizers on the island of Hispaniola. Like many early historical novels, Enriquillo constructs a symbol of nationhood around a historic figure, in this case, a symbol so effective according to Doris Sommer, that the novel played an important role in the constitution of the Dominican Republic as a nation ("Populism as Rhetoric" 256).[12] The physical description of the novel's protagonist that follows stands in contrast to the representation of such figures in the new historical novel, and is noteworthy not just for its obvious idealization of the character but also for the stillness of the moment and for the absence of concrete reference to his body:

> Enrique rayaba en los veinte años: de estatura alta y bien proporcionada, su actitud y sus movimientos habituales, nunca exentos de compostura, denotaban a un tiempo modestia y dignidad: su faz presentaba esa armonía del conjunto que, más aún que la misma hermosura, agrada y predispone favorablemente a primera vista. Alta la frente, correcto el

óvalo de su rostro, la blanda y pacífica expresión de sus ojos negros sólo dejaba traslucir la bondad y la franqueza de su carácter... (168)

Enriquillo is captured here as if frozen in time, statuesque and stone-like. In this passage, in fact, the narrator halts the forward movement of the story to insert this still-life portraiture allowing the reader to ponder the stationary figure transfixed by the narrator's gaze. Ironically, this physical description of Enrique gives few details about his body beyond his black eyes, tall forehead and oval-shaped face. The narrator's nebulous depiction also describes the character's stylish dress and concludes that, were it not for the absence of facial hair and his lightly bronzed skin, evidence of his Native American heritage, Enrique could easily be mistaken for the son of one of the rich Spanish colonizers (168).

This description of Enrique--one of very few moments in the novel when the body comes into view--seems to obscure the historical reality of this figure rather than to reveal him more fully to the reader. First, by using nouns like *compostura*, *modestia*, *dignidad*, *armonía*, and *bondad*, and adjectives like *blanda* and *pacífica* to emphasize Enrique's peace-loving nature, the narrator tries to conceal the fact that the character is remembered in history for leading a justified, but, nevertheless, violent rebellion against Spanish colonial rule. And second, by physically associating Enrique with the Spanish colonizers, the narrator attempts to brush aside the historical figure's actual racial makeup. As Doris Sommer argues in Foundational Fictions, "Galván manages to write a national identity by erasing" (251)--by erasing or whitening Enrique's native American physical traits, by omitting even the mention of the extremely large number of African slaves already present on the island during this period, by simplifying the historical reasons for Enrique's rebellion and his capitulation fourteen years later, and I would add, by erasing the body

from his historical narrative and construction of national identity. Only through erasure and omission can Galván shape a mythic figure representing Dominican nationality from this non-representative and morally ambiguous figure of the past. Enrique is non-representative in that most Dominicans today are descendants of African slaves rather than of the native peoples of the island. The native population of Hispaniola, the Taino, was virtually exterminated, wiped out early in the colonial period by disease brought by the European colonizers and by the miserable conditions of life and work in the encomienda system. The introduction of black slaves into the narrative would have complicated the simple picture of racial reconciliation that Galván paints.[13] Enrique is morally ambiguous because, as Sommer points out, according to the court appointed historian Oviedo, the real Enrique is said to have agreed to hunt down former Indian and African slaves who had participated in his rebellion and to return them to their owners, as part of his deal with Carlos V to retreat peacefully to the land granted to him (Sommer 255). As a result, the physical representation of Enrique in this traditional historical novel is most notable for the lack of specific corporeal reference, for the way it conceals more about the character than it reveals, and for the way this erasure of historical detail allows Galván to construct a mythic national symbol.

In contrast, in the new historical novel bodies jump off the page at practically every narrative turn constantly reminding the reader of the very human qualities of important historical figures, and in effect, achieving the opposite outcome of traditional representations of historical figures as seen in the example above. Whereas Enrique is made motionless, idealized, whitened, and his bodily experience is erased from Enriquillo to create a myth of national origins and identity, the activity as well as the intimate details of bodily functions and experience of historical figures are accentuated in contemporary

manifestations of the genre in order to rehumanize and demythify them, underlining their human flaws. In doing so, their status as mythic figures of national origin and identity are demolished.

The results are often quite comical as, for example, the depiction of Fray Servando Teresa de Mier in the Cuban writer Reynaldo Arenas' archetypal new historical novel, El mundo alucinante (1969). The novel is based on the memoirs of Fray Servando, a secondary historical figure who Lezama Lima, Alfonso Reyes, and Edmundo O'Gorman argued was a precursor to the movements for Independence in Latin America.[14] This historical figure preached that the Spanish justification for the Conquest of the New World--to convert the Indians to Christianity--was invalidated by Saint Thomas' visit to the New World as Quetzalcóatl and the subsequent apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe to the disciple *prior* to the arrival of the Spaniards. Fray Servando writes in his Apología: "La Virgen de Guadalupe había tenido culto en el cerro de Tepeyac, desde antes de la conquista, cuando Santo Tomás apóstol, bajo el nombre de Quetzalcoatl, predicó en México el Evangelio; la Virgen no está pintada en la capa del indio Juan Diego, sino en la de Santo Tomás" (1).[15]

The character in the novel is portrayed as perpetually fleeing persecution from the Spanish Inquisition for his anticolonial thinking and is physically battered by his numerous escapes from imprisonment. In the following hyperbolic passage, Fray Servando's captors use an endless series of chains wrapped around every imaginable part of his body including his eyelashes and his internal organs, to ensure that this time he will not escape:

> Hablemos ahora de la sexta cadena, la cual cumplía una función algo especial, pues salía recta, atrevesaba la frente del prisionero y luego

> descendía e iba a enrollarse en sus testículos, primero bordeaba uno, lo rodeaba varias veces, lo amarraba; y luego empezaba a circular al otro. Esta cadena partía después por entre el intersticio dejado por las nalgas del fraile y remataba en la cadena central de modo que al condenado le era casi imposible realizar cualquiera de sus necesidades; pero, por suerte, la escasa alimentación suprimía tales vicisitudes. La siguiente cadena bordeaba de nuevo los testículos, pero sin aprisionarlos y, de manera airosa, rodeaba el pene del religioso; así al terminar de ser encadenado este órgano, semejaba una serpiente brillante, de muchas roscas o anillos pronunciados. Y por el constante roce de tal atrincamiento, el fraile permanecía con su miembro siempre alterado, lo cual le causaba gran mortificación. (148-49)

The chaining of the captive's body is described amusingly in sordid and profuse detail leaving no part of his body obscured or unexposed to the reader's view. Fray Servando inevitably escapes from this prison as well when the weight of the chains that tie him down brings about the collapse of the entire edifice. Once set in motion, his enchained body rolls over his enemies and flattens several towns (152-53). Indeed, Fray Servando's body is repeatedly displayed in absurd, erotic, and even grotesque representations of his impossible life experiences, as Arenas comically parodies Fray Servando's tendency toward exaggeration in his memoirs, defying any reverence or mythic standing associated with the persecuted cleric.

To be sure, Arenas' novel never pretends to contribute to Lezama's and Reyes' construction of the historical myth around the figure of the precursor, Fray Servando. On the contrary, Arenas wants to destroy that myth. This is clear from the opening pages of

the novel that the Cuban writer begins with a letter to his subject: "No aparecerás en este libro mío (y tuyo) como un hombre inmaculado, con los estandartes característicos de la pureza evangélica, ni como el héroe intachable que sería incapaz de equivocarse, o de sentir alguna vez deseos de morirse (10)." The very notion of the precursor relies on a conception of history as providential--a conception contrary to Arenas' vision of the past represented in the novel as without logic or plan, even chaotic. González Pérez argues that, to construct his historical framework in El mundo alucinante, Arenas parodies the use of figural allegory in Carpentier's early works, a figure that, like the notion of the precursor, implicitly asserts a divine or logical coherence between historical events. According to González Pérez, Arenas breaks with Carpentier's use of traditional realist narrative techniques and their reliance on Aristotelian causality by offering for many of the events in Fray Servando's life several different narrative possibilities from the perspective of various grammatical voices. So, for example, in the first chapter of the novel dealing with Fray Servando's childhood in Monterrey, we read, "Venimos del corojal. No venimos del corojal" (11). In the novel's second Chapter 1, the same episode is narrated in second person singular, "Ya vienes del corojal" (14). Finally, in a third offering of Chapter 1, we read about the same events from the perspective of an omniscient narrator (16-17). Nevertheless, González Pérez maintains, historical narrative can never escape the use of figural allegory, a fact of which Arenas and other contemporary writers are highly aware. The critic argues that, instead, these writers deliberately and explicitly prefigure the present in the past as a way of acknowledging their inevitable linking in the moment of writing.[16]

Accordingly, Arenas parodically acknowledges the construction of figural allegory in his text, that of Fray Servando, not as a figure of great historical significance, i.e. as a

precursor to Latin American Independence, but rather as a precursor to the contemporary Latin American writer, and in particular, a figure of himself: "Lo más útil fue descubrir que tú y yo somos la misma persona" (9). Much like Fray Servando, Arenas is persecuted, imprisoned, and eventually exiled from Cuba where he was unable to publish his work.[17] Arenas' irreverent portrayal of Fray Servando pokes fun at himself, at the figure of the Latin American writer, and at the writer's, occasionally, self-aggrandizing perception of his own importance and capacity to know and reveal Latin American culture to his reader through writing.

It is hardly surprising then, that one of Arenas' main targets in his novel is Alejo Carpentier, the influential Cuban novelist, who, Juan José Barrientos asserts becomes a character in El mundo alucinante. Humorously portrayed as an old man wandering about the National Palace in Mexico City with the tools of the architect's trade and muttering a litany of obscure architectural terms, methods, and other erudite trivia, the caricature is important for Barrientos who believes it represents Arenas' break with previous forms of the historical novel in Latin America and, in particular, with the works of Carpentier (49).[18] In fact, Arenas' parody of El siglo de las luces, leads to renovation of the genre and to a new way of representing bodies in historical discourse.

In an interview with Enrico Mario Santi, Arenas criticizes Carpentier's attempts to faithfully reconstruct historical periods in his novels by providing elaborate detail. Not only does he point to Carpentier's naiveté in believing that historical reality can be reconstructed by relying on a contemporary reading of history's textual remains, but even more emphatically rebukes Carpentier for the way all this historical detail impedes the movement of bodies in his texts:

> En las novelas de Carpentier llega un momento en que los personajes están tan connotados por la historia--no ya en lo que dicen (porque prácticamente no pueden decir nada) sino en el mismo movimiento--que no pueden mover: cada vez que se mueven hay que connotar el paso que dan, la época de la alfombra que pisan, el paño con que se cubren el cuerpo, el mueble donde se sientan; es decir, que hay que agotar completamente el contexto tan fielmente que llega un momento en que, por ejemplo, el personaje de Sofia, de El siglo de las luces, casi no puede moverse con toda la utilería que Carpentier le provee. (25)

Here Arenas points to an important difference in the way bodies are represented in the new historical novel: free of precise period dress, furniture, decor, and scenery, characters' bodies emerge, become conspicuous, and begin to move and to act. In his own writing, Arenas is determined to avoid the petrified historical figures represented in previous manifestations of the genre that were more interested in scrupulously recreating a lost past.

A clear example of the Cuban novelist's lack of concern for evoking the authenticity of things from the past and his obsession with presenting straightforward bodily presence and movement is the previously cited episode of enchainment. In keeping with our parodic and allegorical reading of the novel, it can be argued that the chains are symbols of the burden of the description of historical detail that prevents the movement of the body in these novels. Fray Servando's breaking free prefigures Arenas' own experimental escape from the weight of this form of traditional historical narrative. Arenas' concern with bodily movement is, after all, representative of the new historical novel where the body is never stationary or withdrawn but rather explodes, much like

Fray Servando, onto the historical scene, flattening conventional historical narrative in which the body is virtually absent.

The historical novels of Carmen Boullosa are similar to those of Arenas in their experimentation, in their destruction of old models of narrative, and in their conspicuous display of the body in motion. In her novel Duerme (1994), for example, there is little focus on recreating authentic settings from the Colonial past, on reenacting actual historical events, or even on developing realistic characters. The protagonist and narrator, Claire, a French woman whose identity, gender, race, and social class are repeatedly transformed with each change of clothing, participates in a series of fantastic, picaresque-like adventures from hanging as a nobleman, being raped as an Indian woman, to suppressing an Indian rebellion, and, finally, sleeping for several years in hopes of being revived at a later time. Although Claire's prince charming, the poet Pedro de Ocejo, fails to make good on his promise to return her to Mexico City where the magic water that runs through her body would allow her return to life, he does manage, before he dies, to write a continuation of her adventures. His narration makes up the final two chapters of the novel. As in El mundo alucinante, the focus in Duerme is clearly on plot, and on the actions and bodily movements of the characters. In fact, Boullosa's novel deals more with the contemporary construction of identity than with the colonial past. Claire's changing identity allows her to anachronistically explore gender roles, racial divisions, and social class structure in colonial society.

In her essay "La destrucción en la literatura," Boullosa reflects on the way the contemporary novel depicts the human body and then manipulates it to encourage new ways of constructing self:

> ...los cuerpos que aparecen en la novela cobran forma y reflejan en activo los cuerpos del mundo, destronzándolos al darles su propia voluntad, nutriéndose de ellos, de su carne y su sangre, dejándolos inertes, obligados a repensarse a sí mismos, a re-facturarse, a volver a hacerse. (217)

In particular, she argues that bodies in literature both emulate and destroy bodies from the real world, expressing a paradoxical stance toward language's capacity to capture the material world without violent alteration. For Boullosa, manipulation of the body in discourse is a given. The text's initial emulation, in which words take the form of the material body, allows the text to then sap the body of life and fill it with its own intentions. Like Claire in Duerme whose body is first depleted of life by hanging, and then restored to life with the Indians' magic water, writing can bring life to the body, snuff it out at will, and then revive the body again. For Boullosa, the resulting destruction forces bodies in the real world "to rethink themselves", and "to remake themselves again." Destruction is the mission of writing, according to the Mexican novelist, it is threatening, it puts us at risk, it does not permit us to be passively entertained ("Destrucción" 216-17). The emergence of the body as an essential element of discourse in the new historical novel is threatening as it both mirrors the material world and human activity, and then shatters conventional meanings assigned to them.

Through this process of bodily destruction the historical novel explores new avenues for constructing self and asserting agency. Antiquated notions of identity as homogenous and static, and as given in essentialist terms of race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, or sexual orientation, disintegrate in the new historical novel, which instead, conceptualizes self as embodied subjectivity. As we shall see, embodied subjectivity is an expanded, more flexible concept of identity that incorporates an individual's bodily

experiences of the world as well as mental processes. At the same time, it asserts agency by giving the individual both the power and the responsibility for formulating identity based on his or her reading or interpretation of these bodily experiences. Foregrounding the body in the construction of self highlights the reciprocal marking involved in cultural interactions, undermines the mind/body dichotomy, and reveals the superficiality of essentialist categories making other related dichotomous terms such as white and other, male and female, heterosexual and homosexual, and even French and Mexican, inadequate to the process of formulating identity. Characters in the new historical novel, like Claire in Duerme, are inclined to reject such conventional notions of self and choose instead to shape identity from their personal ordeals, adventures, encounters with other cultures--in short, from the experiences that mark their lives and their bodies. Claire, in fact, changes identity as she changes clothing, adapting to each new personage she takes on, wholeheartedly becoming this new person, and yet willing to shed this identity for a new one when it is expedient to do so. In this new practice of constructing self, the body and its functions blend with and become part of what are generally regarded as the mental processes of thinking, imagining and remembering. From the representations and activities of the body in these novels, a new process of self-formulation emerges, a process that transforms our understanding of cultural interactions across history and asserts the authority of experience and individual agency.

The transition to an embodied notion of subjectivity evident in the new historical novel results as a reaction against modern conceptions of self. During the early modern period there occurs a gradual ontological shift from being as divinely given to "being measured by doing" (de Certeau, Practice 136-39). This shift is exemplified by the discoveries of new trade routes, "New Worlds", expanding empires, and is accompanied

by increasing human contact between cultures previously unknown to one another. It is not surprising then, that, with the known world under siege, cultural identities are constructed through writing in terms of dichotomies like self/other, civilized/barbaric, in terms of absolute difference that show no recognition of the mutual contamination of cultures and the sharing of ideas and knowledge that is actually taking place.[19] These powerful mythical constructs perpetuate notions of difference based on linear models of culture, and play an essential role in post-Independence period formulations of national identity as well. As Roberto González Echevarría has elucidated in his text Myth and Archive: A Theory of Latin American Narrative (1990), the hegemonic discourses of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries--scientific and anthropological discourses respectively--also rely on these mutually exclusive dichotomies to produce "knowledge" about Latin America and to impose constructs of national identity.[20]

Throughout the modern period conceptions of being and identity are based on another related, and overarching antinomy, mind/body, where body is seen as the negative other of the mind, in need of discipline and control. From the rationalist thought of René Descartes to the psychoanalytic thought of Sigmund Freud, notions of disembodied thinking or consciousness form the core of an individual's identity. However, recent theorists including feminists, theorists of class and race, and postmodern critics, have begun to question the mind/body dichotomy underlying much of Western thought.[21] These critics hope to disrupt the mind/body dualism and other related dichotomies--male/female, white/black, heterosexual/homosexual, reality/representation--in order to deconstruct stereotypical concepts of self and other based on these opposing terms. This is accomplished by valuing the body as an essential component of being that in conjunction with the mind, incorporates experiences of the world, social interaction and

their discourses and practices to construct a notion of self that is always in the process of becoming.

Identity conceptualized as "embodied consciousness," or "embodied subjectivity," refers to this formulation of self that incorporates an individual's bodily experience of the world, one's connections with others, as well as an awareness of one's own body acting.[22] Arthur W. Frank states this notion of identity concisely: "The progression to the self must be through the body as consciousness of itself" (50). Keeping this in mind, the reader can learn much about how a text constructs identity by studying the way bodies are represented in language. Frank explains that one's concept of self, or bodily consciousness, is most acute when the body is in movement, acting (47-48). As such, identity can be formulated in terms of action, which can itself be analyzed, according to Frank, by examining how an individual responds to four questions regarding bodily activity. One's answers will fall along a continuum of possible responses (51). The first question deals with control, and the predictability of the desired outcome of action. As Frank points out, epic heroes' actions are "utterly predictable," whereas most of us must contend with a lesser degree of self-control. The second question deals with desire and whether one's body is producing or lacking. Once again, responses fall along the continuum from super-body, brimming with excess, to sub-body, suffering from incompleteness. The third question deals with how the body relates to others. Does one see oneself as self-contained and closed to social relationships, or as interacting with others and open to mutual constitution? The final question concerns the way the body relates to itself. Does one's notion of self associate or disassociate itself from the physical body? (51-53).[23] Frank's concept of bodily consciousness can be applied to our study of the historical novel in order to gain a clearer understanding of how changing

representations of bodies and their practices contribute to shifts in the formulation of identity.

Traditionally, historical figures have been represented as predictable, coherent, unified entities, what Lukács, following Hegel, refers to as "world-historical individuals." These figures, as prescribed by Lukács, should never be primary characters in the historical novel as "this would mean reducing them to the general level of life portrayed" (46). However, characters in the contemporary historical novel, even "world-historical individuals," are immersed in the everyday, and as such are acutely body conscious, and tend to view the outcomes of their bodily actions as unpredictable. For example, Abel Posse's Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca in El largo atardecer del caminante (1992), views his aging body through a mirror that, even in its ambiguous, cloudy reflection, "devours" glorious images of his past self and calls attention to his nearing death (46-47). The unpredictability of this character's body is evident in his inability to maintain anything but a brief erection with a prostitute, which leaves him feeling ridiculous and longing for his youth (48-51). In terms of desire, characters' bodily responses can fall on one end of the spectrum or the other, from excessive productivity to unfulfilled longing, but rarely fall in the middle. Cabeza de Vaca's impotence, for example, is in direct contrast to the sexual prowess of Baltasar, whose nightly orgies become the subject of colonial art in Rodríguez Juliá's novel, La renuncia del héroe Baltasar. Regarding the question of relationships with others, characters in the contemporary historical novel find it nearly impossible to close themselves off from the chaotic changes in their social world. The myopic journalist in Mario Vargas Llosa's novel La guerra del fin del mundo (1981), who travels to Canudos as an objective observer of his government's military campaign against a community of religious fanatics, becomes inextricably involved in the war when he is left

nearly blind and incapacitated by the loss of his glasses. The character's concept of self and outlook on the world are totally changed by his relationships with those within the religious community, ironically a change precipitated by the loss of the "civilized impedimenta," the glasses, which had constituted a barrier of objectivity between him and those he observed. Finally, in terms of the relationship between identity and body, characters see their bodies as inseparable from their notion of self. In El mundo alucinante, even the linguistically constructed Fray Servando contemplates the material, specifically his hands, as he nears death. As symbols of his creative life as a writer, his hands embody the contradictions, paradoxes and changing nature of his existence (219-20).

However, the contemporary historical novel's interest in the body posits more than just a new understanding of identity, the assertion of individual participation in history, and the proposition of new readings of the past. Emphasis on corporeal experience in these narratives brings into question our understanding of what history is by disrupting the dichotomy between culture and nature that traditionally delineates and defines the subject of history. In terms of history, defined generally as the account or process of human development, "the study of the formation and growth of communities and nations" (OED), culture carries the positive connotation, as the word culture itself refers to human development and refinement or more specifically, to the "process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development" (Williams, "Culture," 87-93). On the other hand, within this context of history and human development, nature carries a negative connotation as the inherent, essential quality of things, and the material world, the physical universe, or "the features and products of the earth itself, as contrasted with those of human civilization" (OED). Also, considering the word's underlying theological connotation of "the moral

state of man as opposed to the state of grace," and "the condition of man before the foundation of organized society; the uncultivated or undomesticated condition; physical nakedness" (OED), it becomes clear that, within the context of human development and history, nature is that which is given, prior to the process of refinement and improvement, the negative other of culture, and therefore outside of history.

A stark illustration of this nature/culture dichotomy in historical discourse is developed in the preface to Felipe Fernández-Armesto's Civilizations: Culture, Ambition, and the Transformation of Nature (2001), a recent contribution to the field of Historical Ecology. In the preface, the historian recalls his reading of Jorge Mármol's 1851 historical novel Amalia, and his being struck by the title character's ability to shut out nature, to emphatically delineate the boundary between civilization and the unpredictable natural world outside. Amalia's bedroom is lined with dark velvet wallpaper, carpeted with lush Italian carpets, its windows are covered with two sets of heavy curtains and more drapes surround the bed. This impulse to reject nature, to distinguish oneself from it, is what Fernández-Armesto calls the Amalia Effect:

> Not all people who aim to be civilized cocoon themselves so deeply, shutter their rooms so thoroughly, and separate nature so decisively from their dwelling space: Civilization is, however, a product of what I like to think of as the Amalia Effect. Civilization makes its own habitat. *It is civilized in direct proportion to its distance, its difference from the unmodified natural environment.* (3, emphasis mine)

The negative connation that the term nature carries in the field of history is again apparent in E.H. Carr's classic text What is History? (1961). Here the historian conceptualizes the discipline, and the other sciences as well, as attempts to dominate

nature: "Scientists, social scientists, and historians are all engaged in different branches of the same study: The study of man and his environment, of the effects of man on his environment and of his environment on man. *The object of study is the same: to increase man's understanding of, and mastery over, his environment* (86, emphasis mine). Finally, according to Peter Coates' study Nature: Western Attitudes since Ancient Times (1998), our current ideology that affirms the superiority of the mind and culture over the body and nature has its roots in ancient philosophy. The fifth century Greek philosopher, Lucretius, posited that the human body belonged to nature but that the mind separated him from the natural world. This position allows us to continue to envision nature as the conceptual opposite of human culture, and the body and its natural functions as a past link to nature beyond which we must progress (4-7).

The contemporary historical novel breaks down this false nature/culture dichotomy by showing its readers the benefit of viewing history through the body. These texts emphasize the individual body experiencing the world and participating in history, and thereby expose the "natural" in human beings, and show how the natural body and the knowledge of its nearing demise incite the production of cultural constructions such as cities, religion, the arts, and the writing of history. By displaying the perceiving, feeling body participating in the regular processes of nature rather than abstracted from them, the historical novel subverts traditional notions of history as the record of past events in the development of human civilizations as they dominate and build upon nature. Instead, history is understood as the story of humans' futile attempts to distinguish themselves from nature, to impose order on and create meaning from chaos, and to impede the natural movement toward death.

As the dichotomy culture/nature--often framed as the confrontation of civilization and barbarism in Latin America--and the related dichotomy of mind/body begin to break down in these novels, so do conventional notions of identity, thus allowing for the formation of far more complex conceptions of subjectivity and agency. Where the historical process is often seen as either a rational progression toward enlightenment that derives its force from a Hegelian disembodied Spirit, or as a Foucaultian "will-to-knowledge" driven by the discourses of power far removed from the realm of human influence, the challenge to the mind/body dualism in the historical novel grounds history in the body and restores agency and individual participation to the historical process. History no longer follows a logical progression but is instead subject to the whims and capricious nature of the individual acting according to his carnal desires and needs. The flesh of the body is represented in these texts as nourishment for discourse and a site where discourse is embedded. The body both acts and is acted upon as it experiences and moves about the world. Embodied subjectivity as portrayed in the new historical novel permits us to conceptualize identity as a blending of mental and corporeal processes, continually evolving as it impacts and is impacted upon by its environment, and history as a process in which the individual body, in conjunction with society, acts and creates meaning through narrative, even though this meaning is illusory and ultimately unable to stay death.

Moreover, examining these underlying motives for writing history reveals how entangled the process of writing is with the processes of the body. In these novels, writing history prolongs life, restores life to the dead, and provides comfort to those who are ill or close to death. Bodies incite writing, serve as archives that hoard the inscriptions of experience for future reference, and it is through the work of bodies that

experience is transcribed on the page. For example, when first presented with a ream of paper, the aging Cabeza de Vaca--the figure of the writer in Posse's El largo atardecer del caminante--finds it difficult to write anything but the usual, "official" lies about his journey on foot in the New World. His arm and hand, at first, resist participating in the act of writing honestly (38). As he gradually becomes accustomed to the freedom of writing without a reader, he begins to feel affection for the inkwell and the chair where he sits, which has taken on the form of his body (147). In fact, writing in his old age is, for Cabeza de Vaca, a form of walking allowing him to explore with fresh legs memories from his past (60). The gift of paper has given him the possibility of being born again (38), a possibility realized in the hallucinations of the old man when his youthful self appears before him on the rooftop where he writes. The younger self hardly recognizes the old man's importance: "Creo que me miró con prepotencia: soy apenas su escribiente, su muriente. Soy su tumba, su memoria. (Él podrá despreciarme, pero sin mí y mis cuartillas, no existiría.)" (140). The old writer serves as an archive for the young Cabeza de Vaca, whose memory would be lost except for the old man's writing.

In Saer's novel, El entenado, the body of the writer actually preserves memories that the mind had long ago forgotten:

> A los recuerdos de mi memoria que día tras día mi lucidez contempla como a imágenes pintadas, se suman también esos otros recuerdos que el cuerpo solo recuerda y que se actualizan en él sin llegar sin embargo a presentarse a la memoria para que, retenieńdolos con atención, la razón los examine. Esos recuerdos no se presentan en forma de imágenes sino más bien como estremecimientos, como nudos sembrados en el cuerpo, como palpitaciones, como rumores inaudibles, como temblores. (175)

These remembrances are played out again in the flesh and are perceived by the narrator as sensory stimuli, which are later materialized in writing. For the nameless narrator, the ritual of writing each night, accompanied by food and drink to nourish his body, prolongs his life so that he can fulfill his responsibility to record the history of the cannibal tribe.

Of course, the relationship between the body and writing is not always a positive one. For instance, many of the writers within these texts are deformed, ill, or dying. What is the reader to make of Fernando del Paso's Empress Carlota whose writing reflects her demented mind? The previously mentioned myopic journalist and a second writer in La guerra del fin del mundo, León de Natuba, whose very short legs, relatively long arms, and giant head, force him to drag his body along on all fours like an animal, are regarded as monsters because of their deformities. And yet, even dead bodies have the capacity to incite production, as is the case in García Márquez' novel, Del amor y otros demonios. The author explains in the preface, that as a young journalist reporting on the demolition of a colonial convent and the disinterment of its crypts, he witnessed the emergence of twenty-two meters of intensely red locks from a tomb containing the skeletal remains of a young girl. It is the body of this child and her splendid hair that recall to his memory the tales of his grandmother about just such a girl, and that gave origin to his book (9-11).

The new historical novel's focus on the body's role in history and its involvement in the process of writing history underscores the human need to record our past in order to elevate ourselves to a position above the natural and to affirm the meaningfulness of our lives. At the same time, the ever-present body returns us to our origin and end in nature. It is here in this search for meaning while facing the nothingness and solitude of death that we discover what Aínsa calls the most important characteristic of the new historical novel: the uncovering of the human being in its most authentic dimension. The emphasis

on the body in these novels grounds the human being in nature and exposes history as a construct whose purpose is to deny our connection to nature and its ultimate corruptibility and decay.

This foregrounding of the body in the contemporary historical novel and its appeal to corporeal senses and experiences seems to indicate a return to a materialist conception of language in Latin American literature, a conception prominent before Borges' and the post-structuralist's critique of language's ability to capture reality.[24] A materialist conception of language, according to Elaine Scarry, relies on two assumptions about the relationship between language and the world: "first, that language is capable of registering in its own contours the contours and weight of the material world; second, that language itself may enter, act on, and alter the material world" (xi). Although, as we shall see in the analysis of the selected novels, the emphasis on body in the historical novel may appear, at first glance, to confirm a return to a materialist conception of language, upon closer examination it becomes clear that these texts both posit and deny language's capacity to preserve the physical world on the page.

This ambiguous attitude toward language, writing and the body expressed in the historical novel exemplifies what I will call "lost-body writing," a term coined but never explicitly defined by Michel de Certeau in his essay, "Montaigne's 'Of Cannibals': The Savage 'I.'" De Certeau's interest in Montaigne may stem from the French Renaissance essayist's manipulation of language, his modern ability to deconstruct terms so full of ideology as "barbarian" and "savage." However, a factor even more important to understanding de Certeau's keen interest in this particular essay, is the way in which Montaigne confronts the ethical issue of representing the other in language, and his somewhat apologetic admission of his inability to resolve the dilemma. I contend, based

on de Certeau's essay on Montaigne and his other related writings that, with the modern period's greater awareness of the power of writing and its manipulation of the natural world and the primitive other, writing's relationship with the world it inscribes comes into question. Can writing represent reality faithfully, and do so without prejudice or without distorting the body of the other? Must it always alter the world it captures through inscription? Can writing be benign? On the other hand, what are the consequences of writing that ignores the body, that erases the individual and everyday practices from its discourse? How can the body respond to the determining discourses of power? Can the body, by emerging in writing, assert individual agency, appropriate the discourses of power and undermine its attempts to control through inscription? These are the questions that the new historical novel, a form of lost-body writing, elicits, wrestles with, and yet, never resolves. Lost-body writing acknowledges writing's ability to manipulate bodies and to dominate the individual with discourse, and so proposes an ethics of writing and a way of resisting discourses of power. In order to better understand the origin and meaning of de Certeau's concept of lost-body writing and how it applies to Latin America's historical novel, we must first examine his essay on Montaigne.

De Certeau contends in this essay, that the French Renaissance essayist attempts to rescue writing from losing a stable referential relationship with the world it describes. According to de Certeau, Montaigne aspires to rescue writing from this loss of correspondence between action and word by demonstrating an ethics of speech exemplified by New World savage society, and then offering this as a model for writing in the Old World. De Certeau argues that, in order for Montaigne to present the cannibal as an acceptable model of behavior, he must challenge traditional representations of the

cannibal as a barbarian, and so, distance his discourse on cannibals from the authority of traditional sources (74).

Montaigne's essay, de Certeau asserts, is characterized by the rhetoric of distance typical of travel accounts, but that the distance established is linguistic rather than geographical in form. Montaigne is able to shift the meaning of "savage" and give it a positive connotation by linking it to the "natural," in opposition to the "artificial" and the civilized which alter and corrupt nature. The word "barbarian" loses its status as a noun to become an adjective meaning cruel, no longer used to describe the New World savage, but rather European cruelty. In this way, according to de Certeau, Montaigne empties the word "cannibal" of meaning (70-73).

De Certeau subsequently shows how Montaigne, having cleared a space for writing and for a new understanding of the cannibal, can now fill that space with new meaning by depicting savage society as a perfect, unified body without internal divisions whose natural solidarity is maintained by a faithfulness to the law of verifiable speech. Montaigne illustrates this law with the example of the savage warrior defeated in battle who is willing to offer his body for consumption by others in order to affirm his valor and to uphold the ethic and the continued unity of society. As de Certeau explains it, "the body is the price" paid to sustain verifiable speech, the ethic upon which savage society is based (75).

Next, de Certeau demonstrates how Montaigne corroborates the virtues of cannibalism with heroic comparisons from Greek and Biblical history, and illustrates his analysis with two songs or poems from savage society "born of this ethical passion" (76). De Certeau interprets this progression, as depicted by Montaigne, from bodily sacrifice to poetic expression as the movement beyond discourse to speech act. The poem expressing

this society's ethic becomes "*Mythos*" (76), helping society to understand itself and its history as it communicates the way its members should conduct themselves. Thus, this hermeneutic process begins with the bodily action of self-sacrifice to affirm society's ethic or speech, which later, expressed in poetry and myth, upholds savage society's unity of action and word as continued in the practice of cannibalism. Translated to the Old World whose medieval symbolic order founded on truth is quickly disappearing, the New World savage ethic of speech forfeits the notion of affixing truth, and settles instead for the "triumphant loss" of the defeated cannibal warrior, courageously keeping *his* word (77).

Finally, de Certeau argues that Montaigne's essay illustrates the bodily sacrifices necessary for writing to emerge and for reading to be rendered: the body, offered for consumption, produces verifiable speech; savage speech is also consumed when (mis)represented in writing to the Old World, as the interpreter inevitably forgets or misinterprets their words; this writing, or the body of the text, must offer itself up for the author to make his mark (77-78). Ultimately, de Certeau maintains, even Montaigne must concede, or reluctantly accept his "triumphant loss" as he offers his text on the altar of the reader who may not know how to read the "speaking body" and may only see that the savages "don't wear breeches" (79). In conclusion, de Certeau enigmatically offers as a consolation: "If one cannot be a cannibal, there is still the option of lost-body writing" (79). Just as the savage ethic of speech must forfeit the notion of affixing truth when translated to the Old World, so too must the "lost-body" writer accept his or her "triumphant loss" and courageously keep his or her word by asserting the body but acknowledging writing's failure to inscribe it there without alteration.

From this reading of de Certeau's reading of Montaigne--the consumption of bodies continues--we can deduce the meaning of lost-body writing and gain a clearer vision of the strategies at work in many contemporary historical novels in Latin America. Lost-body writing is an ethics and an alternative form of writing founded on the longing for correspondence between language and the world, as modeled by the savage ethic of speech and cannibalism, even as it admits the impossibility of such correspondence. This disjunction between the world and the word is the space where violence occurs, where bodies and nature are inscribed to conform with prevailing ideologies and laws. Lost-body writing is aware of the bodily sacrifices made in order for reading, writing, and the illusion of reality to emerge and, because of this awareness, pays homage by openly displaying the body as it is marked by experience, as it is manipulated and transformed into text, as it is misread, forgotten, and omitted from history, as it lives, thrives, becomes ill, procreates, ages and dies. However, lost-body writing's textual display of the human body, which flaunts corporeal experiences and senses, while acknowledging the body as a site where discourse is inscribed, also posits the body as a space where discourse is created. Just as the bodily sacrifice of the cannibal warrior is transformed into poetry, and then back again into bodily sacrifice as prescribed by society's ethic expressed in the poem, so the body both incites discourse and feeds upon it. Lost-body writing then reinserts the human body and agency into the historical sphere as it views discourse as a ground for social interaction and practice, and not just as a tool of power, imposed from above. By foregrounding human participation in discursive activity, as we reject some discourses, assume the roles of others, invent, overlap, contradict, add to and subtract from still others, the individual becomes, once again, an active participant in the formation of identity and in the process of history, and the individual body moves to the

forefront of historical discourse. In fact, the exposure of the body in lost-body writing subverts discourses of power by pointing to the difference that emerges when bodies appear, revealing the violence of inscription and its repressive tactics, and showing how bodies continue to rebel and resist domination through everyday activity. These are the strategies and goals of lost-body writing and the new historical novel in Latin America.

In returning to the assumptions underlying the materialist conception of language as set forth by Scarry, we can see how lost-body writing in the contemporary historical novel both proposes and rejects these assumptions. The desire to represent through language the "reality" of the material world and the events of history including the individual experience of the past is expressed in these texts by placing the individual body front and center stage. However, these linguistic substitutes fail in their attempts to capture the material world on the page without repression, distortion and prejudice, and openly acknowledge this failure by reflecting, through metafiction, on the violent nature of writing. The materialist notion that language has the power to alter the physical world again is paradoxically asserted and denied in these texts. Lost-body writing shows that, although writing is frequently used as a tool of power to inscribe its laws on bodies, it also reveals that individual bodies have the power to rebel, to reject the discourses imposed upon them, and to appropriate their language to express the individual's desires. It is a paradox similar to that of the ethic expressed in the poetry that glorifies the sacrifice of the cannibal warrior and establishes a model of behavior for savage society. Once this cannibal ethic is translated and offered to the Old World as a model for writing, language slips and it loses it ability to determine unity of action and word, as it settles instead for the integrity of the individual writer and the expression of his or her truth.

Once again, Mario Vargas Llosa's novel, La guerra del fin del mundo, can serve as an example, this time to convey the paradoxical situation of the contemporary historical novel with respect to the materialist conception of language. According to Vargas Llosa, a self-confessed "realist" writer, his aim in writing the novel is to depict the events, the people, their language, and the misunderstandings that lead to the rebellion in Canudos. The very structure of the novel, narrated from the various perspectives of a large cast of characters, reflects, in fact, the divisions within the society that leads to the failure of communication and its tragic results. For the novelist, his rewriting of this episode of Brazilian history serves as a lesson about the past and the present of all Latin Americans, and so has the power to teach (Writer's Reality 133). However, at the same time, the novel denounces the violence of writing. According to Vargas Llosa it is the manipulative power of the written word that leads to the misunderstandings and to the war:

> It was because the newspapers said certain things about Canudos, because speeches were made and then published, because lectures were given about what was happening, that all this national misunderstanding was possible. And so this written word, a word that was supposed to describe and interpret reality, was in fact transforming and changing it, as fiction frequently does. (Writer's Reality 140)

Clearly, for Vargas Llosa, writing has the power to alter the physical world and influence the behavior of people. And yet, in the novel not everyone is so easily manipulated, even when government forces use violence to impose the ruling power's ideology. The novel's closing image points to the individual's ability to rebel, and subvert the discourses of power: One of the army colonels, hoping to learn the fate of João Abade, a rebel outlaw,

interrogates an old woman who survived the government siege. She tells him freely that she witnessed the archangels lifting him into heaven (Guerra 531). The old woman finds freedom in her appropriation of religious discourse. In lost-body writing the outcomes of language are uncertain as each individual has the ability to use discourse as he or she pleases. Therefore, in some cases, discourse is imposed on the material world and the passive body, and in others it is actively used to convey the individual's will.

Lost-body writing then is an alternative form of writing that explores the complex relationship between writing and the body. It challenges conventional notions of identity by questioning the mind/body dualism, it reinserts the body and individual experience and participation into the historical process by viewing history through the body, it redefines history by destabilizing the dichotomy of nature versus culture, and it reveals the human tendency to write history as a way of preserving the body and denying death. But most importantly, the ethic of lost-body writing in the contemporary historical novel undermines hegemonic discourses by reinserting the body and its practices within the place of power, where it roams about, whimsically emerging and retreating, and thus avoiding subjugation. The paradoxical situation of lost-body writing and the historical novel is, nevertheless, also a disturbing one: how can writing, which sees in itself an alternative, more ethical way of depicting material reality and the other, avoid the violence it decries in hegemonic discourse? Is the new historical novel's gesture of reinserting the body a step forward, a movement beyond dizzying metafictional reflections, their avoidance of the material and denial of the existence of anything beyond language? Or is it a return to more of the same, simulacrums of simulacrums, leading to nowhere and to nothingness? Am I, even in my attempts to rescue the body from its

dissolution in the language of critical discourse, just one more participant in an endless discussion that cannot escape the play of mirrors?

Chapter One of this study, "Subversion and the Emerging Body: Exploring New Ways of Writing the Past," analyzes de Certeau's book-length essay The Practice of Everyday Life (1984), in which the French philosopher examines many of these questions and explores more profoundly the ethical implications of the violence of writing suggested in his essay on Montaigne. The Practice of Everyday Life contends that it is in fact the violence of writing which leads to the suppression of human bodies and body practices in the theoretical discourse of the Modern period and which enables the production of "knowledge," including historical knowledge, and the centralization of power in writing. According to de Certeau, discourses of power, such as historiography, must suppress bodies and body practices in order to shape the knowledge inherent in the activities of individuals into meaningful patterns that are productive and reproducible. Furthermore, de Certeau's text examines how the reappearance of the body and everyday practices can turn the tables and destabilize discourses of power, and in doing so, return agency to the individual. The goal of this analysis of The Practice of Everyday Life is to establish a theoretical framework with which to study textual bodies in the contemporary historical novel.

Chapter Two of this study, "Carnival Destruction and Self-Definition in La renuncia del héroe Baltasar," examines how the emergence of the carnival body and its tactics in Rodríguez Juliá's novel destabilizes hegemonic historical discourse and clears a way for new interpretations of Puerto Rico's past, free from the gaze of the colonizer. Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of carnival likewise elucidates the struggle for self-definition between hero and author, and between the writer and his precursors where, once again,

inverting hierarchies and diverting the gaze through carnival tactics creates new possibilities for self-determination. Although the novel's protagonist, Baltasar, can settle for nothing less than a blank slate on which to inscribe his own conception of self and, thus, insists on total destruction as a solution, the novel's author finds a more hopeful middle ground--parody--on which to strike a compromise.

Chapter Three, "Kinder Fictions: Embodiment and Redemption in La guerra del fin del mundo," uses Elaine Scarry's notions of embodiment and disembodiment to study characterization and the creation of fiction in Vargas Llosa's new historical novel. Although the theme of fanaticism drives the narrative forward, the study of the body in characterization shows that, for Vargas Llosa, there are varying degrees of fanatical behavior some of which are more reprehensible than others. The fictions created by figures of the writer in the novel are also studied in terms of embodiment and disembodiment, that is, the way these fictions themselves deal with the body. By undermining the traditional dichotomy that relates embodiment to the barbaric and disembodiment to the civilized, Vargas Llosa's novel asserts that, in fact, awareness of the body in one's conception of self and in the creation of fiction is essential to moral action and to progress toward civilization.

Chapter Four, "Allegorical Renderings of the Body in Juan José Saer's El entenado," explores the nameless narrator's construction of self through the process of writing the history of the cannibal other. In the process of writing, Saer's narrator discovers that his body stores memories of his years living with the cannibal tribe that his mind had forgotten, and that these bodily memories are so deeply inscribed that they shape his concept of self. He finds that he is no longer that which the cannibal is not, but rather a blending of experiences and discourses inscribed on his body including those of

the cannibal tribe. However, the narrator's body is not just a text for him, but also a text for the cannibals in that they mark him with their movements, gestures, expressions, and words so that he will communicate their history to his people. His bodily memories of his own experiences and those of the cannibals form the basis of his writing that gradually deconstructs traditional dichotomies of mind/body, self /other, savage/civilized, and nature/culture. This metaficcional narrative also examines the human impulse to "write," and the violent nature of writing as it inscribes bodies--our own and others'--to produce knowledge and to endow our existence with meaning. Much like Montaigne, the first lost-body writer, Saer's narrator renders the body to discourse all the while knowing that it will be violently altered by writing, which in turn will be consumed by a voracious reader.

Finally, the Conclusions to this study summarize the way the emergence of the body in each of the three novels analyzed undermines traditional notions of self, history, and writing. In addition, I examine the way that this reemergence of the body signifies a change in the conception of language, and a restored belief in its capacity to represent and act on the material world. In closing, this final chapter addresses the question of whether the ethic of lost-body writing offers a legitimate alternative to violent forms of writing, or if the lost-body writer must settle for a "triumphant loss," and the reader must be content with taking the writer at his "word."

Chapter 1: Subversion and the Emerging Body: Exploring New Ways of Writing the Past

In the Introduction to this study, I argued that one of the major changes in Latin America's new historical novel is in its conception of identity as embodied subjectivity. This new formulation of identity alters our understanding of history and leads to the emergence of an ethics of writing that we called "lost-body writing." De Certeau's essay on Montaigne suggests that lost-body writing may serve as an alternative to more violent forms of writing by allowing the body to reemerge in discourse. However, the essay does not address many of the questions it evokes: First, how and why does the modern practice of writing omit or repress the body from discourse? What strategies of writing are involved in this repression and what are its consequences? Are there alternatives to this repressive form of discourse or is all writing violent to a certain extent? What is the impact of narrative in which the body and its practices are prominent? De Certeau's thinking on these matters is made explicit in his study, The Practice of Everyday Life (1984), a text whose analysis in this chapter will not only allow us to examine the relationship between writing and violence, but also between the body and the subversion of hegemonic discourse. As we shall see, de Certeau's theory of bodily tactics complements a wide array of body theory and leads to a clearer understanding of lost-body writing and the new historical novel in Latin America.

To understand de Certeau's linking of body, writing, and violence in The Practice of Everyday Life, we must briefly outline his conception of the changes brought on during the transition from the medieval to the modern period that transformed our understanding of self. According to de Certeau, the premodern era gradually comes to an end and the

modern era comes into being with the invention of the printing press and the progressive realization that the spoken word of the Bible can no longer be heard, that the voice of God and truth has been silenced, altered by textual corruption. One's place in the world is no longer given by the voice of authority, heard, understood, and then assumed. Rather one's identity is produced, made, it is the result of what de Certeau calls the "work of mourning" (137), a mourning the loss of place, identity, and truth. From here on out, de Certeau contends, "being is measured by doing" (137) and by writing, which must fill the void left by loss.

Writing, too, is changing at this time; it is gradually moving away from its origin in the spoken word or the voice which becomes its other, the thing to which writing is opposed; the voice is the past which must be left behind in the frantic necessity to produce and progress. According to de Certeau, it is no longer enough to *hear* language. In the modern period one must *make* language through the practice of writing and through the construction of sciences, which is accomplished by fabricating languages. In this new scriptural economy, the act of writing takes on the power of myth; however, the origin is not found in the content of a story but in the "work of mourning," the very activity of producing texts and bodies as text (137-39).

This new modern practice of writing not only opposes itself to the voice and orality but also to the earth, nature, the body, and all nonverbal practices. In other words, the new scriptural economy differentiates itself, or that which has been articulated in discourse, from that which is outside of its realm--the "wild" or that which has not been tamed by language. De Certeau points out that closely linked to the myth of writing is the myth of reformation, the notion that reason can impose order on the world, transform nature, and civilize savage bodies. In fact, writing carries out these goals of reason by

inscribing itself on nature and on bodies, thereby subduing the irrational. According to de Certeau, knowledge and the law are inscribed on bodies to make them texts standing for society's norms:

> ...the law constantly writes itself on bodies. It engraves itself on parchments made from the skin of its subjects. It articulates them in a juridical corpus. It makes books out of them. These writings carry out two complementary operations: through them, living beings are "packed into a text" (in the sense that products are canned or packed), transformed into signifiers of rules (a sort of "intextuation") and, on the other hand, the reason or *Logos* of a society "becomes flesh" (an incarnation). (140)

Bodies, in turn, often willingly allow themselves to be inscribed, to suffer, in exchange for the pleasure of being "legible," defined and recognized by society, and thus, of receiving an identity. Through various rites of initiation, bodies are inscribed in the social order and become actors performing the roles given to them (139-40).

Nevertheless, de Certeau does not assume that individuals are condemned to literally reproduce social discourse as it is disseminated. For de Certeau, the activity of consumption is not a passive utilization of products and discourses, in which the individual simply uses a product the way its producers intended. On the contrary, he asserts that consumption is another form of production, a creative act, as it adapts the dominant social order's products to its own needs while deflecting its power and reflecting the individual's desires. De Certeau compares this concept of consumption to that of enunciation in the field of language and proposes it as a model for analyzing consumption. He finds in the difference between performance, or language use by speakers, and competence, knowledge of the linguistic system, an unpredictability similar

to the difference between the creative utilization of products by consumers versus the use prescribed by its producers (32-34).

Indeed, the French philosopher sees his study as an expansion on the work of Michel de Foucault in Discipline and Punish (1977), where Foucault analyzes the mechanisms used by the systems of power to create a generalized "discipline," thereby focusing on production and the producers of culture. De Certeau, on the other hand, studies how individuals and groups resist being reduced to the discipline, thereby privileging the creative act of consumption and consumers. In fact, de Certeau argues that studies of the institutions and mechanisms of repression, like those of Foucault, continue to assert the passivity of consumers and so, continue to propagate the myth on which these institutions and the scriptural economy rely--that consumption is passive and therefore the public has no historical role (167). Through the study of everyday practices--"reading, talking, walking, dwelling, cooking, etc." (xvii)--de Certeau asserts, we can debunk this myth privileging the "producers" of culture and uncover the importance of individual agency in the historical process:

> By challenging "consumption" as it is conceived and (of course) confirmed by these "authorial" enterprises, we may be able to discover creative activity where it has been denied that any exists, and to relativize the exorbitant claim that *a certain kind* of production (real enough, but not the only kind) can set out to produce history by "informing" the whole of a country. (167)

By shifting our focus from institutions and their strategies of repression to the analysis of the tactics or everyday practices of consumers we begin to change and enlarge our understanding of society and the world around us. De Certeau argues that inquiry into

popular culture will not only alter our notion of today's reality but also our conception of history and our role in history as individuals, by transforming "what was represented as a matrix-force of history into a mobile infinity of tactics" (41).

De Certeau asserts that, as scientific discourse, including historiography, gives language to everyday practices in order to refine them, it also erases individual involvement or tactics. Science brings in the engineer, whose job it is to articulate consumer tactics by isolating their techniques, and transforming them into mathematical formulas so that they can be reproduced by machines and technology. In short, the engineer separates human activity from the practice, a process of detachment that de Certeau finds in all kinds of scientific writing. Scientific writing severs or "forgets" a technique's relationship to individual activity to make it more productive and reproducible. In terms of history, by removing the individual body acting at will, writing can show cause and effect, and establish patterns and totalizing theories that give meaning to the past by shaping it into the "progress of civilization." So, for example, de Certeau points out that medieval maps which were once graphic depictions of itineraries and journeys of past travelers, and that prescribed actions for future travelers, gradually become a visual representation of the sum total of geographic knowledge, having forgotten the practices and activities--the journeys and discoveries of individuals--that produced that knowledge (120-21).

The discourses of power impede the study of everyday practices by establishing a place from which scientific writing can demarcate boundaries to constitute an inside and an outside, and distinguish itself from that which still needs to be mastered. As de Certeau puts it, "It [A subject of will or power] postulates a *place* that can be delimited as its *own* and serve as the base from which relations with an *exteriority* composed of targets

or threats (customers or competitors, enemies, the country surrounding the city, objectives and objects of research, etc.) can be managed" (36). By privileging place over time, the discourses of power hope to control the corrosive effects of passing time and dominate objects outside of the place of power through vision and observation, or through what Foucault calls panoptic practices.

Yet, according to de Certeau, within the place of power consumer tactics move about, seizing the moment, or "poaching" without being seen. Having no place of their own, as opposed to the strategies of producers, consumers rely on tactics--terrorist-like maneuvers, ruses, tricks and raids that take advantage of opportunities--to express their desire or will and to disrupt the place of power. Time and mobility, for consumers, are the subversive elements which can be exploited by tactics as a way of introducing heterogeneity and difference into power's foundation and discourses. Still, consumer tactics are ignored by scientific inquiry because to it they are invisible--due to their lack of a separate place--ghost-like, and fantastic, and so, unacceptable or nonexistent to science (34-39). De Certeau argues that in spite of the strategies the producers of theory use to repress everyday practices, to master them and to increasingly assert their own authority over them, that scientific discourse can never entirely gain the upperhand. As the study of everyday practices reveals, the subversive effects of the ordinary and of the tactics of the consumer emerge from within the discourses of power unexpectedly, and then abruptly retreat making them difficult to tame.

Perhaps de Certeau's most striking insight is in his analysis of how, in the scriptural economy, theoretical writing manages to repress everyday practices, the ordinary and the body in its discourse, even as it invokes these practices as evidence to support its theories. By first studying the repressive techniques of scientific writing as it

produces knowledge, de Certeau is then able to suggest alternative ways of writing without subjugating everyday practices and the body, a practice of writing which we previously called lost-body writing.

De Certeau begins his analysis by underlining the repeated strategies of repression used by theoretical discourse, which he calls "cut-out and turn-over: a recipe for theory" (62-64). To illustrate this concept, he cites studies by Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu, both thinkers who highlight everyday practices in their work, and whose work he had previously expounded on in order to show the genealogy of his own thought. This time he cites them in order to demonstrate the way theoretical discourse manipulates and represses non-discursive practices with language to produce knowledge (43-44).

The first step, "cut-out," refers to the strategy of ethnological, historical, or metonymical isolation, in which either the theorist studies the practices of a culture far removed in space or time from the here and now, or isolates practices from the larger social fabric by treating them as a separate but meaningful whole. This remote but coherent culture or set of practices, once isolated or "cut-out," serves as a metonymic figure of the whole human species or its tactics. The second step, "turning-over," is the logical inversion that occurs when this remote culture's obscure activities or isolated practices are turned-over to reveal them to be the essential element that illuminates theoretical discourse and our understanding of the world.

According to de Certeau, Bourdieu's study, Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique. Précédée de trois études d'ethnologie kabyle (1972), uses this "recipe for theory." Bourdieu wants to challenge the scientific rationality of his discipline, sociology, by allowing ethnology's study of everyday practices to confront the totalizing and homogenizing tendencies of sociology's statistical analyses in its construction of theory.

The practices that Bourdieu "cuts-out," come from Kabylian ethnology and deal with courtship and marriage in this remote culture. The various strategies he studies seem to enhance Kabylian society's reproduction and wealth, and yet, Bourdieu contends, that their use involves no "strategic intention" or forethought, but rather simply repeat behaviors of the past. Bourdieu calls this silent but purposeful memory, that is both internalized through learning and later externalized through practices, the *habitus* (50-60). De Certeau sees Bourdieu's *habitus* as '*Docta ignorantia*,' ... a cleverness that does not recognize itself as such" (56). Paradoxically, according to de Certeau, it is this *docta ignorantia*, the *unarticulated habitus,* that allows Bourdieu to *articulate* his theory and give it coherence, by bringing practices under the law of reproduction that is essential to theory. As a result, de Certeau points out, although Bourdieu begins constructing his theory around the "sly agent" of practices, the "hero of ethnography", in the transition to sociological theory he "turns him over" so to speak, by sapping him of all activity and self-understanding. Transgressive everyday practices become *unconscious*, providing Bourdieu "with the means of explaining everything and of being *conscious* of everything" (63).

In Heterologies, de Certeau's study of Montaigne's essay "Of Cannibals" suggests, at first, a similar use and repression of the everyday practices of a remote culture to construct theory and produce knowledge. As we have seen in the "Introduction" to this study, de Certeau reads the Renaissance thinker's essay on New World savage society's speech ethic as an attempt to transpose this ethic on a dying medieval symbolic order, and thus, recapture the correspondence between word and action in the Old World. Montaigne, like Bourdieu, "cuts-out" a distant primitive culture in South America to serve as his model, and then isolates certain "savage" practices within this culture to

illustrate his thesis: in particular, polygamy and cannibalism. He then "turns-over" these obscure "savage" practices by showing them to be a key to rescuing civilization, truth, and order in the Old World. Much as de Certeau sees consciousness as "the price paid" to sustain Bourdieu's theory on the structure of society (Practice 56), here "the *body* is the price paid" (Heterologies 75)--literally devoured by one's enemies--to sustain Montaigne's theory of verifiable speech.

And yet, the outcome of Montaigne's attempts to construct theory are quite different from Bourdieu's, and lead de Certeau to reflect on the possibility of a new kind of writing that challenges the hegemony of scientific writing and the new scriptural economy rather than reinforces it. To illustrate, we will contrast de Certeau's synopses of the way the two theorists conclude their essays. De Certeau summarizes his reading of Bourdieu's study in terms of an increasing aggressivity and violence toward the practices he describes: "The subtle descriptions of Béarnian or Kabylian tactics suddenly give way to *violently* imposed truths, as if the complexity so lucidly examined required the *brutal* counterpoint of a dogmatic reason" (Practice 59, emphasis mine). According to de Certeau, Bourdieu "imprisons" everyday practices within the concept of *habitus* in order to repress their subversive tactics and to secure the foundation of scientific order (60).

On the other hand, de Certeau finds in Montaigne a final submission, a recognition of his failure to (en)force his hoped for conclusion--the shoring up of the symbolic order. Whereas Bourdieu sets out to question scientific rationality and ends up sustaining it, Montaigne, on the contrary, begins his essay intending to defend truth and order, but surrenders instead, concluding that they cannot be preserved. Consequently, de Certeau summarizes his reading of Montaigne's essay in terms of a courageous loss, rather than a violent conquest:

> ...in the passage from the medieval world to the cannibal, a loss of content and a move away from the truth of the world (something *said*) toward the courage to support one's word (a *saying*)--a move from *dogmatism* founded upon a true discourse to an ethic which produces the heroic poem... There is no longer any 'extraordinary' and presumptuous assurance (like those of the priests and prophets) of *detaining a truth* that is 'beyond our ken;' what there is instead is the duty to *keep one's word* in a 'triumphant loss.' (Heterologies 77)

As de Certeau sees it, Bourdieu's "aggressive" theory violently imposes truth on tactics, while, in contrast, Montaigne's less brutal attempts to reinstall order and truth fail, leading Montaigne to acknowledge this failure or "triumphant loss." The model he tries to construct of a New World ethic to be translated to the Old World slips within his own writing, first, as he acknowledges the sacrifice of the body as the precondition for verifiable speech, then as he concedes the difficulty and errors of translation and interpretation of that speech from one culture to another, again with the impact of his own altering marks, and finally, with the alterations the reader makes to his text.

However, Montaigne's acknowledgement of the failure of language and writing to capture truth and human reality does, as de Certeau concludes, begin a new form of writing: "The savage ethic of speech opens the way for a Western ethic of writing--a writing sustained by the impossible Word at work within the text. If one cannot be a cannibal, there is still the option of lost-body writing" (79). This form of writing that he calls lost-body writing challenges that writing which forms the basis of the sciences and the scriptural economy, by writing about scientific writing, about the way bodies are sacrificed (written on and inscribed), and about the way the ordinary, everyday practices

of individuals and groups are manipulated and repressed to make it possible. At the same time that lost-body writing openly questions the legitimacy of discourse that relies on exclusion and erasure of human involvement, it also asserts individual agency by bringing the body and its subversive practices to the forefront of discourse.

Some of the ways that the body emerging in writing can undermine hegemonic discourse are also explored in The Practice of Everyday Life. These bodily practices--memory, spatial stories, orality, and death--can be particularly useful in our study of the new historical novel. Memory is an example of an everyday practice that can wreak havoc on the stability of the place of power, according to de Certeau, as its energy springs from its capacity for change and mobility. Although scientific writing establishes a place in order to insure stability and to suppress the element of surprise associated with passing time, memory emerges moving things about, bringing the established order into question, and restoring the relevance of time to the place of power. For de Certeau, memory, like other everyday practices, is closely linked to the body, the space where the past is inscribed. When external events "touch" these spots on the body, memory arises as a response, which is singular in nature, and fleeting. The intense details of bodily memory function as a metonymy of the whole past event through which the forgotten is reconstructed. Nevertheless, each memory is unique as each recall alters it, springing up in stories, daily practices, and even unexpectedly in scientific discourse. According to de Certeau, memory is stagnant only when it ceases to change with each recall, thereby loosing its mobility as it repeats itself. The apparently insignificant details of memory inscribed on the body, can change the fixed nature of history by bringing to light that which has been forgotten or by remembering events in a new way (82-89).

Latin America's new historical novel relies on this disruptive power of memory, as described by de Certeau, to undermine accounts of the past that have become fixed and stagnant, paralyzing the public imagination. These new historical accounts ask the reader to reconsider traditional versions of events and to imagine what may have happened beyond the silences. The bodies of historical figures in these texts bring this questioning about because it is in the body where memory of these silences is stored. In Posse's El largo atardecer del caminante, for example, the aging Cabeza de Vaca examines the reflection of his nude figure in a mirror, "un objeto lleno de conocimientos" (47), and there remembers the past and searches for meaning. What he sees is a body that is constantly changing, treacherous and disloyal, scarred by experience and wrinkled by passing time. And yet, this unreliable body and its practices evoke his hidden past and allow him to write.

Rummaging through his old clothes stored away in trunks like coffins, is another way the narrator prepares to write his memoirs and through them is reacquainted with his many past selves: "Trajes: vestiduras/investiduras/imposturas, como se quiera, pero ya parte de la vida, de la larga vida" (24). Clothing is more than just garments to cover the body for the aging explorer; it is a symbol of authority investing the person who wears the garment with power, as well as a form of deception allowing one to pretend to be what he is not. And yet, even when these garments are worn as disguise they reveal many hidden secrets about the person who wore them as they tell the story of who he hoped or imagined he should be. Writing in his old age for himself rather than for his king, however, Cabeza de Vaca no longer needs to lie or to cover up the truth of his long journey. In a sense he is writing on the blank page as he walked across the continent, divested both of clothing and authority, no longer seeking compensation or power, but

rather honesty and forgiveness. The history Posse's narrator leaves behind tells the stories of the silences in the official version--of his wife, his children, and of his deep involvement with tribal customs, an involvement that to some would amount to heresy and murder. By focusing on Cabeza de Vaca's bodily experiences throughout his narration, Posse imagines what might have been the explorer's personal memories, those that had to be suppressed in his official account, but those that in reality would give meaning to his incredible experience.

As de Certeau would argue, suppressing the body and its experiences is one way to control memory and the stories it might tell. Without the input of the body, memory becomes stagnant and stories of the past can be entombed in the official pages of historiography. The question of what happens when a controversial figure dies and the body continues to live on through embalmment is explored in Tomás Eloy Martínez' historical novel, Santa Evita (1995). The subversive effects of the perpetuated body and its ability to transmit power are evident to all the players involved in trying to seize the embalmed cadaver of Evita Perón and, thus, to seize control of the creation of myths around the historical figure. Bodies tell stories of difference, stories that diverge from and question those told from the places of power.

Spatial stories, for de Certeau, like memory, are closely linked to the body and are a disruptive force in the place of scientific discourse. He considers them to be a sort of "mass transportation" in that they are narrated adventures that link many places together, transforming the stability of *places*, which are determined by their landscapes and immobile objects, into *spaces*, intersecting geographies created by the movements and operations of historical subjects. Places are dead, lifeless, and transfixed by stagnant history. Spaces are in motion, constantly changing, and bringing the dead back to life.

According to de Certeau, stories can transform places into spaces or spaces into places. Spatial stories are distinguished by their insistence on remembering the activity that linked places together to create space and propel the inanimate into action (115-18). On the other hand, stories can reestablish place by the "putting to death (or putting into a landscape) of heroes who transgress frontiers and who, guilty of an offense against the law of place, best provide its restoration with their tombs" (118). De Certeau argues that encounters between bodies in stories create spaces, appropriating and displacing frontiers and bridges, the first a figure in which points of contact and disjunction between two subjects are indistinguishable, the second a figure which simultaneously liberates subjects and exposes them to alien intervention and loss of autonomy. Yet, it is this lack of respect for places brought about by bodies in movement and disrupting the established order that leads de Certeau to call spatial stories a "form of social delinquency" (129-30), another way everyday practices resist the domination of the place of power.

In traditional historical novels as in stories of place, bodies in motion and crossing borders, may, for a time, undermine the place of power. But later, as de Certeau points out, these same bodies restore order and stability to place with their tombs, as they become part of the immobile landscape. Enriquillo is a clear example of the reestablishment of place by the "putting to death" or "putting into landscape" of the hero. After capitulating to Carlos V, according to the novel, Enrique, his wife, and members of his tribe retire to Bahoruco, where along the foothills of the mountains they establish the town of Boyá. Soon thereafter Enriquillo dies and is buried near the lake that will "eternally perpetuate" his name: "Este nombre vive y vivirá eternamente: un gran lago lo perpetúa con su denominación geográfica" (287). The rebel's body is buried; his name and meaning are fixed. Enriquillo is made motionless as part of the landscape, and

ultimately upholds the system of power that, in life, he had attempted to overthrow. History in this story of place is given a firm footing on which to erect a monument to the Indian leader: stilled, no longer rebellious, but rather forever acquiescent in his mythic role as symbol of national reconciliation.

Los recuerdos del porvenir (1962) by Elena Garro, although not a historical novel in a traditional sense, arguably anticipates certain elements of the new historical fictions. In this novel, one of the rebellious heroines becomes landscape and the other provides an example of de Certeau's concept of a spatial story. Julia, a beautiful and yet licentious woman, is the lover of General Rojas whose troops occupy Ixtepec after the Mexican Revolution. To those who live in this small, conservative town, Julia is the source of all evil. Her sins and her promiscuity disrupt the fragile peace between General Rosas and the town's people. When Julia magically escapes Rosas and the confinement of the town with an old lover, she opens up the possibility of escaping for others by pointing to the power of movement, to new places, and to rebellion. In the second part of the novel, members of the community do follow Julia's lead and rebel.

Isabel, who belongs to a prominent family in Ixtepec and is subtly rebellious from the beginning, openly rebels in part two of the novel by becoming General Rosas' second lover in an effort to save her brother and other town's people from execution. Her betrayal, however, is punished at the end of the novel when she becomes a stone inscribed with the memory of her sins:

> Isabel estaba en el centro del día como una roca en la mitad del campo. De su corazón brotaba piedras que corrían por su cuerpo y lo volvían inamovible. "¡A las estatuas de marfil, una, dos, tres...! La frase del juego infantil le llegaba sonora y repetida como una campana. Ella y sus

> hermanos se quedaban fijos al decirla, hasta que alguien a quien habían señalado en secreto pasaba por allí, los tocaba y rompía el encantamiento. Ahora nadie vendría a desencantarla; sus hermanos también estaban fijos para siempre. (292)

The two endings to the two parts of the novel associated with the two heroines clearly illustrate the two types of stories de Certeau describes. On one hand, Isabel's body becomes the rock upon which the town of Ixtepec is founded, permanently immobilized as punishment for her rebellion against the laws of the town. Isabel's story then is one of place in which transgressive heroes are put into landscape to restore order. On the other hand, Julia's is a spatial story for her adventures link places together, disrupt the stability of place, and create movement and rebellion in the town of Ixtepec. In fact, Julia's magical flight from the town is the kind of spatial story that expands with each telling, as it remains open to new endings and to new adventures. Garro's novel anticipates the new historical novel by showing how spatial stories like Julia's, as opposed to stories of place like Isabel's, can revive the past and open history up to new interpretations.

Finally, de Certeau shows in his study why images of death and the dying body as they emerge in writing have a particularly subversive impact on discourses of power. When everyday practices, the body, voice, memory, space, and death return in lost-body writing, they incorporate human participation into the historical process and destabilize the scriptural economy and what de Certeau calls its "therapeutic politics" (196). As we have already seen, de Certeau conceives of scientific writing as a way of reforming the "savage" or "wild", that which has not been articulated by language. He also asserts that, linked to its fervor for reforming and progressive civilization, scientific writing must be opposed to death, which it views as the ultimate defeat and failure. Dying is, for the

scriptural economy, a moment between life and a nothingness that the dying person is becoming, a period of loss of productivity, and thus, in a culture that values instrumentality over all else, a period of immorality. Scientific writing instead embraces a therapeutic politics, a medical model that posits the unending progress of the body, a body that can always be improved, healed and transformed, but also protected from illness, aging and death. The body is like a blank page, according to de Certeau, "on which a scriptural operation can produce indefinitely the advancement of a will-to-do, a progress" (196).

Dying, on the other hand, a practice that cannot be spoken or articulated in language is the ultimate subversive practice. As de Certeau sees it, in the scriptural economy, death and the dying person must be repressed, removed from the realm of everyday experience so as not to hinder production or raise questions about the status of being as doing or making, questions to which the dying person, who is neither productive nor dead, constantly gives rise: "The dying man is the lapse of this discourse. He is, and can only be, ob-scene, hence, censured, deprived of language, wrapped in a shroud of silence: the unnamable" (191). The dying person is outcast, isolated by technology or hospitalized, and there, prohibited from speaking about the act of dying, or of becoming nothing. The cry "I am dying" would be undignified and, besides, would pronounce the failure of the medical system. And yet, for de Certeau, it is these words that the dying man (and the lost-body writer) desires most to pronounce because these words communicate most sincerely the question of what it means to be. So, although de Certeau concedes that death remains unspoken and exiled, it does, as he points out, at times, emerge in scientific discourse as an escapee, implicating the scriptural economy in its imprisonment. Hence, de Certeau argues that when the body emerges *in* writing, rather

than *as* writing (inscribed by society's norms), it disrupts the notion of perpetual progress by exposing the reality of bodies diseased, aging, and dying. Lost-body writing speaks death, the "unnamable", and, so, unveils the myth of scientific writing--its presumed ability to tame what is wild, including nature and the human body, and consequently, to overcome death.

This other kind of writing opposed to scientific discourse--what de Certeau refers to alternately as literature, fiction, or lost-body writing--is where death finds a language. It is "the gesture of a dying man," writing that sees in itself "the movement of being" (195), in that, writing begins with an absence or loss (of voice and identity), tries to recapture presence (the voice and the body) with a sign, but that presence repeatedly eludes it, as writing gradually moves toward death, acknowledging the inevitability of that which cannot be said. This writing can be distinguished from scientific discourse, according to de Certeau, by its subject matter that is "no longer dealing with the objects produced by the scriptural operation, it takes as its subject this operation itself" (197). In writing about writing, it points to the way the myths of the scriptural economy are created, and how the emergence of the body and death can disrupt them. In lost-body writing, the notion that writing can represent and reform reality by articulating it as a text is no longer believable, as it posits evidence of the wasting away of the body. De Certeau describes the return of the body in writing not just as a reminder of human mortality and decay, but also as an erotic act, an intermingling of desire for both life and death:

> The body *writes* itself therein, but as an ecstasy arising from a wound inflicted by the other, as the "expenditure" of a pleasure that is indissociable from the ephemeral, as the elusive vanishing point that links

"excess" to the mortal... the body returns as the *instant*, the simultaneity of life and death: both of them in the same place. (197)

Lost-body writing tears down the walls of the isolated place assigned to death by scientific discourse and frees this subversive practice to reenter the discourse of life. Lost-body writing concedes that the presence of the voice and the body, which it tries to capture, still eludes it, at the same time, it both alters and is altered by its attempt to articulate this presence. Hence, the erotic nature of lost-body writing, as it desires what it admittedly cannot have, a desire that in turn stimulates its production (150-51).[25]

Figures of illness, death and the dying are a persistent leitmotif in the new historical novel. There are dead narrators in Boullosa's El médico de los piratas (1992), and Son vacas, somos puercos (1991), in Roa Bastos' Vigilia del Almirante (1992), and in Carlos Fuentes El naranjo (1993). Narrators nearing death appear in Carpentier's El arpa y la sombra (1979), Saer's El entenado (1983), Boullosa's Duerme (1994), Posse's El largo atardecer del caminante (1992), Fuentes' La muerte de Artemio Cruz (1962), and Fernando del Paso's Noticias del Imperio (1994). González Echevarría argues, in fact, that death is the "founding trope" representing the limits of knowledge and power in contemporary archival fictions (Myth and Archive 186). An example he uses to illustrate this point is that of García Márquez' Cien años de soledad (1967). As Aureliano Babelonia deciphers the final pages of Melquíades' manuscript to discover the secret knowledge of the Buendía family's degenerative history, "all the ants of the world" are devouring the last Buendía, the monstrous child that is the fruit of many years of incest. The futile search for self-knowledge that marked each successive generation of Buendías comes to an end with the death of the last Buendía and with the windstorm that carries Aureliano Babelonia from the face of the earth just as he finishes deciphering the

parchments and at the very moment he grasps a clear understanding of the knowledge he had been seeking. As González Echevarría points out, in Cien años de soledad, the realization of knowledge and death occur simultaneously. For the Cuban critic, novelistic narrative arises in Latin America, not to mimic European literary movements, but rather hegemonic discourses, revealing through mimicry its false claims to knowledge and truth through which its gains power. Similar to de Certeau's notion of death emerging in writing to reveal the scriptural economy's myths of knowledge and power, death as a trope for González Echevarría, subverts hegemonic discourse and its claims to authority, exposing the limitations of writing's access to knowledge.

In conclusion, de Certeau's theoretical insights in The Practice of Everyday Life facilitate an examination of the ethical implications of writing that produces knowledge at the price of the body and the natural world. Furthermore, de Certeau's study provides important insights with which to analyze the subversive role that bodies play in Latin America's new historical novel, and points to an alternative to repressive forms of writing, to lost-body writing. Lost-body writing materializes bodies and their everyday activities, exposes the violence to which bodies are subjected by the discourses of power, reveals how the individual can escape their repressive strategies, and does not overlook or conceal the violence or destructive impulse inherent in its own process of inscription. The framework we have established using de Certeau's The Practice of Everyday Life provides this study with a broad, overarching theory with which to articulate the relationship between body, writing, and violence. It is not meant, however, to exhaust the possibilities of body theory, but rather to posit a larger structure within which the body emerging in discourse can be studied. The chapters that follow engage the thinking of other body theorists, such as that of Mikhail Bakhtin, Michel Foucault, and Elaine Scarry,

as they analyze the tactics of lost-body writing and explore the ways in which the contemporary historical novel in Latin America deals with the ethical dilemma of writing the body in discourse.

In the following chapter, I read the Puerto Rican Edgardo Rodríguez Juliá's carnivalesque version of history in La renuncia del héroe Baltasar in terms that link de Certeau's theories on the body with those of Bakhtin. Bakhtin, like de Certeau, recognizes the body's disruptive force, its ability to subvert hegemonic discourses and to challenge their claims to knowledge and to power. According to Bakhtin it is, in particular, the carnival body, the body of grotesque realism, that undermines established hierarchies, brings about the destruction of established orders, and that allows for a new order to be ushered in.

Chapter 2: Carnival Destruction and Self-Definition in La renuncia del héroe Baltasar

> Expect no further word or sign
> from me.
> Your own will is whole,
> upright, and free
> and it would be wrong not to do
> as it bids you,
>
> therefore I crown and miter
> you over yourself.
> --Dante, The Divine Comedy

In his groundbreaking study, Myth and Archive: A Theory of Latin American Narrative (1990), Roberto González Echevarría argues that contemporary Latin American narrative wants to free itself from the hegemonic discourse that dominates the collective imagination. The Cuban critic asserts that the Latin American writer is looking for "a clearing in the jungle," a place where the writer can escape the yoke of history and of oppressive civilization (3-4). The novel La renuncia del héroe Baltasar (1974), by the Puerto Rican author Edgardo Rodríguez Juliá, expresses this desire to clear the (neo)colonizers' history from the discursive landscape and to reconstruct a new historic vision that is more faithful to colonial reality. Through the voice of his protagonist, Baltasar, Rodríguez Juliá proposes that carnival tactics and destruction are one way of erasing the history and myths propagated in the literature, architecture, visual arts, and other ideological constructs produced by the (neo)colonizers. In this chapter I demonstrate how carnival in the novel not only destroys the power of hegemonic discourse but also how it allows for the creation of a new historical perspective and a redefinition of Puerto Rican culture. In addition to the antagonistic relationship between colonizer and colonized, Rodríguez Juliá examines in La renuncia parallel relationships of authority such as author/hero, father/son, self and other, and the discourses that emerge from them. These analogous relationships are problematic in that the struggle for power

and control that emerges within such relationships interferes with the weaker subject's search for originality, agency, and freedom, as he finds himself unable to avert the mastering gaze of the dominant figure. At the root of this struggle is the need to define oneself rather than to be defined by another, and this battle for self-definition is played out on the body. My analysis of the struggle for self-definition in La renuncia, a struggle that occurs on several levels—between the colonizer and the colonized, self and other, and between a writer and his precursors, reveals how carnival and carnival bodies can subvert and overturn these power relations by disrupting representation and the power of the gaze.[26]

The novel takes the form of an academic conference in which an historian reconstructs for his audience the events and maneuvers that bring a young mulatto, Baltasar Montañez, to the highest ranks of power in the colonial government of Puerto Rico in the eighteenth century, and Baltasar's subsequent renouncement of this power. The character Baltasar is not totally fictitious—his origin lies in a legend of the period that tells how a rider, of the same name, on a runaway horse, falls from a precipice and is miraculously uninjured, although the horse he rides is destroyed by the fall. Legend has it that it is in memory of this miracle that the Chapel of Christ in Old San Juan was commissioned to be built on the border of this same precipice.[27] Rodríguez Juliá slightly modifies the legend of the miracle; in the novel, the rider and the horse are both saved from falling to their deaths presumably by divine intervention (10-11).

The rest of the novel's plot becomes increasingly distant from historical reality as Rodríguez Juliá's imagination takes over where history left off. Basing his argument on a series of supposedly historical documents—letters, chronicles, and dispatches—the narrator/historian postulates that the miracle of the runaway horse was staged by Bishop

Larra in collaboration with other government officials as part of a sensational plan to pacify the island's agitated slave population (10-11). After the propagation of the miraculous event throughout the island, Bishop Larra's plan culminates with Baltasar's marriage to Josefina Prats, a young aristocrat and daughter of the current Secretary of State, General Prats, with the purpose of creating "la falsa ilusión de libertad y tránsito social" in the imagination of the island's black population (9). According to the narrator/historian, Baltasar, a willing accomplice, becomes a popular hero for the black masses and, for a time, enjoys the privileges of power. In the same year as his farcical marriage to Josefina, Baltasar is named as the new Secretary of State, replacing his father-in-law, who is imprisoned for his lack of cooperation with Bishop Larra's project. The historian also documents what he interprets as the hero Baltasar's gradually deteriorating mental state, his imprisonment by the Inquisition, the bloody slave uprising on the island due to his detention, and Baltasar's persistent refusal to reassume the power of his position, in spite of the massacre that results because of his renouncement.

Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of the carnivalization of literature reigns in La renuncia, where its destructive force breaks down hierarchical relations, degrades hegemonic discourses, and thus, opens a path in the jungle for the generation of new ways of seeing the world. In his study Rabelais and His World, Bakhtin describes how this early Renaissance writer injects images of carnival into his writing disrupting the discourse of lingering medieval officialdom and its strictly regulated society. For Bakhtin, Rabelais's carnivalization of literature commences a practice of writing that ridicules authoritative discourse, inverts hierarchies, and celebrates bodily excesses:

> Rabelais' images have a certain nonofficial nature. No dogma, no authoritarianism, no narrow-minded seriousness can coexist with

> Rabelaisian images; these images are opposed to all that is finished and polished, to all pomposity, to every ready-made solution in the sphere of thought and world outlook. (Rabelais 3)

Rabelais' carnival is characterized in particular by the dominance of the material body in its most fleshy, carnal state, and by the lack of repression of the most basic bodily functions from eating and drinking to having sex and defecating. The importance of this exaggerated presence of the body, which Bakhtin calls "grotesque realism," is in its capacity to degrade, to topple the high, to exalt the low, and to destroy barriers of all kinds, especially those between observers and participants in the festivities (Rabelais 18-30). According to Bakhtin, carnival obeys its own "peculiar logic of the 'inside out,' of the 'turnabout,' of a continual shifting from the top to the bottom, from front to rear, of numerous parodies and travesties, humiliations, profanations, comic crownings and uncrownings..." (Rabelais 11).

It should be noted that Bakhtin's notion of carnival and the carnival body is quite similar to de Certeau's thinking on the emergence of the body in discourse. Both theorists assert that bodies have the power to disrupt authoritative writing and to deconstruct power relations. However, Bakhtin's more narrow focus on the grotesque body's transgressive potential circumscribes his theory's applications to carnivalesque literature. In contrast, as will be seen in later chapters, de Certeau's more expansive view of the subversive power of the body in a wide range of manifestions makes it possible to analyze in terms of the body other forms of literature beyond the grotesque and carnivalesque. Nevertheless, in the analysis of La renuncia, a novel in which carnival logic and degradation upend several types of hierarchical relations including colonized/colonizer, self/other, and writer/precursor, Bakhtin's concentration on the

carnivalesque proves to be particularly productive and revealing as a supplement to de Certeau's broader formulations.

In the plot of La renuncia the carnivalesque turnabout begins with Bishop Larra's plan to marry Baltasar to Josefina Prats and to install him in the post of Secretary of State. Elevating the illiterate, former slave to the highest civilian position in the colonial government and pairing him with the most desirable female member of the white, aristocratic elite blurs hierarchical distinctions and sets carnival logic in motion. Bakhtin points to the mock crowning of the carnival king (and his immanent decrowning, already contained within the act of crowning) as the exordium to carnival festivities, and at whose very core lies "the carnival sense of the world—the pathos of shifts and changes, of death and renewal" (Dostoevsky 124). Baltasar, La renuncia's carnival king, is temporarily raised up from slave to ruler and lavished with opulence and power. However, with his subsequent decrowning, he is dashed down again to depths from which he refuses to rise. Baltasar's crowning and decrowning, carnival acts that Bakhtin calls "ambivalent rituals," symbolize the inevitability of change and of death, but also of renewal (Dostoevsky 124-25). As we shall see further on, Baltasar rejoices in the death and decimation that result from his renouncement because he believes, with a sort of carnival logic, that total destruction represents the supreme act of liberation (95).

Baltasar heightens the carnival mood of the plot when he decides to celebrate his marriage by dragging his new wife in her wedding attire through the slaves' district, where she is forced to drink, dance, and romp about in the mud with the revelers as she is fondled and subjected to a week of humiliations (26-27). The carnival body continues to dominate the plot when Baltasar, after assuming his position in the government, enjoys the fruits of power, in particular, easy access to willing women, by indulging in orgies

that are captured for posterity in a series of erotic illustrations by the leprous artist, Juan Espinosa (56-69). In addition, Baltasar's carnivalesque invention, "el Jardin de los Infortunios," the Garden of Misfortunes, which is designed to be a new defensive system for the island, is a travesty of the established system of fortress walls. The labyrinthine garden, full of all manner of deadly games and traps, poisonous bugs and natural disasters, recalls a carnival funhouse with its slanting floors, hidden doors, and distorting mirrors. Nature and the garden are no longer associated with the innocence and tranquility of Eden, but rather are parodically transformed into their polar opposites, evil and warfare, and recall the depiction of hell in Hieronymus Bosch's triptych, "The Garden of Earthly Delights" (47-51). According to the historian/narrator, the artist, Juan Espinosa, meets his untimely demise in the garden, consumed by a large crab (69).

Once the Inquisition imprisons Baltasar for his "falso culto a Jardines" (70), his false cult to gardens--a maneuver that destroys the myths of racial harmony and of the possibility of upward-mobility for blacks on the island--all mayhem breaks loose. Bakhtin argues that the ritual of decrowning, when the former king is stripped of his regalia and the vestments of power, reveals with extreme clarity "the image of constructive death," and reminds us of the relativity of all things (Dostoevsky, 125). Baltasar's "decrowning" leads to carnival violence in which images of death abound. The slave population rebels, massacring slaveholders and their co-conspirators, leveling the sugar plantations, and with them the established social hierarchies. Although the extent of the violence may seem to preclude calling these massacres carnivalesque, the tone of the narration by the official government chronicler is indeed comical as he tries to be respectful of the dead in his descriptions, and yet fails miserably:

> La primera dificultad que encontramos al entrar a la galería de la casa fue unos intestinos humanos que, a manera de guardacolas, estaban atadas a las vigas de ausubo del techo. Por fin logramos acceso a la sala principal de aquella que fue tan bella casa... Sobre el piano de la niña Carmencita encontramos la cabeza decapitada del que fue el muy noble Sr. Cambó, y en su boca, embutidos salvajemente, sus órganos pudendos. Tirado sobre el gran sofá de la bella mansión, encontramos el torso desnudo del Sr. Cambó, y había sido colocado en muy obscena postura. Amarrado al trasero del que fuera aquel muy noble y distinguido señor, se encontró la cabeza de su leal capataz negro. (80-81)

In fact, the chronicler's discourse is itself carnivalesque, not only because he characterizes human intestines as "guardacolas," a cordon demarcating the pathway to a theater entrance, and describes the intimate details of the placement of body parts as if they were props in a play, but also as he leaves the role of the observer to participate in the carnival itself. Thus, in attempting to restore each member of the family's body parts, spread about the plantation, to its rightful person, the chronicler compares the breasts of the dead older woman to those of her dead teenage daughter: "Baste decir que sus pechos, ya flácidos por los años y no tan firmes como los de la niña Carmencita, fueron colocados en la sopera de su bellísima vajilla de plata, y su cabeza espetada al alto cocuyo de la palma real" (82). Of course, unnecessary details such as the withered and flabby state of the older woman's breasts as compared to the firm breasts of her daughter, and the beauty of the silver serving dish in which her breasts had been placed, add dark humor to what would otherwise be a morbid description. Furthermore, the discourse places the chronicler himself within the sphere of carnival as he participates in collecting body parts

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and in matching them to the appropriate person. The chronicler's official discourse looses all pretense of seriousness as carnival's blurring of boundaries between bodies, and between participant and spectator, reaches the height of confusion.

Through a series of letters Bishop Larra tries to convince Baltasar to reassume his position of power and thus, bring an end to the violence (86-100). When these attempts fail, the Bishop appeals to Baltasar's bodily appetites to tempt him into returning to the government palace, and thereby initiates a new round of carnival activity (102-8). First, he offers Baltasar six beautiful women, and next, a carnival feast. These "offerings" are brought to the prison from the Bishop's palace in a long procession accompanied by large throngs of people who have come to wish the Bishop well in his "holy" efforts. The chronicler of the event does not fail to emphasize the Bishop's diligence in fulfilling his duties:

> "El lugarteniente de la poderosísima fortaleza presentó llaves de guarnición al Obispo Larra, quien asistió personalmente al cuido de las bellas doncellas que servían de señuelo, y ello para avivar la misericordia de Nuestro muy querido Señor Baltasar. ¡Muy atento el pastor a las dulces ovejas que traerían a rebaño a la muy descarriada! (103-4)

Once again, carnival activities bring about the inversion of official hierarchies, when this man of the cloth facilitates the deflowering of his congregation's finest maidens. The boundary between the profane and the sacred is eliminated.

The chronicler also becomes involved in the Bishop's carnival orgy, as the events he witnesses provoke his desire, and so, blur the boundaries between the writer and the object of representation: "Una vez que el Obispo hizo la presentación ante el Excelentísimo Secretario de Gobierno, se procedió a mostrarle al renuente enajenado las

muy sabrosas partes de aquellas hembras que inflamaron todos los masculinos corazones, y digo que también otras partes pertinentes" (104). Whereas, in traditional representation desire circulates among the characters represented, here sexual desire leaves the frame of representation and involves the writer himself, a carnivalesque turnabout that erases the boundary between participant and spectator, and degrades authoritative historiographic discourse. The Bishop's efforts to tempt Baltasar also arouse the chronicler's gastronomic desire, as is evident in the following carnivalesque passage that describes one course of the succulent feast:

> La bandeja de mariscos guardó particular atracción para mi persona: allí vi ricas almejas aderezadas con limón; merluzas y sierras aderezadas con una salsa roja tan picante como deliciosa, y bien generosa en cebolla; y mi gloria de vista, ya que no de paladar, se excedía con una langosta muy confitada con dulce salsa de papaya. Pero aquello era un laberinto de gustos sutiles que jamás se agotaba... (106)

The chronicler's description of this "carnaval de sabores" is so detailed and lavish that it manages to kindle the hunger of the reader as well, thus broadening the realm of carnival beyond the text (108).

In La renuncia, carnival spares no pretense to authority or knowledge, not even that of history itself. Rodríguez Juliá represents the process of writing about the past as a comedy of errors at every level of the process of "knowing." In fact, the form of the novel itself is a parody of history and of historiography. Parody, for Bakhtin, is alien to "pure" genres such as epic, tragedy, and historiography, but "organically inherent" in carnivalized genres (Dostoevsky 127), such as Latin America's new historical novel, exemplified by La renuncia. Thus, Rodríguez Juliá does not write the novel in its

traditional form, ordering the plot in chapters, rather La renuncia pretends to be an objective investigation, the academic presentation of the historian/narrator's research. The narrator's seemingly detailed investigation, and careful documentation of dates and names convince the reader that the novel, indeed, has an historic basis. Furthermore, the documents he cites during the course of his presentation are written in the complex style of the period. In her article "Exploring Conscious Imitation of Style," Estelle Irizarry uses a computer to prove the convincing authenticity of the historic documents' baroque language. Comparing the fictitious documents with actual chronicles of the period, Irizarry finds the same exaggerated style, the excessive use of superlatives and of the word "muy," and the archaic vocabulary characteristic of the period.

Nevertheless, with the exception of the legend of Baltasar Montañez, the characters, the events and the social environment presented in the novel do not correspond to the island's official historiography.[28] In his Historia general de Puerto Rico (1988), Fernando Picó comments that in spite of the successes of the slave rebellions in Haiti during the same period, slaves in Puerto Rico escaped their bonds individually and in groups as the principal form of resistance instead of making recourse to violent rebellion (153). Thus, the novel's apocalyptic scenes of violent slave rebellions and massacres parody Puerto Rico's somewhat uneventful, "official" colonial history. The novel violates historic "truth" in order to reinvigorate the past, to undermine received history, and to force the reader to question monologic historiography and the cultural identity imposed by its discourse. The novel's author himself confesses that, in writing the novel, his intentions were carnivalesque: "Decidí inventarme un siglo XVIII que fuera como una pesadilla de la historia puertorriqueña. Las pesadillas también hablan de la realidad ("A mitad de camino" 132). By carnivalizing preserved history, by making a

"nightmare" out of Puerto Rico's past, Rodríguez Juliá's novel frees the past from the hegemonic discourse of the (neo)colonizers, and allows Puerto Ricans to write their own history and to redefine themselves.[29]

In addition to his parody of historical events, Rodríguez Juliá carnivalizes the historiographic model upon which Western culture bestows the power of truth, and thus, ridicules the authority and the legitimacy of this discourse. The Puerto Rican writer achieves this "decrowning" of historiography by displaying the process of writing history, revealing many of the erroneous presuppositions that underlie the conventional conception of the genre. First, the historical documents in the novel are full of lies and constructed "facts" that the historian/narrator himself acknowledges: "Larra disimuló, con cuidadoso dolo, un acuerdo pactado con Baltasar... Las palabras de su carta al Secretario General Prats están llenas de falsedad y engaño" (27). Many documents in the historian's presentation contradict one another, while others are fabricated under Bishop Larra's direction, as can be seen in a letter from the cleric to his new chronicler:

> En esta crónica testada por El confeso de la calavera se hace muy notable la ausencia del Secretario del Gobierno Prats. Reconozco mi torpísima distracción protocolaria al no emitir órdenes de índole muy particular sobre tan grave asunto; pero, a todos los modos, el culpable de dicho testimonio será muy castigado... El único consuelo que a esta hora nos resta es que mi secretario de cámara... ha comenzado testimonio nuevo sobre el notable suceso. (17-18)

Still other documents are mutilated and therefore incomplete, preserving only a portion of their original text. In the novel these misleading and fragmentary documents give

testimony to the textual and interpretive quality of history and to the impossibility of finding historical truth.

Furthermore, it would be difficult to overlook how the historian/narrator, who compiles and interprets these documents, exposes his own prejudices that, none too subtly, color his interpretation of events. For example, when referring to Baltasar's wife, he calls her "la niña Josefina," the child Josefina and "la muy delicada Josefina," the very delicate Josefina. However, he uses terms like "borracha," drunken, "ebria," intoxicated, and "frenética," frenetic, to describe the black population. Rodríguez Juliá demonstrates through this parody of historigraphic discourse that the process of writing history is not an objective activity; instead, it is wrapped up in language, which cannot escape value judgments or ideology.[30]

Of course, the ideology that dominates historiographic discourse in the novel is that of the Spanish colonizers (and by analogy, the ideology of the American (neo)colonizers). Spanish colonial ideology is expressed through the manipulation of images in the novel's historical documents. Those that have the power of discourse mold the interpretation of the "other." The ideological frameworks corresponding to eighteenth century Spanish colonial rule are Christianity and Enlightenment rationalism, and the "other" of this discourse is the black population of the island. Therefore, Bishop Larra's correspondence, for example, and many of the chronicles, evoke the image of Satan in relation to the blacks and also compare the slave population to a runaway horse, a symbol of irrationality:

> *La negrada primitiva e idólatra* que pretende violar lo querido por naturaleza y sancionado por Dios Padre Celestial, ha entrado en el cauce que su propia condición le ha signado. Este humilde testigo...ha visto

> cómo el llamado Baltasar Montañez ha recorrido con muy magníficas muestras de culto *los sectores más convulsos por las antiguas rebeliones de Lucifer*. El populacho le rinde culto a este muñeco...e imagina en él la esperanza de cumplimiento del anómalo y *diabólico* deseo de romper cadenas, y de ese modo violar lo dispuesto por el Señor de los cielos... Con habilísimo dolo distrae la *diabólica* violencia con la muy fútil esperanza, mientras mantiene firme las bridas del *desbocado caballo que es su raza*. (12-13, emphasis mine)

In this ideological construct, the Bishop and the colonial government are representatives of God and Reason; the slaves represent Satan and animal savagery. This demonization and animalization of blacks in Bishop Larra's rhetoric justifies slavery in the same way that the Christianization of the Native Americans justified the cruelties of the Spanish conquest of the New World in the official discourse of the Spanish Monarchy. This creation of myths through the molding of language discretely controls the imagination of the colonized and their concept of self. In La renuncia Rodríguez Juliá ultimately fights against this (neo)colonialist discursive manipulation and the imposition of its images on Puerto Rican consciousness through the carnivalization of historiographic discourse.

Finally, it is revealing to note how this historical and scientific conference presentation degenerates into hallucination as the historian narrates the decline in Baltasar's mental state. The historian increasingly depends on non-scientific sources such as erotic drawings by a fictitious artist, and poetic meditations by a writer, who curiously has the same last name as the novelist's great uncle, in order to fill the gaps of history.[31] In a sense, the historian/narrator loses his objectivity and becomes a participant in the carnival atmosphere of Baltasar's world. The technique of using the structure of a

historiographic study with invented footnotes and references recalls Borges' false erudition and his habit of "contaminating reality with dreams" (Rodríguez Monegal 68). The historian/narrator's conference presentation is a carnivalesque vision of historiography, a vision that overturns historiography's authority and so distorts the (neo)colonialist version of history that the Puerto Rican colonial past becomes almost unrecognizable. It is this profanation or degradation of esteemed discourses and hierarchies that carnival proposes in order to "disclose the potentiality of an entirely different world, of another order, another way of life" (Rabelais 48).

On one level, as we have seen, the novel explores Puerto Rico's struggle to define its past and itself as a nation by destroying colonial hegemonic discourse, by using carnival to create a "clearing in the jungle." However, the struggle for self-definition does not occur only on the text's thematic level between the discourse of the imperial state and that of the aspiring nation, but also on the diegetic level with the conflict between father and son, between the figure of the author, Bishop Larra, and his hero, Baltasar, and then again on a formal level with the analogous conflict between Rodríguez Juliá and his literary precursor, Alejo Carpentier. Much as the novelist theorizes that parody and carnival destruction will clear a way through the jungle of oppressive colonial history to create a space for national self-definition, so too must the individual subject use carnival tactics to avert the defining gaze of the other/author and to shape his or her own concept of self. One Caribbean writer and critic, Iris Zavala, suggests that Caribbean writers' use of fantasy facilitates the breaking down of imposed colonial identities and that the struggle for national self-determination is closely linked to the individual subject's learning to "author(ize)" him or herself. According to Zavala, because Caribbean nations must narrate against "the gaze of Ulysses"--the false identities imposed

by the discourses of imperialisms--it is necessary for Caribbean writing to pursue "subjectivity itself in simultaneity with colonial liberation" (193).[32] In La renuncia, Rodríguez Juliá does just that as he explores the search for self on both the individual and national levels.

Baltasar embarks on his struggle for self-determination by negating his father. At the beginning of the conference, the historian/narrator declares that Baltasar's first renouncement takes place the day he marries Josefina Prats, an action whose predetermined outcome implies Baltasar's repudiation of his father (9). Because the purpose of this false union is to cultivate the illusion of racial harmony in a moment of upheaval, Baltasar's agreement to the marriage betrays the revolution that his own father, Ramón Montañez, incites. Baltasar's disloyalty to his father and to his father's cause is his first attempt to formulate a concept of self in contrast to a figure of authority. By negating what his infamous dead father stood for, he frees himself from the paternal bonds that define him. He becomes a conciliator between the warring races while his father was a well-known instigator of the most violent slave rebellion of the century; while his father worked as a stimulant to revolt, the son is a "narcotic" (9).

In order to explore more profoundly Baltasar's struggle for self-definition, I turn to Ann Jefferson's article "Bodymatters: Self and Other in Bakhtin, Sartre, and Barthes." In this article, Jefferson lays out a history of thought concerning the body in intersubjective relations based on the writings of these three thinkers at the forefront of body theory. Each of the three writers is concerned with the body as a site where the struggle between the self and other takes place. Jefferson explains the reason why the body is the center of attention in this conflict: "... since the body is what others see but what the subject does not, the subject becomes dependent upon the other in a way that

ultimately makes the body the focus of a power struggle with far-reaching implications" (153).

As Jefferson shows, the early Bakhtin formulated this relationship between subject and other in terms of artistic activity, specifically in terms of hero and author. Accordingly, the author's role is to give form and wholeness to what the hero experiences as the fragments of his being, and, in particular, of his body, which is not within his vantage point. Jefferson describes the author's activity of giving coherence and wholeness to the hero's body:

> Essentially this authoring is an act of gathering. The author gathers together all the parts of the body that escape the subject's own visual field, "his head, his face and its expression" ("Author and Hero," 25), and then places the resultant entity in the world where for the author (but not, of course, for the hero) the body appears as an object amongst other objects. In short, he transforms the dispersedness of the subject's experience into the assembled whole that makes him a hero. (155)

The hero's construction as a whole is an aesthetic activity, and yet it is an exclusively one-way process; in contrast to the author's activity, the hero is passive and accepting of the author's "gift."

Jefferson shows that Sartre concurs with much of Bakhtin's conception of these intersubjective relations but adds the dimension of the hero/subject's feelings of alienation from the author/other's construction or representation of him. Unlike Bakhtin's passive hero, Sartre's subject struggles against the other's power over him. Jefferson quotes Sartre's negative concept of the other's representation of the subject: "...in Sartre this incarnation (which he calls an image) is a negation (228), a theft (225),

an alienation (263), an enslavement (267); it represents danger (268); it brings shame (261) and fear (259) and is the harbinger of death—'the death of my possibilities' (271)." (159). Jefferson's analysis of the way the later Bakhtin and Barthes deal with this problem of self-determination and the self's possibilities for breaking free from the penetrating gaze of the other by using carnival tactics is particularly relevant to our study of La renuncia.

For Jefferson, Bakhtin's concept of carnival, as developed in his later works on Rabelais and Dostoevsky, undermines the hierarchical relations of representation and questions the specular basis of these relations (165-68). Whereas in representation there is a distinct boundary between authorial observer and the subject represented, in carnival there is no such distinction between spectator/author and actor/hero; in carnival all are participants. Another change in representation brought about by carnival, according to Jefferson, is in the construction of bodies. Bakhtin's notion of a represented or "classical" body is as a completed, closed, and isolated form, whereas the carnival body of grotesque realism lacks boundaries, is open, unfinished or in process. Carnival's blurring of boundaries between individual bodies, between actors and spectators, and between life and death, destroys representation, undermines the power of the author/other over the subject, and leads to the possibility of the subject's self-determination that representation precludes.

Finally, Jefferson interprets Barthes' application of carnival to the processes of writing and reading as another possibility for undermining representation, and returning the power of self-determination to the subject (169-74). Because Barthes imagines the conflict between self and other as a battle of discourses, he also conceives of the solution in terms of language practice. Barthes' other constructs the subject he observes with

language, a linguistic construct that the subject experiences as the "doxa," the already said. For Barthes, according to Jefferson, the best way for the subject to counter the doxa is through the bodily practice of writing:

> In this practice the body's relation to language is altered from being the object of representation to becoming the support and condition of a certain linguistic activity. Or as Barthes rather elliptically puts it, "Writing proceeds through the body [L'écriture passé par le corps]" (Roland Barthes 80). When the body sides with the subject, then it becomes possible to counter the finished and static representations of the doxa, a discourse that Barthes describes as being without a body, even if it takes the body as its object. A doxa is no longer a doxa if it is no longer finished and complete, if its structures open up. The body is a kind of wild-card that slides and also creates slide... (170-71)

Jefferson contends that Barthes' body is a carnivalesque body--fragmented, erotic, and blurring boundaries between self and other, author and subject, and ultimately between reading and writing. The carnival body creates a carnival text that destroys doxa or representation by allowing the body to leave the confines of representation's frame, an effect that Barthes calls figuration. In leaving the frame, bodies and their desires are no longer imprisoned in the text, but instead circulate with bodies outside of representation's frame, and thereby reconstruct representation's specular subject-object relations (171-72).

Carnival's redefining of the specular relations of representation is apparent throughout Rodriguez Juliá's novel, as we have seen in the chroniclers' discourses, and as we will now examine in Baltasar's struggle to formulate his own concept of self. Baltasar's most bitter conflict for self-determination rages between him and Bishop Larra.

As the Bishop is, in many ways, the author of Baltasar, the creator of his legend and the man who gave him power, Baltasar, the mythic hero, is beholden to him, obliged to act out the part written for him.[33] Within this story, the hero Baltasar is what de Certeau calls a "bridge" figure, a character whose body, like a bridge, both frees a subject by allowing him to explore new places, and exposes him to alien intervention and loss of autonomy (Practice of Everyday Life 126-29). In the novel, it is Bishop Larra who, in fact, "constructs" Baltasar as a bridge between the blacks on the island and the white elite. Baltasar appears to be a coherent whole, a well-structured building, an accomplishment that the Bishop boasts of in his writings: "*Su bien arreglada fachada* de emancipador le conviene a su persona; pero también—y ello por orden natural y no sutil dolo político—a nuestra santificada monarquía" (13, emphasis mine). Baltasar, accepts the Bishop's "gift," and allows himself to become the Bishop's construct as a way to achieve personal power, wealth, and status. However, like a bridge, the freedom that he wins comes at a cost—his self-determination. Baltasar's body becomes the Bishop's text, as the Bishop scripts his movements and activities, and inscribes him with meaning. Just as the Bishop intended, Baltasar's marriage to Josefina represents the myths of peace between the races and of social mobility for blacks.

Although at first Baltasar plays his part, he becomes increasingly uncomfortable with his status as the passive protagonist/hero of the Bishop's narrative, and takes action to impose meanings of his own invention. As Jefferson interprets Sartre's position with regard to this conflict, the hero, alienated from the author/other's representation of him, responds with a representation of his own making, either one more favorable to himself, or one that makes the other/author the object of his representation (164). Baltasar

responds first by figuring the other in a representation he authors, and then with carnival tactics, in his attempt to free himself from the discourse imposed upon him.

Baltasar's alienation from his constructed image first becomes apparent to the narrator/historian when he uncovers a draft of an official chronicle, describing the wedding ceremony, to which changes have been made in the margins of the text. The historian first suspects that these marginal annotations, which insert the presence of General Prats at his daughter's wedding to Baltasar, are made by Bishop Larra, knowing that such a glaring omission could bring into question the veracity of his narrative. With further research and careful reading, however, it becomes clear to the narrator that these exaggerated annotations were written by none other than Baltasar himself:

> Ahora bien, nuestra cuidadosa lupa sigue esclareciendo misterios: Las adiciones hechas a la crónica de Oviedo se las atribuimos a Baltasar Montañez. La grafía de estas adiciones corresponde a la de varios manuscritos de Baltasar que conservamos. El estilo es el de Baltasar: ampuloso, retórico, resultado de una asimilación cultural precipitada... Baltasar exageraba el estilo hiperbólico de la intelectualidad española del siglo XVIII. Aquel estilo dieciochesco que Heltfeld llamó "crepúsculo del barroco", se convierte bajo su insegura pluma, en una exageración de lo ya desmesurado... (18-19)

With this discovery, the narrator/historian speculates about Baltasar's motives for making these changes to the manuscript, and concludes that Baltasar craves his father-in-law's acceptance. General Prat's absence from the wedding and his subsequent imprisonment underline his sheer disgust with the Bishop's plan and the dishonor he believes that the marriage to Baltasar brings to his daughter and his family. The General's actions provoke

feelings of inferiority in Baltasar and lead him to construct his own modified narrative of the wedding in which Prats is present and glowing in all of his glory, in Baltasar's words: "¡Bello adorno de la autoridad insular!... Allí despedía luz para todos los siglos venideros. ¡Este gran señor de nuestras Indias!" (19). The offending representation is replaced by another authored by Baltasar, and yet this second version of events does little to free him from the mastering gaze of the elitist other, as the response remain within the specular confines of representation. Baltasar's incitement of carnival festivities, however, does open the way to his self-determination.

After his marriage, Baltasar's inferiority complex, which stems from the Bishop's power over his construction of self, prevents him from consummating his marriage to Josefina. It is, in particular, Josefina's gaze that horrifies Baltasar, the fear that, in his pleasure, her eyes will express disgust. In his diary Baltasar writes, "Y es por ello que temo al treparla una muy *glácida mirada* de odio que me haga notar la debilidad de mi intento" (55, emphasis mine). The power of Josefina's gaze to master Baltasar, to define him as weak or impotent, similar to Bishop Larra's narrative, alienates him and threatens to deny him the possibility of self-definition. According to the narrator/historian's reading of Baltasar's diary, Josefina's anticipated look of revulsion would be Baltasar's ultimate humiliation, and so he "renounces" his wife's body:

> Renunció carnalmente a su bella esposa; la relación carnal con ella lo convertiría en poderoso humillado por el desprecio del débil. Y esa posibilidad de humillación surgía de su más profundo estrato sicológico: el miedo a una latente inclinación a reconocerse como inferior ante el amo blanco. El cuerpo de Josefina se convirtió en "tentación de inferioridad", según sus propias palabras. (54)

However, Baltasar fears that the mere act of renouncing his wife's flesh might in itself be viewed as recognition of his inferiority. Therefore, he ingeniously invents a method to humble Josefina, to bring her down a notch, so to speak, without degrading himself. His method, with a carnivalesque twist, deconstructs the power of the gaze.

Recent body theory, and in particular the work of Michel Foucault has focused on vision as a tool of power and as a means for controlling bodies. According to Foucault, panoptic practices, society's techniques of surveillance, produce a disciplined body, a body fabricated by a network of power relations.[34] In the novel, the fictitious poet, Alejandro Juliá Marín, who the historian/narrator frequently cites to document his presentation, describes an oppressive landscape of eyes through which man must pass: "Son los ojos del poder, que acechan al hombre--apenas nacido y con la tripa de madre aún enroscada en el vientre--y lo pasean por todo este grande paisaje de esclavitud que los antiguos llamaron el laberinto del buen orden" (61). Certainly, this concept of the gaze, as the wielding of power, penetrating, probing and mastering other bodies, describes Baltasar's feeling of objectification as both Bishop Larra's passive representation, and as the object of Josefina's hate-filled gaze. However, Baltasar is able to undermine the power of the gaze by using his awareness of others' looking at him to make them participants in his carnival-like activities—his orgies, his obsessions, and his meditations. By looking, Josefina and Bishop Larra become involved in Baltasar's carnival beyond the mere act of observing or seeing. The newly crowned carnival king knows that sight is not a sense isolated from the rest of the body, or a disembodied perception. On the contrary, sight functions in conjunction with other bodily senses, and in turn stimulates the entire body. Baltasar takes advantage of this more complex understanding of the gaze to incite

carnival, which in turn, overturns power relations in the novel, allowing Baltasar to regain a sense of power over his own construction of self.

Baltasar begins the carnival process of deconstructing the gaze of the other by installing a "mirilla" or peephole in the walls between Josefina's bedroom and Baltasar's "retiro de placer" (55), or chamber of pleasure. In order to draw Josefina to the mirilla, Baltasar also installs small speakers that carry the sounds of Baltasar's lovemaking into Josefina's room. In this way he tempts Josefina to look at him, to observe his body in the throws of pleasure with his lovers. In other words, rather than avoiding the gaze of the other, Baltasar purposefully draws the gaze of the other to him by appealing to another bodily sense, sound, which consequently attracts yearning eyes, and involves the whole body in the erotic scene. The narrator/historian quotes from Baltasar's diary to reveal the desired effect of this system of imposed surveillance on Josefina:

> '...y será esta mirilla la permanente tentación en aquellas fantaseosas noches cuando mediando los oidores su mente inventará los más deliciosos y rizados placeres de la carne. Oirá los rumores, el vivísimo jadeo que emiten los cuerpos convulsos por el inmenso placer que es el de la carne, y entonces deseará unirse a la orgía; pero será posible sólo por la mirada, y será ésta su dulce humillación, la que doblega su cuerpo a mi gran voluntad sin yo sufrir la persecución de sus ojos. Se logrará nuestro amor conyugal en un solitario placer que se debe a la música celestial de mi acompañada frenesí'. (55-56)

Baltasar envisions that Josefina will first be beckoned to the peephole by what she hears, where she will become transfixed by what she sees. Seduced by the lovemaking she observes, Josefina will imagine herself participating in the orgy and, in this way, in

Baltasar's mind, the marriage will be consummated without his suffering the mastery of her gaze. Instead Josefina's lustful gaze will lead to her own involvement in the orgiastic experience. The controlling gaze of the other, then, reverses its effect and becomes a way of drawing the observer in as a participant in what she observes.

Through a series of five carnivalesque drawings by the fictitious artist, Juan Espinosa, the narrator/historian shows how the peephole achieves its desired effect, disrupting the power of the gaze and making not only Josefina, but also Bishop Larra and other characters participants in Baltasar's constructed scenes of debauchery. Each of the five drawings that the historian describes is a triptych featuring the bedrooms of Baltasar and Josefina, and the office of Bishop Larra. Poetic meditations, written by Juliá Marín, follow the historian/narrator's descriptions of each of the erotic scenes. In the first three triptychs the narrator describes Baltasar with many different women in various states of sexual rapture, while in the adjoining room Josefina shows increasing interest in the sexual activity next door (56-62). In the third triptych Josefina masturbates while watching Baltasar through the peephole. Clearly, with the description of these drawings the historian reveals how Baltasar's strategy for reversing the power of Josefina's gaze works just as he had planned. Once attracted to the peephole, Josefina participates in Baltasar's orgy. The power is no longer in the eyes of the observer, but rather in him who is being observed.

Nonetheless, it is the carnivalesque depictions of Bishop Larra in these drawings that are particularly amusing and revealing as they show his incremental evolution from observer to participant in Baltasar's erotic activity. Indeed, Baltasar manages to reverse the mastering gaze of the Bishop through his confessional, which instead of producing a disciplined body, seduces the Bishop himself. Foucault sees the confessional as a space

where the speaker is transformed from bad to good by speaking about his acts that contravened the laws of God. By granting forgiveness, the priest--in whom resides what Foucault calls the "agency of domination" (History of Sexuality 62)--realigns the speaker's desires from illegitimate to legitimate, normalizing him and eliminating his transgressive potential. However, in La renuncia the Bishop's confessional produces the opposite outcome: the figure of authority, the Bishop, is himself transformed by the discourse of confession as the speakers' desires and transgressions become his own. In the series of drawing the Bishop is depicted first as calibrating peepholes for himself and for his page and housekeeper, then presiding over a confessional with a penis-like shepherd's crook in his hand, and finally, participating in an orgy with his two servants. A poetic meditation entitled "El coleccionista," alludes to the Bishop in the confessional, who excitedly awaits the arrival of confessors with their stories of sexual encounters: "...se anima la carne tras el poder, esperando el testimonio de ajenas delicias, guardando en cofrecillos de oro esos gemidos, que son los más preciados trofeos de su infinita, catedralicia colección de pasiones" (62). Although Baltasar is, in the beginning, the Bishop's "hero" or construct, his carnivalesque maneuvers invert the relations of power. While the Bishop becomes a participant in the carnival scenes that Baltasar creates, Baltasar becomes his own author.

The final two drawing in the series of five depict Baltasar's gradual evolution from Bishop Larra's hero in the creation of myths to a contemplative figure aware of his need for self-determination (62-69). While the drawings show Josefina and the Bishop's increasing involvement in the carnival orgies, they also depict Baltasar's loss of interest in the sexual activity that he instigates and his emergent infatuation with the natural landscape, el Jardín de los Infortunios, just outside of his bedroom window. The artwork

reveals Baltasar's growing realization that his eroticism is also a construct, a myth that stands in the way of his own search for self. Juliá Marín's poetic meditation interpreting these final drawings reflects on eroticism as an obstacle to creative thought and Baltasar's awakening to this fact: "Del cielo bajaron muñecas con agujeros placenteros. Esto entretuvo a los hombres... El ingenio no tuvo un momento de soledad creadora, las muñecas hastiaban; despertó de nuevo la fastidiosa curiosidad" (64). According to Octavio Paz, eroticism is, in fact, a form of social control over human sexual instinct:

> ...el erotismo es sexualidad socializada, sometida a las necesidades del grupo, fuerza vital expropiada por la sociedad. Inclusive en sus manifestaciones destructoras--la orgía, los sacrificios humanos, las mutilaciones rituales, la castidad obligatoria--el erotismo se inserta en la sociedad y afirma sus fines y principios... el erotismo defiende al grupo de la caída en la naturaleza indiferenciada, se opone a la fascinación del caos y, en fin, al regreso a la sexualidad informe. (183)

Baltasar becomes aware of his eroticism as a construct imposed by society, as a myth that distracts him from his "fascination with chaos" and that impedes him from realizing his own animal nature in need of freedom. In a dream, Baltasar discovers his philosophy of destruction that helps him to form his new concept of self, a concept of his own making that celebrates the violence and destruction occurring all around him: "Soy un artífice del vacío, un negador de la arquitectura y edificios que los hombres han dicho y hecho por siglos" (89). Carnival destruction, a form of destruction that combines death with renewal, or what Baltasar describes as "la destrucción redentora de la vida" (95), becomes the rule of the day. This redemptive destruction is the essence of carnival as it

clears a way for positing "another way of life," and for Baltasar to formulate his own vision of self.

In conclusion, carnival tactics allow Baltasar to transform the relationship between his body and language. At first, Baltasar's body is the object of representation, a product of the gaze of the other over which he has no control. In his first attempt to free himself he creates a representation of his own, making the other the object of his gaze. This mere reversal of the gaze, however, does not challenge the specular basis of representation, and so, the other maintains his power over the subject and the subject's body.

Nevertheless, Baltasar's carnival orgy that invites all to participate brings bodies out of representation's frame and destroys its specular basis. The opening created by the break down of traditional representation leads to a carnivalized literature in the meditations of Juliá Marín and carnivalized art in Espinosa's erotic drawings. Finally, Baltasar recognizes in his own body a deeply inscribed text. Even his own sexuality, it seems, originates in a discourse imposed upon him by society and its gaze. For Baltasar, the only possibility left for him to regain control over his body and identity is through the most extreme forms of carnival violence and destruction.

Within the novel we can discern a dynamic that runs parallel to Baltasar's struggle to make his body his own text. Just as the young Baltasar must free himself of the gaze of his author, Bishop Larra, the first time novelist, Rodríguez Juliá must find a way to disrupt the defining gaze of his literary precursor, Alejo Carpentier. Rodríguez Juliá's carnival tactics, much like those of Baltasar, free the young novelist to make his body of work his own. In the article "Imágenes de la conquista y la colonia en la novelística hispanoamericana contemporánea," Aníbal González contends that the work of a group of

young Latin American writers has entered into dialogue with the work of Carpentier that serves as a model to both emulate and criticize. Rodríguez Juliá forms part of this group, according to González, which is reflected in his carnivalesque parody of many aspects of the Cuban writer's work. Most poignant is Rodríguez Juliá's parody of Carpentier's offering of transcendental truths in his early historical novels. By this I am referring to the privileged knowledge the Cuban historical novelist shares with his reader through his fiction. For example, Carpentier opens his novel El siglo de las luces (1962) (in English translated as Explosion in the Cathedral) with an epigraph from the Zohar: "Las palabras no caen en el vacío," or, "Words do not fall into the void." The Zohar is the principle source of the kabala, a Jewish mystic tradition that teaches a system of biblical analysis and interpretation, in which nothing is casual, everything has significance and is susceptible to interpretation.[35] The epigraph suggests that the novel should be read as a sacred text, and furthermore, that the novelist is a vehicle of revelation. In his epilogue to El siglo de las luces, "Acerca de la historicidad de Victor Hughes," Carpentier affirms that, in the writing of this novel, he had accomplished his prophetic vocation:

> Estaban publicados ya estas páginas al final de la primera edición que de este libro se hizo en México, cuando, hallándome en París, tuve oportunidad de conocer a un descendiente directo de Víctor Hugues, poseedor de importantes documentos familiares acerca del personaje. Por él supe que la tumba de Víctor Hugues se encuentra en un lugar situado a alguna distancia de Cayena. Pero con esto encontré, en uno de los documentos examinados, una asombrosa revelación: Víctor Hugues fue amado, durante años, por una hermosa cubana que, por más asombrosa realidad, se llamaba Sofía. (362-63)

The Cuban writer confirms that he recorded historical truth, without realizing it at the time, when he imagined the story of the romance between the historical figure, Victor Hugues, and his Cuban lover, Sofía.

Rodríguez Juliá openly criticizes this providential authority that Carpentier confers on the writer. In his essay "Tradición y utopía en el barroco caribeño," the Puerto Rican writer describes Carpentier's novels as "un museo de señas, cifras y claves históricas" (10). Rodríguez Juliá finds something naïve in the kabalistic nature of Carpentier's work and in his desire to communicate a mystic knowledge which establishes a link between historical reality and fiction. Thus, in La renuncia Rodríguez Juliá parodies Carpentier's providential vision; there is no omniscient narrator who watches over the world with a ubiquitous eye as there is in El siglo de las luces. On the contrary, the narrator in La renuncia is a very human historian who makes mistakes, who is partial and who does not have all the answers that he would like to possess. Rodríguez Juliá strips the writer of his privileged insight when at the end of his presentation the novel's narrator/historian gives the final word of the conference to the invented writer, Juliá Marín, commenting ironically, "¡Oh, el poder el del poeta! ¡Adivinador de la posible historia!" [Oh, the power of the poet! Foreseer of the possible history!] (114).

The Puerto Rican writer further attempts to create distance between himself and his Cuban precursor, that is, to avert Carpentier's defining gaze, by using other carnival tactics. In addition to his carnivalesque parody of the writer's providential authority, Rodríguez Juliá parodies the Romantic relationship that Carpentier establishes between the cycles of nature and those of history in El siglo de las luces. As in the literature of Romanticism, nature in El siglo reflects the social environment in which the characters find themselves. Carpentier adopts in his novel the Romantic ideology of the early

nineteenth century that promulgated an organic vision of culture. This vision maintained that human beings and all of their activities were part of and corresponded to nature and the physical world. So, history and art, as human activities, exhibited organic properties like the universe itself and also participated in this unending process of creation (Abrams 185-86). According to M.H. Abrams, the English Romantic, Coleridge, postulated that literature, like a plant that synthesizes diverse elements from water, air and the earth to grow, assimilates a diversity of materials to form an organic unity (220-21).

In El siglo, Carpentier concretizes this organic vision of united multiplicity in the form of a spiral. González Echevarría, in his text Alejo Carpentier: The Pilgrim at Home (1977), has studied the spiral and the conch shell, the natural form of the spiral, as a reflection of the movement of history and artistic creation in the novel. Esteban's meditation on the conch shell underlines this Romantic vision of the harmonic destiny between nature and man (El siglo 184). For Esteban the conch shell is the conciliator between order and chaos; it represents the united multiplicity of the historic and the cultural organism. González Echevarría finds the same "fluidity of form" in the repetitions and returns in the action of the novel. However, according to the Cuban critic, the repetitions are not identical, but are rather progressive cyclical movements (232-33). For example, he points out that Esteban's return to the familial home in Havana does not mark the repetition of events in history, but rather a new beginning in the character's progressive self-understanding (230). As history progresses cyclically, material manifestations of this progress change meanings when they reappear. We can see this pattern of "repetitions with variations" in the novel's allegorical figure of the revolution that represents continual progress. When the French Revolution follows its course and deteriorates into repression, the uprising against Napoleon's forces in Madrid, in which

Esteban and Sofía lose their lives, paves the way for the Wars for Independence throughout Latin America. This use of figural allegory, a figure that anticipates another in the future that is the fulfillment and the surmounting of the first, expresses a progressive and providential vision of history.[36]

In La renuncia, Rodríguez Juliá rejects this providential concept of history and its connection with the natural cycles. Instead of a progression through time, the historical vision of the Puerto Rican writer is one that marches linearly toward carnival and destruction, and parodies Carpentier's Romantic ideology that harmonically links nature with the destiny of man. For example, as Secretary of State, Baltasar dreams of the Garden of Misfortunes in which he perceives, behind nature's beautiful surface, an insidious perversity:

> Era una visión de lo que nosotros los cristianos llamamos el Paraíso Terrenal antes de la caída de aquel desdichado que fue nuestro primer padre. Pero como aquél, también en éste se escondía la fruta de discordia y la maldad tras el bello ropaje de las flores... Satanás enseñó su pezuña entre tanta belleza... Este jardín será aún más cruel que aquel que llevó a nuestros primeros padres al pecado. Porque era entonces la naturaleza muy inocente; pero desde aquel formidable suceso de los siglos se ha vuelto la más implacable fuerza contraria al hombre. (48-49)

Instead of being the harmonious reflection of man, nature becomes his enemy, indifferent to his suffering. Rodríguez Juliá also parodies Carpentier's Romantic descriptions when Baltasar says: "Es sabido que las plantas, los árboles, las flores y el sol permanecen radiates y rebosantes, o secas y escuras, sin gravitar importancia a la tristeza y alegría de las gentes" (49-50). In contrast to the congruent spiral movements of humans and the

physical world in El siglo, man and nature move in contrary directions in La renuncia. In this novel, natural forces and history flow in a horizontal path toward destruction, death and forgetfulness. The island's colonizers attempt to impede this natural flow toward destruction by constructing vertically with monuments, buildings, texts, and myths, hoping to establish a historical "truth" that will remain in the collective imagination. This battle between the two opposing tendencies, permanence and destruction, is depicted in this description of human beings' struggle with nature that Baltasar offers:

> La vanidad de los hombres es borrada cruelmente por el paso de las estaciones, y la eterna renovación de fauna y flora. De este modo la naturaleza no se entera de los principios, creencias y muy firmes propósitos que llevan a los hombres a la matanza; y ella con muy impía crueldad hace imposible que los hombres recuerden los hechos gloriosos o nefastos de los antiguos siglos... Y yo diría que los hombres recuerdan por las ruinosas piedras de las antiguas ciudades porque los hombres mismos las han obligado a halagar su vanidad. (50)

With the construction of the Garden of Misfortunes, Baltasar threatens the island's defensive system of walls, and therefore threatens the colonizers' vertical constructions, which assure the hegemonic culture's stability and survival. Here we observe Rodríguez Juliá's parody of the concept of architecture as text, an idea that prevails in much of Carpentier's work. In his essay La ciudad de las columnas, for example, Carpentier emphasizes the connection of a culture's ideology and its expression in the culture's architecture.[37] At the end of La renuncia, Baltasar insists on the total destruction of buildings and monuments as the only way of liberating a culture from the weight of history and it's myths, a solution that suggests Rodríguez Juliá's own desire to create a

clearing in the jungle of literary precursors and their writings, to demolish the "doxa," the already said:

> Pedir compasión a un hombre de verdad es hacerlo cómplice de la mentira que--como bello palacio donde los hombres olvidan la intemperie--ha sido fabricada, día a día, por la desenfrenada astucia, que es reservo de la piedad. Yo el más puro de los hombres, sostenedor de la verdad, pretendo la destrucción de todas las catedrales, de todos los fastuosos palacios que provocan el olvido en los hombres... ¡qué dulce y fiel arquitectura la mía! Fabrico del aire y con el aire; hacia el silencio y el vacío de las esferas se alza mi intento desolado, la morada del techo olvidado. (89)

When the Inquisition orders Baltasar's imprisonment due to his construction of the Garden of Misfortunes, it sends this requisition that demonstrates the institution's desire to control Baltasar's propensity for nature's horizontal and destructive movement:

> Referimos al brazo secular de estos Reinos el tratamiento de suspensión de garantías civiles, cuyo ejercicio está en potestad, hacia el súbdito extramuros Baltasar Montañez. Y ello así se requiere la privación de movimiento mediante encarcelamiento al momento, dejándole dentro de su privación ejecutada aire a respirar que mantenga con vida su cuerpo. Es por ello que certificamos con sello Pontífico ejecutado en Indias *la negación de volición horizontal, permitiéndole la vertical*, para que con ella, y según la benefactora gracia divina, se acerque a la verdad de los cielos. (71, emphasis mine)

Of course, Baltasar is permitted to move vertically because this would imply his participation in the creation of myths, whereas his horizontal movement implies carnival destruction against the colonizers' ideological constructions and the instability of hegemonic discourse.

With Baltasar's imprisonment the myth of racial harmony that was constructed around him collapses, and with the revolts and massacres that follow, the carnival flow of nature and history toward destruction begins. The Inquisition quickly decides to restore Baltasar to his post as Secretary of State, but Baltasar voluntarily renounces his power and refuses to intervene in the violence. The Bishop writes desperate letters to his young protégé, trying to convince him of the necessity of "la mentira piadosa," white lies or myths, which are reflected in the ideological constructions that preserve the peace. But Baltasar, who has come to recognize himself as the Bishop's masterpiece, a mere text that exists as the creation of others, is convinced that carnival violence and destruction are the ultimate act of liberation, the only way of escaping the gaze of the other and the control of the hegemonic discourse. He states emphatically: "La suma caridad es la obligada, insistente y gigantesca destrucción" (95).

In his final letter to the Bishop, Baltasar narrates his vision in a dream of destructive crabs that devour the world. Like the conch shell in Esteban's meditation, the crab represents the author's historical vision. In El siglo, the conch shell symbolizes the conciliation between order and chaos, the harmonic unity of nature and history in continual progression. The crab in Baltasar's vision is a parody of Esteban's conch shell and presents itself as a response to his question: "¿Qué habrá en torno mío que esté ya definido, inscrito, presente, y aún no pueda entender? ¿Qué signo, qué mensaje, qué advertencia en los rizos de la achicoria, el alfabeto de los musgos, la geometría de la

pomarrosa?" (184). The message of the crab is in its distinct perspective of history. This crustacean represents history's linear flow toward destruction. We could say that Rodríguez Juliá's historic vision in La renuncia is a "histrionic" vision, in the Borgesian sense of the word. In Borges' short story "The Theologians," the Histriones are a religious sect that believes that history never repeats itself and therefore it is necessary to commit all possible atrocities in order to impede their occurrence in the future, and to accelerate the conclusion of history (553). Baltasar describes his vision in the following manner:

> Ya cede la gran pirámide; el mundo fue devorado por los cangrejos, y era entonces que me colmaba la dulce sensación de caída. Ya todo cae: cangrejos, pirámides y hombres; los humanos ya entienden sus pasados errores, y se acercan a lo benigno de la destrucción...Y fue así que se quedó muy aliviado el corazón de los humanos. Ya no existe el terror, y ello porque ya no existe vacío que aplaste. Todo lo creado fue devorado. No hay gigantesco y fiero dedo que señale. Se ha realizado el muy supremo acto de liberación. (95)

Rodríguez Juliá's concept of history in La renuncia negates Carpentier's providentialism and his search, in the past and in the present, for indications of a better future. The figural allegory, implicit in El siglo, loses its final stage in this historic scheme, and without its temporal dimension becomes simple allegory. But in the end it is important to point out that the novel's linear and destructive vision of history is not exactly the vision of the novelist. Rodríguez Juliá reveals his more optimistic vision through the research of the historian/narrator that attempts to construct a bridge between the historic figure of Baltasar Montañez and contemporary Puerto Rican culture. As he

tells his audience, looking into Baltasar's face will help them to see themselves more clearly: "El adentramiento en su enigma tiene que ser lento y cuidadoso; solo así lograremos reconocer en su rostro el nuestro..." (46).

In La renuncia Rodríguez Juliá tries to destroy the myths of colonial life as a "mar quieta," a silent sea, and of racial harmony, in order to better understand the complexity of contemporary Puerto Rican culture in its battle to define itself. The author maintains that Puerto Ricans, like Baltasar, will first have to free themselves from the (neo)colonizers' gaze and interpretive discourse that repress the possibility of self-determination, and reinterpret the fragmented history of the eighteenth century where the origins of their national culture can be found. The liberation from the dominating gaze of hegemonic discourse will come through carnival acts and the destruction of thought imposed by the (neo)colonizers. But herein lies the contradiction in Rodríguez Juliá's argument: the author wants to annul the power of the oppressors' historic discourse at the same time that he confers the power of truth upon his own novelistic discourse. For González Echevarría this contradiction is inherent in the Latin American novel:

> The novel dons a disguise to appear as something else. That something else includes a desire to preserve secrets about the origin and history of a culture, and in this way may be related to the epic... but also its Protean ability to change and to disavow the knowledge/power equation lodged in those secrets. (38)

A parallel contradiction occurs in the confrontation of letters between the old writer, represented by Bishop Larra, and the young writer, represented by Baltasar. Rodríguez Juliá has said that "La renuncia es una novela sobre la paternidad... Mi obra es un diálogo entre un joven y un viejo, entre la ilusión y el desengaño, entre la inocencia y

la madurez, entre la utopía y la topía, so peligro de convertir este testimonio en confesión ("A mitad de camino" 132). In this epistolary interchange we find the most profound theme of the novel: the young writer's desire to return to the origins, before the construction of cities and texts, to find his "clearing in the jungle." Rodríguez Juliá is looking for a blank slate, a space without the influence of historical myths, or the oppression of other writers' works where he can begin to write his first novel. But once again a contradiction: this parodic work would not exist without the precursor that the author attempts to destroy.

Bakhtin speaks of the image of fire in carnival that "simultaneously destroys and renews the world" (Dostoevsky 126). Dante before the wall of fire at the entrance of Paradise must take leave of his "sweet father" and guide, Virgil, in order to pass through its purifying flames. Virgil, who represents "the spirit of knowing through art" (Pinsky), encourages Dante to proceed forward with confidence in his own will: "I have brought you here with understanding and with art. Take henceforth your own pleasure as your guide" (Purgatory, "Canto XXVII", 130-32). Similarly, Rodríguez Juliá, in writing his first novel, is both guided by and leaves behind his literary master, Carpentier, as the text he writes passes through the carnival flames of destruction and renewal.

In La renuncia the carnival body emerges to disrupt the authoritative discourse of the colonizer, the other, and finally, that of the precursor. And yet, paradoxically, Rodríguez Juliá's early form of lost-body writing offers little alternative but to respond to violent hegemonic discourse with more violence, with destruction. In Chapter Three of this study, I will examine Mario Vargas Llosa's La guerra del fin del mundo (1981), a new historical novel that, in contrast to La renuncia, deplores violent fictions and their brutal treatment of the body, while offering an alternative form of writing and

redemption, a form of writing which I call kinder fictions. By analyzing characters and the fictions that these characters create in terms of Elaine Scarry's notions of embodiment and disembodiment, I show that, for Vargas Llosa as for de Certeau, awareness of the body and bodily experience underlies advancement toward a more civilized and moral society.

Chapter 3: Kinder Fictions: Embodiment and Redemption in La guerra del fin del mundo

Angel Rama's important article "La guerra del fin del mundo: Una obra maestra del fanatismo artístico," identifies two types of fanaticism in Mario Vargas Llosa's novel--one of the body and the other of the mind. According to the Uruguayan critic, the novel mistakenly values the first and condemns the second, which it considers destructive. Are they not both equally irrational and dangerous, Rama asks, in their rejection of moderation? Rama pinpoints the source of this contradiction in the novel's effort to provide solutions to social conflict through individual action. Whereas Euclides da Cunha in his original work on the conflict, Os Sertões (1902), limited his study of the rebellion in Canudos to analysis of the causes that led to the violence, Vargas Llosa, according to Rama, "procura dar soluciones, haciendo proposiciones de lo que sería una especie de moral natural, los impulsos a la efectividad y al placer que vienen en la piel de los seres humanos: 'il faut cultiver son jardin'" (637). In short, for Rama, the novel's scenes of love-making juxtaposed with the epic violence of war create narrative imbalance, and these "hedonistic" solutions--earlier identified as fanaticism of the body--that the text proposes detract from the larger social problem of ideological fanaticism.

I agree with Rama that La guerra del fin del mundo (1981) does, indeed, favor fanaticism of the body over that of the mind. However, I disagree with Rama's judgment that Vargas Llosa's bodily solutions detract from the novel's larger concern with ideological fanaticism at a social level. An analysis of the role of bodies in the novel's depiction of characters and of the relationship of this embodiment to language use reveals that, for Vargas Llosa, bodies shape moral action on both an individual and societal scale. In this chapter, I examine characterization in terms of embodiment and disembodiment,

as defined by Elaine Scarry, what this characterization communicates about each figure's construction of self and his or her social standing, and, in the end, how (dis)embodiment reveals the author's attitude toward each character's moral rectitude. Which is to say, in answer to Angel Rama's query, Vargas Llosa does not create all fanatics equally: some are justified in their outlook and actions while others are condemned. In addition, several of these characters, some embodied and some disembodied, are figures of the writer, creators of fiction. Consequently, I explore the different types of fiction that these "writers" generate, the way each deals with bodies, and the impact of their fictional creations on the bodies with which they come into contact. Ultimately, Vargas Llosa privileges what I call "kinder fictions," that is those fictions that provide a form of redemption, a more humane concept of self and of the self's interaction with others by allowing the body to emerge in discourse rather than repressing it. Furthermore, as writing and reading are essentially two sides of the same coin, suppressing the body in the generation of fiction may lead to the suppression of bodies in reading, an equally dangerous practice for Vargas Llosa. Finally, while da Cunha's original text unwittingly questioned the accepted positivistic dichotomy between the civilized and the barbaric, Vargas Llosa's novel pointedly reconsiders this dichotomy from the standpoint of the body.[38] Members of the urban ruling class whose notions of self tend toward disembodiment, and who are collectively associated with the civilized, are contrasted with the rural folk that form the religious community in Canudos. These characters are deeply embodied and are traditionally, as in da Cunha's text, considered barbaric. Although at first glance, the novel seems to uphold the dichotomy, my analysis of embodiment in the conception of self and in fictional discourse shows that, in reality, the novel questions the negative valuing of body in the process of civilization as an obstacle

to be overcome, and asserts that the presence of the body is a necessary component in achieving an ethical society.[39]

Angel Rama's observation of La guerra del fin del mundo's fanaticism of the body may be due in part to the novel's technique of characterization that relies heavily on bodies as signs of social class and of access, or lack thereof, to power. Specifically, there are embodied characters, those whose bodily experience mark their existence and concept of self, and there are disembodied characters, those whose bodies play little or no apparent role in the development of their character or in their notion of self. This contrast between embodied and disembodied is closely related to a character's social class, gender, or race, all categories that play a role in determining access to power. Those characters associated with the ruling classes, regardless of political affiliation, are described and defined in terms of language, their use of words, and the objects that surround them in their environment. Whether Republican or Monarchist, these ruling class figures' bodies, gestures, and bodily movements are rarely depicted.

In stark contrast, however, are the *sertaneros*, the people who live in these isolated backlands, mostly poor, small town folk, whose existence precariously depends on their harsh environment. It is these rural folk who ultimately form the religious community in Canudos. These characters are described in terms of their bodies and their bodily experiences. From the moment they are first depicted in the novel Vargas Llosa defines them in terms of their scars, deformities, physical peculiarities and suffering. In addition to characters from the rural, peasant class, female characters, too, tend to be more deeply inscribed by their bodily experiences, and in particular by the violence of rape.

In order to understand why some characters are defined in terms of their bodies and others in terms of their use of language, it is helpful to turn to Elaine Scarry's The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World (1985). In chapter 3 of her study, entitled "Pain and Imagining," Scarry describes what she calls the framing events of the human psyche, or what we might call a spectrum of sentience. She notes that on one end of the spectrum is pain, the most embodied state, in that it is an objectless state where perception is experienced as one's own body or as bodily sensations. On the other end of the spectrum lies imagination, a state of disembodiment in which sensation is experienced as objects other than one's own body. Scarry describes the state of disembodiment as one of two possible sensations:

> ...one seems to become disembodied, either because one seems to have been transported hundreds of feet beyond the edges of the body into the external world, or instead because the images of objects from the external world have themselves been carried into the interior of the body as perceptual content, and seem to reside there, displacing the dense matter of the body itself. (165)

For Scarry this disembodied state of imagination, free of pain, is the state that she connects to the "making" of the world, those activities that allow one to share thoughts and ideas with others through acts of creation or civilization. As Scarry envisions it, between the two framing events of pain and imagining, between total embodiment and total disembodiment, lies the whole realm of human experience.

Scarry further demonstrates that the experience of embodiment or pain has the capacity to absorb one's perception of the world entirely with the suffering of one's own body, canceling the content of the world and, in turn, destroying a person's ability to use

language and to extend one's self beyond the body (35). For this reason she associates the state of embodiment with the "unmaking" of the world and acts of "decivilization." Scarry uses the extreme example of torture to illustrate how intense experiences of pain that increase the torture victim's perception of his or her own body, disintegrate the world or civilization beyond the body and, with it, the ability to communicate that suffering to others through language. At the same time, by making the voiceless victim's entire world a weapon with which to inflict pain, the torturer expands his voice and increases his power.

In considering Scarry's notion of embodiment it is important to keep in mind the negative value she assigns to this state and consequently to the body. In fact, Scarry's theory of the making and unmaking of the world, though in many ways revolutionary, at the same time, stems from the traditional mind/body dualism. This dualism sees the body as the negative other of the mind, an obstacle to the painless state of imagining in which acts of civilization are possible. The body and embodiment seem to represent for Scarry the uncivilized past while disembodiment represents the ultimate goal of civilization as it progresses and evolves.[40]

I propose to use Scarry's concepts of embodiment and disembodiment, even as I set aside her dualist perspective. It will become clear during the course of this analysis that, rather than viewing embodiment as a purely negative state, I conceive of it as our actual state, in that we are always embodied. On the other hand, disembodiment is a notion of self in which one tends to disassociate oneself from one's own body. As we saw in the Introduction to this study, Arthur Frank considers the relationship that an individual establishes between his or herself and the body to be an essential element in the construction of identity, or what I have called embodied subjectivity. In addition, my

modified formulation of (dis)embodiment questions the dualist tendency to associate the body and embodiment exclusively with negative qualities such as decivilization or barbarism, irrationality, pain, and hedonism, as both Scarry and Rama do. Indeed, Vargas Llosa's novel subverts this negative valuing of the body by problematizing the traditional dualist notion of the body as barbaric, and at the same time proposes bodily solutions to the moral dilemmas presented by the text.

In this chapter, then, my modified use of Scarry's theory of the making and unmaking of the world supplements de Certeau's general assertions about the subversive impact of the emergence of bodies in discourse that forms the basis of my analysis. Although both theorists are interested in the relationship between the violent treatment of bodies and the production of discourse, Scarry focuses more specifically on the infliction of bodily pain as way of generating a sense of reality. For Scarry, the "open" body confers reality on baseless fictions or ideologies. De Certeau, on the other hand, addresses the suppression of bodies of all kinds from discourse that claims to produce knowledge. For de Certeau, the body is "the price paid" when scientific writing inscribes the unarticulated natural world. In short, that while de Certeau and Scarry are at loggerheads in certain aspects of their theories, most conspicuously in Scarry's negative appraisal of embodiment, both share a strong ethical interest in exploring the way bodies participate in creative acts and the way violence is used against bodies to produce knowledge, to establish "truth," and to claim power.

The embodied characters in La guerra del fin del mundo are those who the narrator describes in terms of their bodies and bodily acts: they are frequently those who suffer pain, whether it is the pain of poverty and neglect, pain inflicted by the violence of others or by the institutions of society, the pain of physical deformity, or pain that is self-

inflicted. Their embodiment as characters indicates that their conception of self is closely associated, rather than disassociated, with their bodies and bodily practices. Depending on the level of their embodiment, these characters' sense of self is more or less likely to be defined in terms of their use of language, as a close analysis of some of the principal embodied characters in the novel reveals. It should be noted that, although Vargas Llosa employs an omniscient narrator in the novel, this does not preclude my analysis from examining concepts of self. Indeed, Vargas Llosa's narrator is able to delve into the minds of the enormous cast of characters through the use of focalisers—characters through whose eyes we view the world, the changing reality, and even each character's concept of self.[41]

Embodied characters in the novel include the brothers Antonio and Horacio Vilanova and their families who, before becoming followers of the Counselor, suffer the bodily calamities typical of the region's poor—illness in the form of an epidemic of smallpox that kills their parents and other family members; years of drought and then floods which leave them homeless, destitute, and suffering starvation and thirst. Then, exposed to the elements, one of their children dies of dysentery, another of a simple cold, while still another loses his sight. Later, a scorpion bite debilitates Horacio. The suffering and bitterness of their lives, like so many of the Counselor's followers, is continual until they settle in Canudos with the other pilgrims where they find alleviation from their misery (82-87).

In addition, various characters in La guerra del fin del mundo are embodied by the violence of others. Catarina, the wife of João Abade (known before his conversion as João Satán), suffers a brutal rape and stabbing. She is one of the few survivors from her village of an attack carried out by a group of bandits led by her future husband. Her

fragile body seems permanently marked by the pain she suffers, communicated to the observer, here João Abade, by her fragility and the anguish in her eyes:

> Había entre ellos una figura tan delgada que parecía espíritu, embutida en una túnica blanca como un sudario. El ex-cangaceiro había encontrado muchas veces los ojos de la mujer, fijos en él, durante las marchas, los rezos, los descansos. Lo ponían incómodo y, por momentos, lo asustaban. Eran ojos devastados por el dolor, que parecían amenazarlo con castigos que no eran de este mundo. (180)

Later, Vargas Llosa describes her as emaciated, mortally sad, and a person whom most people had never seen smile nor heard speak (342-43). Catarina embodies physical and emotional pain--her silence points to the way immense suffering destroys language, as she continues to suffer for years after the original violence.

At the same time, João Grande exemplifies an embodied character who suffers the pain inflicted by an institution of society—slavery. João Grande's pain is not inflicted by actual whips and chains, or other weapons of slavery, as he was adopted into his master's family and "privileged" to live in the big house, however, the pain of his embodiment is still quite real. Not only is his body not his own because of his legal status as a slave, his very body is a "product" of the careful breeding the master learned from years of mating the finest stallions and mares in Bahía:

> Su proceder era dictado por el ojo y la inspiración. Consistía en seleccionar a las negritas más ágiles y mejor formadas y en amancebarlas con los negros que por armonía de rasgos y nitidez de color él llamaba más puros... João Grande fue el resultado de una de esas combinaciones que

llevaba a cabo ese hacendado de gustos perfeccionistas. En su caso, sin duda, nació un magnífico producto. (35-36)

The narrator never explicitly tells us of João Grande's pain and suffering that result from being the creation of this eugenic experimentation and sexual bondage. He does, however, hint at the character's underlying turbulence as João Grande matures—his physical strength, his brutal nature, and his lack of affection or feeling for anyone, including his own mother (37). But the depth of João Grande's torment becomes clear when he attacks his master's old-maid sister--the woman who raised him--with diabolic savagery, stripping her of clothing, humiliating and raping her, stabbing her to death, and finally, dismembering her body (38). Later, when he is asked why he was driven to kill, he simply replies: "Porque tengo al Perro en el cuerpo" (39). This escaped slave experiences the agony of his body as possession by Satan, who is expressed through João Grande in an explosion of violence. Clearly, while Vargas Llosa describes these characters in terms of their physical suffering, thus, "embodying" them, several characters, by inflicting violence on others, also embody their victims. João Grande is similar to characters such as João Satán and Galileo Gall, who after being embodied by, or suffering violence at the hands of others, become violent as well. Therefore, the experience of extreme embodiment often leads to the expression of that embodiment by inflicting pain on (or embodying) others.

Vargas Llosa also embodies other characters not only by their poverty but also by the trials of physical deformities. For example, Pajeú has been marked physically by his violent life with a notorious scar across his face. One hunter, Rufino, describes Pajeú when he first sees the legendary bandit as "un caboclo fortachón, amarillento, con una cicatriz que lo ha privado casi de nariz" (234). When Pajeú arrives at Calumbí to

announce the burning of the estate, the Baron de Cañabrava searches the outlaw's deformed face for signs of his violent past: "El Barón trató de identificar en esos ojitos pertinaces, en esas facciones curtidas, las fechorías y crímenes que se le atribuían. La feroz cicatriz, que podía ser de bala, faca o zarpa, rememoraba la violencia de su vida" (237). Pajeú's facial features are so strongly tied to his identity that even as he lies dying, the soldier who kills him observes how these features augment his bravura: "la cicatriz bermeja ha crecido, cubre la cara del bandido, una masa de barro y sangre sin rasgos ni forma. Pero tiene aún los ojos abiertos y hay aún en ellos esa indiferencia tan ofensiva y tan extraña" (498).

Other characters that suffer from physical deformity, including León de Natuba, the storytelling Dwarf, and the myopic journalist, problematize the relationship between language and embodiment. León de Natuba, for instance, endures the embarrassment and rejection of his family, insults and beatings from other children, the prejudice and suspicion of town people, physical abuse and humiliation at the hands of drunks, and finally, nearly being burned alive by the father of a young girl who blames him for his daughter's death. But León de Natuba's only fault was having been born deformed:

> Le pusieron León tal vez por burla, seguramente por la inmensa cabeza que, más tarde, como para dar razón a los bromistas, se cubriría en efecto de unas tupidas crenchas que le tapaban las orejas y zangoloteaban con sus movimientos. O, tal vez, por su manera de andar, animal sin duda alguna, apoyándose a la vez en los pies y en las manos (que protegía con unas suelas de cuero como pezuñas o cascos) aunque su figura, al andar, con sus piernas cortitas y sus largos brazos que se posaban en tierra de manera intermitente, era más la de un simio que la de un predador... Por

su peculiar manera de moverse nunca vistió pantalones, solo túnicas, como las mujeres, los misioneros o los penitentes del Buen Jesús. (101)

Leon de Natuba's strange, animal-like body is such a source of preoccupation for him, for his family, and for the people of the town in which he lives, that, at one point, he is forced to join the travelling circus to be a monster or freak in the side show, where it is believed he will finally fit in. Clearly, his body and his deformity dominate León de Natuba's construction as a character, as well as his construction of self.

However, another of Leon's distinguishing characteristics that provokes wonder while still arousing suspicion is his ability to read and write in a town of illiterates. Although he willingly lends his services to those who need correspondence transcribed, his own words are highly suspect. When he composes and sings a song for Almudia, a young girl who later becomes gravely ill, he is accused of smiting her with a curse and the evil eye that bring about her death. Upon being saved from the funeral pyre by the Counselor and his wandering group of pilgrims, he joins them and becomes the holy man's scribe, writing down the words he speaks, words that he hopes will serve as scripture for the faithful of the future. Thus, Vargas Llosa problematizes Leon de Natuba's relationship with language, which is ambiguous at best. When the words he transcribes belong to others, they represent no threat to the people around him. However, when this highly embodied character attempts to express his own thoughts, to extend himself into the world, or to represent himself, through language, as in the song for Almudia, his words meet with suspicion and fear (100-105).

The Dwarf, the star of the Gypsy's travelling circus, at first shares his anomalous physical state with the other monstrous entertainers that make up his "family:" the Bearded Lady, the Giant, the Human Spider, and the Idiot (149-50). Having lost the other

members of his troupe to starvation, the Dwarf clings helplessly to Jurema, another refugee of the war, with whom he manages to escape from being killed by retreating Republican soldiers. The Dwarf's intense will to live moves Jurema, when he manages to keep up with her after many hours of running without rest, and in spite of his physical impairments: "Cuando ya no pudo correr, siguió andando. Pensaba, compadecida, en lo extenuado que debía estar el Enano, con sus piernas cortitas, a quien, sin embargo, no había sentido quejarse y que había corrido prendido con firmeza de su mano" (313).

The Dwarf is particularly vulnerable because of his diminutive size and spends much time seeking protection from the violence around him, yet because of his embodied state, the Dwarf empathizes with the suffering of others, and tries to protect those who are in need, in particular, the myopic journalist. As the journalist explains to the Baron de Cañabrava, he owes a large debt to the Dwarf who saved his life during his long stay in Canudos through the joy and entertainment of his storytelling (338). In fact, the Dwarf's use of language allows him to give strength and comfort to those around him even in the midst of war. João Abade also reflects on the Dwarf's stories, and, remembering the happiest moments in his life (64), finds courage and contentment in them:

> En eso, algo lo hace detenerse de golpe. Cierra los ojos, para escuchar. No se ha equivocado, no es sueño. La voz monótona, afinada, sigue recitando. Desde el fondo de su memoria, cascada que crece y se torna río, algo exaltante toma forma y coagula en un tropel de espadas y un relumbre de palacios y alcobas lujosísimas. "La batalla del Caballero Olivero con Fierabrás", piensa. Es uno de los episodios que más lo seducen de las historias de los Doce Pares de Francia, un duelo que no ha vuelto a oír desde hace muchísimo tiempo. La voz del trovero viene de la

> encruciajada entre Campo Grande y el Callejón del Divino... Quien canta la prisión de Oliveros y su duelo con Fierabrás es un niño. No, es un enano. Minúsculo, delgadito, hace como que toca una guitarra y va también mimando el choque de las lanzas, el galope de los jinetes, las venias cortesanas al Gran Carlomagno. (347)

In "Roberto el Diablo," one of the Dwarf's tales, the basic plot structure is that a young boy becomes a cruel man, experiences a miraculous conversion, and therefore becomes a good man through repentance. As Leopoldo Bernucci explains, this plot runs parallel to the life of João Abade (Bernucci 371), and thus, the story assures the former criminal of eternal life rather than condemnation.

Crippled by fragility, myopia and sudden fits of sneezing, unlike the more gregarious Dwarf, the myopic journalist is, at the beginning, quite isolated and alone in his suffering. We first observe him at work in his office at the Jornal de Noticias:

> ...está, solo, ese periodista joven, flaco, desgarbado, cuyos espejos de miope, sus frecuentes estornudos y su manía de escribir con una pluma de ganso en vez de hacerlo con una de metal son motivo de bromas entre la gente de oficio. Inclinado sobre su pupitre, la desgraciada cabeza inmersa en el halo de la lamparilla, en una postura que lo ajoroba y mantiene el sesgo del tablero, escribe de prisa, deteniéndose sólo para mojar la pluma en el tintero o consultar una libretita de apuntes, que acerca a los anteojos casi hasta tocarlos. (129)

Here Vargas Llosa emphasizes the character's embodied state, and also how, for the journalist, the act of writing is very much an embodied activity, one that is both impeded by his body and intertwined with his bodily functions. Later in the novel when

the journalist breaks his glasses during one of his sneezing attacks, he loses the ability to continue writing his reports on the war. However, when this barrier of the glasses—a form of civilized impedimenta—is removed, the myopic journalist becomes more open to others, especially those he once considered barbaric, irrational backlanders, as he becomes dependent on them for his survival. He is increasingly aware of his own embodied state and, as a result of his suffering, more aware and more compassionate of the suffering around him. It is no coincidence that the Dwarf, the nameless journalist, and León de Natuba, all characters who suffer from physical deformities, are also figures of the writer in the novel, a theme to which we will return later in this analysis. Suffice it to say for now that all three use language as a means to overcome their own deficiencies, and to be of worth to their communities.

Finally, several characters in La guerra del fin del mundo actually choose to inflict pain on themselves and, in so doing, emphasize their own embodied state. Although one might think this self-embodying behavior is a form of renouncing the body and thus, a way of achieving a disembodied state, Scarry asserts that the opposite is true:

> The self-flagellation of the religious ascetic, for example, is not (as is often asserted) an act of denying the body, eliminating its claims from attention, but a way of emphasizing the body that the contents of the world are cancelled and the path is clear for the entry of an unwordly, contentless force... the metaphysical is insistently coupled with the physical with the equally insistent exclusion of the middle term, world. (34)

According to Scarry, those who are self-embodied inflict pain on themselves willingly in order to draw closer to themselves, their bodies, and to God, to expand the perception of their bodies through suffering, and to collapse the notion of a meaningful

world outside of themselves. Of the characters in the novel, El Beatito fits Scarry's model. However, Vargas Llosa's depictions of María Quadrado and the Counselor subvert, in part, Scarry's paradigm of the world-creating possibilities of the self-embodied character.

To begin with, Antonio da Mota, better known as el Beatito, the Little Blessed One, is an example of a self-embodied character that conforms to Scarry's model. To prove his love and devotion to God and the Counselor, he wears a wire around his waist that lacerates his skin, turning it black and blue. Once the rawness diminishes, he cinches the wire even tighter again under his coarse woollen shirt. When the Counselor and his followers return to Pombal, the Little Blessed One reveals his sacrifice of pain without speaking; as the narrator states, "no hubiera podido" (24), he would not have been able to speak. The pain he suffers from his self-inflicted wounds make it difficult to express himself verbally, recalling again Scarry's assertion that pain destroys language. Although part of the religious community, El Beatito spends most of his time in prayer, withdrawn from the world, submerged in the exaltation he feels from the pain of self-flagellation.

On the other hand, María Quadrado exemplifies a self-embodying character that does, in fact, extend herself into the world. She walks barefoot carrying a large cross for three months across the deserts of the region to arrive at Monte Santo. Once there, she reaches the summit of the mountain by crawling for hours on hands and knees. On her pilgrimage, she endures hunger, thirst, and four rapes, tests that she believes God subjects her to in order to expiate her sins (49-53). After her long penitence, María Quadrado makes a home for herself in a small cave near Monte Santo, where she paints the scenes from Christ's Passion, inspirational art that she shares with pilgrims who visit the holy site. In addition, she serves her new community with acts of goodness, carrying for the

sick, acting as a midwife to women giving birth, mediating between quarrelling couples, giving refuge to battered women, and providing food and clothing to the poor and elderly. María Quadrado's spirituality is not confined within her body, but is shared with others in her community through her art and charitable works.

Moreover, the Counselor himself is the ultimate example of a self-embodied character who, rather than cancelling the content of the world, reaches out to the world and creates a healing community through his teachings and through his use of language. The Counselor, like el Beatito, wears a wire around his waist, and in addition, walks long distances as he travels to preach from town to town, choosing to live the lifestyle of an ascetic--eating very little and sleeping outside, exposed to the rain and the cold, even when shelter is offered to him. The novel opens with an unattributed drawing of the gangly figure of the Counselor. The drawing is followed by the narrator's detailed description of the Counselor's body, dress, facial expressions, the way he moves, and his eating and sleeping habits:

> El hombre era alto y tan flaco que parecía siempre de perfil. Su piel era oscura, sus huesos prominentes y sus ojos ardían con fuego perpetuo. Calzaba sandalias de pastor y la túnica morada que le caía sobre el cuerpo recordaba el hábito de esos misioneros que, de cuando en cuando, visitaban los pueblos del sertón bautizando muchedumbres de niños y casando a las parejas amancebadas. Era imposible saber su edad, su procedencia, su historia, pero algo había en su facha tranquila, en sus costumbres frugales, en su impertublable seriedad que, aun antes de que diera consejos, atraía a las gentes. (15)

The passage continues by describing the activities the Counselor undertakes upon arriving in each town, and finally, the practical advice he gives and the lessons he teaches to the people there. First, he empathizes with their suffering and their losses, and then he prays for them. Immediately he goes about restoring churches and repairing cemeteries, and finally, he heals the hearts of the poor with his words by giving them hope for a better future.

The Counselor's words are clearly those of a fanatic, irrational, and without basis in reality. Some of his reported preachings are outlandish, especially those that describe the nearing end of the world and the signs that will precede it: the ocean will turn into the dry sertón and the sertón into sea, the number of hats will increase and the number of heads decrease, the rivers will run red, and a new planet will cross space (17). The newly established Republic finds others of his teachings threatening: the scandals of the separation of Church and State, and of the secularization of marriage and cemeteries, the refusal to pay taxes and to participate in the census. From the Republican perspective, these are all teachings that seem to attempt to turn back time, and instill the suspicion that the Counselor's true aim is to reestablish monarchical rule.

In a sense the Counselor's words are a fiction. They construct an imaginary world out of real edicts and events by placing them in a new context, and giving them new meaning and new urgency. However, I suggest that the figure of the Counselor problematizes the practice of grouping all fanatical characters in the novel into a single moral category, as Rama does when he argues that fanaticism of all kinds should be denounced equally. The Uruguayan critic is correct, however, in stating that the novel does not judge them by equal measure. The text reveals that Vargas Llosa favors one form of fanaticism, one form of fiction, over another. This is because, in addition to the

Counselor's ludicrous teachings on the devil State and the apocalypse, the Counselor's fiction gives language to the suffering of the poor, the ill, and the deformed: an act that in itself diminishes pain, according to Scarry, and allows those that suffer to rediscover their voice:

> An act of human contact and concern... provides the hurt person with worldly self-extension: in acknowledging and expressing another person's pain, or in articulating one of his nonbodily concerns while he is unable to, one human being who is well and free willingly turns himself into an image of the other's psychic or sentient claims, an image existing in space outside of the sufferer's body, projected out into the world and held there intact by that person's powers until the sufferer himself regains his own powers of self-extension. By holding that world in place, or by giving the pain a place in the world, sympathy lessens the power of sickness and pain, counteracts the force with which a person in great pain or sickness can be swallowed alive by the body. (Body in Pain 50)

The Counselor's compassionate words allow the poor of the backlands to move beyond their own pain, and to participate in world creating activities again. In this way the followers of the Counselor begin to establish their community in Canudos, a society that provides food, shelter, and meaning to the poor, which neither the Monarchy nor the Republic has done. Yet not all creators of fiction in the novel are inspired by such philanthropic motives as the Counselor's, making his fanaticism relatively less reprehensible.

In concluding this analysis of embodied characters, it is important to call attention to the range of possibilities of embodiment as represented by Vargas Llosa's characters.

Clearly, Catarina's silence and João Grande's display of violence indicate the most extreme cases of embodiment. Their concept of self is so strongly connected to bodily suffering that this aspect of their subjectivity, their relationship with their physical bodies, governs their sense of self. In contrast, the storytelling Dwarf, the myopic journalist, and the Counselor exemplify characters who adapt to their embodied state and strive to use their bodily experience to become more aware of the suffering around them, to become more compassionate, and, consequently, to endeavor to diminish the pain of others through their words.

The myopic journalist's process of adaptation is explicitly depicted through the course of the novel, which allows the reader to witness his increasing awareness of his embodiment and how this awareness changes his notion of self. In Arthur Frank's terms, he becomes more open to interaction and constitution by others, and he increasingly associates, rather than disassociates, his notion of self with his physical body. Furthermore, we see how his understanding of desire evolves from a sense of incompleteness to a force of energy that pushes him forward. At the end of the novel, his commitment to writing the story of Canudos and the people there, to set the record straight about the reasons for the conflict, and to tell of his admiration of the *yagunços* faith rather than of his abhorrence of their fanaticism, demonstrate his compassion for their suffering and the desire to give language to it.

As mentioned earlier, Vargas Llosa describes some characters, in contrast to the embodied characters I have just analyzed, much less in terms of their bodies and more in terms of their use and manipulation of language. The absence of bodily description in the characterization of a figure seems to indicate membership in the political class and access to power. These characters' bodily status and well-being never come into question due to

their social and economic position in Bahian society. In fact, this lack of preoccupation with their bodies bolsters their concept of self, creating a distancing from the body or a sense of disembodiment that, Scarry would argue, allows an individual to participate in acts of creation or in the making of the world.[42] One of the characters I have in mind here, Epaminondas Gonçalves, is indeed a creator, a generator of fiction, but, in contrast to Scarry's conception of disembodiment, this disembodied character's fictions are world destroying rather than world creating. Epaminondas Gonçalves' destructive creation, indeed, reverses the conventional duality that relates disembodiment with the civilized and embodiment with the barbaric.

We are first introduced to Gonçalves, the director of the Jornal de Notícias and head of the Bahian Republican Party, in the second section of Part One of the novel. Devoting only one sentence to his description, the narrator gives us relatively little information about the physical aspects of this character: "Ocupa el único escritorio, lleva botas, un traje gris, y es joven y moreno, de aires enérgicos" (18). In comparison to the extensively detailed physical descriptions of the embodied characters we examined previously, this description is curt and almost disinterested. The rest of the section is dedicated to Gonçalves' dialogue with Galileo Gall (whose body is described with a luxury of detail) and his fascination with the Scottish anarchist. Gonçalves reappears in Part Two of the novel, which consists of three sections, all dedicated to this character and his manipulation of the political fallout from the occupation of Canudos by the Counselor and his followers. In these pages the reader might hope to find a more detailed physical description of this skillful politician, but instead encounters him, once again, behind his desk and depicted again in terms of his energy, this time though, through the eyes of the myopic journalist with few details added:

> Tiene los codos sobre la mesa y las manos cruzadas. Al verlo, su cara morena, angulosa, en la que rasgos y huesos están subrayados por esa energía interior que le permite pasar las noches en blanco en reuniones políticas y luego trabajar todo el día sin dar muestras de cansancio, se distiende como si se dijera "por fin". (129)

Of particular interest in this description is the fact that Gonçalves' face does not reflect, and is apparently unaffected by, his physical exhaustion, an indication of the disconnect between the character's body and his notion of self. This partial physical description is followed by a lengthy article written by the myopic journalist, but commissioned by Gonçalves, that narrates the meeting of the legislative assembly of the State of Bahía after the defeat of the second military campaign to Canudos (131-38). In this section we observe Gonçalves' masterful manipulation of language and events as he accuses the ruling Autonomist party of supporting the rebellion in Canudos in order to overthrow the newly established Brazilian Republic. Thus, Vargas Llosa's characterization of Gonçalves is practically bodiless, and focuses instead on this character's ability to create a powerful fiction about the Canudos rebellion, a fiction notable for its violence.

Gonçalves' fiction not only manages to construct historical events and then impose meaning on them, but also requires bodies to sustain it and to falsely substantiate its veracity. Upon learning of Galileo Gall's misplaced support for the rebels in Canudos, Gonçalves convinces Gall to take a shipment of arms to the rebels, purporting that this military aid is necessary to help bring about the overthrow of pro-monarchist rule in the State of Bahía. Gonçalves tells Gall that a defeat for the Baron de Cañabrava in Canudos will bring to an end his party's dictatorial reign in the region (66). We learn later that Gonçalves never intends for the arms to reach the religious rebels. Instead he has

arranged for Gall to be murdered en route to the commune with his guns, so that Gall's body will serve as physical evidence to back up the Jornal de Notícias's claims of conspiracy between the rebels, the Baron's Autonomist Party and the British crown. The Scottish Gall, with his flaming red hair is to serve as an "English corpse" (p. 113). Ironically, due to a series of unforeseeable events, the English corpse never materializes. Even Epaminondas Gonçalves with his narrative power and complex manipulations cannot impose order on the chaotic events that surround him, as he loses control of his fiction. Instead of the whole body, he must settle for only locks of Gall's red hair as proof of the British connection to the Baron and the *yagunços*.

The narrative that Gonçalves creates surrounding the rebellion at Canudos, which reflects his beliefs and desires, takes hold in the imagination of the Brazilian public. Like Borges' fictitious universe of Tlön, which explodes into reality and whose culture eventually takes over the world, Gonçalves' narrative representation of the events at Canudos, as expounded in his newspaper, becomes the accepted version of the rebellion. This public acceptance of his fiction is a reflection of his present authority as the owner and editor of a leading newspaper, and, at the same time, leads to his increasing power in the State of Bahía. For although the development of his narrative escapes his control, the outcome is still favorable for his party. The Baron and Gonçalves ultimately decide to join forces to prevent increased central government involvement in the region, with the agreement that the Republican Party leader will become the state's new governor.

The connections between power, fiction-making, and violence in the novel cannot be overlooked. Gonçalves struggles to gain political power in the region, which, for him equates with the ability to interpret events and, therefore, with storytelling. But in order for his representation of events to become the "official" history he must impose his

fictionalized order on the chaos of reality, and he must kill a man for his story to become fact. Once his fiction is released for public consumption it leads to even further violence. It incites riots in the capital of Rio de Janeiro where several Autonomist Party leaders and newspaper editors are assassinated by angry Republican mobs. Gonçalves' use of the open body to substantiate his fiction, what Scarry calls the "laying edge to edge of the extremes of the material and the immaterial" (126), his placing the injured or dead body alongside ideology or fiction, is what gives his story veracity. This disembodied character's violent narrative relies on the fiction-generating capacity of the injured body, even as the suffering body dissipates and finally disappears in his story.[43]

Compared to the Counselor's kinder fiction, Gonçalves' construct is motivated by the desire for power. It manipulates without regard for its impact on people's lives. It inflicts pain and suffering in order to accomplish its goals, and it destroys bodies to impose its point of view. It is just this type of writing--writing that sacrifices bodies to substantiate itself, to grant it reality, and then represses bodies to produce knowledge and claim power--that troubled de Certeau and that led him to propose ways of subverting this violent writing. What are the consequences when this destructive form of fiction succeeds in claiming power? Is one of these consequences a sense of betrayal, a loss of faith in language and writing? What impact do violent fictions have on their readers?

We find answers to these questions by analyzing a naïve reader of Gonçalves' fiction, Galileo Gall. While the embodied characters I analyzed are embodied by their own experiences and in turn by the narrator, Galileo Gall is embodied in the narrative, but disembodied in his concept of self, creating a chasm between the way other characters and the narrator see him and the way he sees himself. This lack of self-awareness is characteristic of Gall, a Scottish anarchist, infamous political agitator and terrorist, and

phrenologist—that is, a scientist who analyses behavior and personality traits by examining the shape and protuberances of the skull with his hands. In fact, Gall's faulty self-understanding combined with his poor understanding of others (in particular the people of Canudos) and fed by his adherence to a discredited science, and his misapprehension of the events around him, make him the quintessential figure of misreading.

From his first appearance in the text, Gall stands out as physically distinctive and, therefore, marked by his bodily difference. His curly red hair and beard, his blue eyes, as well as his heavy accent, indicate his foreigness, distinctions between himself and other characters that he fails to perceive but that others consistently focus on:

> Viste de oscuro, con una levita de dos puntas y un sombrero hongo que denotan uso. Una enrulada cabellera rojiza le cubre las orejas. Es más alto que bajo, de anchas espaldas, sólido, maduro... Tiene una barbita rojiza como sus cabellos, y sus ojos penetrantes, muy claros; su boca ancha está fruncida con firmeza y las ventanillas de su nariz, muy abiertas, parecen aspirar más aire del que necesitan. (18-19)

When he reappears in the text, the narrator does not, at first, identify him by name but rather by his red hair and beard (47).

In addition to the obvious physical and linguistic distinctions, the cultural gap between Gall and the people of the region is enormous. Gall's praise for the revolt in Canudos as well as his interpretation of the events surrounding the religious community as an anarchist rebellion, are ideas that come across as totally absurd to political figures in the capital and to the *sertaneros* of the backlands. No one can make sense of this strange figure or his abstract ranting about exploitation, injustice, and revolution. And yet, this

self-anointed intellectual is unaware that others, even the least educated of society, perceive him as a fool. For example, as Gall travels toward Canudos with Jurema and the members of the circus, the group, on the verge of starvation, stops to give a performance in a small town in hopes of receiving food in exchange for entertainment. But as the Dwarf captivates the crowd with his stories, Gall, seeing an opportunity to call his brothers to arms in support of the *yagunços*, interrupts with one of his incoherent, political diatribes. As usual, he shows little awareness that his words mean nothing to the backlanders. The Bearded Lady tries to stop him from ruining their opportunity to eat by pointing out the obvious: "--¡Estúpido! ¡Estúpido! ¡Nadie te entiende! ¡Los estás poniendo tristes, los estás aburriendo, no nos darán de comer! ¡Tócales la cabeza, diles el futuro, algo que les alegre!" (226).

Yet even while his identity in the narrative is bound up with his body, the character sees himself as disembodied. Gall fancies himself an intellectual and a writer, and several articles that he sends to l'Étincelle de la révolte, a small anarchist newspaper published in Lyon, are included in the novel. Nevertheless, we learn from the Baron de Cañabrava that the newspaper had ceased to exist years before, and Gall's writings about his heroic endeavors in Brazil had no readers (434). Furthermore, the committed activist distances his concept of self from his body and his desires by taking an oath of celibacy in order to focus his mental energy on his political activities and his fight for justice.[44] Ironically, his supposed ability to dominate and control his body and sexual urges, is revealed to be a farce when, on a whim, he rapes Jurema, and commits the ultimate injustice. In the end, his existence is tied to his physical body rather than to his ability to think and use language, and his greatest fear--to die a senseless death--is played out. Gall and Rufino, Jurema's husband, both die in conjunction fighting out their differences in

hand-to-hand combat in the midst of a battle between Republican forces and the *yagunços*.

In addition to misreading himself, others, and the rebellion in Canudos, Gall's misplaced faith in phrenology (which causally links random head protuberances to temperament), also exemplifies Gall as a naïve reader. His reading of history reveals an analogous tendency to give meaning and order to random events. He writes in one of his articles concerning the Counselor:

> Nosotros sabemos, compañeros, que no existe el azar en la historia, que, por arbitraria que parezca, hay siempre una racionalidad encubierta detrás de la más confusa apariencia... La racionalidad está grabada en la cabeza de todo hombre, y... puede guiarlo,... a actuar en la dirección de la historia. (90)

Hayden White argues, on the contrary, that in order for real events to have meaning they must take the form of a story in which an inherent order is revealed, or rather *invented* ("The Value of Narrativity"). For Gall that inherent order seems naturally there; history has a shape and a direction that can be deciphered. Vargas Llosa's vision of history as expressed in the novel, like White's, is history as chaotic, arbitrary events that only find order and coherence through fiction.[45]

The most revealing example of Gall as the figure of misreading is his gullible reading of Gonçalves' fiction concerning the shipment of guns to Canudos in support of the rebels. Gall accepts this apparently coherent story without seeing the ruptures or gaps, in other words, the "countertext," or even considering its existence. He is wrapped up in following the events of what he interprets and hopes to be an anarchist revolution in the backlands. Gall's unsuspecting reading of events is reminiscent of Borges' arrogant

detective, Erik Lönnrot, who credulously connects constructed clue after constructed clue to form a believable narration, which, instead of leading to the prevention of the predicted fourth crime, leads to his own murder (Ficciones, 147-63). In fact, Gall's misreading of Gonçalves' violent narrative twice nearly costs him his life. It is not until Caifas, Gonçalves' hired killer, literally spells out to him the intended plot (whose desired outcome is all but certain as the killer holds a gun to his head) that Gall understands the extent of his own naïveté. But the fortuitous nature of reality is revealed when Jurema, the woman who Gall has just raped, inexplicably intervenes on Gall's behalf, preventing Caifas from killing him.

Here begins the plot of another story, a story that Gall, once again, fails to understand, his second notable misreading. This time, however, his misreading does lead to lethal consequences and the ultimate embodiment in death. Gall refuses to grasp the importance of the code of honor that governs the behavior of the *sertaneros*, and chooses instead to try to impose his system of beliefs and his reading on a story whose dénouement is already decided. His mad attempts to convince both Jurema and Rufino of the absurdity of their beliefs and values, to change a centuries old story of rape and revenge in the name of honor, end only with his unheroic death.

Gall, as the misguided reader of violent fictions, is violent himself, not only in his futile struggle with Rufino that seems inevitable, but especially in the rape of Jurema, a crime that he commits twice.[46] Particularly notable in Gall's response to his crime is his lack of sympathy for his victim. In typically condescending fashion, he actually thinks that the rape might have been good for Jurema as a way of waking her from her uneventful and backward life:

> Pensó en Jurema. ¿Era un ser pensante? Un animalito doméstico, más bien. Diligente, sumiso, capaz de creer que las imágenes de San Antonio escapan de las iglesias a las grutas donde fueron talladas, adiestrado como las otras siervas del Barón para cuidar gallinas y carneros, dar de comer al marido, lavarle la ropa y abrirle las piernas solo a él. Pensó: "Ahora, tal vez, despertará de su letargo y descubrirá la injusticia". Pensó: "Yo soy tu injusticia". Pensó: "Talvez le has hecho un bien". (108)

Incredibly, he thinks most profoundly about the impact of his crime, or what he interprets as "hacer el amor" or making love, on his own life, that is, whether he should renew his oath of celibacy, and whether it might impact his goal of reaching Canudos. Gall's disembodied concept of self not only impedes his own self-awareness but also obstructs his ability to feel compassion for the poor and suffering around him, except on the most abstract, theoretical level, and thus, it allows him to inflict violence on those he purports to help.

Reading is also highlighted in Vargas Llosa's depiction of the disembodied Baron de Cañabrava, a character that, like Epaminondas Gonçalves and Galileo Gall, requires us to rethink Scarry's linking of disembodiment and world creating. During the first two parts of the novel, the Baron is most notable for his absence. He is frequently mentioned by name as a powerful landowner, proprietor of an influential newspaper, and leader of the pro-monarchist Autonomist Party of Bahía. But his bodily absence from the state and from the narrative during the period of time when the rebellion in Canudos develops and then begins to heat up not only contributes to his disembodied characterization, but also leads to suspicion about his involvement in organizing shipments of arms to the rebels.

When the Baron finally does appear in the text, Vargas Llosa characterizes him by his words and thoughts, his environment, and the people around him rather than his physical attributes. In fact, the lack of any physical description of this character is striking, considering the important role he plays in the novel. For example, in Part Three, section five, the section in which the character first appears, the Baron returns with his wife from an extended vacation in Europe. The couple is greeted by only a small crowd of well-wishers and local dignitaries, a reception that the Baron correctly interprets as corresponding to his party's loss of influence during his absence. A meeting with his associates upon arriving at the palace depicts the Baron planning the party's response to recent events, maneuvering to regain the upper hand, and advising his cohorts on their next moves. The reader quickly comes to know the Baron as a prudent political operator, with keen insight into the power of public opinion and the importance of moderation; we could say he is an astute reader of the region's political terrain. However, at no time does the narrator attempt to draw, or even sketch, a visual picture of the Baron.

Importantly, the disembodied Baron is a sensitive observer, a reader of others' bodies. Like the omniscient narrator of the novel, he seems to rise above his visitors, to scrutinize their appearance, postures, and gestures, looking for the key to understanding them. I have already examined his reading of the deformed Pajeú. He similarly reads the face of Colonel Moreira César hoping to gain insight into this character's motivations: "El Barón examinó con minucia la menuda cara impávida del oficial, sus ojos hostiles, la mueca despectativa. ¿Era un cínico? No podia saberlo aún: lo único claro era que Moriera César lo odiaba" (212). Later, he observes Galileo Gall with scientific interest: "...volvió a examinar a Gall como un entomólogo fascinado por una especie rara" (236). Holding himself in a position superior to those embodied characters that he scrutinizes,

the Baron is like the objective and bodiless scientist deriving knowledge from what he observes, and always maintaining his dispassionate perspective.[47]

We might also characterize the Baron, in contrast to Gall, as a figure of the sage reader, not only in his perceptive readings of the various visitors to his home, of his levelheaded understanding of the people of the backlands, but in particular, of Gonçalves' fiction. The Baron discovers the key to its twisted plot and develops strategies for minimizing the fiction's impact on the balance of power. The Baron's superior understanding of the region's culture and politics apparently makes him a better reader. Nevertheless, the Baron's conversation with the myopic journalist brings his understanding of the conflict in Canudos into question, and this questioning subtly disrupts his orderly life. Furthermore, this man of apparent moderation and gentility, moments after the conclusion of his conversation with the journalist, becomes a violent rapist. The disembodied Baron sheds his veneer of civility and reveals his underlying barbarism.

An examination of his relationship with his wife, sheds light on this change in the Baron's character. From the beginning, the Baroness, Estela, and her maid, Sebastiana, in contrast to the Baron, are embodied as characters:

> La Baronesa se río, con una risa grácil y desocupada, que la rejuvencía. Era de cabellos castaños y piel muy blanca, con unas manos de largos dedos que se movían como pájaros. Ella y su mucama, una mujer morena, de formas abundantes, miraban arrobadas el mar azul oscuro, el verde forforescente de las riberas y los tejados sangrientos. (162)

However, the Baroness becomes increasingly embodied by events, as she is unable to continue to maintain her composure with the disruption that the conflict in

Canudos creates in her life. The Baroness, as the wife of an aristocrat, is expected to accompany her husband at public events and to provide charming but superficial conversation at the appropriate moments. As the Baron reminds his friend and cohort, Adalberto de Gumucio, "Es mala educación hablar de política ante las damas" (162), he implies as well that it is inappropriate for women to be involved in such discussions. Generally, the Baroness performs her role gracefully, making herself "invisible" to her husband and his friends. However, the destruction of their plantation and home in Calumbí brings about a change in her character that inflicts discomfort on the Baron's guests:

> ...la escuchaban esforzándose por mostrarse naturales, pero no podían disimular la incomodidad que les producía el desasosiego de la Baronesa. Esa mujer discreta, invisible detrás de sus maneras corteses, cuyas sonrisas levantaban una muralla impalpable entre ella y los demás, ahora divagaba, se quejaba, monologaba sin tregua, como si tuviera la enfermedad del habla. (267)

The Baroness' words that attempt to describe her suffering and that draw attention to her, making her visible, embodied, produces uneasiness and embarrassment in the Baron's guests. She no longer behaves according to the rules of her social class and her position of power, and her increasing embodiment is considered demeaning. The Baroness describes the pain that she feels at having watched Calumbí burn as a physical pain in her belly, similar to that she felt when she lost her children in childbirth. The Baron, once again playing the part of the observer, examines the changes in his wife, the loss of her beauty and vivacity (268), and he pities her, as he blames himself for her ultimate descent into insanity.

Nevertheless, the Baron himself continues in his disembodied state, as the world seems to crumble around him. His, formerly disembodied wife, is now embodied by her illness, and her incapacity leaves her husband, like Gall, leading a celibate life. The Baron remains a disembodied character in Part Three and most of Part Four of the novel. The sections in which he appears generally consist of dialogue rather than narration of action or description. In Part Three he is found conversing with his various houseguests including his fellow Autonomists, Galileo Gall, Colonel Moreira César, and Epaminondas Gonçalves. Part Four includes his long discussion with the myopic journalist. However, in the final section of the novel the Baron, a man of words, is also momentarily embodied by the narrator who describes the character's penis as he rapes his wife's servant, Sebastiana, who is asleep in the same room with the Baroness:

> --La señora está ahí y yo la quiero más que tú—se oyó decir, pero tenía la sensación de que **era otro el que hablaba** y trataba aún de pensar; **él sólo era ese cuerpo caldeado**, ese sexo ahora sí despierto del todo al que sentía erguido, duro húmedo, botando contra su vientre... (504, emphasis mine)

During this act of violence, this disembodied character becomes only his body: he is his penis, not the man who speaks. In this moment of partial embodiment, the Baron disassociates himself from his words. As a victim of rape, however, Sebastiana is more completely embodied, because although she was embodied earlier by the narrator, she is now embodied with excruciating detail by the Baron (502-7).

How can we read the many instances of rape in this novel? Even with such an abundance of violent acts depicted throughout this war narrative, the multiple scenes of rape still stand out, a fact that is clear when we consider recent criticism dealing with the

issue. A close reading of the two most indelible scenes of rape committed by Gall and the Baron clarifies the meaning of sexual violence in La guerra del fin del mundo. As we have seen, both of these men view themselves as disembodied, disassociating their notion of self from their bodies and bodily drives. And yet at the time these two characters commit rape, both feel the loss of control and power in their lives and they become slaves to their bodily urges. The strong sense of disembodiment that both men feel as they construct their subjectivity is disrupted by the violent events occurring around them, that threaten to embody them as well.

Gall's sense of a loss of control stems primarily from the many instances of his misreading people and events. When Gall, who considers himself a man of science, first meets Jurema, she seems an enigma to him; in her he sees "esa vocación perniciosa, anticientífica—salir del campo de la experiencia, sumirse en la fantasmagoría y la ensoñación—es evidente" (62). Subsequently, moments before the attack on her home that leads Gall to rape, the Scottish anarchist tries desperately to read Jurema's face again, but without success:

> No hay ni pizca de burla en sus palabras y tampoco en sus ojos cuando Galileo Gall la mira, tratando de adivinar por su expresión cómo toma ella esas habladurías. No lo averigua: la cara bruñida, alargada, apacible, es, piensa, tan inescrutable como la de un indostano o un chino. (97)

Gall rapes Jurema moments after this failed reading and after the first attempt on his life by Gonçalves' thugs. His complete bafflement as to why anyone would want to kill him (due to his misreading of Gonçalves' fiction), and Jurema's attempt to find protection from the violence that has entered her home, leads to Gall's sexual violence.

The Baron too experiences a loss of control over his life moments before raping Sebastiana. He has just concluded his long, disorienting conversation with the myopic journalist, which has led him to question his understanding of the problems around him--the conflict in Canudos, the consequent loss of most of his fortune and power, and the reasons for his wife's insanity. The Baron's feeling of impotence is related to the myopic journalist's narrative concerning the war, an endless series of revelations, "incomprehensible" (500) for the Baron, a narrative that points to the Baron's misreading of the rebellion that leaves a profound impression on his life.

Although rape has frequently been portrayed as evidence of male power and dominance, and female victimization as proof of women's powerlessness and vulnerability, considering sexual violence in light of Scarry's theory of torture and the laying edge to edge of the material and immaterial, changes our understanding of rape. If rape as a war crime can be considered a form of torture (as was recently decreed by the United Nation's War Crime Tribunal), then as with torture, in rape illegitimate ideological regimes inflict pain on their victims, not as a form of punishment, but as way of conferring reality on their baseless ideologies, with the reality of the open or injured body. Renee Heberle in fact argues that rape is just that—"a sign of the impotence of masculine social power and dominance" (68). The rape victim's body then serves to confer reality on the fiction of male power.[48] With this in mind, I conclude that Gall and the Baron rape in order to regain a sense of power and control by using the fiction-generating capacity of their victims' open bodies. Ironically, their fictions ignore the consequence of their violent acts on the victims' bodies, repressing them, and thus, could be called "disembodied" fictions.

The violent fictions created through rape by these two disembodied characters, as with Gonçalves' narrative, lead to further misreadings and violence. We have already noted Gall's total lack of compassion for Jurema, his victim, as he justifies his actions as part of a learning process: "Volvió a acercar la cara a Jurema: --No me arrepiento, ha sido... instructivo. Era falso lo que creía. El goce no está reñido con el ideal. No hay que avergonzarse del cuerpo ¿entiendes? No, no entiendes" (224). Jurema's injured body serves to instruct Gall, and to substantiate his abstract theories and philosophy. Meaning flees Jurema's open body (she does not understand), to attach itself to Gall's new reading of reality. Her body is, as de Certeau would have it, "the price paid" for knowledge.

Perhaps the most violent misreadings occur as a response to the Baron's rape of Sebastiana, and most interestingly, they occur outside of Vargas Llosa's text. Many critics have interpreted this explicitly savage rape as an act of love. For example, Seymour Menton believes that although rape is normally a reprehensible act, in this case it has been justified by Vargas Llosa and transformed into an act of tenderness toward the Baron's wife (47). Dick Gerdes also finds positive signification in this violent act, when he states that the Baron "*makes love* to his wife's servant" (186-87, emphasis mine) and then, goes on to argue that the act brings harmony, understanding and peace to the Baron's life.[49]

These critical interpretations or misreadings are a form of flight from looking squarely at Sebastiana's injured body and acknowledging the Baron's capacity for violence. These critics' comments reveal a desire to bring closure to a disturbing novel, to assign meaning to the open body, to find a satisfying and coherent ending to the violence of the text. But these readings also repeat the violence of fiction that Vargas

Llosa has been demonstrating in the novel, fiction that, like Gonçalves', sacrifices bodies to produce "knowledge." The text itself, however, does not support these misreadings of lovemaking or happy endings in the Baron's case.[50] A close reading of this section reveals unquestionably the forced nature of the violent act between the Baron and Sebastiana. For instance, the Baron "la obligó a ladear la cabeza," he feels her lips "cerrados con fuerza," "ordenó" as if he were commanding a slave, Sebastiana's arms are wrapped across her chest like a "escudo," a shield, and finally, she trembles, "temblaba," and she cries, "sollozaba," as the Baron attempts to forcefully penetrate her (504). In addition, although the Baron does awaken to the peaceful singing of birds and cool breezes coming though the window, there is, once again, a disturbing sensation, "una vaga inquietud" (507), a vague anxiety in the Baron that something is not quite right. Suddenly he notices far out in the Bay of Bahía an unidentifiable commotion. Using his wife's opera glasses, which underline the theatrical, and thus fictional, nature of reality, brings the scene into focus: he sees several boats full of people singing, praying, and tossing flowers into the sea in a funeral ceremony for the severed head of the Counselor (507-8). The Baron's momentary illusion of well-being, his sadistic fiction of control, is again destroyed.

At the end of the novel, the kinder fictions emerge as victorious. These include the Counselor's teachings of a better world to come, manifested in the celebration of the Counselor's resurrected head and in the ascendance of João Abade into heaven as told by the old woman survivor (531). What makes some fictions kind while others are violent, according to Vargas Llosa's novel, is the sense of compassion with which they are told and the awareness of, and compassion for bodies that the reader brings to the text. Although disembodiment has frequently been associated with language use, the civilized

and the rational, La guerra del fin del mundo implies that a disembodied concept of self not only distances a person from his or her own body and sentience, but also from others' pain, and thus, from empathy and compassion. Disembodied fictions--that is, those that repress bodies from their discourse--like disembodied characters, disregard the pain they bring about as they impose their point of view, and in doing so, overturn their identification with the civilized and become, instead, barbaric. Clearly, for Vargas Llosa, the use of language is not a panacea for physical violence, as language itself becomes increasingly sophisticated in its capacity to manipulate, to repress, and to bring about violence.

On the other hand, embodied characters and fictions may enable a shared understanding of suffering and a desire to lessen it through language and communication. Whether they are the oral legends of the storytelling Dwarf or the Christian teachings of the Counselor, such embodied fictions express the pain of those who suffer and the hope of overcoming. As in lost-body writing, the body and body practices are made prominent in these kinder fictions in order to emphasize the importance of being aware of and acknowledging the experiences of others. Like the myopic journalist's anticipated writings about the history of the conflict in Canudos, these kinder fictions strive to represent the reality they depict from the various viewpoints of the many participants, and without intentional distortions. Embodiment and the body, then, are no longer associated with the uncivilized, the irrational, and the barbaric past, but instead are viewed as essential to compassion, understanding and advancing civilization. For Vargas Llosa, embodiment is a necessary component to moral action at both individual and societal levels, a notion which subverts Scarry's negative valuing of the body and the need to progress beyond its sentience.

Thus, pain is not the only form of embodiment. Pleasure also brings about an embodied state, and thus, inspires moral action. In Scarry's framing events of the human psyche, pleasurable sensations are associated with disembodiment and imagining. But Vargas Llosa, once again, questions Scarry's paradigm by proposing that pleasure, such as that achieved through lovemaking, is a positive form of embodiment, and a possible path toward redemption. In La guerra del fin del mundo, the character of the myopic journalist best represents the possibility of redemption through embodiment, in terms of both pain and pleasure. As we have seen, the journalist is made increasingly aware of his embodied state during the conflict in Canudos, suffering from hunger and thirst, and teetering on the verge of death. But in this embodied state he also experiences, for the first time, extreme pleasure, as does his now lover, Jurema. More than any other aspect of the journalist's embodiment, it is his new understanding of desire, not as a deficiency or a void, but as a force of energy, that motivates him to seek help for the Dwarf, who is dying of tuberculosis, and to write the story of Canudos.

In fact, feelings of pleasure and love rooted in the body not only inspire the journalist's charitable acts but also allow Jurema to move beyond her resignation, from being a rape victim and a dishonored woman, to being happy even in the midst of war and to rekindling her desire to survive these catastrophes:

> ...sólo ahora había descubierto que también el cuerpo podía ser feliz, en los brazos de este ser que el azar y la guerra (¿o el Perro?) habían puesto en su camino. Ahora sabía que el amor era también una exaltación de la piel, un encandilamiento de los sentidos, un vertigo que parecía completarla. (487)

Bodily pleasures are what bring about this transformation of being in Jurema and permit her to leave behind the pain of rape.[51] Is this "exaltation of the skin" indeed fanaticism of the body, as Angel Rama claims, or instead a form of redemption, a path toward a more humane concept of self and of the self's interaction with the world? Vargas Llosa's novel indicates that a return of the body in fictional discourse, and a reaffirming of embodiment in our notion of self might reduce violence and further civilization.

While Vargas Llosa's La guerra del fin del mundo subtly points to a more humane form of writing and of conception of self through embodiment, Saer's El entenado epitomizes this "kinder fiction" as it explicitly examines the process of writing one's own and others' bodily experience of the world. In the following chapter, I study the way Saer's narrator constructs a history of the cannibal tribe, with whom he lives for ten years, that merges with his own personal history to create a discourse in which the notions of self and other fuse, and the dichotomy savage/civilized unravels. The nameless narrator is not only compassionate, as his writing the history of the tribe fulfills its desire to be remembered, but is also honest about his own vulnerability expressed in his need to write and to be remembered. Coming full circle, in this final analytical chapter we return to Montaigne, the first lost-body writer. He, like Saer's narrator, writes to be remembered, to vanquish death. However, as de Certeau has shown us, these lost-body writers ultimately submit to a "triumphant loss," the loss of the illusion of truth and the triumph of inevitable uncertainty.

Chapter 4: Allegorical Renderings of the Body in El entenado

> They are savages at the same rate that we say fruit are wild, which nature produces of herself and by her own ordinary progress; whereas in truth, we ought rather to call those wild whose nature we have changed by our artifice, and diverted from the common order.
> --Michel de Montaigne, "Of Cannibals," Essays of Michel de Montaigne (66-67)

> Pero ahora que soy viejo me doy cuenta de que la certidumbre ciega de ser hombre y solo hombre nos hermana más con la bestia que la duda constante y casi insoportable sobre nuestra propia condición.
> --Juan José Saer, El entenado (109)

Arcadio Díaz-Quiñones establishes a relationship between the Argentine writer Juan José Saer's contemporary historical novel, El entenado (1983), and what the critic refers to as the novel's two historical and philosophical sources: Herodotus and Montaigne. Both of these sources contribute to the long-standing discussion concerning barbarians and cannibals that is also explored in Saer's novel. Herodotus labeled barbarians those who were not Greek, while Montaigne questioned the traditional dichotomy between the civilized and the savage. According to Díaz-Quiñones as he interprets de Certeau's reading of Montaigne's essay "Of Cannibals", Saer's novel responds in particular to Montaigne's discussion of the space of the Other, the space of difference and the space of the literary (9-10). I too am interested in this exploration of the relationship between Montaigne's essays and El entenado but I will focus more specifically on how the body's exposure to different cultures and discourses (the space of the Other and of difference) brings about a new process for conceiving one's own identity, less in terms of self versus Other than as a blending of cultures and values experienced. I will also analyze how the body rendered in the texts of both writers, representative of what we earlier defined as lost-body writing, is valued as a storehouse of memories and

experiences, and also as a catalyst for writing. El entenado recalls the essays of Montaigne beyond the breaking down of the savage/civilized dichotomy. The novel also alludes to the relationship Montaigne establishes between the body and writing both as a way of capturing reality more faithfully and reconnecting humanity to the natural, his blending of the discourses of self with that of the subject of writing, and his ultimate acknowledgment that writing is another artifice which fails to preserve the human body from encroaching death.[52]

In 1580, when Montaigne first presents his "honest book" of essays to his reader, and expresses the wish that his writing be understood as sincere and as an accurate, unadorned depiction of himself, the French Renaissance essayist becomes the first lost-body writer: "I desire therein to be viewed as I appear in my own genuine, simple, and ordinary manner, without study and artifice: for it is myself I paint" ("To the Reader" N. pag.). Montaigne engages in the activity of writing to make sense of the world, exploring subjects from education and philosophy to drunkenness and thumbs, and manages to do so by inserting his own body into the text and showing the reader how bodily experience can be organized in writing to create meaning. This new form of essay blends the personal experience of the writer with the subject of writing and so erases the distinction between the author and the world he describes. In his attempt to faithfully portray himself in his writing, Montaigne clearly demonstrates his belief that simple language can transparently represent the material world. Being himself the principal subject of his writing, Montaigne prominently displays his body and its defects in the text "so far as public reverence hath permitted me." This first lost-body writer, in fact, wishes to unreservedly bare his body in its most simple state in his discourse as a way of revealing himself most completely and capturing his natural essence: "If I had lived among those

nations, which (they say) yet dwell under the sweet liberty of nature's primitive laws, I assure thee I would most willingly have painted myself quite fully and quite naked." In acknowledging that he himself is the subject of his writing, albeit a "frivolous and vain" one, the essayist also acknowledges that his body accumulates knowledge and its experiences incite the act of writing.

Implicit in his desire to be "naked" in the text, and explicit in the epigraph to this chapter, are the two dichotomous associations that Montaigne establishes: the first links the naked body and nature to accuracy and honesty, and the second relates culture and the artifice of civilization to corruption and falseness. Although revealing the unadorned body in writing is a gesture which communicates the essayist's longing to capture his natural essence in language, and in spite of his previously mentioned faith in the capacity of language to represent material reality, in dedicating his book of essays to his family, Montaigne is yet aware that his representation of self is incomplete and somehow *unnatural*:

> "I have dedicated it to the particular commodity of my kinsfolk and friends, so that, having lost me (which they must do shortly), they may therein recover *some* traits of my conditions and humors, and by that means preserve *more whole, and more life-like*, the knowledge they had of me." (emphasis mine, N. pag.)

It seems that artificial language has failed to capture fully the vitality and the integrity of the body: only some characteristics of the essayist can be grasped and retained in writing, and the portrait therein is contrived. But regardless of language's inability to reconstitute the writer completely, it is clear from this passage that Montaigne views writing as a way of prolonging his life beyond his nearing death. In spite of Montaigne's attack on the

"savage" way culture intrudes on and perverts nature, the essayist himself attempts to forestall the progress of nature toward death by preserving his body in writing. Montaigne's awareness of the interconnected nature of the body and writing--as his bodily experience forms the basis of his essays and his essays resurrect hope of continuing life--represents what de Certeau calls a "triumphant loss." The lost-body writer courageously offers the body to the text out of a longing to establish correspondence between language and the world; there it is consumed by the perverting power of language, whose remaining meaning is then devoured by the reader. Truth and the body are impossible to grasp, but agency is born as the writer expresses his truth and the readers manipulate discourse at will.

The undermining of the notion of fixed truths, the role the body plays in writing, and the relationship between humanity, nature and the impulse to write are themes also explored in Saer's El entenado. El entenado's focus on these themes, the apparent confusion and break down between the subject and object of writing in the novel, as well as the its stark, self-conscious narrative style and preference for analytical discourse over storytelling, recall Montaigne's personal style of essay, and suggest a link between the essays of Montaigne and this contemporary Latin American novel which goes beyond the questioning of traditional ideas concerning the representation of otherness.

In El entenado, the nameless historian-narrator, a survivor of Juán Díaz de Solís' 1516 expedition to Río de la Plata, attempts to remember and write sixty years later about his experience living as a captive amongst a tribe of cannibals in the region.[53] His fictional narration, whose writing would coincide with Montaigne's writing of his book of essays, reveals that memory is not only recorded as images in the mind, but is also

imprinted on the body in ways that do not lend themselves to examination by rational thought:

> A los recuerdos de mi memoria que día tras día mi lucidez contempla como a imágenes pintadas, se suman también esos otros recuerdos que el cuerpo solo recuerda y que se actualizan en él sin llegar sin embargo a presentarse a la memoria para que, retenieńdolos con atención, la razón los examine. Esos recuerdos no se presentan en forma de imágenes sino más bien como estremecimientos, como nudos sembrados en el cuerpo, como palpitaciones, como rumores inaudibles, como temblores. (175)

The narrator of El entenado does not consider these corporeal memories to be any less useful to his task of remembering. In fact, these bodily memories, which, according to the narrator, may take the form of shudderings, knots buried in the flesh, palpitations, or inaudible murmurings, may actually be more powerful in that they have become an integral part of his being, and therefore, help to form his notion of self and identity.

By positing the body as a site where experience is recorded, El entenado challenges the mind/body dualism that pervades Western thinking. Body is no longer conceived as the separate, inferior other of the mind, an alien self in need of discipline and control, but instead an equal partner in preserving knowledge and memory of the past, a text where many discourses inscribe themselves or leave their mark. For example, even as the narrator's cerebral memory begins to fade in old age, his body continues to retain the past: "Mi cuerpo se acuerda sin que la memoria lo sepa...puedo decir que, de algún modo, mi cuerpo entero recuerda a su manera, esos años de vida espesa y carnal..." ["My body remembers without my memory knowing it...I can say that, in some way, my

entire body remembers those years of thick, carnal life..."] (176). These bodily memories become essential to his formation of identity as they allow the individual, through intuition, to recall and relate his experiences and perceptions of the world.

This conception of body as text is not unique to the narrator's body, but rather, throughout his text, the narrator consistently reads the bodies of others as texts and as layered with the discourses of social practice as well. For instance, in describing the battered bodies and slow, painful recovery of the Indians after one of their violent cannibal feasts and orgies, he depicts the scarrings, and other deformities left on their bodies by the events as "marcas imborrables" ["unerasable markings"], "el signo inequívoco de sus excesos en su propio cuerpo" ["the unequivocal sign of their excesses on their own bodies"] (84). Also, the narrator's careful observations or readings of the physical appearance of others reveal their personalities with great accuracy. Upon meeting for the first time Father Quesada, a man who will become the narrator's spiritual father, the narrator is able to discern that "De su persona emanaba una insolencia resignada y generosa" [a resigned and generous insolence emanated from his body"] (126). [54] Others, too, read bodies to gain knowledge, as occurs when the narrator returns home after his release from captivity and is subjected to the suspicious interrogations and careful study and observation of learned priests and courtesans (124).

In the case of the narrator of El entenado, the body not only serves as an archive of his own life experiences, but also preserves the history of the cannibal tribe with which his identity is thoroughly entwined. This material subject, whose very notion of self results from the negotiation of discourses associated with the communities he has encountered, is clearly aware that his identity is shaped by his experience of living for ten years with the cannibal tribe. The narrator describes the formation of self by comparing

the body's experiences in the world to the molding of clay into rock (108). Later, he wonders if the tribe had left their essence engraved on his body converting him into a walking text, a "signo viviente que era evidente para todos" ["a living sign that was apparent to all"] (124). In fact, the cannibals explicitly recognize the narrator as an embodiment of their history, a "def-ghi", a native word with many related meanings, such as an object to symbolize an absent person, an interpreter, a bird with the capacity to mimic human speech, or a reflection of things in water (172-73). "Def-ghi" is also the name they give to their captive and future narrator. His witnessing of the events surrounding the annual cannibal feast and of the customs and social practices of the tribe imposes upon him the responsibility of communicating his knowledge of the Indians to his own kind. The narrator will serve as a substitute in their absence, and in his presence (and in the presence of his body), their history survives. In this way, the narrator's body can be seen as a form of writing, a text inscribed by his experiences with the tribe.

After his release from captivity, the nameless narrator returns to the Old World with a clear understanding of the importance of his role as tribal historian. He knows that, with the inevitable dispersal, disappearance and slaughter of the tribe under Spanish conquest, only he can testify to its existence and leave a written record of its culture. In the act of writing this record, the narrator discovers the seminal role his body plays in remembering and writing the tribe's history and in knowing himself as he is marked by his experience. He learns that even the most mundane movements of his body can extricate memories hidden beneath the surface of the skin:

> ...y no pocos de los gestos que realizo, mecánicos, en los momentos más inesperados, están como impregnados de esos recuerdos, a veces de un modo tan indirecto y secreto que ni yo mismo alcanzo a darme cuenta de

> que existe una relación, sin dejar de experimentar, sin embargo, la sensación extraña de que a través de ese acto fugaz y secundario, todos esos años van a volver, de golpe, de la región oscura en la que están enterrados, a la superficie. (175)

The body of the narrator in El entenado is an archive of memories and knowledge of the cannibal tribe whose resources can be tapped through motion and intuition.[55] Reflecting the feeling of the profound responsibility of his role as "defghi," the narrator's autobiographical narrative, the novel itself, becomes the historical record of the tribe, a testimony to their lives and customs, unavoidably fused with his own. The structure of the narrative itself expresses this fusion of histories and identities as it tells these stories without pause, breaks, or chapter divisions to signal transitions to new subjects, places or times. In the mind of the narrator, the story of his life and that of the cannibals have become inseparable. In fact, his very skin forms a barrier to anything that might sever this unity:

> De la misma manera que los indios de algunas tribus vecinas trazaban en el aire un círculo invisible que los protegía de lo desconocido, mi cuerpo está como envuelto en la piel de esos años que ya no dejan pasar nada del exterior. Únicamente lo que se asemeja es aceptado. El momento presente no tiene más fundamento que su parentesco con el pasado. Conmigo, los indios no se equivocaron; yo no tengo, aparte de ese centelleo confuso, ninguna otra cosa que contar. (176)

This combined history is not, however, another instance of a representative of the dominant culture speaking for the voiceless Other as some critics have argued.[56] I believe, on the contrary, that El entenado questions the purity of terms like self and Other,

terms which themselves form the basis of a traditional dichotomy and which rely on stereotypes, exclusive categories of race, and a monadic conception of self and cultural identity. In contrast, the narrator-historian of El entenado speaks as an adopted member of the cannibal community, as a stepchild, the meaning of "entenado" in English. His writing and exploration of self demonstrate the complexity of human identity in a world where encounters between cultures once unknown to each other permit the individual to perceive and theorize the world differently. In this conception, identity is not a stable, disembodied consciousness, nor is it determined solely by one's race, ethnicity, or nationality. Identity, as formulated in El entenado, is an impure, changeable hybrid based on life experiences and exposure to different discourses, whose origins cannot always be traced. The narrator, himself an orphan who never knew his parents and who prior to traveling to the New World lived at the margins of Spanish society, exemplifies this notion of self as embodied subjectivity, in which life experiences leave their mark on the body, and thus influence the formation of identity.

For example, even though the narrator lives only a relatively short time with the tribe, the ideological and cultural discourses grafted on him during his captivity have a greater impact on his notion of self and his place in the world than the discourses of national origin. Writing as an old man, the narrator describes his youthful voyage to the New World, and his perception of this exotic land using a discourse that reflects the philosophy of the cannibal Indians. In the tribe's conception of the universe, one's own presence is necessary to uphold and sustain the reality of the world, whose very materiality has the effect of making its existence more doubtful. In the following passage, the narrator describes the necessity of bolstering reality after many days at sea:

> No se veía un pez, un pájaro, una nube. Todo el mundo conocido reposaba sobre nuestros recuerdos. Nosotros éramos sus únicos garantes en ese medio liso y uniforme, de color azul. El sol atestiguaba día a día, regular, cierta alteridad... Pero era poca su realidad. Al cabo de varias semanas nos alcanzó el delirio: nuestra convicción y nuestros meros recuerdos no eran fundamento suficiente. Mar y cielo iban perdiendo nombre y sentido. Cuanto más rugosas eran la soga o la madera en el interior de los barcos, más ásperas las velas, más espesos los cuerpos que desambulaban en cubierta, más problemática se volvía su presencia. (15)

Like the Indians he has yet to encounter, the narrator and, by implication, his shipmates act as guarantors of the continuing existence of the world, and yet, at times, even their presence is insufficient to maintaining its persistence. Also reflecting the philosophy of the Indians is the narrator's assertion that physical objects on the ship like rope, wood, and the sails actually diminish reality rather than reinforce it. This description is entirely anachronistic in its perspective, as the narrator is remembering a time previous to his captivity with the Indians, memories on which, nevertheless, he imposes their ontology. Throughout the novel we find similar descriptions, in which the narrator shows that he can no longer visualize the world from the perspective of his youth; his outlook and memories are totally altered by the thinking of the Indians and their conception of the world. In terms of culture and ideology, the narrator has been fully incorporated into the tribe, and having been chosen by the tribe to be a "defghi," and to represent its culture to the outside world, he cannot be conceived of as a conqueror speaking for the conquered, or a dominant voice appropriating the voice of the voiceless Other. By suggesting that bodies are marked by their exposure to various social discourses and practices and that

they are involved in the formation of identity, this embodied notion of self presented in El entenado precludes the practice of conceiving of identity by defining one's self in contrast to the Other. Mutual marking occurs and perspectives of the world change when bodies meet and even when they clash. Consequently, the Other becomes part of the self through this act of mutual inscription.[57]

A similar conception of self as the embodiment of conflicting discourses can be seen in the influential writing of Saer's Argentine compatriot Jorge Luis Borges, and as we shall see, this is just one of many Borgesian discourses that seem to have penetrated Saer's narrative. In Borges' short story, "Los teólogos," the theologian Aureliano spends his life in secret battle trying to surpass the writings of a rival theologian and his polar opposite, Juan de Panonia. Aureliano's treatises against heretical groups are characterized by the complexity of their reasoning in contrast to the simple but elegant argumentation of Juan de Panonia. Years of intense rivalry, however, do not lead to a widening of the chasm between them and their styles of writing, but rather to conformity in their discourses, and later to a merging of their selves. First, Aureliano unconsciously plagiarizes the work of his adversary:

> De pronto, una oración de veinte palabras se presentó a su espíritu. La escribió, gozoso; inmediatamente después, lo inquietó la sospecha de que era ajena. Al día siguiente, recordó que la había leído hacía muchos años en el *Adversus annulares* que compuso Juan de Panonia. (554)

The disturbing infiltration of his rival's words into his argument will lead Aureliano to place these remembered words in a new context to accuse Panonia of heresy, a crime for which he will burn at the stake. Nevertheless, by destroying the Other, Aureliano also destroys himself, for while observing Juan de Panonia's execution, Aureliano recognizes

his own face in that of the dying man. It seems that in this Borgesian conception of self, the individual is transformed by his contact with the discourse of the Other, even when the Other is despised for his difference.

A similar proposition is asserted in El entenado where, once the encounter of cultures has occurred so has the process of mutual marking and inscription. The narrator, who is "contaminated" (118) by his experience with the cannibal tribe, does not see the Indians as Other but rather as a part of himself, and is unable to disentangle his own history from the history of the tribe. Not only that, but on contemplating the probable slaughter of many of the Indians at the hands of Spanish soldiers, the narrator states that, because nothing exterior to them could exist without them, the native victims and their victimizers were doomed to suffer the same sad fate: "Sin embargo, al mismo tiempo que caían, arrastraban con ellos a los que los exterminaban" (161). Much like the way Aureliano and Juan de Panonia were two sides of the same coin, and the destruction of one lead to that of the other, so too the Indians and the Spanish soldiers are unable to extricate themselves from one another, because, according to the narrator, death for the Indians dooms the Spanish as well.

We have explored the role the narrator's body plays in remembering and writing, and in constructing a notion of self in which the body is a palimpsest of overlapping and conflicting discourses. Likewise, in examining the narrator's memory of the tribe, we find writing lush with materiality, with images--sights, sounds, smells, feel and flavors--of native bodies in the movement of daily life, images of bodies in action which help the narrator to construct tribal history. In fact, the narrator provides explicit, almost anthropological detail about the Indians' obsessive cleanliness, their attitudes toward their own and each other's bodies, customs concerning urinating and defecating, sexual

behavior, personal distance during communication, bathing, cooking, and house cleaning habits, the pace of movement in carrying out chores, and the well-defined roles of the members of the community as they struggle to survive during the difficult winter months (84-96). But the descriptions of the annual cannibal feast, the rendering of human flesh, and the ensuing periods of drunkenness and orgy are particularly startling and enduring in their blunt corporeality. For example, the narrator's memories evoke the sight and smell of human meat, broken down into its various body parts, whose melting fat produces smoke, crackling and sizzling as it slowly cooks over an open fire (55-56). Grotesque images of human bodies being prepared for cooking and of the anxious looks of hungry onlookers give way to graphic depictions of gluttony, intoxication, public copulation and sexual violence (67-72).

The effect of this writing, in which the body in its various states is so prominent, is to inject discourse with vitality, breathing life back into events and people from a lifeless past. The narrator's memories of the smells, sounds and tastes from long ago bring his descriptions into the present of the reader who experiences these memories in a very concrete, palpable way. In the following passage, the narrator remembers his perceptions of his childhood in the ports:

> El olor del mar y del cáñamo humedecido, las velas lentas y rígidas que se alejan y se aproximan, las conversaciones de viejos marineros, perfume múltiple de especias y amontonamiento de meracaderías, prostitutas, alcohol y capitanes, sonido y movimiento: todo eso me acunó, fue mi casa, me dio una educación... (11)

As readers we hear the conversations of old sailors, we smell the ocean, hemp, spices, and cheap perfume of prostitutes, we feel the humidity of the sea, and we see the movement

of ships coming and going, and of commerce in the ports. Throughout the novel, the narrator's sensual descriptions recreate and reinvigorate the material world of his past.

Nevertheless, even as the sensual world the narrator creates in his writing brings the past to life, it also has the effect of reconnecting humanity to nature and the natural world and, therefore, to its ultimate death and decay. In the following passage from the novel, the narrator describes how the language of the Indians reflects the materiality and the uncertainty of their world. In doing so, his own language, through synaesthesia, exudes doubt and ambiguity, but also recalls the physical nature of his memories and his life, and finally, his link to the natural world and to disintegration:

> Esa vida me dejó--el idioma que hablaban los indios no era ajeno a esa sensación--un sabor de planeta, a ganado humano, a mundo no infinito sino inacabado, a vida indiferenciada y confusa, a materia ciega y sin plan, a firmamento mudo: como otros dicen, a ceniza. (109)

In this single evocative sentence, the narrator describes his life with the tribe as the flavor of soil--the sound of their language captures a similar sensation for him--of the earthy smell of the populous like a herd of cattle, of a vision of the blind, silent disorder of their lives, and of ash. Of course, ash represents the insubstantial nature of this life, the awareness of the unreality of existence, as well as the certainty of death.

In El entenado, this grounding of the human being in nature by rendering the body to discourse, and to disintegration, emphatically points to the opposing human tendency to deny our link to nature and its corruptibility by removing the body from historical discourse and by constructing monuments to memorialize the eternal nature of human accomplishments and values. The narrator of the novel implies that civilization, or culture, the traditional subject of history, and all of its constructs are simply ways of

removing ourselves from the natural flow toward nothingness. Throughout the text, the narrator suggests that specific cultural constructs--religion, theater, the city, history, defghis and cannibalism--create the illusion of durability.

One recurring example of a cultural construct that creates or reinforces the illusion of meaning in human life is theater. Early in his captivity the narrator observes that theater is a social practice that the cannibals and the Spanish share. He first witnesses theatrical acting among a group of children playing by the river. One child removes himself from the group, and after a period of mental preparation, returns walking, gesturing and speaking in an exaggerated fashion provoking the laughter and applause of his playmates. When the children return to the village, the narrator remains pondering the empty space left behind, the stage, and the feelings fostered by the children's play:

> ...permanecí todavía unos minutos contemplando el espacio vacío que habían estado ocupando, como si hubiesen dejado, detrás de su presencia bulliciosa, algo impapable y benévolo que despertaba, en quien llegaba a percibirlo, no únicamente dicha sino también compasión por una especie de amenaza ignorada y común a todos que parecía flotar en el aire de este mundo. (49)

First, by contemplating the abandoned stage, the narrator calls the reader's attention to the similarities between the native children's play and the conventions of Western theater, in particular, to the illusion of dramatic representation requiring the involvement of both the actors and the audience in a game of make-believe. In the theater of both cultures, the audience must collaborate with the players by accepting the action represented on stage to be mimetic, a faithful imitation of real life that shows society to itself as it really is. Also, the narrator reminds the reader of the empathetic reaction that theater in both cultures

evokes in the observers as they identify with the characters on stage and project themselves into the action of the play, but even more importantly, the feeling of catharsis theater arouses. Catharsis, which the narrator subtly alludes to in the preceding passage, is the release of pity or compassion juxtaposed with fear, here, of an undefined threat which we later learn is the cannibals' lingering anxiety about their existence and their preoccupation with the persistence of reality. So, theater in cannibal culture serves the same purpose of purging through expression of these emotions, and provides the same sense of joy of seeing "real" life compressed and intensified in an orderly way on stage as the values of society are reinforced, filling the theater audience with a sense of comfort of the familiar, of endings as they should be, and of lasting truth and meaning. At the same time that theater provides a release for society's fears, it also constructs the illusion of purpose in human life.

For the narrator of El entenado cultural constructs like theater give order and meaning to existence, and deny the human link to nature, death, and the absurdity of life by reinforcing the mind/body dichotomy. In theater, the opposition of these terms is perpetuated through the cathartic reaction to dramatic illusion. Plato regarded catharsis as a separation of body and soul, a process of learning in which the soul mastered the ability to free itself from bodily restraints.[58] In the preceding passage, it is clear that the narrator of El entenado also views catharsis as a disjunction of mind and body, when, after viewing the children's play, he describes his perception of these feelings of compassion and fear as lacking grounding, "impalpable," and seemingly "floating about in the air." Later in the novel, as he describes the Spanish audience's reaction to the theatrical rendering of his capture and years of captivity, the narrator reiterates this concept of catharsis as separation of mind and body, although this time criticizing the ensuing loss of

reality. Even though the drama, in which he plays himself, is blatantly false--as the narrator says, "De mis versos, toda verdad estaba excluida," [From my verses all truth was excluded], (138)--the audience consistently responds with praise and applause. Commenting on their enthusiasm for his dramatic illusion and wishing that someone would denounce the fraud, the narrator views the Spanish audience as "títeres," puppets, "fantasmagorías," ghosts, (140), and in the following quote, as empty, lifeless bodies:

> ... el vigor de los aplausos que festejaban mis versos insensatos demostraba la *vaciedad absoluta* de esos hombres y la impresión de que eran una muchedumbre de vestidos deslavados rellenos de paja, o *formas sin sustancia* infladas por el aire indiferente del planeta... (emphasis mine, 141)

Cathartic reaction to dramatic illusion allows for the separation of mind and body, leaving behind a vacuous form as the soul rises above the body and, therefore above nature, with the belief in its eternal values that bring meaning to human existence. But what the narrator implies with his description of the satisfied Spanish audience is that this meaning comes at the price of the awareness of reality and at the expense of the body whose natural essence must be ignored and overcome in order to construct the illusion of immortality.

Hoping to bring his audience back down to earth, the narrator experiments with changing the meanings of his pronouncements on stage. But to his surprise, the audience never seems to notice the change, a reaction which the narrator surmises shows that the audience has come to find the same meaning ascribed to it by the play's publicity and fame (141). In trying to understand the audience's exuberant, yet distracted, reaction, the

narrator wonders if the play transmits some vitally important "secret message" or if, on the other hand,

> ...durante las representaciones, los actores representábamos nuestro papel sin darnos cuenta de que el público representaba también el suyo, y todos éramos los personajes de una comedia en la que la mía no era más que un detalle oscuro y cuya trama se nos escapaba... (139)

Here, the narrator evokes the theme of life as theater or dramatic illusion, a recurring leitmotif in Hispanic literature. In this variation on the theme, reminiscent of Cervantes' entremés "El retablo de las maravillas," individuals in society blindly play their parts and read their lines without listening, questioning, or looking behind the curtains to examine the mechanisms and conventions that create dramatic illusion.[59] This indifferent acceptance of society's norms and evasions, which the narrator translates into the metaphor of life as theater, blurs the boundaries between fiction and reality, between art and life. The narrator's conception of life as theater underlines his view that as humans, we are constantly disavowing our link to nature by creating a fictional reality that separates us from nature and death, and so, from reality itself. Reality, for the narrator as for the cannibal Indians, is chaos, the uncertainty of existence, and the haunting doubt that at any moment the material world, which we are a part of, can disappear or fade into nothingness. Although for a time, the narrator goes along with the illusion of theater and success, as he says "Yo me dejaba incorporar indiferente, en ese orden que se me escapaba" ["I, indifferent, allowed myself to be incorporated into this order that escaped me"] (142), later, when he adopts the children of a murdered colleague, he decides to leave behind the lies and the falseness of the theater for their sake (143). His search for more reality for himself and for the children leads him to open a printing house, "menos

por acrecentar mi fortuna que por enseñarles a los que ya eran como mis hijos un oficio que les permitiera manipular algo más real que poses o que simulacros" ["less to increase my fortune than to teach those who were now like my children a profession that would permit them to manipulate something more real than poses and simulacrums"] (144-45). The narrator's implicit criticism of the deceptive nature of theater goes hand in hand with the assertion that writing is more capable of expressing the dubious nature of reality, a theme that will be explored subsequently.

In addition to theater, the narrator observes other constructs and practices in the cannibal culture that give meaning to their chaotic world, in particular, the annual cannibal feast and the selection of the "defghi." As the narrator comes to understand, the yearly practice of the consumption of human meat is a way of instilling in the tribe a stronger sense of their existence. During the summer of each year when the feeling of uncertainty of existence increases amongst the tribe along with the intensity of the sun, an ancient desire inscribed on their bodies drives them to hunt for other humans and then to consume them. Eating human meat for them is not to satisfy a hunger or a craving for a particular flavor, instead it is like chewing nothing, it is an empty ritual which, like the Christian practice of communion--itself a form of symbolic cannibalism--grants a sense of certainty to a people tortured by their own mortality:

> ...estaban obligados a repetir, una y otra vez, ese gesto vacío para seguir, a toda costa, gozando de esa existencia exclusiva y precaria que les permitía hacerse la ilusión de ser en la costra de esa tierra desolada, atravesada de ríos salvajes, los hombres verdaderos. (166)

Like the Christian ritual of communion, cannibalism for the Indians gives hope of the perpetuation of life even in the face of the certainty of death. The narrator explains that,

at one point in their history when they were indistinguishable from the dark nothingness of the universe, the Indians consumed each other, members of their own tribe. Later, when they turned outward and became unified as a tribe, they began consuming only outsiders, Others, and thus, they became real, the center of the universe. The narrator describes the Indians' perception of their newly found realness as well as their continued link to their origin in nothingness through the figure of a divided body:

> No obstante provenir también ellos de ese exterior improbable, habían accedido, no sin trabajo, a un nivel nuevo en el que, aun cuando los pies chapalearan todavía en el barro original, la cabeza ya liberada, flotaba en el aire limpio de lo verdadero. (167)

The image here of the separation of their heads, floating in the air of true existence, and their feet wallowing in the mud of nothingness not only symbolizes the Indians' keen awareness that there is still darkness within them and that their destruction can occur at any time, it also points to the cathartic-like reaction of the tribe after each cannibal feast. As occurs in theater, the mind separates from the body, under the illusion of realness and lasting truth, and in the ephemeral belief that the tribe can somehow rise above their natural condition and the movement toward death by consuming others.

Another important element of the Indians' ritual cannibalism and another construct clearly designed to perpetuate the memory of the tribe is the setting aside of the "defghi" from among the prisoners they have taken to be consumed. At the time of his capture, the narrator is oblivious to the role he is expected to play as "defghi," and does not comprehend the Indians' excessive gesturing, dramatic posturing, and exaggerated expressions constantly performed on his behalf. Gradually, after years of observing this repeated ritual, he comes to understand this strange form of theater performed by the

cannibals as a way of accentuating their image in the mind of the "defghi" and impressing upon him a strong corporeal spectacle sure to endure in his memory:

> De mí esperaban que duplicara, como el agua, la imagen que daban de sí mismos, que repitiera sus gestos y palabras, que los representara en su ausencia y que fuese capaz, cuando me devolvieran a mis semejantes, de hacer como el espía o el adelantado que, por haber sido testigo de algo que el resto de la tribu todavía no había visto, pudiese volver sobre sus pasos para contárselo en detalle a todos. (173)

It is hoped that the "defghi"-narrator will in turn repeat these exaggerated movements and posturings to evoke the memory of the tribe and represent them in their absence, a hope as we have seen which the narrator of El entenado faithfully fulfills. According to the narrator, the importance of the "defghi" lies in his responsibility as witness to leave a legacy of the tribe's accomplishments, in particular their having pulled themselves from the original clay to become "los hombres verdaderos" ["the true men"] (174), and so, save them from the dark nothingness of death:

> Amenazados por todo eso que nos rige desde lo oscuro, manteniéndose en el aire abierto hasta que un buen día, con un gesto súbito y caprichoso, nos devuelve a lo indistinto, querían que de su pasaje por ese espejismo material quedase un testigo y un sobreviviente que fuese, ante el mundo, su narrador. (173)

In this passage, the figure of the "defghi" in cannibal culture is subtly linked to the Western historian who narrates the accomplishments of civilizations and peoples from the past, a link that points to our own need to be remembered, and memorialized in history. In fact, it becomes increasingly salient that many aspects of cannibal culture serve as

allegory for parallel constructs in Western culture. As we have seen, the native children's play acting points to Western theatrical conventions, the tribe's cannibalism cleverly parallels Christian communion, and the role of the natives' "defghi" recalls that of our historian. All of these social practices give order and meaning to human life as we struggle to understand existence or being in a chaotic, absurd world. Through these constructs, death seems less final as it looses its power to destroy everything; it may take the body, but traces of our existence endure.

In much the same way that many cultural constructs create the illusion of immortality, the narrator of El entenado points to aspects of nature and other human constructs that create or reflect doubt and uncertainty about our existence: the sun, the moon, the stars, the ocean, the river, the earth, the human body, and, interestingly, language and writing. For example, the brutal harshness of the sun brings out the unreality of our being; according to the narrator, it shows us our "unjustified existence" (197). The intense summer sun also brings about the annual need for cannibalism amongst the Indians, and at the moment of at least three deaths in the novel--those of Captain Solís (30-31), Father Quesada (131), and the friendly neighbor cannibal--the sun's intense presence seems to sap humans of their very existence and harshly reveals the illusory nature of life. The narrator's memory of his neighbor's death after one of the violent cannibal feasts clearly shows the sun's power to mock human existence:

> A medida que el hombre iba entrando en la muerte, casi con el mismo ritmo, el sol de verano subía en el cielo que, con la luz creciente, iba poniéndose, a partir de la palidez del alba, cada vez más azul. Que el mundo nos roba su substancia, que se sostiene con nuestra sangre, podría probarlo el contraste que ofrecían el hombre agonizante y el espacio en

cuyo interior se extinguía, porque, a medida que el brillo de sus ojos se apagaba,...la luz matinal ganaba brillo y magnificencia... (180)

For the narrator, the moon is more benevolent than the sun, but still reminds him, albeit in a more gentle way, of the same intolerable message. At times the moon's warmness, constancy and familiarity permit the illusion of order and realness. Nevertheless, when the narrator describes the eclipse of the moon as it divides in two and then slowly erases itself, the moon, through its own example, serves only to reinforce the tribe's conviction of their temporality. In the end, the gentle moon is, for the narrator, like a bridge between the illusion of life and nothingness, not able to prevent human annihilation, but making it less cruel and impersonal (196-97).

The narrator associates the stars with a characteristic somewhere in between the cruelty of the sun and the charity of the moon. Their light is soft and merciful but the presence of each individual star represents for him the existence of another world, taking reality away from this world (19). Both in the opening and closing paragraphs of the novel the narrator refers to his need in old age to take refuge in the cities where "la vida es horizontal, porque las ciudades disimulan el cielo" ["life is horizontal because the cities conceal the sky"] (11). Remembering his life with the Indians, the narrator tells how they slept under the open sky making him feel "aplastado," crushed or flattened by the stars. For the narrator, the cities are another cultural construct that allow him to evade the constant, overwhelming reminder of his nothingness represented by the stars. The last sentence of the narrator's text, summarizing his life after captivity, reminds us of the ambiguous relationship he maintains with the stars, a relationship which symbolizes his strong connection to nature, and his nearing, inevitable death:

> A lo que vino después, lo llamo años o mi vida--rumor de mares, de ciudades, de latidos humanos, cuya corriente, como un río arcaico que arrastra los trastos de lo visible, me dejó en una pieza blanca, a la luz de las velas ya casi consumidas, balbuceando sobre un encuentro casual entre, y con, también, a ciencia cierta, las estrellas. (201)

It seems, in fact, that the very subject of his narrative is his relationship with the stars, symbols of his mortality. This final sentence brings the reader to the moment and to the act of writing, to the narrator's "babbling" about his encounter with the stars, and by association, with his eminent death. The final flickerings of the candles that light the room where he writes point to the end of his narrative and to the end of the act of writing, a process which has sustained him and even given him life, although transient. The stars represent both the narrator's purpose for writing--to preserve the memory of the cannibal tribe--and the futility of this quest given the nature of writing.

Writing and language are examples of human constructs that, rather than create the illusion of disjunction between human life and nature, actually reflect nature's indeterminacy. These two related constructs are similar to the elements of nature emphasized in the text, although they are more like the moon than the sun in that they provide comfort to the narrator as he confronts the empty, dark future. Nevertheless, writing and language, due to their grounding in the natural body, simultaneously reveal the uncertainty of existence through their ambiguity and contradiction. For the narrator, language is inseparable from the body as is clear in his conception of the body as discourse, or as a text to be read and interpreted. The narrator's descriptions also show how communication depends to a large extent to gesturing with the body and to facial expressions. For example, when the narrator is first brought to the village as captive, he

observes the mixture of gesturing, expressions and words with which three Indian women communicate with his guardians:

> Al vernos llegar se interrumpieron, y una de ellas dirigiéndose a mis guardianes con interés displicente, señalándome con la cabeza, lo interrogó con la expresión y con un ademán consistente en juntar las yemas de los dedos de una mano y sacudirlos varias veces hacia su boca abierta, aludiendo al acto de comer. *Def-ghi, Def-ghi*, respondió, perentorio, uno de sus acompañantes. Al oírlo, las viejas abrieron desmesuradamente los ojos, con asombro complacido, y comenzando a sacudir la cabeza me dirigieron las mismas sonrisas melosas y deferentes con que me recibieron en general todos los miembros de la tribu. (42)

The women communicate through motioning with the head and hands, and expressions made with the eyes and mouth, as well as with words. The fact that the gesture for eating described here by the narrator is common among many Spanish speakers today points allegorically to the importance of body language beyond this "primitive" culture. Later in the novel, when the narrator is released from captivity to be reunited with other Spaniards, he has difficulty remembering how to speak his native language and he cannot comprehend the spoken language, which he perceives as "puro ruido," pure noise. His ability to understand is apparently made more difficult by the beards on the Spaniards faces which, "como máscaras rígidas", like rigid masks, cover their facial expressions (116-17). With time, the narrator explains, he regains the capacity to speak and understand Spanish, a gradual process involving the mind and the body: "Día tras día, el idioma de mi infancia...fue volviendo, íntimo y entero, a mi memoria primero, y después poco a poco a la costumbre misma de mi sangre" [Day after day, the language of my

childhood...returned, intimate and complete, to my memory first, and later little by little to the very custom of my blood] (123).

But even as language flows through our veins with our blood, forming part of the material and seemingly concrete body, it frequently fails to describe this physical world and our suffering as we pass through it. It may be language's very grounding in the body and in nature that make it so susceptible to deterioration at moments of crisis, as it reflects the irreality of the world. For example, the narrator recalls Captain Solis' incoherence and inability to articulate his thoughts concerning this strange land they were exploring on the day of his death: "Las pocas palabras que pronunciaba le salían con una voz quebrada, débil, cercana al llanto" ["The few words that he pronounced came out in a broken, weak voice close to tears"] (30). The narrator attributes Solis' inability to speak to his realization of the intolerable nature of his condition, his nothingness, revealed to him by this land. As the Captain tries to muster up the words to verbalize his thoughts concerning this horrific world, he can barely utter more than monosyllables and resorts to gesturing with his body:

> ...se puso a sacudir la cabeza con la expresión de la persona que está a punto de manifestar una convicción profunda que las apariencias se obstinan en querer desmentir... Por fin, mirándonos, y con la misma expresión de convicción y desconfianza, empezó a decir: *Tierra es ésta sin...*, al mismo tiempo que alzaba el brazo y sacudía la mano, tratando de reforzar, tal vez, con ese ademán, la verdad de la afirmación que se aprestaba a comunicarnos. *Tierra es ésta sin...*--eso fue exactamente lo que dijo el capitán cuando la flecha le atravesó la garganta... (31)

At this moment of death, language, incoherent and dependent on the body to express itself, reflects the absurdity of existence. Captain Solis, apparently aware of the folly of his search for glory in a nonsensical land, can only babble meaningless phrases as the arrow pierces his throat. In the end, words cannot express the hopelessness of overcoming death, and instead expose the illusion of history, and the futility of its records of great deeds and heroic accomplishments.

Written language also reveals the illusory nature of human existence, but at the same time, provides consolation for those in pain, and restores a semblance of meaning to life. This dual nature of writing is born out in the narrator's autobiographical discourse. After being released from captivity and returning to Spain, the narrator falls into a deep depression. Seemingly contaminated with the cannibal malady of the persistent awareness of one's own irreality, he describes how this sadness immobilizes him, making it almost impossible for him to speak or to move his body. Words turn to ashes in his mouth, and his body and the world seem strange and distant to him. He wishes to become a "forgotten thing", as if he could just fade away into oblivion (124-25). The cure for the narrator's depression, we learn, is writing, and it is Father Quesada who gives him the instruments he needs to begin the process of recuperation: the ability to read and write. The narrator explains that for Father Quesada these abilities are like tentacles that allow a person to wield their bodily experience of the world to form a coherent narrative, a conception of language, as we have seen, reflected in the narrator's writing:

> Para él, eran como tenazas destinadas a manipular la incandescencia de lo sensible; para mí, que estaba fascinada por el poder de la contingencia, era como salir a cazar una fiera que ya me había devorado. Y, sin embargo, me mejoró... Después, comprendí que si el padre Quesada no me hubiese

> enseñado a leer y escribir, el único acto que podía justificar mi vida hubiese estado fuera de mi alcance. (127)

In this passage, the narrator depicts the paradoxical nature of writing, as it both reminds us of our connection to the natural world and to death--the beast that had already devoured him--and consoles us by forming meaning from the chaos and absurdity of our lives, captured or hunted down in writing. In fact, writing is the activity that *justifies* the narrator's life.[60] For the narrator, its ritual like quality, like the nightly return of the stars, expressed in the repetition of time, place, lighting, and sustenance, soothe him and provide an outlet to vent his fears and doubts and to tell the story he needs to tell: "Es a pesar de renovarse, puntual, cada noche, un momento singular, y, de todos sus atributos, el de repetirse, periódico, como el paso de las constelaciones, el más luminoso y el más benévolo" (146). Each night the narrator slowly sips the same red wine, and alternates eating black and green olives whose flavors evoke an image for him that shoots from his mouth to his memory, like fuel for his writing. The certainty that comes from this ritual of writing gives order to his world, which, at the same time he recognizes as illusion: "También es inútil, porque no sirve para contrarrestar, en los días monótonos, la noche que los gobierna y nos va llevando, como porque sí, al matadero" (147). In the end, writing is useless because it lacks the power to overcome death.

Also, the very nature of writing undermines its ability to create meaning in life. The narrator, in a series of Borgesian gestures, points out the contradictory nature of writing, its ambiguity, its characteristic multiplication of meanings into infinity, and, through authorial self-effacement, the unreliability of memory and interpretation:

> Como era en los primeros años, y como las palabras significaban, para ellos, tantas cosas a la vez, no estoy seguro de lo que el indio dijo haya

> sido exactamente eso, y todo lo que creo saber de ellos me viene de indicios inciertos, de recuerdos dudosos, de interpretaciones, así que, en cierto sentido, también mi relato puede significar muchas cosas a la vez, sin que ninguna, viniendo de fuentes tan poco claras, sea necesariamente cierta. (160)

By underlining the indeterminacy of his own writing, the narrator strips the readers of their grounding in meaning and throws them into a whirlwind of confusion and chaos. The narrator's text not only undermines the capacity of writing in general to capture history, but also self-reflexively doubts its own ability to tell the story of the Indians' past.

Even more disruptive to the attachment between writing and meaning is the way the narrator constantly returns to the present of writing and observes the hand, his hand, as it scribbles marks on the page. For the narrator, as we have seen, writing about the past is a process inextricably tied up with the body. The bodies of the natives form the basis of his memories of the tribe; his own body functions as an archive of corporeal remembrances where his perceptions and experiences are inscribed that emerge to nourish his writing; and it is his aged body in the present of writing that struggles to push the pen forward. And yet, bodies, which are apparently so solid or real in their materiality, are also constantly changing and are susceptible to rapid deterioration and death. As the narrator brings us to the present of his writing, we observe with him his body's involvement in the act of writing--his slow, quiet breathing, his adjustments in posture to relieve the cramping in his legs, his wrinkled hand moving from left to right leaving a trickle of black ink on the page (73). It is this connection between the failing body and the process of writing which underscores the illusory nature of writing, here a sort of last ditch grasping for meaning in the final throws of life. But like the futility of trying to

escape the nothingness and solitude of death that awaits him, or the conversion of his body into ashes, the promise of writing to preserve him and his memories seems empty and destined to be unfulfilled. In fact, the narrator compares the markings on the page to scoria, the ashlike substance left behind from volcanic eruptions, something less than solid, easily blurred and erased, and destined to melt away. The recurring image of ash in the novel representing death and decay links the insubstantiality of the body and life with that of writing and history.

By emphasizing the connection between the body and writing the past, the narrator's text "embodies" a new way of writing history, that admits its constructed and illusory nature as well as its indebtedness to the body as it creates the illusion of reality. The text proposes writing that renders (offers; restores) the body to discourse, and by doing so reconnects human activity to nature, prolongs life and creates meaning. At the same time, just as in the narrator's text, this bodily writing is fully conscious that it captures merely a rendering (a translation) of meaning that like ash (the body disintegrated) will fade away. In El entenado, the narrator's writing is impregnated with the bodily senses, sensuality, and carnality of his life experiences and that of the Indians. His urgent appeal to the senses and the experiences of the body underlines the narrator's attempts to somehow preserve the "realness" of the tribe, to protect his bodily memories from the passing of time, and the destructive ambiguity and immateriality of written language. Much as the cannibal word "def-ghi" came to name the narrator as a stand-in for the tribe, or as the embodiment of tribal history, so the narrator's writing becomes a rendering (a representation) of his bodily experience and memories, as it tries to represent and eternalize his material reality. The narrator, nevertheless, concedes that, in this task,

his writing will inevitably fail, and so, accepts the "triumphant loss" of lost-body writing--the rendering (surrendering) of the body and meaning to discourse.

In El entenado, the narrator's purpose for writing is to document and preserve his memory of the Indian tribe, expressing in this purpose a belief or hope for correspondence between his writing and physical reality. His narrative exemplifies lost-body writing's open exhibition of the body as a record of experience or as a text, a resource he turns to in order to recall the past. His own body serves as an archive of memory that, through movement and other bodily processes, nurtures the act of writing. The bodies of the Indians also feed his discourse, as they are the very subject of his narrative, and so, they fill the pages of his work. And yet, as the narrator accumulates memories and concrete images of the Indians, bringing them to life for the reader, he also calls the reader's attention to the unreliability of language and writing in general, and of his own narrative in particular. Memories, like dreams and like ashes, are difficult to grasp and even harder to communicate because, according to the narrator, memories tend to divide into their many component details and then multiply infinitely:

> Esos recuerdos que, asiduos, me visitan, no siempre se dejan aferrar; a veces parecen nítidos, austeros, precisos, de una sola pieza; pero, apenas me inclino para asirlos con un solo gesto y perpetuarlos, empiezan a desplegarse, a extenderse, y los detalles que, vistos desde la distancia, el conjunto ocultaba, proliferan, se multiplican...muchas veces empiezo a sentirme un poco asolado y me digo que no solamente el mundo es infinito sino que cada una de sus partes, y por ende mis propios recuerdos, también lo es. (176-77)

Recalling the Borges' story, "Funes, el memorioso," in which the title character is unable to articulate thoughts because his mind has no way of organizing his endless capacity to remember each and every detail, the narrator of El entenado finds his remembrances expand beyond his ability to capture them in writing. He also contends that memories are like death in that they are unique for every person, even for those people who have witnessed or lived through the same event. According to the narrator, each is condemned to the solitude of their memories as they are to the solitude of death (189-90). The narrator of El entenado justifies his life by writing the history of the cannibals and simultaneously posits the impossibility of knowing or faithfully representing them in writing.

As we have seen in the "Introduction" to this study, lost-body writing's textual display of the human body acknowledges the body both as a site where discourse is inscribed and where it is created. This notion of discourse feeding the human body is asserted in El entenado when the narrator, paralyzed by depression and a lack of desire, regains the will to live through the process of writing. By stimulating desire and providing a purpose for living, discourse nourishes the human body and extends the life of the languishing narrator. Writing, as a creative, self-reflective act, is life giving. In fact, as the narrator writes, looking back on his first days with the tribe and the painful realization of his abandonment and solitude, he relives his birth and is at the same time reborn:

> Pero esa noche, mi soledad, ya grande, se volvió de golpe desmesurada, como si en ese pozo que se ahonda poco a poco, el fondo brusco, hubiera cedido, dejándome caer en la negrura. Me acosté, desconsolado, en el suelo, y me puse a llorar... Entenado y todo, yo nacía sin saberlo y como

niño que sale, ensangrentado y atónito, de esa noche oscura que es el vientre de su madre, no podía hacer otra cosa que echarme a llorar. (42-3)

El entenado also demonstrates the body's involvement in creating discourse, in particular, the way his individual body selects from among the social discourses and bodily experiences he encounters, and then layers these discourses to construct identity. In other words, identity is not so much imposed on the body, but rather social discourse is processed and transformed, and identity is created there. The narrator, who remains nameless throughout the novel, is continually in the process of forming an identity, but one whose boundaries are flexible and ever-changing. By abstaining from naming himself, the narrator sides steps the need to affix identity. In fact, when he decides to retire from acting, the narrator allows one of his fellow actors in the theater company to assume his identity and name so that the play can continue its long, successful run. His name's connection to the play gives it validity and defines its meaning (144). The narrator's lack of attachment to his name and to any determined identity is reflected in his belief that people can be born and reborn repeatedly throughout their lives, constantly recreating themselves, although, he also maintains, some people are never born at all:

> No se sabe nunca cuándo se nace: el parto es una simple convención. Muchos mueren sin haber nacido; otros nacen apenas, otros mal, como abortados. Algunos, por nacimientos sucesivos, van pasando de vida en vida, y si la muerte no viniese a interrumpirlos, serían capaces de agotar el ramillete de mundos posibles a fuerza de nacer una y otra vez, como si poseyesen una reserva inagotable de inocencia y de abandono. (43)

For the narrator, the formation of identity is a choice. An individual can allow society to impose one's identity by simply adopting its values, norms and practices without

questioning, a concept that the narrator explores in his philosophy of life as theater. On the other hand, the individual can, as the narrator does, actively participate in the production of their own concept of self by refusing, accepting, amending, and blending social discourses.

In this way lost-body writing in El entenado reinserts the human body and agency into the historical sphere, as it foregrounds human participation in the creation and manipulation of discourse. However, the individual's active participation in the processes of history and the formation of identity is grounded in desire, and therefore, in the body, without which there is no memory, no purpose, and no agency. According to the narrator of El entenado, forgetting is due to indifference and apathy, rather than loss of memory: "Cuando nos olvidamos es que hemos perdido, sin duda alguna, menos memoria que deseo" (110). The desire the narrator refers to here is the same desire for continuing life that drives the Indians to cannibalism, Christians to communion, and all cultures to write history, the desire that Spinoza understood as the striving "to persist in one's own being" (qted from Butler, 378), and I would add, in one's own body. Historical writing must not necessarily deny the human link to nature. As El entenado shows us, lost-body writing recovers the natural in human activity and at the same time acknowledges that the very existence of writing about history is founded on the human desire to give meaning to existence and to overcome death. Desire, in this discourse, is no longer perceived as a lack, or as something missing, but instead as a productive force grounded in the body and leading to artistic creation.

Finally, Saer's text, like much of Borges' writing, is a metafictional discourse--a reflection on the nature of writing. For some, such as the French philosopher Henri Lefebvre, metadiscourse has created "an enormous emptiness" that is filled with vacuous

signs, "the great alibi for masking and forgetting those historical tasks and missions that have not been accomplished, for erasing responsibility..." (qted. in Chanady 682). And yet, in light of our reading of El entenado, we can argue that Saer's metadiscourse is, in fact, a way of countering traditional historiographic discourse that speaks for the Other by "exiling orality" (Chanady 689). Saer's metadiscourse, which we have called lost-body writing, rather than creating an "enormous emptiness," reflects on the nature of writing and its inability to represent the other without violent alteration. The purpose of lost-body writing is to explore this dilemma of writing and the body, of inscription and the violent representation of the other, and to ask what the alternatives might be. The most obvious would be to write only about oneself, one's own culture, race, and history. Of course, this alternative, nearly impossible during the age of Herodotus, has become inconceivable in the age of the Internet. In addition, it is becoming increasingly difficult to construct a notion of self based on monadic concepts of race, nationality, and ethnicity, and therefore, equally difficult to conceive of self to the exclusion of an "Other." Another alternative would be to exclude the other in body and speech from the text, which is, as de Certeau contends, to do what traditional historiography has always done, ultimately erasing individual accomplishments and human agency from the historical process in order to produce knowledge. Lost-body writers like Saer, instead, accept a "triumphant loss;" by offering the body honestly to writing and openly admitting that the body can only be represented with alteration and prejudice, they make a commitment to depict the experience of others as fully and straightforwardly as language and writing permit. Whereas historiography presents writing as a reliable form of communicating knowledge, Saer's narrator, much like Montaigne, candidly questions writing's ability to capture knowledge about the world and admits that the writing of history, rather than a

sign of progress, is a reflection of the need for self-deception, an artifice to obscure the inevitability of death.

Conclusions: Lost–Body Writing and the Representation of the Material World

...Quiero que en la palabra
se vea la aspereza,
la sal ferruginosa,
la fuerza desdentada
de la tierra,
la sangre
de los que hablaron y de los que no hablaron...
--Pablo Neruda, "Verbo"

Latin America's new historical novel reflects an increasing awareness, in the history of the region, of writing's violence as it inscribes bodies. The historic period of the transition to what de Certeau calls a "scriptural economy," coincided with the encounters between the peoples of the New and Old Worlds. As de Certeau has shown us, this modern period initiates writing that produces knowledge about the unarticulated world by inscribing it with language. In the process of producing knowledge, scientific writing violently represses the bodies and bodily practices from which knowledge is extracted. Thus, like many modern writers, the explorers, conquistadors and other European travelers to the Americas described their new reality with a language inadequate to the task, brutally altering what they attempted to represent, and suppressing the source of this newly found knowledge. Writing about the other, in America in particular, was formulated in terms of contrasts and antinomies, and led to a deformed depiction of the New World other as a savage and an animal, which, in turn, justified his suppression.

As González Echevarría so clearly demonstrates in Myth and Archive, this pattern of violent hegemonic discourse, that misshapes as it suppresses, inspires literature that mimics this discourse while at the same time subverting its power and its claims to knowledge. Mimicking historiographic discourse, Latin America's new historical novel returns to the moments when the dichotomy between self and other became the lens

through which people viewed the world and it deconstructs the binary oppositions on which this vision of the world relied. The new historical narrative challenges, in particular, the dichotomy of mind/body, with its notion of embodied subjectivity—a reworking of the formulation of identity to include bodily experience alongside mental processes. Once this dichotomy breaks down, other dichotomies, like barbaric/civilized, and nature/culture quickly follow suit, so that traditional notions of identity as a monadic mental construct of belonging or not belonging are destroyed. This study has explored the different ways that embodied subjectivity in the new historical novel not only changes our conception of the formulation of identity, but also changes our interpretation of the past, the way we view individual participation in history, and the way we regard writing as an objective tool for describing material reality.

Although traditionally the historical novel has been viewed as an instrument to encourage feelings of patriotism and to help to establish a sense of national identity, this study has shown that Latin America's new historical novel undermines the notion of national identity, revealing it to be a mythic construct, useful to those interested in maintaining national boundaries and harnessing power, and yet, repressive of dissenting voices. Rather than simply enlarging the notion of national identity to include voices repressed in the past as Pons suggests, the new historical novel, instead, subverts the very concept of national identity by showing the experience of history to be multifarious, the remembrance of the past a highly individualized experience, and the formation of identity itself a much more complex process than imposing a given vision of a country's history. Hence, in the traditional historical novel, the body is neutralized by dressing it in language that conceals its subversive tendencies, and instead, bestows the body with the

air of myth. On the contrary, the new historical novel undresses the mythic body to reveal its humanity, its links to nature, and its lowly beginnings and end in the natural world.

In the first analytical chapter of this study, we saw how the emergence of carnival and the carnival body in Rodríguez Juliá's early new historical novel, La renuncia del héroe Baltasar, undermines traditional notions of self, history, and writing. In the beginning, Baltasar conceives of self in terms of the conflict between father and son, as he struggles to define himself in opposition to his father, a notorious leader of the slave uprisings that shake the island colony. Not only does he renounce his father's cause by not participating in the rebellion, but, in addition, he brings peace to the island by becoming the *embodiment* of reconciliation between the warring races. Baltasar, a former slave, becomes a symbol of the potential for upward mobility of blacks on the island when he agrees to marry Josefina Pratts, daughter of the Secretary of State and a prominent member of the white, aristocratic community. Nevertheless, in becoming a "bridge" between blacks and whites, Baltasar forfeits his personal autonomy and becomes Bishop Larra's "hero," a character in his fiction of racial harmony. The hero soon realizes that his body and its movements are Bishop Larra's text, and in order to free himself from the violence of the Bishop's inscription, he must first escape the power of the Bishop's gaze and disrupt representation itself. Baltasar, thus, incites carnival activity with the open display of his nightly orgies, where the emergence of the carnival body invites the participation of all spectators, including Bishop Larra, which in turn allows Baltasar, once the object of the gaze, to escape representation's frame and the violence of writing.

Rodríguez Juliá's novel also subverts the bodiless historiographic discourse of the colonizer by injecting his fictional version of historiography with carnival and the

carnival body. The crowning and decrowning of the carnival king, the spectacle of violent massacres, lustful orgies, sumptuous feasts, and nightmarish gardens, underline the novel's perversion of Puerto Rico's official past. The form of the novel is itself a carnivalization of the historiographic model, and as such, undermines historiography's claims to knowledge and truth. The fictional historian is also an object of derision and carnival, as his errors, prejudices, and lack of objectivity taint his version of the past and reveal the subjective and even violent nature of the process of writing history.

Nevertheless, while La renuncia points to writing's violence as it inscribes bodies with its discourse, it also reveals how bodies rebel against inscription through carnival tactics. For instance, Baltasar's realization that his body has become Bishop Larra's text and thus has been inscribed with the meaning that the Bishop imposes, leads him to instigate carnival activities that subvert the power of the other's gaze as well as the other's power over his conception of self. Even so, only the most extreme forms of carnival violence, like the carnival flames of destruction and renewal, can bring a definite end to Baltasar's sense of bodily inscription and to the Bishop's hegemony over him.

Through destruction, La renuncia clears a way for a new form of writing concerned with the ethical implications of inscription's alterations, distortions and violence. In particular, Rodríguez Juliá's lost-body writing points to the violence of writing the other, and focuses our attention on the importance of individual agency and self-determination that writing suppresses. Although carnival tactics may free us from the other's gaze, there may be endless layers of bodily inscription that can only be erased by further violence and destruction. Baltasar's abdication of power represents his "triumphant loss," brought on by his understanding that, since the advent of the modern practice of writing, the relationship between language and the world is forever changed.

Writing unavoidably alters what it touches, including the body. Even as a freed slave, Baltasar remains enslaved to a history of social inscription that can only be overcome through absolute annihilation of the discourses that make up his being.

If lost-body writing seeks an ephemeral correspondence between the world and the word, then La renuncia's violation of Puerto Rico's official colonial history shows that Rodríguez Juliá searches for a deeper truth than the facts and figures that traditional history records. The mythic "silent sea" of Puerto Rico's colonial past may correspond to (neo)colonialist versions of history, but does little to enlighten contemporary conceptions of self and national self-understanding. For Rodríguez Juliá, as we have seen, nightmares also reveal much about our reality. Therefore, paradoxically, Rodríguez Juliá's fictional version of a past of racial conflict and slave revolts is a more realistic mirror for contemporary self-evaluation.

La renuncia, published in 1974, is an early form of lost-body writing. It restores the body to discourse and demonstrates the violent alterations to the body that inscription requires. The novel also recognizes that writing and other cultural constructs such as architecture, deny humanity's link to nature and the inevitability of death. Nonetheless, La renuncia offers no alternative to carnival destruction as a means of combating violent writing and its suppression of bodies. Rodríguez Juliá proposes to counter violence with violence, leading us to what appears to be an irremediable dead end. The two later novels by Vargas Llosa and Saer pursue many of the same themes as Rodríguez Juliá's earlier novel but also propose solutions to the impasse of violence in Rodríguez Juliá's text.

In contrast to La renuncia, Vargas Llosa's novel La guerra del fin del mundo not only reinserts the body in historical discourse, but also explores different ways of constructing self in relation to the body. In both Vargas Llosa and Rodríguez Juliá's

novels characters are marked by their bodily experiences. In La renuncia, Baltasar struggles to free his formation of self from the inscription of the colonizing other, while in La guerra del fin del mundo Vargas Llosa's characters are inscribed according to their social class, race, and gender. Although both novelists view the construction of self as an embodied process, and one that, at first glance, seems predetermined by factors beyond a character's control, in fact, Vargas Llosa's characters have more freedom to choose or reject the discourses that form them, a fact that may, in part, explain Rodríguez Juliá's recourse to violence and his novel's more pessimistic outcome. For instance, in the beginning of La guerra, Jurema is inscribed by the traditional *sertanero* code of honor, and, thus, believes that because she was raped she should pay with her life. However, after having left her home to follow her rapist, Galileo Gall, then witnessing the absurd battle to the death between her husband, Rufino, and Gall, and finally, becoming a refugee of the war in Canudos, Jurema uses her new experiences in the world to reform her conception of self. In the midst of war, Jurema discovers happiness, friendship, and her own sexuality. These discoveries, in turn, bring about her rejection of traditional hegemonic discourse, and her contact with different ways of thinking allows her to patch together a new way of being, and a new way of envisioning the world.

Admittedly, the Counselor's followers' choice to refuse the dominant Republican discourse leads to war and violence, much as Baltasar's refusal to readopt the discourse of the colonial government leads to massacre and rebellion. Clearly, the individual choice of identity can assert a political position, and thus, can affect not only the subject involved in that choice, but others in society as well. Nonetheless, Vargas Llosa's principal argument concerning the construction of self and the body is that distancing one's self from the body and conceptualizing one's self as monadic, or closed to mutual

constitution with others, results in individuals who are unable to feel compassion for others' suffering and, thus, are incapable of moral action. Hence, Jurema's embodied subjectivity--her having known pain and suffering--enables her to empathize with the pain of others, which, in turn allows her to care for the people in need all around her.In contrast, the Baron's disembodied notion of self, which isolates him from the misery of the poor of the region, makes him both incapable of truly understanding the catastrophe of Canudos and capable of committing the violent crime of rape.

Furthermore, Vargas Llosa's exploration of (dis)embodiment and its impact on moral action deconstructs the traditional dichotomy barbaric/civilized that frequently underlies the discussion of Latin American identity, and leads to a rereading of the past. On one hand, embodied characters such as Jurema and the Dwarf, associated with the backlands and barbarity, are, in fact, characters whose behavior exemplifies compassion and civility. On the other hand, disembodied characters such as the Baron and Gonçalves, associated with the capital and civility, show themselves to be inhumane and barbaric. Accordingly, La guerra del fin del mundo forces readers to reinterpret not only the events at Canudos themselves but also da Cunha's original reading and interpretation of the people and the events in his classic text, Os sertões. By questioning the barbaric/civilized dichotomy ingrained in Latin America's scientific writing of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, bodies in Vargas Llosa's new historical novel subvert hegemonic discourse and reveal violent writing's sacrifice of the body in order to produce "knowledge."

In addition, as Vargas Llosa's novel exemplifies lost-body writing, it clearly participates in its metadiscursive reflections. We have seen that La guerra del fin del mundo differentiates between the motivation behind violent and kinder fictions, and also

between the resulting impacts of these two kinds of writing. Accordingly, disembodied writing often leads to disembodied reading, a form of misreading, in that it disregards the fiction's impact on bodies and any suffering that may result because of writing's violence. Galileo Gall's misreading of Gonçalves' fiction, for example, contributes to his lack of understanding of the rebellion in Canudos and almost results in his death at the hands of thugs. Similarly, Gall's misreading of the *sertanero* code of honor gives him license to rape without remorse and in the end results in his murder at the hands of the offended husband. Likewise, many critics have misread the Baron's rape of Sebastiana, his fiction of male superiority, by passing over Sebastiana's injured body, the open body that confers reality on the Baron's fiction. These disembodied readings of a disembodied fiction duplicate the violence of writing and its suppression of the body, allowing brutal rape to be read as tender love-making. Vargas Llosa's novel shows us how to read the body back into discourse from which it has been repressed, it shows us that as with the formulation of self, in reading we are "consumers" who have the capacity and the responsibility to reconnect with the body. The tendency to disassociate one's self and the discourse one reads from the body can be reversed, restoring the awareness of others' bodily experiences of the world and the compassion necessary to moral action.

Once again, Vargas Llosa's text, in contrast to Rodríguez Juliá's novel, proposes an alternative to violent forms of discourse, what we have called "embodied" or "kinder" fictions, a later form of lost-body writing. Similar to the embodied characters' understanding of pain and their desire to lessen the suffering of others, embodied fictions emphasize bodily experience in order to bring about a greater awareness of others' pain with a desire to diminish it. The medieval romances and epic tales of the storytelling Dwarf, for instance, entertain and revive the war-weary, while giving hope of redemption

to a reformed murderer. The Counselor's fictions, although preposterous, give meaning to the lives of destitute backlanders, and give them strength and courage to rebuild their lives. La guerra del fin del mundo is itself a kinder fiction, in that, rather than condemning all fanatical behavior as equally irrational and inexplicable, instead reveals how human suffering can lead to extremist behavior and, consequently, suggests how such conflicts might be avoided in the future. Although writing the other is often a violent activity in early forms of lost-body writing, for Vargas Llosa it must not necessarily be so. Lost–body writing can diminish pain by expressing the experience of others and inspire moral action by teaching empathy.

Finally, whereas La guerra del fin del mundo exemplifies lost-body writing, Saer's novel, El entenado, incorporates within its structure the very *process* of lost-body writing. El entenado's narrator shows us that the body is an archive of memory that plays an essential role in remembering, writing and in constructing the self. The body recalls the past to the narrator's consciousness in movements and gestures that evoke those of the cannibals, and through the bodily senses that call forth memories of textures, sights, sounds, tastes, and smells from the past. In fact, by conceptualizing the body as a storehouse of memories, as a text of past experience, the narrator breaks down the mind/body dichotomy underlying traditional notions of identity, and allows us to envision our subjectivity as a fusion of discourses, expanding the notion of self to reflect our ever-changing bodily experiences. Thus, although the self is frequently defined in contrast to the other, in Saer's text the experiencing of the cannibal other becomes an integral part of the narrator's own conception of self. This disruption of the boundaries between self and other is apparent in the narrator's thinking and in his philosophy of life that reflect those of the cannibal tribe; for example, the reality he narrates, even that of his past before his

encounter with the other, is imbued with the tribe's uncertainty of the existence of the material world.

In addition, Saer's narrator's discourse incorporates and illuminates the body of the cannibal other by describing the tribe's existence and everyday practices with rich detail. In his writing, the narrator attempts to preserve his memory of the cannibal tribe and to fulfill his responsibility as the tribe's *defghi*, its historian. The narrator, one of many captives of the tribe assigned to be *defghis*, witness to their annual cannibal feast, has come to see himself as the embodiment of the tribe's history. On his body is inscribed the memory of their past, and, therefore, he is a sort of walking text. The narrator recognizes that his function in cannibal society is much like that of the historian in the Old World—to preserve their culture's accomplishments for future generations, somehow defeating death by enduring through memory.

However, at no time does the narrator see his writing as a purely faithful representation of the cannibal other's reality. On the contrary, he constantly reminds us of the unreliability of memory and of language itself. According to the narrator, writing and language, inseparable from the body and thus, grounded in material reality, are frequently incoherent, ambiguous, and fail to express our experience of the world. Captain Solis, moments before his death, struggles to express his feelings of futility and hopelessness as he confronts the impenetrable American landscape. The narrator recalls the captain's incoherent babbling and attempts to communicate through bodily gestures the absurdity of their endeavors to conquer this strange land and to forge a place for themselves in history.

On the other hand, writing has some redeeming values for the narrator of El entenado. For instance, writing has the benefit of giving order and meaning to what he

sees as his chaotic and absurd existence. The ritual of sitting down each night to remember and to write the history of the cannibal tribe intertwined with memories of his personal story justifies his life. The narrator's lost-body writing consoles him by giving a purpose to his life in old age, and yet he explicitly acknowledges that it is an illusory comfort, as writing lacks the power to truly overcome death. While many cultural constructs, like theater, religion, cities, and history, repress the body and deny the human link to nature and therefore to death and decay, writing is a process so thoroughly intertwined with the natural body--in the case of the narrator, a process reliant on an aging and increasingly feeble body--that writing's fragile markings, in fact, remind him of the insubstantiality of life itself, both like ash, destined to fade.

Saer's metafictional reflection, like that in Vargas Llosa's novel, centers on the ethical implications of writing the other and the dilemma of how to represent the other without violence and alteration. For some critics, Saer's narrator oversteps the bounds of what should be narrated by one such as him; in their view, the narrator, a representative of the dominant culture, appropriates the voice of the voiceless other. In part, this ethical dilemma is resolved by my argument that the narrator's conception of self is not based on absolute distinctions between self and other. Rather, as the narrator acknowledges the other's influence on his ever-changing sense of self, he recalls Rolena Adorno's urging "to understand cultural interactions in far more disquieting ways: in patterns of mutual influence and penetration..." (173). For the narrator of El entenado, writing the other *is* writing the self.

Nevertheless, as de Certeau has shown, writing the other, even for lost-body writers like Saer's narrator and like Montaigne who are intent on preserving the symbolic order of correspondence between the word and the world, necessarily relies on a series of

interpretations and translations, each, in a sense, consuming the body that writing hoped to represent. Like de Certeau, the narrator of El entenado suggests that this alternative form of writing must settle for a triumphant loss. The best a writer can hope to do is honestly render the body to discourse with the commitment to depict the other's experience as straightforwardly as writing and language permit, while admitting the impossibility of the task and the inevitability of writing's violence and alteration.

Paradoxically, however, while rendering the body honestly to discourse in an attempt to capture the material and the "real," lost-body writing also incorporates a reflection on the nature of writing and language, a strong metafictional component that works a bit like confession. At first, this may seem contradictory. How can writing that returns to a more materialist conception of language, that proposes that language can represent material reality and has the power to shape that reality, subsequently turn for salvation to metafictional discourse, a discourse that instead conceives of language more as a mirror that reflects only on its own nature? Writing about writing, in the case of the new historical novel, is not a denial of the existence of a material reality beyond language, an empty discourse referring only back to itself. Instead, the metafictional discourse of the new historical novel is the moment of confession. In this self-reflexive discourse, the novelist admits the existence of a reality that is difficult to capture fully and without alteration, but is a reality all the same and one whose existence should not be ignored or repressed. The contemporary Latin American historical novel exposes the violence that the modern practice of writing inflicts on bodies while *confessing* that writing of all kinds, including lost-body writing, cannot escape doing harm. A much greater harm, however, would be for authors to return to the bodiless historiographic discourse of the past that perpetuated simplistic notions of identity, illusory conceptions of a progressive

movement of humanity through time, and a lack of awareness of the way writing shapes our vision of the world and alters material reality.

Notes

[1] Several critics have noted this reemergence of interest in the historical novel in Latin America in recent decades. See Angel Rama, Daniel Balderston, Fernando Aínsa "Nueva novela", Seymour Menton, and José Emilio Pacheco. Balderston, who in 1985 organized a symposium at Tulane University dealing with the genre, is one of the first critics to call attention to the new generation of historical novel and to note its Borgesian twist: "The new historical novel in Latin America owes much to Pierre Menard, for whom historical truth <no es lo que sucedió; es lo que juzgamos que sucedió.>" (11). Menton's text catalogs nearly four hundred historical novels published, for the most part, since the 1970's. Aínsa identifies the decade of the 1980's as the period in which the historical novel enjoys renewed popularity.

The historical novel in Latin America has been associated with themes exploring the formation of national identity since its inception during the Romantic period, which coincided with the creation of new nations throughout the region after the wars for independence. See Jean Franco (Spanish American Literature 62-66). Raymond Souza and Balderston argue that contemporary historical novelists look to the region's past to understand present problems and conflicts. For example, Balderston states: "In Fuentes, in Garro, in Vargas Llosa, in Piglia we find a similar preoccupation with history or origins and with the present and the future. The recreation of a past time serves as an inducement to meditate on the shape of things to come" (11). Aníbal González-Pérez argues that reconstructions of the Latin American past have always mirrored the concerns of the present from which it is written. As a result, the critic concludes, even postmodern

historical narrative which parodies the use of figural allegory cannot avoid the linking of the present of writing to the rewritten past (445-46). Aínsa compares traditional and contemporary manifestations of the genre, by asserting that the new historical novel continues to participate in the exploration of the concept of national identity by deconstructing official history and fragmenting the concept of national identity itself ("Nueva novela" 5).

[2] In "Antinomies," Aínsa maintains that Latin American discourses of identity are founded on several unresolved antinomies that are reflected in the region's literature. He lists many of them: unity/diversity, authentic/foreign, interior/port, countryside/city, masses/elite, Creole/Hispanic, tradition/modernity, continuity/rupture, religious/secular, neocolonial/metropolitan, to name a few. Aínsa argues that literature can synthesize these opposing terms by showing the ways they often overlap and by undermining their mutual exclusivity.

[3] An earlier study by Herbert Butterfield, The Historical Novel: An Essay, published by Cambridge University Press in 1924, did not so much attempt to define the genre as to distinguish it from the work of the historian. Butterfield regards the historical novel as a form of history that, in treating the past, manages to reveal its inner "secret," a peculiar knowledge captured by the novelist through the illusion of direct human experience (112).

[4] The defining characteristics of the genre according to Lukács are the following: the authentic historical portrayal of characters, time, and place, not presented as givens, but rather presented as they developed through time; the characterization of the central figure of the novel as average or mediocre, and thus representative of a social type; the

appearance of great historical figures as minor characters, only present in the action of the novel to fulfill their historical missions; the importance of dialogue to depict conflicting political forces and social class struggles; and, the representation of history as a precondition of the present, and as a series of crises whose resolution leads to progress (19-88).

[5] For example, in an article published in the journal Genre in 1979, Joseph W. Turner points out the problematic nature of defining the historical novel due to the instability and oxymoronic nature of the two underlying terms: history and fiction. Turner recommends, instead of attempting to attribute certain characteristics to a genre that resists definition, that we designate three types of historical novels positioned along a continuum pertaining to the narrative's relationship with history--documented, disguised, and invented historical novels. Such an approach would only require that a given novel have attributes of one of the three types, although many novels, he points out, contain aspects of all three. A documented historical novel, according to Turner, includes at least one real person or historical figure, and as such maintains a close relationship with documented history. In the invented historical novel, situated on the other end of the spectrum, all the characters and events are fictional; and yet because the novel's setting is typically far removed in time, it requires the reader to engage his or her historical imagination. Turner differentiates the invented historical novel from other fiction by asserting that these novels primarily reflect on the way we reconstruct the past. Finally, the disguised historical novel falls somewhere between the documented and invented historical novels, because in it there are striking similarities to recorded history, even though this type of novel insists on its fictional autonomy.

In History and the Contemporary Novel (1989), David Cowart establishes a definition of the historical novel in broad and simple terms: "any novel in which a historical consciousness manifests itself strongly in either the characters or the action" (6). Like Turner, Cowart feels compelled to organize the genre into categories so that he can demonstrate some of the possible variations permitted within his broad definition. The first of the four kinds he calls "The way it was," which are novels that, like Turner's documented historical novels, recreate a believable past. From this point on there is no overlap between the two critics' categorizations. Cowart's second type, "The way it will be," are fictions about the future that reverse the past. The third kind is called "The turning point." These are novels that attempt to locate seminal moments in the past that have shaped the present. And finally, "The distant mirror" refers to fictions that anachronistically view the past with a modern sensibility (6-11).

[6] Although Roberto González Echevarría admits that Indians and Blacks were important figures in Romantic literature, he contends that in fact the idealized depictions of marginalized groups in these texts contribute little to the constitution of national identity in the new republics:

> But no one thought, save in the most stylized and abstract romantic poems or novels which invoked "universal" feelings such as love or grief, that the Indian or the Black had anything to say that could be incorporated into Latin American culture, or that their history was anything but ancillary in the composition of the nascent independent states. They were not a source of stories that could express the innermost secrets of Latin American society, nor could their beliefs compete with the knowledge offered by

> "civilization" in general, or by scientific reportage in particular.... The new story had to be of the present. In the present Indians and Blacks appeared as part of nature, part of the violent becoming of the New World, but not its voice. (Myth and Archive 149)

This legitimate observation by the Cuban critic does not, however, negate the accuracy of Franco's contention that the emergence of marginalized figures as protagonists in Romantic literature helped to distinguish the cultures of the new nations from their Spanish heritage.

[7] In a 1996 dissertation, Lee Joan Skinner studies the way Latin American historical novels of the nineteenth-century address the objectives of national consolidation and the formation of national identities, as well as reflect intellectuals' changing attitudes about the colonial period. Also see Nina Gerassi-Navarro's 1994 dissertation, "Pirate Novels: Metaphors of a Developing Identity", which analyzes nineteenth-century historical novels that reconstruct the figure of the pirate, who embodies the ideological debate over national identity at that time.

[8] See Lori A. Madden's 1991 dissertation, "The Discourses on the Canudos War: Ideologies and Rhetoric," which shows how recent rewritings of the war were "designed to symbolize Latin American Politics." See also Cheryl Rae Riess's 1989 dissertation, "Narrating History: Five Argentine Novelists," which concludes that these rewritings of history are as much a reaction to, and an examination of the *present time* in which they are written. And finally, see Claudia Montilla Vargas' 1993 dissertation, "History and Narrative: The Latin American Experiment," in which, similar to the intellectuals of the

Romantic period, the critic views the historical novel as the "ideal space" for reassessing cultural identity and traditions.

[9] Lukács' prescriptive definition of the historical novel relegates the great historical figure to the role of a "minor" character that appears only at moments of historical significance, "while avoiding what Hegel calls the psychology of the valet, namely the detailed analysis of small, human peculiarities which have nothing to do with the historical mission of the person concerned" (47). Later in his study, Lukács will identify the "making private of history" as one of the tendencies manifest in the decline of the historical novel (199). Avrom Fleishman agrees with Lukács' contention that primary characters in the historical novel should not be world-historical figures as it is essential to maintain their status as "exceptional" individuals (10-11).

In her recent study of the contemporary historical novel in Latin American, Pons coincides with this point of view. Pons excludes from the genre works in which historical events "están sujetos y son interpretados en función de la vida privada e individual de los personajes" ["are subject to and are interpreted as a function of the private, individual lives of the characters"] (58).

[10] A few examples of major historical figures portrayed in these novels include Christopher Columbus in Alejo Carpentier's El arpa y la sombra (1979), in Abel Posse's Los perros del paraíso (1983), and in Augusto Roa Bastos' Vigilia del Almirante (1992); Simón Bolívar in Gabriel García Marquéz's El general en su laberinto (1989); and Phillip II in Antonio Benítez Rojo's El mar de las lentejas (1979). Secondary figures include Lope de Aguirre in Posse's Daimón (1987), fray Servando Teresa de Mier in El mundo alucinante (1969) by Reynaldo Arenas, and A.O. Exquemelin in Carmen Boullosa's El

médico de los piratas (1992), and in Son vacas, somos puercos (1991). Examples of fictional characters passed down through oral tradition are Baltasar Montañez in Rodríguez Juliá's La renuncia del héroe Baltasar, and Sierva María de Todos los Ángeles in García Márquez's Del amor y otros demonios.

[11] Aínsa is one of the first critics to describe the new literary trend in terms of its innovations and to call the renovated genre "la nueva novela histórica." Aínsa lists several characteristics of the new historical novel, most of which revolve around its intent to rewrite and reread official history, and around the narrative strategies the new historical novel employs to accomplish this goal: use of multiple perspectives to demonstrate the inaccessibility of historical truth; elimination of historical distance by establishing a dialogue with the past; deliberated distancing from official historiography to degrade foundational myths; inclusion of anachronism; utilization of authentic historical documents or false chronicles disguised as historiography; use of parody; and preoccupation with language ("Nueva novela" 9). In addition to these renovations to the genre described by Aínsa, I argue in this study that the new historical novel flaunts the human body as it moves through history.

[12] Also, in the preliminary study to the Porrúa edition of the novel, Concha Meléndez quotes various intellectuals that find in the figure of Enriquillo as constructed by Galván, a man who represents a nation (xviii-xxiii).

[13] Sommer explains Galvan's omissions by pointing to his conservative political leanings, in particular, his official government involvement as secretary to the President in the 1861 attempts to restore Spanish colonial rule over the Dominican Republic in order to avoid Haitian annexation. By omitting African slaves' presence on the island in

his national romance, Galván can erase the relevance of black contributions to national origin and identity. In short, Galván denies the racial heritage of the majority of Dominicans and implies that blacks are Haitians, and thus, foreigner invaders. See 247-56 for a more detailed discussion.

It is interesting to note that Dominican attitudes toward race continue to show denial of their African heritage. For example, Helen I. Safa maintains that Dominicans often use the term "indio" to refer to anyone from racially mixed origins, a euphemism that falsely suggests descent from the Tainos and at the same time reveals "negrophobic" attitudes still current in the Dominican Republic (9).

[14] In La expresión americana (1957), Lezama Lima finds in Fray Servando a transitionary figure between the Baroque and the Romantic periods in America, a transition that Lima associates with the leaving behind of the colonial past and a moving toward Independence:

> Frey Servando es el primero que se decide a ser el perseguido, porque ha intuido que otro paisaje naciente, viene en su búsqueda, el que ya no contaba con el gran arco que unía el barroco hispánico y su enriquecimiento en el barroco americano, sino el que intuye la opulencia de un nuevo destino... (97)

In fact, Lima asserts that, with the declaration of Independence in Mexico, Fray Servando's life finds meaning, "la plenitud de su rebeldía, la forma que su madurez necesitaba para que su vida alcanzara el sentido de su proyección histórica" (91). In short, Fray Servando prefigures the great leaders of Latin American Independence like

Hildalgo and Bolívar, while their later heroic deeds bear out Fray Servando's role as precursor.

Alfonso Reyes, who writes the prologue to an undated edition of Fray Servando's Memorias, simply declares, and without wavering, that the cleric "hasta 1795 es, en México, un precursor de la independencia," at which time he is forced into exile in Spain (Reyes xvi). O'Gorman's prologue to his 1945 edition sidesteps the terms "precursor" and yet magnifies the importance of Fray Servando's political writings, sermons and speeches in the Mexican movement for Independence and the country's later move away from monarchy and toward republicanism.

[15] In her article, "A Natural History of the Old World: The Memorias of Fray Servando," Kathleen Ross maintains that Fray Servando's sermon combines the idea of the visit of Saint Thomas to the New World as Quezalcóatl, previously theorized by Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora and other Jesuits, with the myth of the Virgin of Guadalupe, a combination which leads to Fray Servando's condemnation by Spanish Church authorities (98).

[16] González Pérez' article points to innovation in the new historical novel when he shows how contemporary historical discourse --including poetry by Ernesto Cardenal, poetic prose by Eduardo Galeano, and essays by Severo Sarduy--enters into dialogue with the early historical narrative of Carpentier and its representation of the past as a prefiguration of the present (439). According to González Pérez, each of the six novels he studies--El mundo alucinante by Arenas, El mar de las lentejas by Benítez Rojo, Daimón and Los perros del paraíso by Posse, La noche oscura del Niño Avilés (1984) by Rodríguez Juliá, and El entenado by Saer--challenges in different ways Carpentier's use of

figural allegory and its providential notion of history. As we have seen, González Pérez show how in El mundo alucinante, Arenas destroys the notion of Aristotelian causality that governs historiography by offering several alternative versions of the same events throughout the novel. According to González Pérez, Benítez Rojo questions the providential notion of history by allowing excessive historical detail to muddy simplistic conceptions of the past, showing in this way the multifarious nature of historical events. In contrast, Saer, Posse, and Rodríguez Juliá parody the use of figural allegory by openly displaying its use in their texts in an exaggerated manner to reveal its distortions as it represents historical events as prefigurations of the present.

[17] In a eulogy to Arenas, who died of AIDS in New York in December of 1990, Dolores M. Koch explains the circumstances of his imprisonment in the same Havana prison where, ironically, at one time, Fray Servando had been held. According to Koch, although El mundo alucinante won a national prize in Cuba, the novel was never published there, and Arenas was forced to secretly publish the work in Mexico (1969), in France (1969) and in England (1971), winning both international recognition and incarceration for its author. After 2 years of hard labor, Arenas was released but not permitted to work, and finally managed to flee the island on the Mariel boatlift of 1980. See Koch 686.

[18] Barrientos article, "Reynaldo Arenas, Alejo Carpentier y la nueva novela histórica hispanoamericana," studies El mundo alucinante as an explicit parody of El siglo de las luces. Barrientos shows that where Carpentier's novel is notable for its erudition, Arenas employs imagination; where Carpentier strives for verisimilitude, Arenas opts for the unbelievable; Carpentier's narrative is strictly chronological, and

Arenas' is brimming with anachronisms; Carpentier locates the actions in his novel in the places and on the very streets where they would have occurred, whereas Arenas makes the different settings in the novel unreal, and dream-like. Barrientos concludes, however, that the most important difference between the two novels is that in Carpentier's, the protagonist, Victor Hugues, is transformed into a literary character, while Arenas' Fray Servando becomes a mythic figure. According to Barrientos, Fray Servando becomes myth because he somehow "escapes" imprisonment as a literary character--fascination with his life goes beyond that with Arenas' novel, somehow overshadowing the importance of the Cuban writer's work. I disagree with Barrientos' conclusion, as I believe Fray Servando had achieved a mythic status through the writings of Lima, Reyes, and those of Fray Servando himself, before becoming Arenas' fictional character. As we have previously shown, Arenas deconstructs the mythic historical figure by exposing the cleric's body, by thrusting him into motion, and by exaggerating his very human qualities. The 2000 release of "Before Night Falls," a movie about Arenas' life, adds a new dimension to this argument, as the historical figure of the writer Arenas also becomes a literary personage and is on his way to becoming a mythic figure himself.

[19] Hayden White finds that the need for "self-definition by negation" (152), in particular the antithetical characterization of oneself as civilized, and the other as wild, often occurs during periods of crisis:

> In times of sociocultural stress, when the need for positive self-definition asserts itself but no compelling criterion of self-identification appears, it is always possible to say something like: "I may not know the precise content of my own felt humanity, but I am most certainly *not* like

that," and simply point to something in the landscape that is manifestly different from oneself. ("The Forms of Wildness" 151)

Certainly the period of discoveries and conquest in the New World taking place during the transition from a premodern to a modern ontology, would be an example of a moment of "sociocultural stress."

[20] González Echevarría argues in Chapter 3 of his text, "A Lost-World Rediscovered," that scientific travel literature of the nineteenth century derives its authority, in part, by isolating the European traveler in Latin America from the object of study through various rhetorical strategies and "civilized impedimenta," and thus, establishes an inside and an outside, a self and an other, a civilized subject and a wild or barbaric natural object (106-109). In Chapter 4, "The Novel as Myth and Archive: Ruins and Relics of Tlön," the critic shows how, in the twentieth century, anthropology still relies on these fissures to produce knowledge about the other. According to González Echevarría, the telluric novels of this period that imitate ethnography "explode under the pressure of their internal contradictions" (159). One of these contradictions is the attempt to speak for and describe the myths of the primitive other using the realist language of anthropological discourse (144-59).

[21] For a general discussion of strategies used by these various types of contemporary critics to disrupt the traditional mind/body dichotomy in literature, art and other cultural constructs, as well as an overview of important critics in the field, see Anne Cranny-Francis' The Body in the Text (1995). In Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (1990), feminist critic Judith Butler challenges the accepted gender categories of male and female by showing them to be discursive practices rather than

"natural" ways of being, and examines the consequences of this challenge in terms of sexual identity. bell hooks, a theorist of race, criticizes the essentialism underlying racial identity as a perpetuation of stereotypes inscribed on the bodies of the colonized and the colonizer. See Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics (1990), in particular, her essays entitled "Postmodern Blackness" and "Representing Whiteness: Seeing Wings of Desire." Michel Foucault is considered the most prominent postmodern theorist of the body. In one of his most important works, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison (1975), Foucault asserts that the body is constructed or inscribed by the discourses and practices of society's institutions. Michel de Certeau's work, particularly The Practice of Everyday Life (1984), expands on Foucault's theories by analyzing the ways bodies resist the "discipline." See Chapter 1 of the current study for a more in depth discussion of de Certeau's contribution to the study of the body in discourse.

[22] The term "embodied consciousness" is used by Arthur W. Frank in his article, "For a Sociology of the Body: An Analytical Review," in which the author establishes a theoretical typology of the body in order to explore the relationship between the body and ethics. Anne Cranny-Francis uses the term "embodied subjectivity" in her study, The Body in the Text, which analyzes how contemporary theory focuses on the body to change the way we position ourselves socially, politically, and economically.

[23] Frank uses these four questions concerning bodily action to construct a matrix of four idealized body types based on their styles of action: the disciplined body, the mirroring body, the dominating body, and the communicative body. Frank does not contend, however, that empirical bodies are confined to one type of action, but rather that these body types can help us to understand body behaviors and relations.

[24] Although some might argue that twentieth century vanguard movements in Latin America and even turn-of-the-century "modernistas" had previously abandoned referential pretenses in their work, these literary movements do not propose the radical critique of language and representation as set forth by Borges or Derrida. Latin America's "modernistas" may have, especially in the first "preciosista" phase, rejected naturalism's aspirations to describe social reality and its drive to reform, in favor of an escape into an imaginary world of exotic beauty and aesthetic perfection; nevertheless, they maintained faith in the power of the poetic word, and later during the "americanista" phase, expressed a rekindled interest in regional problems. See Jiménez 9-64.

Vanguard artists, too, withdrew from the material world in order to transcend the human condition and the boundaries of nature. However, as Poggioli argues, what Ortega y Gasset called the vanguard's dehumanization of art, can be better understood not so much as a "recoiling from life and living beings" as a "deforming" of material reality (176). For Poggioli, the vanguard's experimental language is not a figuration but rather a "transfiguration" of the real (197). In vanguard poetry's "vision the word is not spirit which became flesh, but flesh which became spirit" (199). The vanguards' almost mystic belief in poetic language's capacity to renew the impoverished language of bourgeois society demonstrates its faith in the power of the word to alter the world.

[25] De Certeau's linking of death and eroticism recalls George Bataille's conception of eroticism as distinguished from animal sexuality: "In human consciousness, eroticism is that within man which calls his being into question" (29). Although de Certeau does not explicitly explore eroticism as a subversive everyday practice, his linking of the two suggests the importance of the erotic body in dismantling hegemonic discourse.

[26] Several critical texts on the work of Rodríguez Juliá have contributed to my analysis of La renuncia, including two articles by Estelle Irizarry. The first, "Metahistoria y novela: La renuncia del héroe Baltasar," analyzes the novel using the theories of Hayden White about metahistory. Irizarry examines emplotment, tropes, historical philosophy, and the ideological position employed in La renuncia. This article is particularly interesting as an application of White's theories, but concerns itself less with clarifying a reading of the novel. The second article by Irizarry, "Exploring Conscious Imitation of Style with Ready-Made Software," makes use of a computer to study the imitation of eighteenth century language in the text. The principle purpose of this article is to show the possibility of employing computer technology in literary research, and so, once again, does not explore the novel's salient themes.

Two recent articles have examined the novel's themes and historical context more profoundly. A study by Francisco Cabanillas examines La renuncia as "política de ficción," and analyzes the novel's theme of the dangers of power. In particular, he explores how historical discourse, constructed with the language of power, cannot escape its ideological and fictional foundations. César A. Salgado's insightful article "Archivos encontrados: Edgardo Rodríguez Juliá o los diablejos de la historiografía criolla," studies the parody of the archive in three works by the Puerto Rican author. According to Salgado, Rodríguez Juliá lays bare through parody the "Generacion del Treinta's" project to construct an archive that would represent elitist Creole identity. Salgado concludes that Rodríguez Juliá's novels reflect the revisionist work of a Pancaribbean group of "new historians" that reveals the actual brutal nature of the treatment of slaves on the islands, and the less than harmonic relations between the races.

Although in relative terms, the critics have overlooked this first novel by Rodríguez Juliá, beginning with his second novel the Puerto Rican writer has garnered increasing interest. A compilation of analyses on the work of the writer, Las tribulaciones de Juliá (1992), includes broad thematic approaches to Rodríguez Juliá's writing. Of particular interest in my analysis of La renuncia is "Escribir la mirada," by Aurea María Sotomayor. In this study, the critic examines the Puerto Rican writer's readings of visual artwork, real and imaginary, in several of his texts including La renuncia. Her focus is primarily on Rodríguez Juliá's verbal transformation of visual images, a strategy repeated frequently in his work.

[27] In her article "Metahistoria y novela," Irizarry cites Caytano Coll y Toste, Leyendas puertorriqueñas, as a source for this legend.

[28] Miguel Henríquez is another historic figure that may have served as a model for the novel's characterization of Baltasar. José Luis González describes him in the following way: "un zapatero mestizo que llegó a convertirse, mediante su extraordinaria actividad como contrabandista y corsario, en el hombre más rico de la colonia durante la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII... hasta que las autoridades españolas, alarmadas por su poder, decidieron sacarlo de la Isla y de este mundo" (22).

[29] For a brief discussion of the history of Puerto Rico's colonization and its effects on contemporary Puerto Rican culture, see José Luis González, "El país de cuatro pisos: notas para una definición de la cultura puertorriqueña," in El país de cuatro pisos y otros ensayos, (11-42).

[30] In Marxism and the Philosophy of Language (1973), V.N. Volosinov convincingly maintains that all language is a social construct and therefore cannot be divorced from the ideology of its community.

[31] See Rodríguez Juliá's conference presentation at the Wilson Center, "Puerto Rico y el Caribe: Historia de una marginalidad," for more information on his great uncle, Ramón Juliá Marín, who was also a novelist (10).

[32] In her essay, "A Caribbean Social Imaginary: Redoubled Notes on Critical-Fiction against the Gaze of Ulysses," included in the anthology Latin American Identity and Constructions of Difference (1994), Zavala asserts that Caribbean cultures "are bookish or 'grammatological' to the root" (187). By this she means, that they look to symbols, tropes, and allusions to communicate cultural meaning and identity. This impulse to obtuseness, she argues, stems from the firmly-constituted imaginary cannon of the imperialist powers, that, when imposed on islanders, provoked "many energies of symbolic vehemence" in the islanders' expressions of national identity and in their attempts to recapture self-determination (187). To a list of past tropes and metaphors adopted by Caribbean poets and novelists, the Puerto Rican writer adds her own:

> All epistemic metaphors from the cultural anthropophagy of Oswaldo de Andrade, to the metamorphosis of the cannibal of Maximilien Laroche, the baroque of Severo Sarduy, the creolization of Edouard Glissant, the counterpoint of Fernando Ortiz, the real maravilloso of Alejo Carpentier, the cultural maroonization of René Depestre, to the dialogical imaginary and the metalepsis I propose, in other words, the primacy of displacing the colonial by the liberatory... have created a constant shift in our remapping

> of identities. Such entities emerge in the continuum of the struggle for the sign of our histories. In such struggle, metaphoricity and subjectivity have been reconstituted since the contested space of the Caribbean was mapped by the European imperialist epistemologies. (192)

No matter the metaphor it employs, the principal aim of Caribbean writing, according to Zavala, is to redefine individual and national identity by freeing the imagination.

[33] Cabanillas also contends that the Bishop is a figure of the author, and specifically of the "categorical and hegemonic" author (287). In addition, he argues that Baltasar is a figure of the reader who opens up the Bishop's text to the democratic process through the activity of reading.

[34] See Foucault's text, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison (1975), in particular "Panopticism," and The History of Sexuality Volume One: An Introduction (1976).

[35] Roberto González Echevarría finds other symbols from the Zohar and the kabala in Carpentier's novel El siglo de las luces. See Alejo Carpentier: the Pilgrim at Home, 237-54.

[36] For a discussion of figural allegory as a way of interpreting history, see Erich Auerbach, "Figura," Scenes from the Drama of European Literature, 11-76.

[37] In this essay Carpentier observes that the architecture of Havana expresses the island nation's disorderly, mestizo psychology:

> Y como todo mestizaje, por proceso de simbiosis, de adición, de mezcla, engendra un barroquismo, el barroquismo cubano consistió en acumular, coleccionar, multiplicar, columnas y columnatas en tal demasía de dóricos

> y corintios, de jónicos y de compuestos, que acabó el transeúnte por olvidar que vivía entre columnas, que era vigilado por columnas que le medían el tronco y lo protegían del sol y de la lluvia, y hasta que era velado por columnas en las noches de sus sueños. La Multiplicidad de las Columnas fue la resultante de un espíritu barroco que no se manifestó--salvo excepciones--en el atirabuzonamiento de pilastras salomónicas vestidas de enredaderas doradas, sombreadoras de sacras hornacinas. Espíritu barroco, legítimamente antillano, mestizo de cuanto se transculturizó en estas islas del Mediterráneo americano, se tradujo en un irreverente y desacompasado rejuego de entablamentos clásicos, para crear ciudades aparentemente ordenadas y serenas donde los vientos de ciclones estaban siempre al acecho del mucho orden, para desordenar el orden apenas los veranos, pasados a octubres, empezaran a bajar sus nubes sobre las azoteas y tejados. (La ciudad de las columnas 101-103)

[38] In Os sertões, da Cunha at once attempts to justify the Brazilian government's massacre of the thousands of inhabitants at Canudos by appealing to the Darwinian notion of progress through the elimination of racially inferior beings, and to the Romantic concept of national unity and the advance of civilization. However, while condemning the government's actions, da Cunha empathizes with the *jagunços'* courageous defense of their home and ideals. This long narrative is an attempt to understand the tragedy using scientific methods and discourse to reach a conclusion. And yet, in the closing paragraphs of the text da Cunha expresses his own skepticism regarding the ability of science to present us with positive knowledge, as science seems to come into conflict

with his own moral code. In this passage, a commission assigned to confirm the death of the Counselor disinters his corpse, and after returning the decaying body to its grave, decides they should preserve his head for further study:

> ... and, since it was a waste of time to exhume the body once more, a knife cleverly wielded at the right point did the trick, the corpse was decapitated, and that horrible face, sticky with scars and pus, once more appeared before the visitors' gaze.
>
> After, that they took it to the seaboard, where it was greeted by delirious multitudes with carnival joy. Let science here have the last word. (476)

Da Cunha's ironic distancing from his own methodological approach leaves the reader questioning the author's stated purpose and conclusions. The Brazilian writer's preliminary thesis that "civilization is destined to continue its advance in the backlands, impelled by that implacable 'motive force of history' in the inevitable crushing of weak races by the strong" (xxix), is forcefully contradicted in his concluding image of the supposedly "civilized" in their carnivalesque barbarity.

[39] In addition to Rama's study, several other articles dealing with the theme of fanaticism in the novel have aided me in this analysis. For José Miguel Oviedo as for Seymour Menton, the novel's principal theme is the condemnation of fanaticism, to which Menton adds the praise for flexibility as represented in the Baron de Cañabrava. Andrew J. Brown categorizes and examines the characters in the novel in terms of their relationship to fanatical thinking--the fanatics themselves, those neutral to fanaticism, and those who fight against it--and concludes that only those who struggle to defeat

fanaticism, like the myopic journalist, can be considered morally successful by the novel's ethical standard. Marie Madeleine Gladieu studies fanatical characters in several of Vargas Llosa's novels, including La guerra del fin del mundo, and links these figures to the return of barbarism and violence. She concludes that although da Cunha believed in the triumph of civilization over barbarism, a century later, Vargas Llosa does not. James W. Brown explores the theme of fanaticism in the novel and the responsibility of the individual to make moral decisions in societies that are amoral.

Juzyn-Amestoy questions the supposedly impartial voice of the narrator in the novel, and studies his idolatry of violence and his participation in the violence of the text. Although the critic is not specifically studying the novel's representation of the body, she does discuss what she interprets as the narrator's obsession with the phallus, the anus, and excrement. She argues that these obsessions do not point to a "vital acceptance of the body" (186), but rather to the glorification of violence and death. And finally, concerning the link between authority and narration, Aníbal González' discusses the portrayal of journalism in several works of contemporary Spanish American fiction, including La guerra del fin del mundo. He sees journalism in these works as a metaphor that allows authors to reflect on the ethical implications of writing that is frequently associated with authoritative discourse and oppression. My analysis of the embodiment of characters and fictional discourse in the novel allows me to reconsider dimensions of several of these articles, including fanaticism, the moral implications of fanatical thought, the perceived dichotomy between the civilized and the barbaric, and the novel's stance toward ethics and writing.

[40] Norbert Elias, another important contributor to contemporary body theory, argues in his two-volume text, The Civilizing Process (1939, the English translation 1978 & 1982) that, through time, bodies have become more civilized, in that they are increasingly rational, socialized and individualized. Bodily processes and drives have been repressed, become unmentionable, and violence as a means for competing and resolving conflict has been replaced gradually by an increasing rationality, drive inhibition and refinement of manners as a means for distinguishing oneself. In Elias' evolutionary scheme of civilization, the human body and bodily practices from the Middle Ages to modernity have become increasingly repressed in our interactions with others, and this repression is valued as a sign of civilization and diminishing violence. Although Elias' theory of the civilizing process does not rely on dualist thinking like Scarry's theory of the making and unmaking of the world, it is similar in that it too views the repression of the body and bodily practices as a move toward a more civilized world.

[41] Focaliser is a term first coined by Mieke Bal in Narratology: An Introduction to the Theory of Narrative. Raymond Leslie Williams effectively uses the term to describe narrative perspective in La guerra del fin del mundo (139-47), as does Seymour Menton in his study (48).

[42] In The Civilized Body: Social Domination, Control and Health (1982), Freund argues that bodily well-being and health are related to social class, economic position, and whether one is in a position of power or of subordination. Feelings of disempowerment or lack of control over one's own goals leads to stress, the questioning of one's concept of self, and ultimately, illness. In The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling (1983), Hochschild shows how people in positions

of power are protected by what he call "status shields" that defend a person's self concept and their sense of well-being. Individuals lacking power have less access to these status shields, and so, are more likely to suffer the stress of attacks on their concept of self, and therefore, are more likely to become ill.

[43] This reality-conferring or fiction-generating capacity of the open body is explained by Scarry as an avoidance of the disturbing reality of the corpse:

> It is as though the human mind, confronted by the open body itself (whether human or animal) does not have the option of failing to perceive its reality that rushes unstoppably across his eyes and into his mind, yet the mind so flees from what it sees that it will with almost equal speed perform the countermovement of assigning that attribute to something else, especially if there is something else at hand made ready to receive the rejected attribute, ready to act as its referent. (Body in Pain 126)

Scarry gives as an example the use of sacrifice in the Brahmin religion. The sacrificed body was placed at the walls of a city to make the city impenetrable. Thus, the open body substantiated the belief of the city's impenetrability in the imagination of its people

[44] Gall's oath reminds Jacques Joset of Simón Bolívar's oath at Monte Sagrado. He concludes that Vargas Llosa's rewrite of this oath profanes a sacred episode in Latin American history and thus underlines an important theme in the novel—that no matter how heroic the cause, it is susceptible to fanaticism.

[45] In La guerra del fin del mundo, Vargas Llosa is clearly interested in portraying the historical events preceding the massacre and the war itself as a series of accidents in direct contradiction with the necessary relationship of cause and effect set up by

traditional historiography, and represented by Gall's description of history. The Peruvian novelist achieves this effect by accumulating massive amounts of detail, by introducing large numbers of characters, and by presenting so many varying perspectives on the events, that it becomes difficult for the reader to perceive any certain connection between the actions of the characters and their effect on others and the war itself. The multiple perspectives that Vargas Llosa shows us through the use of focalizers represent the varying interpretations of reality and the competing discourses that make-up history. For Antonio Conejo Polar, chance undermines the verisimilitude of the text and negates history as absurd.

[46] Although many critics have written about Gall's rape of Jurema (Menton; Gerdes; Juzyn-Amestoy; Brown, A.; Brown, J.; Company Gimeno; Henderson; Weatherford; Meneses) it seems that they fail to note his continuing violence. Gall commits the first rape after the first attempt on life (98-100). He rapes again after the second attempt on his life while he and Jurema travel to Canudos with the mule (124).

[47] Among critics there are varied responses to the character of the Baron. For example, Menton argues that Vargas Llosa characterizes the Baron as a "compassionate human being" (46), who breaks down stereotypes of the wealthy landowner, and represents moderation in a landscape of fanaticism. In contrast, A. Brown maintains that the novel condemns the Baron because of his lack of responsibility in fighting fanaticism. Rama asserts that the Baron represents a weak point in the novel, as Vargas Llosa's characterization of this figure is of a man without class affiliation and removed from the conflict in Canudos as well as from history. Finally, for Patricia Montenegro, the Baron and his anachronistic vision are representative of Vargas Llosa himself.

[48] Another instance of rape in La guerra del fin del mundo makes this assertion almost literal. João Satán, a traveling bandit, who before reforming his life and becoming João Abade, a member of the Counselor's Catholic Guard in Canudos, abducts and rapes the thirteen-year-old sister of Leopoldina, his lover, when Leopoldina runs off with another man. The young girl becomes a scapegoat for João's vengeful anger when he is unable to control the actions and heart of the woman he loves. João rapes in order to restore the myth of masculine dominance and control and converts the girl's body into a text of this myth. First, João Satán brands his initials on either cheek of his young victim, and then abandons the pregnant girl on the streets of her hometown with a sign dangling around her neck "explicando que todos los hombres de la banda eran, juntos, el padre de la criatura" (69). In this instance, the rape victim's body is actually inscribed as a text of the fiction of male power.

[49] A sampling of other critical comments concerning the Baron's rape of Jurema also are quite disturbing: Salvadro Company Gimeno maintains that the Baron opts for the path of "love" and pleasure in an erotic scene with his wife and maid as a solution to the irrationality of history. James Brown interprets the scene of "rape/love" as a reflection of "la conciencia naciente del Barón de los simples actos del amor y del placer, un intento burdo de retomar la hebra del amor con su mujer loca, de tender una puente, como había logrado el periodista, sobre el espacio que le separa de los otros de la realidad..." (174). Carlos Henderson simply states that the Baron's "erotic" scene is without importance in the development of the character: "la escena erotica es gratuita en tanto configuración de este personaje; es decir que a pesar que esta escena se inserta causalmente en la progression narrativa no adquire una importancia reconocible" (221).

[50] Juzyn-Amestoy also points to critical misreading of this scene as erotic (184). However, what most concerns her is what she views as the narrator's participation in the violence of the text, including the Baron's rape of Sebastiana. While her concern about violence is valid, her arguments supporting the notion that the narrator participates in the novel's violent acts are less than convincing. Juzyn-Amestoy's focus on the grotesque nature of the text's bodily representations reveals her desire to repress the body in Vargas Llosa's fictional discourse. In this analysis, I argue, that Vargas Llosa's novel instead privileges readings that allow the open body to emerge, providing a medium through which one can learn compassion and achieve redemption.

[51] Jurema also represents hope for Patricia Montenegro, although she concludes that, because of the destruction of the community at Canudos--the place where Jurema's new outlook on life became possible--Jurema's hopeful viewpoint is destroyed as well.

[52] This study of El entenado has benefited from my readings of several previously published analyses of the novel by Saer. First, concerning the notion of history explored in El entenado, see de Grandis who examines the narrative and rhetorical nature of history, and Gnutzman who contrasts the novel with the chronicles of the Conquest. Bastos' article explores the relationship between writing and memory--fragile, tainted by the present, and therefore unreliable--and places El entenado among other historical novels that were published in Argentina during the military dictatorship of the seventies and early eighties. The theme of language and representation is analyzed in studies by Díaz Quiñones and Premat. Both critics explore the narrator's struggle to represent the tribe with language that ultimately undermines meaning. And finally, the theme of identity and the exploration of self versus Other are explored in articles by Chanady,

Romano Thuesen, Steinberg de Kaplan, and Pons. My analysis will investigate how each of these themes is modified by considering the representation of the body and the resulting breakdown of the mind/body dichotomy in Saer's novel.

[53] In her article, Bastos establishes the historicity of these events and documents the name of the expedition's sole survivor, Francisco del Puerto. According to Bastos, the episode is well-known to all Argentine school children, although the account of cannibalism among the tribe that attacked the Solís expedition belongs to the realm of legend (3-4).

[54] The reader should not overlook the symbolic significance of the name Quesada, which is one of the possible surnames given to Don Quixote in the first chapter of the novel by Miguel de Cervantes. In this passage, Saer points to his own spiritual father, the great Spanish novelist, and to the unreliability of writing, of the knowledge it presents, and of memory in the writing of history, so evident in the ironic passage it recalls: "Quieren decir que tenía el sobrenombre de Quijada, o Quesada, que en esto hay alguna diferencia en los autores que deste caso escriben; aunque por conjeturas verosímiles se deja entender que se llamaba Quejana. Pero esto importa poco a nuestro cuento; basta que en la narración dél no se salga un punto de la verdad" (36). Díaz-Quiñones also detects in the name Quesada "un secreto homenaje a Cervantes y evoca la cadena de incertidumbres con que se abre el Quijote" (4-5), whereas in "The First Colonial Encounter," de Grandis finds in the same figure "the overpowering presence of Bartolomé de las Casas" (35).

[55] Both Pons and Bastos cite passages from the novel with explicit references to the body and contend that they demonstrate how the intensity of experience can impact

memory. Neither critic, however, connects these bodily remembrances with the formation of identity or with a challenge to the mind/body dualism. See Bastos 8-9, and Pons 249.

[56] Amaryll Chanady criticizes Saer's novel for its Eurocentrism, and sets El entenado apart from other new historical novels that reinterpret official history by pointing to its recurrence to, and "nonproblematic" use of past paradigms and stereotypes of the Amerindian (679). Chanady argues that the text devalorizes "the excluded Other" (698). Among the examples that Chanady gives of this stereotyping and devalorization are the novel's description of the tribe's annual cannibalism, orgy and intoxication, and the depiction of the tribe as lacking arts, culture, and especially writing, representations which reinforce the traditional dichotomy between a "literate," advanced European civilization and an "illiterate," primitive culture of Amerindians. For Chanaday, El entenado follows the tradition of modern historiography that "exiled orality and replaced the discourse of the Other with its discourse founded on scientifically articulated knowledge" (689).

It is my argument that, in fact, El entenado undermines the traditional self/other dichotomy through the narrator's unique process of formulating identity. The narrator's concept of self recalls Arthur Frank's notion of embodied subjectivity in which an individual incorporates bodily experience of the world, one's connection with others, and an awareness of one's own body acting. Of particular interest here is Frank's question regarding whether one sees oneself as self-contained and monadic, or as interacting with others and, thus, open to mutual constitution. As we shall see, the fact that the narrator sees himself as being molded like clay by his experiences with the tribe, that he adopts

their philosophical outlook on the world as his own, and that the story of his life and that of the cannibal tribe merge to form a single, uninterrupted narrative, show the irrelevance of the dichotomy self and Other in his construction of identity. In addition, Chanady's argument that Saer depicts the tribe as lacking art, religion, and writing will also been challenged by our reading of the text. Art takes the form of theater, which is apparent in the children's play. Religious belief manifests itself in the yearly ritual of cannibalism and the need to confirm their continued existence through this rite. And writing, following the broader definition proposed by Lévi-Strauss, is inscribed on the body of the *defghis* who are designated from among the captives before the ritual cannibal feast. Like the modern day historian, the defghi organizes and memorializes the accomplishments of the tribe.

Pons too implies that the narrator appropriates the discourse of the other and so speaks out of turn, when she contends that El entenado exposes the conflict between "la imposibilidad (y la indeseabilidad) de hablar en nombre del otro silenciado, y, a su vez, la necesidad de que esas ausencias y silencios de la Historia no se olviden sino que perduren a través de la escritura," ["the impossibility (and undesirability) of speaking in the name of the silenced other, and, at the same time, the necessity that History's absences and silences not be forgotten, but rather that they survive through writing."] (246). Pons here suggests that the narrator, a member of the dominant culture, speaks for the other, and yet, ultimately contends that "el relato del entenado (y la novela) se manifiestan, no como la representación de la tribu, sino como la representación y la perpetuación de la ausencia misma diferida a través de la escritura," ["the narrator's account (and the novel) present themselves, not as the representation of the tribe, but rather as the representation and

perpetuation of their absence itself deferred through writing."] In other words, Pons argues that the narrator is placed in the untenable position of speaking for the tribe so that their existence not be forgotten, a paradoxical position resolved to a certain extent by his writing which reflects the tribe's continued absence from history rather than their presence. Pons alludes here to an issue--the ethical dilemma presented by lost-body writing--which I will address further on in this analysis. However, based on my argument that the involvement of bodily experience in the formation of identity renders exclusive categories of self and Other invalid, I contend that the narrator is not a representative of the dominant culture silencing the oppressed other.

[57] An entirely different reading of the narrator's formation of identity can be found in Romano Thuesen's article. Applying a Lacanian approach to her study of the stages of the narrator's development, Romano Theusen asserts that it is his encounter with the Other which allows him to discover and identify himself in complete contrast to and in utter isolation from the Other: "El 'otro' permanece siempre como tal, y esa alteridad es la que hace posible el planteo y el cuestionamiento de la propia conciencia" (51).

[58] According to Wheelwright, Aristotle was the first to use the term catharsis in reference to literature, but that the term was used previously in medical and religious discourse. Wheelwright quotes from Plato's Phaedo to explore catharsis' religious meaning: "in separating, so far as possible, the soul from the body, and in teaching the soul the habit of collecting and bringing itself together from all parts of the body, and in living, so far as it can, both now and hereafter, alone by itself, freed from the body as from fetters" (107).

[59] The theme of life as theater is prominent in such works by the seventeenth-century Spanish dramatist, Calderón de la Barca, as El gran teatro del mundo, and La vida es sueño. These plays explore religious aspects of this theme by dramatizing how humans, regardless of their social standing, ultimately lose any power or riches they may have accumulated during this worldly life when they face their maker. A different variation of the theme is set forth in Cervantes' Quijote, in which theater becomes a creative act that the individual may engage in in order to invent a better reality, and to participate actively in the production of the world. This variation of the theme is in contrast to that explored in "El retablo de las maravillas," where the individual is seen as passive, a social type who simply acts out the role given to him or her.

[60] The idea that writing "justifies" one's life is repeated obsessively in Borges' stories and essays and often accompanies the notion that an individual's identity is merely a verbal construct or a fiction. Borges' characters, frequently terrorized by their lack of a substantial identity, attempt to create the illusion of permanence and stability, to "justify" themselves, by constructing coherent, personal histories. The author presents himself as a case study of this concept in his essay "Borges y yo," just one of many examples in his work. See my study, "El terror y la justificación del ser en la obra de Borges," presented at the Kentucky Foreign Language Conference, Spring 1995.

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