WHEN GRIEF REMAINS AND MEMORIES PERSIST: TRAUMA AND HISTORICAL REVISIONISM IN 1920s PARAGUAYAN LITERATURE OF THE WAR OF THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis studies how Paraguayan literature about the War of the Triple Alliance (1864-1870), written in the 1920s, addresses both historical trauma and revisionism by reacting to the prevailing liberal historiography of the war. The thesis analyzes war narratives by three different authors: *Cuentos y Parábolas* by J. Natalicio González (1922), *Tradiciones del Hogar* by Teresa Lamas Carísimo Rodríguez de Alcalá (1921, 1928), and *Don Inca* by Ercilia López de Blomberg (1920). I argue that González, an intellectual and conservative politician, employs horror and gothic to portray the "past as present" and also rectifies the image of (Mariscal) Francisco Solano López. In contrast, Lamas Carísimo's narratives from family testimonies in oral history portray how silence transmits intergenerational trauma and herald the war roles of women. Finally, López de Blomberg's novel is analyzed from the overwhelming presence of melancholia and how sadness impacts an upper-class family that confronts death and political instability. A niece of Mariscal López who lived in exile after her father was condemned as a traitor, she is especially concerned with treason and truth in the atrocities of Mariscal López's military court called "el Tribunal de Sangre." With the assistance of trauma theory (Freud 1917, Kristeva 1989, Caruth 1996, Danieli 1998, Mucci 2013 et al.) and an analysis of the three authors' diverse manifestations of historical trauma, I conclude that their works express the wounds of a devastating war of defeat, offering potential healing in narration and new insights into the lingering grief and memories of a war that never really ends.

This thesis is dedicated to my husband, Leo, and our children, Brendan, Evan and Cristina, for their unwavering support and inspiration.

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INTRODUCTION

"…all wars are fought twice, the first time on the battlefield,
the second time in memory."
Viet Thanh Nguyen, *Nothing Ever Dies*

When I first visited Paraguay in 1995, I read Paraguayan history about the War of the Triple Alliance in one of the few English histories I could find in the country at that time, Andrew Nickson's 1993 edition of the *Historical Dictionary of Paraguay*. As I learned of the war, I wondered how the Paraguayan people had endured and survived as a nation through such devastation. That initial question from many years ago inspired a pursuit that led to the research question of this thesis: how Paraguayan literature of the 1920s was impacted by historical trauma during a time when the nation was revising the liberal historiography of the War of the Triple Alliance.

1. The War of the Triple Alliance: "el naufragio nacional"

Undeniably, the War of the Triple Alliance was an extremely traumatic event in Paraguayan history. Lasting over five years, 1864-1870, and occurring primarily on Paraguayan soil, Paraguay fought against three countries, Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay. What precipitated the war initially was Brazilian intervention in the 1862 Uruguayan election that overturned the rule of the ruling party, el Partido Blanco. Paraguay viewed Brazilian intervention in Uruguay as an aggressive threat to the "political equilibrium" in the region (Warren 4). When Brazil ignored a warning from Paraguay in August 1864 and sent troops into Uruguay, following Argentina's refusal to grant permission to Paraguay to use its territory to enter Uruguay, Paraguay reacted by declaring war on Argentina and invading the neighboring country in March 1865. The governments of Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay thus formed The Triple Alliance in reaction to Paraguay's invasions. Paraguay believed it was protecting its survival by preserving Uruguayan

sovereignty, while Brazil and Argentina argued that they were stopping aggression lead by Paraguay's "barbarous," "tyrannical" President Francisco Solano López.

For Paraguay, the war had disastrous consequences. Paraguayan historian Efraím Cardozo referred to the war as "el holocausto paraguayo" (110). Brazilian journalist Julio José Chiavenato titled his account, *Genocido Americano*, and French historian Luc Capdevila described the war as one of "las primeras guerras modernas" and "una guerra total" (14). Paraguay suffered final defeat in the battle of Cerro Corá when its leader, Mariscal Francisco Solano López, was killed. The death toll in Paraguay reached catastrophic numbers; two-thirds of the total population of the country died during the war from battle wounds, epidemic illnesses or starvation. Ninety percent of the adult male population in the country perished. The remaining population consisted of urban elites and the rural campesinos. In addition to the devastation of the economy and infrastructure, Paraguay lost 55,000 square miles of territory, twenty-five percent of its land, to Brazil and Argentina in the peace treaties. Brazilian and Argentinean forces occupied Paraguay for seven years. During the war and occupation, a provisional government ran the country, mainly staffed by those Paraguayans who had emigrated to Argentina and fought as "Legionnaires" on the Alliance side of the war. The Paraguayan Legion formed mainly in their opposition to Mariscal López. The allies banned the use of the native Guaraní, the only language spoken by a majority of the population, in all business and instruction, a prohibition not lifted until 1992. War indemnities charged to Paraguay were not absolved by Argentina and Brazil until 1942 and 1943 (Brezzo 10-27).

After the war, in 1870, Paraguay signed a democratic and liberal constitution, a document modeled after the constitution of Argentina that included a provision for a free press and other liberties. Years of political instability followed, with Presidents not finishing their terms of office

(Cardozo 110-111). For example, between 1870 and 1880, Paraguay had seven different Presidents, and of that seven, two were overthrown by coups, one was assassinated, one resigned, and one died in office. Public health continued to be problematic. The Asunción city government lacked essential sanitary services, particularly in the removal of dead bodies in the streets and roads. In 1871, an epidemic of yellow fever developed. Asunción had few doctors in 1871 and depended on army doctors from Brazil (Warren 133). Brazilian troops had occupied houses in Asunción and looted the properties (Whigham). With no army or police force, armed bands vandalized the city and country, and crime increased. The country needed new systems and education. According to an 1886 census, only fourteen percent of the population reported being able to read and write (Capdevila 146). In public discourse, President Bernardino Caballero (1881-1886), also a veteran, referred to the War of the Triple Alliance as "naufragio nacional" (national shipwreck) (Capdevila 159). The national image of Paraguay reflected ruin, defeat and humiliation.

In *The Culture of Defeat*, Wolfgang Schivelbusch, who studied the effect of war defeat on the South after the U.S. Civil War, France after the Franco Prussian War and Germany after World War I, writes, "Defeat follows war as ashes follow fire. At the heart of both defeat and war lies the threat of extinction, a threat that resonates long past the cessation of hostilities" (5). The traumatic wounds of war that remain with survivors are less obvious and not measured by statistics. Wars cause violence and losses that impact the emotional life and challenge mental health for decades. Grief remains, and memories persist.

2. The theoretical approach: trauma as an open wound

"Trauma" did not exist as a word or condition in the nineteenth century, but mental illnesses were recognized and treated. Twentieth century trauma theory, however, can assist in

understanding the effects of a catastrophe on the mind. Trauma, as defined by Sigmund Freud in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle,* represents a "wound inflicted not upon the body but upon the mind" that differs from a body wound that represents "a simple and healable event" (Caruth 3). Cathy Caruth in *Unclaimed Experience* explains trauma: "as the response to an unexpected and overwhelming violent event or events that are not fully grasped as they occur, but return later in repeated flashbacks, nightmares, and other repetitive phenomena" (94). In her analysis, trauma appears belatedly and repetitively (7). Overwhelming events of violence, such as war, interrupt a normal sense of time and inflict emotional pain that cannot be easily recognized, comprehended or expressed, representing a disturbance with the conscious and unconscious. Not all experiences cause trauma, and not all persons respond to a catastrophic experience in the same way or with some type of trauma. Some persons are able to mourn, and some are not. Sometimes the pain appears through sleep disturbances, in sudden experiences of horrific memories, in distorted thoughts, or in depressed or angry moods. Internal emotional suffering can alter perceptions, behavior and relationships. According to Caruth, traumatic wounds have a "voice" that begs to be expressed, no matter how much a person tries to suppress the feeling or forget the past (4). The immediate demands of survival, along with shame and guilt, can cause survivors to bury and numb pain into silence. The works I will study offer the opportunity to examine the wounds of war and the responses the authors and their characters make to the overwhelming experiences of violence, death and threats of death in war.

In addition to individual wounds, massive violent events, like the War of the Triple Alliance, affect a community, society or nation and leave long-term, cumulative imprints on others. Historical trauma describes "unresolved trauma resulting in grief that continues to impact the lives of survivors and subsequent generations…characterized as patterns of thoughts,

emotions and behaviors that negatively affect…well-being" (Grayshield et al. 295). Over the past fifty years, "intergenerational" or "transgenerational" trauma studies have specifically examined the transmission of trauma from one generation to the next. In 1966, doctors observed mental health concerns in the children of victims of the Nazi Holocaust during World War II; the survivors' traumatic experiences put their children at higher risk for mood and anxiety disorders (Mucci 136). The children showed varying effects, sometimes a similar psychopathology and other times symptoms of anxiety or depression, even if the children were born after the trauma and even if the parent remained silent about their memories (Danieli 9). According to psychologist Bruno Bettleheim, "What cannot be talked about can also not be put to rest; and if is not, the wounds continue to fester from generation to generation" (qtd Danieli 8). The book, *International Handbook of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma* (1998), edited by Yael Danieli, summarizes twentieth century scientific research on the effects of catastrophic events on future generations in multiple countries around the world, such as Israel, Cambodia, Nigeria, South Africa, and Chile. Research continues, especially in the areas of treatment, theory and epigenetics, the study of the transmission of trauma through genetic transfer from parent to child (Yehuda and Lehrner). Intergenerational trauma studies show that the effects of war are not limited to the survivors and can impact the future long after the physical reconstruction of a country[1]. The works I will study in this thesis were written fifty years after the War of the Triple Alliance and, in different ways, show how the stories of the war and its effects pass on to subsequent generations.

In this thesis, I will use trauma theory as the lens through which I will analyze Paraguayan literature written after the War of the Triple Alliance. However, I do not intend to use trauma theory for the purpose of individual or collective diagnosis; such conclusions would

be unethical and presumptive. I also will not overextend the use of trauma theory by applying it to stories about other topics. My analysis will focus on specific narratives about the War of the Triple Alliance and the specific ways authors express grief and pain in their literary works. Trauma theory helps explain the impact of a devasting war on individuals, an impact that varies according to personality and experience. Each author in the works I will study grappled in different ways with how to articulate the human experiences of loss and emotional residue that followed the War of the Triple Alliance.

Literature plays an important role in the understanding of trauma because literature can represent the voice for testimonies passed orally through generations and can offer a way to examine the collective effects of the historical events. Narrative offers expression that can be a source of healing and can capture through metaphor and artistic description the nuances of emotions that exceed the spoken word. Paraguayan writer Josefina Plá summarizes the liberating process of narrative, "escribir, crear, es liberar fantasmas que nos pertenecen, por herencia, por tradición, por experiencia" (qtd Mateo del Pino 297). Literature provides an opportunity to organize fractured memories and thoughts into a chronology and a meaningful interpretation. In addition, on cultural and historical levels, literature also serves as a reflection of the tensions in society and a tool for political expression and social change.

3. Overview of the Paraguayan literature of the war

In varying degrees, literature of the War of the Triple Alliance that began during the war continues to this day in Paraguay. No current bibliography of Paraguayan literature of that war exists. However, in 2006, in an article "La guerra de la Triple Alianza en la literatura paraguaya," Mar Langa Pizarro summarized this corpus, also including a comprehensive review of Paraguayan history and literature earlier in her 2001 dissertation. A history of specific war

literature can also be gleaned from general histories and anthologies of Paraguayan literature written by Guido Rodríguez Alcalá, Hugo Rodríguez Alcalá, Josefina Plá, Teresa Méndez-Faith, Viriato Díaz Pérez, and Cristina Bravo Rozas. Literature developed very slowly during the war and during the period of reconstruction, 1864-1900. Throughout the war years, Mariscal López censored all publications and authorized the printing of specific newspapers, *El Semanario*, *Cabichuí*, *Cacique Lambaré* and *La Estrella*. *Cabichuí* provided propaganda for Paraguayan troops in castellano and Guaraní. Natalicio Talavera (1839-1867), a journalist and a soldier who died in battle in 1867, wrote chronicles of the war and romantic, patriotic poetry for *El Semanario* and *Cabichuí*. Talavera is regarded as Paraguay's first national poet and for his poems, *Reflexiones de un centinela en la víspera de combate* and *Himno Patrio. Himno Patrio* remains one of the national songs of Paraguay today (Tissera 82).

During reconstruction, literary work remained limited. Veterans and survivors were silent about their experiences in light of the dominating rhetoric of the victors who occupied the country. Luc Capdevila observes, "Frente al dispositivo conmemorativo agresivo organizado bajo la ocupación brasilera, los paraguayos communes, que habían luchado contra la Triple Alianza, debieron soportar la negación de su sacrificio y de su patriotismo. Inicialmente fueron condendados a guardar silencio y a aceptar el discurso de los vencedores sostenido por el poder" (181). No memoirs or histories were published in Paraguay until after 1880. Poetry became literature "de consolación" or "de resurrección nacional," in the works by Victorino Abente (1846-1935), Enrique D. Parodi (1857-1917), Adriano Mateu Aguiar (1859-1913), and Ramon Zubizarreta (1842-1902) (Langa Pizarro "La Guerra"). Their works, influenced by Spanish post-romanticism, expressed mourning and love of country. Abente's poem, *La sibila Paraguay*, contains verses that describe the personal pain and loss of the war:

De luto y sangre cubierto
quedó tu inmenso cariño;
lloró sin padres el niño,
el hogar se vio desierto.
Entonces el hado incierto,
viéndote postrada, inerte,
al azar puso tu suerte
y te anubló de tal modo
que en torno tuyo fue todo
envuelto en sombras de muerte. (Méndez-Faith "Poesía")

In addition to poetry, Parodi published stories of *costumbrismo* in a magazine he directed in Buenos Aires, la *Revista del Paraguaya 1891-1897*, and Aguiar published in 1898 a series of war chronicles narrated by fictional characters, *Episodios militares de la Guerra contra la Triple Alianza*. In exile, Juan Crisóstomo Centurión, an aide and correspondent for Mariscal López, published in New York in 1877 a semi-autobiographical novel, *Viaje nocturno de Gualberto o Recuerdos y reflecciones [sic] de un ausente, por el paraguayo J. C. Roenicunt y Zenitram*. The novel describes a veteran's memories through a dream. In 2019, literature professor Jennifer L. French and historian Thomas Whigham reprinted the work in Paraguay, adding analysis and notations. In her article, French examines the trauma in the story, discussing dissociation and double consciousness and applying Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok's psychoanalytic theory of the intrapsychic crypt (French "Viaje Nocturno" 42-45). At the end of the nineteenth century, Paraguayan authors published war histories, *Memorias del Coronel Juan Crisóstomo Centurión, o sea Reminiscencias Historicas sobre la Guerra del Paraguay* (1894) by Juan Crisóstomo

Centurión, *Datos históricos de la Guerra del Paraguay con la triple alianza* (1895) by Francisco I. Resquín, and *Monografias Históricas* (1893) and *Ultimas Operaciones de Guerra del General José Eduvigis Díaz Vencedor de Curupaity* (1897), both by Juan Silvano Godoi.

Liberal policies during reconstruction promoted educational improvements in Paraguay that led to the opening of a Colegio Nacional in 1878 and the Universidad Nacional in 1887. The college and university offered a space and opportunities for intellectuals to gather. Those discussions led to first debate in the country about the memory of the War of the Triple Alliance (Caballero Campos 16). Hugo Rodríguez Alcalá describes Paraguayan literature as it developed at the turn of the century:

> El pasado obsesionaba en el Paraguay del 900. De ahí que la literatura fuera ante todo una historiografia de clamoroso afán reinvindicador, agresivamente nacionalista, para lanzar un mentís al vencedor, y una poesía y una narrativa de tema heroico, por un lado, o de idealización idílica y sentimental, por otro. En ciertos casos, se combinaba lo heroico, lo idílico, lo sentimental. Una literatura crítica de la realidad presente no era "oportuna." El alma nacional tenía desgarraduras profundas necesitadas de urgente cura, se ha dicho, como para poder atender a *dolores actuales*. Además, los dolores *de antes eran los de hoy.* (52)

Memory of the War of the Triple Alliance became a specific issue of intellectuals because the prevailing view of Paraguayan history had created a negative and humiliating world image of the country after its defeat. Paraguay had been portrayed as a barbaric nation. In particular, Francisco Solano López had been vilified as a brutal tyrant and officially deemed by the victors in the 1869 war treaty, "asesino de su patria" (Brezzo 10-17). In 1903, university professor and lawyer, Cecilio Báez, and young journalist, Juan O'Leary, engaged in a newspaper debate that

lasted four months in two different newspapers in which they argued about the historical memory of War of the Triple Alliance. Presenting the dominant "liberal" view, Báez advocated for more public education for Paraguayans to instill principles of freedom and democracy and for the continued negation of past despotic governments. The tyranny of the past had encouraged "cretinism" in the people, he argued, leaving them unable to think or express themselves. O'Leary represented the alternative and "conservative" view that recognized Paraguay's glorious and heroic past, arguing that Paraguayan history had been marred by the Brazilian imperialism and the complicity of Argentina in the war (Brezzo "La polemica"). Cecilio Báez's work, *La tiranía en el Paraguay* (1903), presented what would become the official liberal government's view of history in an administration beginning in 1904 and lasting until 1936. In 1936, as the liberal government lost power, the 1868 decree condemning Francisco Solano López was annulled, and he was declared "el héroe máximo de la nación" (Fernandes 57). Juan O'Leary's publications extended in three decades, *Historia de la Guerra de la Triple Alianza* (1912), *Nuestra epopeya*, (1919), *El Mariscal Solano López* (1925), and *Apostolado patriótico* (1930). Likewise, Báez continued publishing political and historical works in the same time period, such as, *Ensayo sobre el Doctor Francia y la Dictadura en Sudamerica* (1910), *El Paraguay moderno* (1915), and *Política Americana* (1925).

Besides Báez and O'Leary, the group of intellectuals, known as *"Novecentistas"* or "*Generación de 900,*" included Manuel Domínguez and Ignacio Pane[2]. The writers published essays, histories and poetry that idealized Paraguayan history and people. For example, Manuel Domínguez wrote of Paraguay's mythical past, arguing that Paraguay under rulers, Carlos Antonio López and Mariscal López, represented a golden age for Paraguay, a time when the people were considered the most happy of the land ("La edad de oro de la agricultura y la

ganaderia…..Le llamaban el pueblo más feliz de la tierra") (G. Rodríguez Alcalá "Imágenes" 110). Ignacio Pane's famous 1899 poem, "A la Mujer Paraguaya," praises the endurance and heroism of Paraguayan women (Ganson 335).

The intellectual debate at the turn of the century reflected and informed the two main political ideologies, liberal and conservative, that distinguished the two organized political parties that began in Paraguay in 1887, el Partido Liberal and el Partido Colorado. While the Liberal party held power from 1904 until 1940, conservative thought rejected the liberal narrative and promoted reestablishment of a positive and patriotic view of Paraguay's independence and its leaders. Liberalism, conservatives believed, threatened the existence and identity of Paraguay as it entered the modern age under the influence of European and Argentinean ideas and policies that were not appropriate for the country. Over the first three decades, conservatives began to publish altered histories, obtain supportive revisionist legislation and hold commemorative events and public demonstrations, such as the fiftieth anniversary of the battle of Cerro Corá. Political groups divided as supporters or detractors of Francisco Solano López, known *lopistas* or *anti-lopistas*. By the 1930s, the Paraguayan culture adopted the revisionist view, a view that continued and expanded into justifying the dictatorship of Alfredo Stroessner (1954-1989) who compared himself to early leaders of Paraguayan independence in the nineteenth century.

While the majority of literature at the beginning of the twentieth century focused on history and politics over fiction, short stories began to appear along with non-fiction prose. The notable precursors of the Paraguayan narrative included three immigrants, José Rodríguez Alcalá, a journalist from Argentina, who published the first Paraguayan novel, *Ignacia* in 1905, Rafael Barrett, journalist from Spain who represented the first writer of social literature, and

Martín de Goycoechea Menéndez, an Argentine writer who quickly assimilated revisionist ideas in short stories. Barrett's famous work, *El dolor paraguayo,* contained stories and columns about the current sufferings of the poor, among them, veterans of the war[3]. Martín de Goycoechea Menéndez published heroic stories about the War of the Triple Alliance, in *Guaraníes*. *Cuentos de los héroes y de las selvas* (1905). The 1920s included narratives of the War of the Triple Alliance by J. Natalicio González, Teresa Lamas Carísimo de Rodríguez Alcalá and Ercilia López de Blomberg, the authors that will be the focus of this thesis.

With a victory in the Chaco war against Bolivia (1932-1935), a changing historiography that supported *lopista* ideas and a new conservative government lead by Partido Colorado, the War of the Triple Alliance lessened in intensity as a theme and presence in literature. However, literary production of novels and short stories increased in Paraguay, and the War of the Triple Alliance continued to be a subject in Paraguayan literature[4].

4. Outline of thesis and contribution to the field

In this thesis, I have chosen to study Paraguayan literature of the 1920s. This time period offers the opportunity to look at a series of narratives that show the oral transmission of history and personal, family experiences of the war and potential signs of historical trauma. The 1920s also marks the appearance of the first female authors. Liberalism had promoted laissez- faire economics, foreign investments and continued political instability with frequent administrative changes. In the 1920s, in addition, there were two civil wars and developing conflicts in the Chaco region with Bolivia. The works I will study were also written during a time when Paraguayan writers and politicians had begun to challenge and recreate the narrative and meaning of the War of the Triple Alliance. In this thesis, I will examine how the changing historiography of the War of the Triple Alliance affected the Paraguayan literature of the 1920s.

In the three chapters that follow, I will study three narrative works of Paraguayan literature that were written in the 1920s by three different authors. Each work creates stories of the War of the Triple Alliance which transmits historical trauma from the war as well as shows, in different intensities, the effect of 1920s' politics in the changing Paraguayan historiography and remembrance of the war. My analysis and work will differ from other current literary criticism in the works that I select and in the focus that I take, carefully adding to but not duplicating what already has been done. In most cases, the works have received little attention and critical study. With references to current literary criticism noted, the chapters in my thesis include:

1. In Chapter 1, "Haunting, Horror and Heroes in Paraguayan War," I will explore four stories of the war included in the book, *Cuentos y Parábolas* by J. Natalicio González Paredes (1922). González, a young politician of the conservative Partido Colorado, portrays how "the past remains present" in the trauma of war by writing a heroic interpretation of the War of the Triple Alliance. Through the stories, I will also look at how González criticizes liberalism and how he defines treason and heroism. In his narratives of war, González expresses and promotes conservative historiography, particularly in his representation of Mariscal López. I will focus on his use of horror and gothic which is instrumental in conveying how the past haunts the present and thus reflects historical trauma from the war. There is no evidence of current or past literary criticism about the stories that I will analyze. In an article, Jennifer L. French analyzed trauma in the 1953 novel by González, *La raíz errante*, and referred to one of the stories from *Cuentos y Parábolas*, "La Batalla de los Muertos" as part of her discussion (French, "Trauma y nación telúrica"). She does not interpret that story at

length or other stories in *Cuentos y Parábolas* as I will in my analysis. I will respond to her interpretation of "La Batalla de los Muertos" in this chapter.

2. In Chapter 2, "Silence in the Voice of Women in the War of the Triple Alliance," I will explore nine stories written in two volumes of *Tradiciones del Hogar* by Teresa Lamas Carísimo de Rodríguez Alcalá (1921, 1928). In these stories, she presents testimonies and memories of the war from her relatives that survived the war. I will examine how her narratives are based on recollections passed on to her orally and transmit the voices and roles of women in the war from the perspective of her social position. Specifically, I will analyze how she uses "silences" to convey expression and meaning to the trauma that transpires in her stories. I will address how these stories speak about the losses and horrors of the war and, at the same time, how they address the 1920 revisionist ideas and emphasize heroism in the war. French has published two articles on Lamas Carísimo. In "La Honra de la Casa: Memoria y Nacionalismo en Las *Tradiciones del Hogar* de Teresa Lamas," French addresses the nationalism and honor expressed in *Tradiciones del Hogar* through some of the war stories, while in "El peso de tanta pena: La Guerra de la Triple Alianza como trauma transgeneracional," she examines intergenerational trauma in writings of Teresa Lamas Carísimo, Rafael Barrett and Juan O'Leary. French also evaluates stories written by Lamas Carísimo after the 1930s and published in a revised edition of *Tradiciones del Hogar*, and not included in the 1921 and 1928 versions I will address. My thesis will examine nine specific stories of war, not other stories that relate customs, folklore or other historical events or promote nationalism through *costumbrismo.*

3. In Chapter 3, "In the Shadows of Melancholia," I will explore a novel, *Don Inca*, that was written in 1920 by the niece of Francisco Solano López, Ercilia López Carrillo y Otazú de Blomberg, a child during the war who lived most of her life in exile in Argentina. Her novel is based on autobiographical experiences and conveys the melancholia which characterized survivors and the country after the war in the 1880s. I will address how she focuses on melancholia as a way to expresses the trauma and tragedies of war and survival by portraying sadness as a part of Paraguayan legacy. In particular, I will examine how she differentiates between the ways men and women grieve and how the psychoanalytic works of Freud and Kristeva address these differences. Considering her exile status and personal relationship with Mariscal López, I will address how she responds to 1920s revisionism in her representation of him, the war, heroism and liberalism. There has been little evidence of literary criticism and analysis of *Don Inca* beyond introductory summaries.

Through the next three chapters, my thesis presents an analysis of Paraguayan literature not readily available to the public and not extensively known outside of Paraguay. These three works and their authors offer three diverse ways Paraguayans articulate and transmit the concept of "collective trauma" that was undefined in their time. The works exemplify the beginning stages of narrative in Paraguayan literature and first expressions of the residue and pain that remains of a war that none of the writers participated in but whose defeat and loss they experience as part of their inherited legacy. An understanding of these works can add to the understanding of the catastrophic War of the Triple Alliance and how its memory haunted Paraguayans for generations and affected their future.

CHAPTER 1:

HAUNTING, HORROR AND HEROES IN PARAGUAYAN WAR

Cuentos y Parábolas by J. Natalicio González

In a 2017 article, Andrea Tutte summarizes the life of Paraguayan author J. Natalicio González Paredes (1897-1966), in two words, "polifacético y controvertido" (multifaceted and controversial) (Tutte 42). González, born to Pablo González and Benita Paredes in Villarica, an agricultural and wood processing area southeast of Asunción, is considered one of Paraguay's principal intellectuals of the twentieth century **(**Quinteros 449**)**. His life encompassed many roles, as journalist, poet, essayist, novelist, publisher, editor, politician and ambassador. Notably, he served as President of Paraguay for a brief time, from August 15, 1948, until January 30, 1949. His first political role occurred in 1928 when he was elected deputy of the conservative party, Asociación Naciónal Republicana (ANR), known as Partido Colorado. Over time, he became the ideologue of the party, supported militant nationalism and opposed liberalism, including leading the Guión Rojo, a controversial unit criticized as a terrorist group (Rodríguez Alcalá, Guido 110**).** After the coup that ended his presidency, he lived in exile in Mexico until the end of his life, serving as ambassador to México in 1956 under the dictatorship of President Alfredo Stroessner.

Cuentos y Parábolas, his only work of short stories, began his published literary works that would later include a novel, *La raíz errante* (1951), and several books of poetry and political essays, some published in other countries or published posthumously. Most notable of his works remain the polemic works that established his nationalistic ideas for Paraguay, *El Paraguay eterno* (1935) and *Processo y formación de la cultura paraguaya* (1938). In 1920, before the publication of *Cuentos y Parábolas*, González started a literary magazine, *Guaranía,*

that would continue until 1949[5]. Monte Domecq', an Argentinean publisher for whom González worked and learned the trade, published *Cuentos y Parábolas*. In 1925, while in Paris, González began his own publishing company, Editorial de Indias. Both the publishing company and magazine served as vehicles for promoting the Guaraní heritage and supporting other conservative writers with similar political views on nationalism and historical revisionism such as Juan O'Leary, Manuel Domínguez and Fulgencio R. Moreno. O'Leary had tutored González when he first arrived in Asunción after the death of his parents. González aligned himself with intellectuals like O'Leary that were part of the movement *Novecentismo* (or *Generación de 900*) that advocated a change in the country's portrayal of War of the Triple Alliance, replacing the country's image of shameful defeat in the war to the idealized image of glorious defeat ("la derrota gloriosa") and national epic ("la epopeya nacional') (Méndez-Faith 119-120). González joined the work of revising Paraguay's history and recreating heroes. As a first step in his work on historical revisionism, in 1920, he directed the publication, *Cincuentenario de Cerro Corá*, a book that commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of Cerro Corá, the last battle of the War of the Triple Alliance.

Cuentos y Parábolas contains a series of short stories followed by a series of religious parables. Hugo Rodríguez Alcalá described the work as "narraciones juveniles," a designation that may reflect the brevity and simplicity of the stories rather than the content that at times is violent and sexual (63). The story collection begins with the Guaraní myth that describes the creation of the famous Paraguayan bird, Urutaú, known for his nightly mourning cry, and ends with the story of the ancient Roman bloody orgies. In between, there are stories about other Guaraní myths, Paraguayan legends, the war for independence, and the War of the Triple Alliance. The four specific stories about the War of the Triple Alliance in *Cuentos y Parábolas*

will serve as the basis for this chapter. Two stories occur after the war, at the time that González wrote them, "La Cruz de Corrales" and "La Batalla de los Muertos;" two stories occur in the battlefields of the war, "El Centinela," and "La Muerte Desviada." In these four stories, González represents the War of the Triple Alliance as a haunting past. His gothic ghostly figures and sensory imagery convey the horrors of war, but, at the same time, serve as a way to attack contemporary liberalism, to challenge perceptions and memory of the war, and to offer a revised and idealized interpretation of soldiers and their leader, Mariscal López. As he transmits gruesome war violence from the past and criticizes present society, he includes heroic portrayals of Paraguayan soldiers as examples of patriotism to inspire and transform the present and future nation.

"La Cruz de Corrales" begins with a statement that succintly summarizes the story's plot, "Celebraba el pueblo la gloria de sus héroes" (31). Men and women of the early twentieth century, dressed like princes and princesses, gather in clubs, theaters and salons in Asunción to celebrate the heroes from the War of the Triple Alliance. Progress has illuminated the city with streetlights, automobiles, grand buildings and flags flying over houses. However, the glory they celebrate is one they do not comprehend. In their revelry, the people ignore an old, unattractive veteran from the war who begs on the street for a few pennies. In the midst of the noise, the veteran dies. At the moment of death, the word "glory" appears a second time, this time describing his death, "veía pasar la propia apoteosis y saboreaba su gloria de guerrero" (32). In his misery, death comes as a release but shows his glory, a brightness beyond the lighted city. González gives the veteran a hero's death; he dies on the ground in pain, not unlike soldiers on a battlefield. Yet, González emphasizes, the soldier retains his pride to the end despite the social

rejection he receives. He achieves an apotheosis, a type of deification and immortality in death that the money of liberalism cannot buy.

Like a metaphor of trauma itself, the veteran as a representative of the past interrupts the present time to challenge current Paraguayan reality with its true history[6]. Only the reader can see how he disrupts society, not the crowd around him. The veteran appears like a ghost who haunts the city as he sits in the shadows of a doorway, invisible and unheard. He represents the voice of otherness, a distinction that shows in appearance, class and memory. The fine silks the youth wear contrast with the man who resembles "a pile of rags" ("…semejante en la penumbra a un montón de harapos") (32). Elegant women smile with gleaming white teeth and red lips while the veteran recalls different images of white and red, the sweat and blood that covered him after each battle. Opulent rings and necklaces sparkle in the crowd while the veteran holds a weathered copper cross, the greatest award of the war that he comes to sell. His purpose also distinguishes him; his mind and body are far from celebration. He mistakenly believed people would recognize the value of his cross. While he sits, his mind returns to the past and all the battles he fought. He thinks about his future when he can get his veteran's pension, leave the city and go back to his cottage and die there peacefully. Though the veteran seems a ghost, González makes his reality clear in corporal descriptions of his "inválido" status, the designation given soldiers with war injuries, and of the hunger that bites ("el hambre mordía ferozmente") his body (32). In his body, he represents both the past and the present. However, the crowd denies his existence and appears incapable of sharing their riches to support his need. The analysis of Judith Butler in *Frames of War* applies; the "precarious" life of the veteran is not within the frame of reference of the people and thus not noticeable or "grievable" (Butler 8-15). To González, liberals are short-sighted and superficial.

The haunting of ghosts raises issues of absence and injustice in society (Wale et al. 8). Through the veteran's dilemma, González criticizes the economic liberalism of his time that he believed was destroying the nation and its soul. The laissez-faire policies created economic disparity, luxuries for some classes but destitution for others. Capitalistic mercantilism impacted *campesinos*, like the veteran, because they lost their leased land when the government sold public lands to raise money after the war. New owners, mostly foreign investors, created *latifundios* for which the peasants worked in a system that resembled feudalism (Lewis 32). For González, liberalism, that had controlled Paraguayan government for nearly twenty years by the time he wrote his story, conflicted with Paraguayan nature; liberalism represented a "foreign idea" that he labeled "exótico," not reflecting the "autóctono" nature of the people; the "exótico" caused people to lose their identity and heritage, like the crowd he depicts in "La Cruz de Corrales" (Lambert 344). González's early life experiences contributed to his message and support for Partido Colorado, the party that began as the representative of the *campesino*. González grew up among the Guaraní *campesinos* and describes the fears that followed the arrival of the new liberal troops to his town in 1904, remarking then as a young boy, "¿Cómo explicar la tristeza que un desfile ha acarreado en este pueblo?" (Quinteros 458). Political instability marked the liberal era; in its thirty-six years in power (1904-1940), there were twenty-one different administrations, headed by seventeen different presidents, and two civil wars (1911, 1923) (Lewis 34). That instability had personal consequences for González; looting in his town left his family impoverished; in turn, by the age of seventeen, both his parents had died. In Asunción, liberalism brought restrictions hostile to the peasant class, particularly in limits on Guaraní native dress on public streets (Capdevila 147). In "La Cruz de Corrales," the city shuns the veteran as he waits for his pension, a provision not legislated until 1899, available only to

those with war injuries and involving a complicated process of application and verification (Capdevila 162). The medal he carries with its inscriptions of place and date may have been documentation for his pension. The veteran did not have sufficient provisions for his stay in the city.

González emphasizes the profound ignorance of the city crowd at the moment of the veteran's death, an event of bitter irony. As he dies, the crowd chants, "¡Viva los heroes de los Corrales!" They do not recognize the dead hero of that battle next to them, someone who might have lived longer with their help. Historical ghosts carry messages for the present and future with a warning attached. In *Post-Conflict Hauntings*, authors Kim Wale, Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela and Jeffrey Prager explain:

> While the creation of something new out of the ashes of the old is important, the denial of the ghosts which haunt those ashes will only seek to ensure that the old becomes entangled with and repeated in the new. To begin to create something new, will also require the careful and attentive slowing down, to listen and transform the haunted presences. (9)

Histories of violence repeat if denied attention. The veteran has stories to tell but no listeners. He is the voice of a wound in history and in society, but he is unable to survive amidst liberalism. His death leaves the crowd bereft of their history and also their humanity. Yet, as Gonzalez's narrative shows, a veteran-hero has an afterlife.

Haunting can also be used to challenge rational order (Biggs 176). In "La Batalla de los Muertos," death returns again as a theme. A couple discovers the haunted battlefield of Cerro Cora on their return from a vacation to Iguazu Falls. They camp in the desolate battlefield,

perhaps showing their ignorance of history or the lack of public commemoration of historic sites at the time. They are on hallowed ground, the site of the final battle of the war and the death place of Mariscal López. The couple's stability is shaken as they realize that the dead of their history do not rest. Suddenly, their lives are threatened by the turmoil of war. All night they endure a raging thunderstorm accompanied by a fantastic reenactment of the battle. They witness a ghostly man in the field, a pale and silent soldier with a black beard, galloping on his white horse. When dawn arrives, the battle ends, and a stranger comes to tell them that the ghost they saw was Mariscal López who returns with the dead every night there is a storm. Past history, they also learn, will keep repeating and remains unfinished.

González creates fear and terror though poetic skills of personification and demonic allusion. Haunting, according to Tiina Kirss, "recurs through uncanny phenomena, personified or atmospheric" (21). Uncanny phenomena prevail in "La Batalla de los Muertos." In his introductory paragraph, González describes the scene:

> La noche estaba trágica como las fauces de una fiera, atravesadas de húmedo y afiebrado aliento. Grandes nubes infladas como globos pasaban de largo, encapotando el cielo con sus alas enlutadas. Embrujado viento ladraba y aullaba, como un perro macilento y sarnoso, por los caminos desolados. ¿Que pena enorme palpitaba, cual oscuro dolor, en el aullido agónico que se elevaba de aquella lobreguez de cementerio? (43)

The night and sky resemble beasts and demonic monsters. The wind utters distorted animal sounds, and later, in the heat of battle, it "blasphemes" (44). Cerro Corá harbors evil as it defies and fractures nature. Memory will not let the couple rest as they hear the violent sounds from guns, swords, cannons, angry soldiers and screaming horses. Fear transforms the wife's eyes so

that they resemble the wings of crows ("sombríos como alas de cuervos") (44). Nature laments the desecration through the mourning song they hear from Urutaú, the Paraguayan bird whose tragic legend is told in the first story of *Cuentos y Parábolas* (5-17, 44). Memories of Cerro Corá come to life and capture the senses and emotions to show their power and presence in the early twentieth century life of the couple. Reliving tragic memory represents a way that people understand massive psychic trauma (Auerbahn and Laub 23, 29).

As part of her analysis of González's 1952 novel *La raíz errante,* Jennifer L. French describes "La Batalla de los Muertos" as an allegory of collective memory in the 1920s; Mariscal López and the dead of Cerro Corá return to punish liberals who do not honor him and the nation; liberalism, she believes, appears when the narrator gives Mariscal López a European image and questions whether the scene is part of the new cinematography, the film of a nightmare (400). The couple, however, differs from the liberal crowd on the streets in "La Cruz de Corrales." While they show similar ignorance of history, they do not flaunt wealth or ignore ghosts; they remain with the battle before them. Their 1920 experience resembles what the later twentieth century would call a post-traumatic flashback or nightmare in its intensity, repetition, suddenness and sleep disruption (Caruth 58-60). Traumatic repetition, Dominick LaCapra explains, "collapses the past into the present, making it seem or feel as if it were more 'real' and 'present' than contemporary circumstances" (377). The couple confront the reality of historical trauma in them or their society that they must wrestle with the next morning. A man who visits them after their terror explains that the battle repeats. In trauma, explains Jacques Lacan, "Repetition demands the new." (Caruth 110). For González, the "new" is a revision of memory to counteract what he believes is a false history bequeathed to Paraguay by the victory of the Triple Alliance. Through the story, Gonzalez emphasizes the importance of Cerro Corá: "El viejo escenario de la

caída insuperada, es un abismo de sombras, una enorme mancha de tinta en la negrura de la noche" (44). For him, Paraguayan defeat hangs over the country as a massive stain, an open wound, that all can see. The nightmare gives the couple a new story to tell; their trauma begs expression. At the same time, Gonzalez's writing expresses the psychic effects of war in his use of a haunting past.

In his 1920 introduction to *Cincuentenario de Cerro Corá*, González idealizes the battle and identifies his revisionist goals: "Cerro Corá fue el último acto de la tragedia. Y la patria inmolada identifica en aquel acto la belleza de su sacrificio y la inmortal grandeza de su causa. He ahí explicado el génesis de este libro, que también persigue otro propósito: contribuir en algo a disipar la calumnia con que corono su victoria el vencedor" (6). In his story, the couple survives their night in Cerro Corá and shares in the Paraguayan crisis of survival. Survival, according to Lacan, means "an awakening" to life from death (Caruth 112). The night of terror pulls the couple into their history, a history perhaps obscured by liberalism or the silence of ancestors. Their "awakening" contrasts with the lack of recognition in the liberal crowd of "La Cruz de Corrales." The couple shows curiosity and desire to understand through the questions they ask during and after the reenactment. Their encounter with a stranger both validates their experience and explains their experience as a restless part of Paraguayan history, the ending of the war unfinished. The stranger tells them, "Los caídos de Cerro-Corá resucitan y reanudan con furia el ultimo combate" (46). According to Avery Gordon, ghostly haunting indicates the unfinished parts of memory (qtd in Kirss 27). For González, the battle is indeed not over; like traumatic repetition, it repeats, demanding a voice and new understanding.

In "La Batalla de los Muertos," González begins to reconstruct the image of Mariscal López. In his story, Mariscal López appears as a man of action, strong and virile in battle. He is

unmoved when a bullet pierces his beard in the battle ("Una bala paso silbando junto a la agitada melena y él continuó inmóvil y erguido."), and he appears the victor ("un vencedor') (46). The story does not mention or show Paraguayan defeat. Mariscal López returns whenever there is a "storm;" he is a protector of the country as a ghost hero, an image that may anticipate nationalism[7]. Eglitis and Kelso in their article, "Ghost heroes: Forgetting and remembering in national narratives of past," describe the "ghost hero" as a myth created in nationalistic movements as part of image rehabilitation and historical revision; the ghost hero represents a prominent historical figure who preserve culture and pride but also may be a dictator who has committed atrocities (273). Their work, while involving former dictators in Eastern Europe, discusses the process of impression management that in nationalism can lead to misrepresentation of history. Nationalism developed in Paraguay after the Chaco war (1932-35) and the official end of the liberal era in 1940.

In two remaining stories, "El Centinela" and "La Muerte Desviada," González takes the reader into the past battles of the War of the Triple Alliance to experience both the pain and heroism of the war. Again, he mixes in his revisionist ideas with the trauma of the war. In "El Centinela," a young woman, Marta, dies heroically in the battle of Boquerón (16 July 1866), just after her former lover is captured and executed as a traitor. In "La Muerte Desviada," a young boy, Carlos Melgarejo, joins the military at the battle of Curupayty (22 September 1866) and sacrifices his life to save General José E. Díaz. The stories present patriotism as a high ideal that demands love of country more than life, family and personal choices. Díaz sees in the boy a soul lit with the sacred passion of the patria (67). Heroism, as González depicted in "La Crux de Corrales" with the dying veteran, offers immortality of memory, a life beyond the gruesome process of death. Both protagonists in the stories represent unlikely soldiers in the war, Carlos

Melgarejo as a twelve-year old orphan and Marta as a young woman. Their stories underscore that patriotism applies to all Paraguayans according to González. The boy, in his innocence and ingenuity, inspires the troops with humor and rapidly deflects a bomb intended for Díaz. Díaz appears a mythical figure, a man with "the majesty of an ancient sculpture" whose presence alone motivates the troops (70). The boy's story enables González to praise the attributes of a real figure in the war while creating a fictional one. In "El Centinela," González describes Marta as a ferocious warrior who fights as "aquella amazona magnífica con una tragica belleza" and dies like a Paraguayan flag falling to the ground (59). Another mythical figure, Mariscal López, appears in her story.

The two protagonists die heroically but take their sad pasts with them; Carlos Melgarejo, lost his whole family in the war, including his father and brother who died in battle, and Marta, a spurned lover, carries the grief of six years of loss in her "ojos tristes" (55). Carlos Melgarejo follows in the footsteps of his father and brother in the military, a way for him to be near them and to survive. Marta's story includes memories of her time with a different character named Carlos, a fiancé who had pledged eternal love. She recalls in memory his promise to return after he traveled to Buenos Aires, a promise he broke. Her experience on the battlefield becomes more complicated when Carlos reappears as a Legionnaire soldier, one of those Paraguayans who lived in Argentina, strongly opposed Mariscal López and chose to fight for the Triple Alliance. When Carlos is captured, he recognizes Marta; in a response full of rage and pain, she replies, "Traidor," a term that describes his behavior toward her and to his country. Her gun becomes the one that executes him when he is sentenced to the firing squad. For González, the confrontation and execution represent a resolution and a clear example of Marta's choice of country over love.

In the brevity of his stories, González does not examine the depth of grief that accompanies Marta and Carlos Melgarejo in their losses. Marta's sad eyes are the only indicator of grief, while Carlos Melgarejo appears as a happy boy. The personal grief that may have pushed them to death does not concern González as much as their final patriotic actions. Instead, dying as heroes gives their lives meaning and releases them from personal misery. Perhaps the omission hints at González' own choices in grief. At seventeen, he, too, was an orphan and chose to leave his hometown for a new life in Asunción where he was mentored by Juan O'Leary in the movement to restore idealism to Paraguay's sad past. Commemoration and memorials to heroism are listed among activities that help individuals heal and integrate past trauma (Danieli 7).

In turn, González shows an awareness of the horrors of the dying process in war, a reality he transmits through portrayals of death on the battlefields. In "La Muerte Desviada," the soldiers dig trenches to prepare for the battle of Curupayty. They dig all day and night and are covered with soil when the battle begins. The dirt reminds them of burial. They comment that killing takes less time than burying someone; "Matarlos nos costará menos que los preparativos del entierro" (69). The dirt they carry on their bodies symbolizes the imminent threat of death and decomposition they confront. In "El Centinela," the story begins by creating a sense of dread that resembles the start of the battle scene in "La Batalla de los Muertos." A thunderstorm rages with flashes of lightening that appear like a snake coiling in the dark sky of night. Once again, the uncanny and terror prevail. The light illuminates a field of cadavers, unburied from the last battle, frozen by rigor mortis in the positions they had at the moment of death (51). The "black bulge" of a Paraguayan soldier weaves through the bodies like "un felino" as he stealthily captures an enemy soldier (51). The corpses that shield the soldier symbolize eerily the past in

the present, with the next battle occurring on top of dead bodies. The death of Marta at the end of the story also contains horror. As Marta fights, her uniform is torn, revealing her bloodied bare breast, but she fights undeterred until she receives a final stab that kills her. González idealizes his characters but does not idealize the death process or reality of war. The ghastly death images of González will haunt his readers with reminders of the realities of war, the price paid for Paraguay in history.

The title, "El Centinela," hints at the identity of another protagonist in the story who bears González' political message: Carlos, the ex-lover of Marta and the Legionnaire soldier. Carlos' capture and meeting with Mariscal López depicts González's condemnation of the Legionnaires. In the field of dead bodies, a Paraguayan soldier jumps on Carlos and violently strangles his neck until his eyes pop out and he faints. The scene echoes a statement González made in *El Paraguayo Eterno* in 1935, saying that Paraguay needs to "strangle" liberalism; "Necesita estrangular el liberalismo sin piedad, con fría decisión" (Monteolivia Doratioto 20). Legionnaires staffed the Paraguayan provisional government after the war and implemented Argentinean "liberal" policies (Lewis 27-31). The soldier that arrests Carlos carries him over his back through the corpses to a confrontation with Mariscal López, the leader Legionnaires notoriously despised. In the story, Mariscal López maintains a thoughtful and just demeanor, not the brutal tyrant and assassin portrayed in images after the war. He gives the soldier a chance to talk and tells him that he has fought against the patria and has the blood of his brothers on his hands. Mariscal López uses no violence or intimidation in the scene of interrogation. González revises Mariscal López's memory through his representation and uses the scene to assert again his negative positions on Legionnaires and liberalism.

In *Cuentos y Parábolas*, four short stories by J. Natalicio González, "La Crux de Corrales," "La Batalla de los Muertos," "El Centinela," and "La Muerte Desviada," represent historical trauma of the War of the Triple Alliance in his use of the gothic. Horrors surface through the bodily images of violent death and abandoned corpses and through uncanny descriptions that instill dread and anxiety. Haunting appears in his use of ghosts and the traumatic repetition. González's use of trauma conveys his opinions about historical revisionism in 1920 Paraguay. With ghosts, he criticizes liberalism and idealizes the deaths of Paraguay in the war. Dying as a war hero earns a sacred passage to deification, like the apotheosis experienced by the dying veteran in "La Cruz de Coralles." For González, heroism offers a consolation to war loss and represents all Paraguayans, old, young, poor, male and female. He recognizes the heroic actions during the War of the Triple Alliance, not their outcome. No battles end in his stories. In addition, González begins to revise history and absolve the negative image of Mariscal López, leaving new images in his readers of Mariscal López as the proud, strong and just patriot still fighting for Paraguay. González's ideal of patriotism denies parts of history and humanity, like the grief that complicates the eager sacrificial deaths of the boy and the young woman and the war injury that contributes to the veteran's death. Heroism and historical revision do not obliterate the loss and sadness of their deaths or alter the outcome or effects of the battles in which they fought. Eliminating liberal views alone does not heal a country of the trauma that González expresses in the haunting terrors of war. A new image of Mariscal López may contradict a past representation but still be inaccurate by creating another exaggerated view. Yet, for González, the stories serve to inspire patriotism and esteem in being Paraguayan and begin the development of Paraguayan nationalism that he will advocate for, even more strongly, in future writings.

CHAPTER 2:

SILENCE IN THE VOICE OF WOMEN OF THE WAR OF THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE

Tradiciones del Hogar by Teresa Lamas Carísimo de Rodríguez Alcalá

Teresa Lamas Carísimo de Rodríguez Alcalá (1887-1975) represents the first woman to publish a book in Paraguay. A member of the upper-class society in Asunción with family roots traceable to the colonial days, Lamas Carísimo attended the Escuela Normal, the first teacher normal school in Paraguay, and at age sixteen began teaching. She also began writing articles, using the pseudonym, "TIRSE." In 1909, she married José Rodríguez Alcalá, an Argentine journalist who published the first novel in Paraguay, *Ignacia* (1905). Together they raised six children, some of their progeny also developing literary careers, like son, Hugo Rodríguez Alcalá, and grandson, Guido Rodríguez Alcalá. As a gift, her children arranged the first publication of Lamas Carísimo's stories as *Tradiciones del Hogar* in 1921. In the dedication, the children explain that the stories are ones their mother told them in their home. Lamas Carísimo published a second series of *Tradiciones del Hogar* in 1928. Later, she wrote two novels, *Huerto de odios* (1944) and *La casa y su sombra* (1955). She received notoriety for civic and religious work in Paraguay that included being president of the Red Cross during the Chaco War (1932-1935). In her Red Cross role, Lamas Carísimo gave a public address on the balcony of the Governor's Palace on behalf of the mothers of Paraguay, urging peace with the signing of the armistice on June 12, 1935. Her four sons fought in the Chaco war, and all survived.

The ancestry and social connections of Lamas Carísimo provide material for most of the stories in *Tradiciones del Hogar*. Her grandparents, José María Lamas and

Teresa Silva Lamas, socialized with Francisco Solano López and his mistress, Eliza Lynch. Both her grandfathers died in the War of the Triple Alliance, and her grandmother, mother, aunts and cousins became "residentas," participants in the mass evacuations ordered by President López during the war when the Allied troops entered cities. Her maternal grandmother, Carlota Bargas de Carísimo Jovellanos, died at a young age due to the hardships she suffered in the evacuation. Nonetheless, both grandmothers spoke proudly of the patriotism of their spouses, following the "code of honor" of "the distinguished families" of Paraguay (Caballero Aquino). In *Tradiciones del Hogar*, Lamas Carísimo writes as the first-person narrator of the generational stories passed on to her orally. Like the stories of J. Natalicio González, her stories include *costumbrismo* through Guaraní folklore and customs described, such as "El origen del mono," a tale about how monkeys were created from disobedient children. In the two volumes of *Tradiciones del Hogar* (noted in in-text citations as "LC I" and "LC II"), Lamas Carísimo composes nine stories about the War of the Triple Alliance that represent the voices of the women who describe their experiences to her. In her narratives, she creates semi-autobiographical reconstructions that appear in text like fresh testimonies with her use of quotes, dialog, pauses and silences, and, at times, with the inclusion of personal reflections. The interplay of voice and silence emphasizes traces of the unsaid, the unspeakable, and the unknown that are part of the human experience of navigating the horrors of war. In the second volume of *Tradiciones del Hogar*, the story, "Nuestro folklore," presents the text of a speech she gave to the Gymnasio Paraguayo. She also states in the second volume that she is "not a feminist" because she is not combative and angry like feminists (LC II 95). She does not address women's suffrage

or rights in her stories, ideas that the first feminist organization, Centro Femenino, had begun promoting in 1921.[8] Her narratives instead support "la de reivindicar al Paraguay" (Caballero Aquino). As a part of that mission, the heroines of her stories exemplify the nationalistic ideals of Paraguayan women. Interestingly, many of her heroines take action in public space outside the home. She also shows how war invaded that domestic sphere of safety. She romanticizes Paraguayan women, many of them her relatives, who endured a catastrophe they could not direct or stop. Yet, at the same time, she gives her protagonists voice and agency, as the survivors with a story to tell in a society that has not yet heard their voices. The self-expression generated through the narrative process provides healing for those who have suffered the trauma of an overwhelming life-threatening catastrophe. The women of her stories represent a variety of roles in the war, as nurses who cared for the injured and orphaned, as the mourners of the deceased family and community members, as soldiers who could take arms when necessary, and as virtuous martyrs who sacrificed and died heroically for the cause of justice and country. In essence, Lamas Carísimo portrays the feminine faces of the war, and, through narrative, places them in historical memory as positive figures that support the 1920 nationalist ideals of her time. She takes the private story and transfers it to narrative literature for the public. In *Tradiciones del Hogar*, Teresa Lamas Carísimo constructs stories that combine voice and silence to convey the tragedies suffered by Paraguayan women during the War of the Triple Alliance and gives meaning and agency to their sacrifices within the idealized national feminine identities of hero, patriot, martyr, mother, companion and survivor.

The first story of her collection, “Vengadora,” analyzes the costs of being a “feminine superhero” in the War of the Triple Alliance. The story represents her most popular and most original piece of fiction. It won first prize in a 1919 national *El Diario* short story contest and was retold as “Santa” by Paraguayan author Renée Ferrer in 1986. “Vengadora” relates the story of an older woman who literally becomes “the avenger” during the battle of Curupayty (22 September 1866). The woman’s husband and two of her four sons have died in the War of the Triple Alliance. Now she follows her son Carlos in the war; she blesses him as he goes to battle; she prays for him during battle, and she helps him if he is injured. Lamas Carísimo tells the story through a mix of voice and silence. The opening scenes of the story show that speech can be dangerous in war. According to Jacques Derrida, silence is a “strategic response” (Mazzei 28). In the story, silence in voice and movement enables troops to surprise or evade the enemy. As the troops walk through a marsh under the command of silence, the woman kneels on a mud floor in silent prayer. The command of silence demands that troops kill venomous snakes quietly and even cut off a wounded part of their body from a snake bite without a sound. The praying woman has another surviving son, Pedro, captain of the Allies that fight the Paraguayans. As the battle ensues, Carlos returns to his mother for first aid, injured but noticeably silent. With her prompting, he shares an unspeakable truth: Carlos was shot by his own brother Pedro. After she nurses Carlos’ wounds, his mother goes to the battlefield, provides bullets and water to the soldiers, and then takes a gun and kills Pedro. She appears to say nothing as she acts. When she returns to Carlos, she tells him of Pedro’s death, and at last, she cries. Her tears express the ambivalence of the unknown inside her; she is unsure if she cries from shame or sorrow. In action, she embodies the

stereotypical traditional identities of Paraguayan women as "La madre," "La Patria," and "La compañera" and she reveals a new identity forged in the war, "Madre de los Leones," the mother of soldiers who willingly sacrifices her family for the country (Makaran 47, 53). However, Lamas Carísimo presents the soldier mother as a more complex character. Like her sons, she is wounded. She remains nameless in the story, described as "una hermosa anciana, del tipo físico y moral, ya raro, de nuestras abuelas Capaz [sic] de las más infinitas ternuras, lo era también de los mas inauditos heroísmos" (LC I 9). In her anonymity, she symbolizes all Paraguayan grandmothers. On one hand, she represents a powerful feminine figure as she takes action and avenges wrong. She is fearless in battle and easily bears arms. Lamas Carísimo makes her unique in her boldness because few women actually fought in the War of the Triple Alliance and those trained for battle only had swords, not guns (Ganson 361). She explains to Carlos the thoughts that filled her body when she shot Pedro:

> … Lo he buscado entre los asaltantes y al verlo no sé qué terrible voz resonó en mi alma. Vi el cadáver de tu padre y tus dos hermanos muertos defendiendo nuestra bandera; vi tu sangre de la otra noche; vi el infortunio inmenso de nuestra pobre patria y no pude contenerme: un impulso más fuerte que mi voluntad puso un fusil en mis manos, le aseche, le tire y él cayó al golpe de mi tiro…(LC I 8)

Her words describe a traumatic flashback of the morbid memories in her mind of all the deaths in her family; their deaths haunt her (Caruth 62-65). In the unspeakable pain, she found the enemy in her son and chooses to extract justice. The war has brought conflict and violence within her family that exceeds reason and dialogue. She made an impossible choice for a mother and sacrificed nearly all her family for country. In her

character, Lamas Carísimo combines multiple roles that women confronted in the War of the Triple Alliance as saint, nurse, soldier, mourner and hero. While the mother in "Vengadora" reflects the extreme sacrifice demanded of Paraguayan patriotism, she also suffers the reality of that sacrifice. The pain came to her at the end of the story, "Sólo entonces cedió la fortaleza de la anciana" (LC I 14). The grief and mourning that follow become part of survival in Paraguay.

Another widow of the War of the Triple Alliance appears in the story, "El retrato," the story of the paternal grandmother of Lamas Carísimo. The story describes how Teresa Silva Lamas learned of her husband's death in the battle of Estero Bellaco (1 May 1866).[9] The narrative begins by noting the "lethal sadness" that consumed Asunción as Battalion 49 prepared to leave with "the best youth of Asunción" (LC I 16); the grandfather of Lamas Carísimo, José María Lamas, is one of those soldiers that must say goodbye to his family. He and Teresa, both twenty-four years old, had three children. Both hold back emotions as José María leaves; he does not look back, and Teresa, Lamas Carísimo writes, "guardó silencio" (LC I 16). Robyn Fivush describes this type of mutual silence as "sacred space;" "In these situations, where being silent together creates a shared space where the speaker and listener are emotionally attuned, silence may promote a sense of belonging" (92). Silence can express a connection for which words remain insufficient or unnecessary. Some months later, Teresa hosts Eliza Lynch in her home, an event that reflects the family's prestige and class. Their conversation seems trivial in light of the crisis in Paraguay. Lynch describes the new clothes she just received from Paris and becomes enraged when a servant accidentally spills chocolate on her silk dress. However, her chatter is interrupted by a sudden disturbance in the room. The well-

secured portrait of José María that hangs prominently in the living room, another manifestation of the family's wealth and prestige, begins moving and falls to the floor. All conversation stops with the incomprehensible event (LC I 17). Teresa's intuition prompts her to be the first to speak over the silence; she believes the uncanny occurrence is a message from her husband, saying that he has died. The falling picture brought his living and dead presence together in the room. Death has interrupted life with a shock beyond words, like a metaphor for trauma that Caruth describes (100). A few days later, Teresa's confirms her supposition when she leaves to obtain information. A soldier meets her with a message from President López, but he pauses, speechless, before the grief he observes in her. She learns that José María indeed died at the time the picture fell. Lamas Carísimo adds personal remarks at the end of the story, expressing her grief over the loss of the grandfather she never knew. She describes the details of his portrait, an item the family preserved during the war even though the house was later occupied by Brazilian troops. The portrait shows her grandfather as a young man, dressed like a fine gentleman before a dance at the National Club (LC I 22). Lamas Carísimo contrasts the portrait with an image of José María lying dead on the battlefield, with torn clothes, full of blood and sweat, and barefoot. Being barefoot reflected social class; only the wealthy could afford shoes, but all soldiers fought barefoot in battle. The war demanded their lives and took away class structure. For Lamas Carísimo, war robbed her grandfather's dignity, a dignity that the portrait retains for her memory. The war obliterated part of her family's noble station. Her struggle with two images also can reflect a part of the grief process that Sigmund Freud calls "reality testing," where "the mourner oscillates between remembering them [the deceased] when they were alive and remembering them that they

are now dead" (Tutter and Wurmser xxvi-xxvii). The portrait enables Lamas Carísimo to remember her grandfather as he lived and not as he died; the falling portrait leads her to conclude that José María literally gave his last breath to his family when he died, that last breath causing the picture to fall. Her interpretation gives comfort and meaning in his death and memory. Lamas Carísimo elaborates on her personal grief from the war in later editions of *Tradiciones del Hogar* where she shows how she absorbed both the grief of her mother and grandmother.[10]

Another story about Teresa Silva Lamas, "Un critica de antaño," emphasizes her lifelong pain of loss by presenting another type of "reality testing." In that story, Lamas Carísimo describes a time when she and her grandmother gazed at old photos. With melancholy, Teresa Silva Lamas tells the stories behind the photos of grand social events held before the war. She recalls the first anniversary celebration of the presidency of Francisco Solano López. She describes the colors, the gowns and fine suits, the elegance, the luxury and the all-night dances. Her nostalgia makes her aware of changes brought by the war, when, she notes, the nation became a "cemetery" (LC II 79). Lamas Carísimo contrasts images of pre-war life and post-war death:

> Los galantes marquesitos y los pajes de pelucas empolvada del baile de la noche del siete de noviembre, caían en las trincheras y en los esteros, mientras en los tristes hogares las bellas marquesitas y las aldeanas deliciosas, lloraban al esposo o al novio muerto por la patria en el horror de las batallas gigantescas…(LC II 79)

Persons and a way of life depicted in the photos have been silenced by the war. The photos preserve memories and provide a way to mourn the happiness and young lives lost. Photography at the time of the War of the Triple Alliance remained a privilege, a

resource not affordable for the masses of people. However, wealth and privilege did not keep people from all classes from dying in the war and grieving losses. Social institutions and family structures are not the same, and mourning continues over generations, as Teresa Silva Lamas's reflections reveal to the granddaughter that writes her stories.

Teresa Silva Lamas appears in a third story, "La sagrada ofrenda." She participated in the first women's assembly held in Asunción during the war, as one of the elite women who donated jewelry to support the war (LC II 80-86). Rural women in villages had similar assemblies. The date of the first assembly, February 24, 1867, now marks an annual day to commemorate Paraguayan women, "la Día de la Mujer." Through Lamas Carísimo's description, the event demonstrates the power of silence and the power of speech. She describes the women in attendance as "intimo, silencioso, casi adusto en su concentración" (LC II 82). Their self-imposed silence corresponds to a time of reflection, solemnity and commemoration, an "eloquent silence" according to Michal Ephratt in his study, "The functions of silence" (1909). Then the voices of women interrupt the silence, including the voice of Teresa Silva Lamas, then only twenty-five years old, who says publicly in the central plaza of Asunción:

> He perdido a mi esposo en esta guerra cruel que nos hacen tres naciones; he perdido también a otros seres queridos y solo me quedan en el desastre mis hijos y mis alhajas. Demasiado pequeños los primeros para ofrecerlos, hoy vengo a depositar en el altar de la patria todas mis joyas para que ellas contribuyan a sostener la defensa de nuestra bandera… (LC II 84-85)

Teresa Silva Lamas expresses personal grief in a public forum. The donations of the women, like the title of the story, resemble a religious ritual; their ritual gives patriotism a sacred and honorable quality. Both religion and patriotism give meaning to the losses suffered. Lamas Carísimo uses religious imagery when she concludes with praise for her grandmother and the other Paraguayan women as "el temple de hierro que fue el tuyo, sigue siendo el de la mujer paraguaya que en su sangre siente bullir los dictados de esa tradición sagrada" (LC II 86). Lamas Carísimo idealizes the strong community of women patriots. Future assemblies may have been less spontaneous and a part of propaganda for the war efforts (Potthast "Algo más que heroinas" 95). War propaganda involves another type of silence in speech, speech that conveys an emotional message intended to silence opposition. Lamas Carísimo does not praise the war in her stories but rather praises the responses of women.

In "Junto a la reja," Lamas Carísimo describes the complicated grief of her aunt, Antonia Carísimo Jovenallos, who lost her only love in the war. Antonia has kept silent about the story for years (LC II 46). While she sits in her patio with Lamas Carísimo, the light of the moon and smell of garden flowers recall romantic memories that she now wants to share. Antonia and her fiancé, Salvador, were planning their wedding when Antonia became very ill and went to the country to recover. During those months, without any communication to Antonia, Salvador marries her cousin. Antonia observes sadly, "de silencios, así están hechos muchos trágicos destinos. . ." (LC II 51). The silence of their communication predicted disaster. After Antonia returns home, Salvador explains that he thought she had married a country rancher and suggests that "some intrigue" from a jealous suitor has separated them forever. At the end of her tale, Antonia

sees Salvador again, as a soldier during the war, when he marches by her house and smiles at the patio where they once shared happy moments. Antonia hides from his gaze and watches him in silence. Unlike the unspoken but united connection between Teresa Silva Lamas and her husband when they parted in mutual silence, the dual and separate silences of Antonia and Salvador reflect their disjointed and broken relationship. Unfortunately, Salvador's passing smile from memories distracts him from the horrific reason for his soldier's march; he is walking to his execution as a traitor to the Paraguayan army. Antonia concludes wistfully that she was always "his," but he was never "hers" (LC II 5). Perhaps she might also have realized that if she had married Salvador, she might have been executed too as a member of his family. The narrative gives a voice to her buried emotions, the inexpressible and the unsaid grief of decades. She reports that she closed her soul "like a trunk" where no one could see the love that still burned within her; she "left the world" at twenty years of age (LC II 51). The grief of Salvador's loss, a double loss of his love and then of his life, locked her in perpetual melancholy and repression. As Freud's work in *Mourning and Melancholy* explains, melancholy develops from unresolved mourning, a condition that Lamas Carísimo validates through narrative (Freud 244). Antonia's losses produced a condition that prevailed across generations of silence and found some release in her testimony to Lamas Carísimo. The pain of rejection coupled with the death of Salvador and thus the loss of any possibility of reconciliation or understanding left her unable to express her grief and make other choices. Her silence reflects a sickness and loss of her identity, and her traditional home became her tomb.

In two stories, Lamas Carísimo describes the "residentas," the women and children who were ordered to evacuate their homes to avoid the enemy invasion. She relates the difficult challenges her aunts, cousins, mother and grandmothers experienced as residentas. In "Paí-chí," her aunt, María Antonia, hears the moaning at night of an injured Paraguayan soldier named "Paí-chí," lying next to a dead Alliance soldier. Paí-chí bleeds profusely from severe lacerations to his brain. When he is able to speak, the aunts hear his story, nurse him and reunite him to his mother, also a residenta. María Antonia describes the "tétrico silencio" of their desolate and frightening journey where the women shared frequent tears, lack of food, and little understanding of their location (LC I 41). In "Un episodio de la Residenta," Lamas Carísimo describes the death of her great uncle who died on the road with the residentas and whose memory always brings a moment of silence in her family, "Y cada vez que en el hogar de mis mayores se evocaba el recuerdo de este triste episodio, una sombra de dolor empañaba las miradas y se hacia un silencio como de remordimiento" (TC II 26). Lamas Carísimo refers to the journey with idyllic terms as "aquella heroica aventura" and "la más sublime peregrinación del patriotismo," but the realities of the journey provoke many silences that reflect the harsh realities the women faced. (LC II 33). Dolores, an aunt of Lamas Carísimo, tells the story of caring for her uncle, José Carísimo Haeda, a paralyzed man that she pushes for months on the road. The difficulties they confront leave them silent as their conversation when they realize that they all have dead family to report. José begs Dolores to leave him when they run out of food, cross muddy terrain or find dead bodies. She refuses and "silences" his complaints with a kiss of reassurance (LC II 36). However, one day, Allied troops pursue them, and they must run to evade capture. Dolores collapses, and José orders her to leave

him for her safety. She does, but José is never seen again. War lead to an impossible choice followed with more loss. José grieved that he could not be a soldier, but, in the family's memory, he died heroically, sacrificing his life for others. Heroism helps the family find meaning in his death and in their survival. Héctor F. Decoud, a witness of evacuations, describes in his testimony, "Vía Crucis," the unequal treatment of the residentas, some considered "agraciadas" by Mariscal López and given railway transport and first choice of housing in other cities (Rodríguez Alcalá, G. "Residentas" 46). According to historian Barbara Potthast, the residentas became the privileged memory of women in the war and were the selected group to depict in a 1970 monument dedicated to honor women of the War of the Triple Alliance (91). The designation represented the ideal Paraguayan feminine patriot, and the term expanded to include all women who sacrificed in some way for the country.

"Pancha Garmendia" remains the most controversial of Lamas Carísimo's stories because the silence in the story belongs to the author who censors truth to craft her narrative. Lamas Carísimo's aunt, Loló, a friend of Pancha, becomes the voice of the story. She establishes Pancha as the the ideal Paraguayan woman. Using exaggerated religious imagery, Loló describes Pancha's exquisite beauty, exemplary virtue and education; Pancha represented "pureza inmaculada" along with "la inquebrantable y desdeñosa firmeza," characteristics that provoked the martyrdom Loló describes (LC I 28, 29). A young orphan, Pancha was raised by the Barrios family, a family that knew Mariscal López. López admired Pancha, but she repeatedly rejected his attentions. When Pancha becomes engaged to Perico Egusquiza, Mariscal López orders him out of the city. Loló becomes silent after she shares her last memory of Pancha, when she saw

her sitting in a window, reading a book. Lamas Carísimo prompts her to describe the death of Pancha, a story Loló says was told to her during her time as a residenta. Lolo's silence emphasizes her grief, but the pause also permits Lamas Carisimo to credit the next part of the story, the least credible, to an unnamed source. In the war, Loló was told, Pancha became a "residenta," who, along with an aunt, was ordered to follow Mariscal López to an army camp. Pancha dines with Mariscal López and Lynch at the camp, and, in a few days, is executed, presumably at the request of the very jealous Lynch. Mariscal López appears as a sympathetic figure, not fully aware of the executions, and overwhelmed by his lost illusions of victory. Pancha moves him to generosity during the dinner when she asks for food for her starving aunt, and when he learns Pancha is dead, he is noticeably disturbed, dropping his yerba maté and trembling in silence (LC I 31). At the end, Loló adds her own observation, that the "silence" of Mariscal López convinces her that someone else, like Eliza Lynch, was responsible for the tragic death. However, it seems impossible that anyone could have witnessed all the intimate details crafted in the hearsay story. The reality of Pancha's death reveals an ugly side of the War of the Triple Alliance that Lamas Carísimo avoids in her tale. Pancha was a "destinada," a woman arrested for suspicion of treason that was forced to march to prison camps for questioning and possible execution. According to records, there were about 3000 destinadas, with about 800 surviving at the end of the war (Potthast 98). Pancha's adopted family was suspected of conspiracy, and under López's rules, when one family member was suspected, all family members were arrested. Lamas Carísimo omits any use of the term "destinada" and any discussion of that group of women, most who were from the elite class. Lamas Carísimo also avoids the violent details of Pancha's death and

torture which likely involved rape, a common abuse of destinadas. Interestingly, it is her grandson, Guido Rodríguez Alcalá in his 2007 book, *Residentas, destinadas y traidoras*, that presents documents that explain the conditions of destinadas during the War of the Triple Alliance; eyewitnesses, Antonio Barrios and Romualdo Nuñez, describe the physical condition and death of Pancha Garmendia:

> Pancha Garmendia, convertida en un *exce homo*, a causa de las heridas ulceradas que presentaba su cuerpo desde la región cervical hasta las nalgas, por los azotes, que a corto intervalo, recibía de día o de noche, durante su prisión, envuelta únicamente con una sabana de lienzo criollo, toda sucia y machada de la sangre vertida por su laceramiento, con la cabellera suelta y desgreñada, apenas podía andar de pie y manos.
>
> Fue traída al lugar de su lanzamiento, sobre la orilla del arroyo Guazú, distante unos cincuenta metros de un árbol corpulento, en cuya sombra guardaba su prisión.
>
> A sus verdugos no les dio gran trabajo para ultimarla, pues, apenas le tocaron con las puntas de sus lanzas, cayó completamente inerte. (Rodríguez Alcalá, G 62)

While Lamas Carísimo judges Lynch harshly, she presents López as a neither tyrant nor hero, a diplomatic position during her political era but not a believable one, given the origin of the destinadas. In her analysis, French observes a continual ambivalence and shift of Lamas Carísimo between her aristocratic "antilopista" political views and the growing nationalist "lopista" political views of the 1920s, views that generated from the

writings of another relative of Lamas Carísimo, her cousin, Juan Emiliano O'Leary (French 87-90).[11]

The destinadas not only show the cruelty of López but also suggest dissonance and dissension in the historiography that contradict the nationalist myth. The revisionist movement of the first decades of the twentieth century worked to declare President López a Paraguayan hero, an initiative that underscored "lopismo" politics. In the 1920s, the movement included the destruction of the records of the destinadas. In 1926, Congress sanctioned a law that "erased or considered nonexistent" all official papers that linked López with cases in which he had labeled and condemned citizens as traitors (Brezzo). In *Archive Fever,* Jacques Derrida describes archives as a place of "violence" because it is where those in power silence the marginalized (Carter 219). Due to political pressure, Lamas Carísimo may have edited her text. She may also have censored sexual and violent parts of the story to create a narrative that she could tell her children. Her introduction of the text as a story "from aunt Loló who heard it from someone else" allows her room for creativity. The resultant portrayal of Pancha Garmendia as a martyr for purity reinforces another traditional feminine ideal, "La Virgen y Esposa fiel" (Makaran 47). An underlying rationale may be that if Pancha had accepted López's affections, he would have saved her from death, though French's work contradicts the supposition. Martyrdom gives Pancha's violent death a spiritual meaning. She represents the antithesis of Eliza Lynch, a woman Lamas Carísimo portrays as materialistic, cruel, immoral and selfish. Whether martyr, heroine or victim, Pancha's death demonstrates horrific injustice that the society of 1920 did not permit to diminish their positive national view of Mariscal López.

Unfortunately, unmitigated “lopismo” provided rhetoric that later Alfredo Stroessner used to justify his authoritarian rule.

Lamas Carísimo as author also serves as witness to the testimonies of the War of the Triple Alliance from past generations that she translates and preserves in narratives. All her stories about the war are about or told to her by women, with the exception of the story a veteran who told his story to Lamas Carísimo when she was a child (“Un combate singular en Curupayty”). In her work, Lamas Carísimo constructed chronological narratives and inserted gaps, pauses and silences as part of the story. Those insertions create nuances that highlight important emotional moments when communication is difficult or impossible. Her stories explore the various ways silence conveys meaning, message and emotion. Silence can mark a profound moment of shock, loss or pain, those traumatic moments that Caruth incomprehensible and unassimilable in the human psyche (4-5, 116-117). Silence can indicate oppression or repression, like Antonia who could not share her story for years. Silence can also mean denial of reality and suppression of truth too difficult to express or too politically charged to print, as the story of Pancha Garmendia shows. Silence can both explain and limit discourse, expressing the profound power of a moment or reflecting powerlessness in a person. At times, as in the battlefield, silence can represent a form of power and control. The narrative provides a way for the one in pain to find a lost or misunderstood voice and to find release through a form of expression. At the same time, the recorded and interpreted testimonies give the public an understanding of individual experiences not detailed in histories. Lamas Carísimo contributes to the historical revisionism of the 1920s by adding women’s stories to the country’s heroic war memories and avoiding controversial topics in the history of

the war. She may be conforming to political and religious ideologies of the 1920s, but she may also be eager to create positive images and meaningful interpretations for her relatives who suffered during the war as part of her own legacy of the war. She idealizes the Paraguayan women as she describes how they represents heroines, patriots, martyrs, mothers, companions, and survivors. Her women are either perfect Paraguayans or evil foreigners like Eliza Lynch. Even the long-suffering aunt who lives with depression appears to behave with social correctness. Lamas Carísimo lived in the upper class during a fragile political time when it was difficult to have optimism and pride for Paraguay and its people without denying mistakes and creating myths. At times, Lamas Carísimo shows the human complexities women confronted in the impossible choices and demands of war, as she does in her story of the mother avenger, her aunt with complicated grief, and the aunt that had to abandon her uncle. The pain of grief can also include the guilt of choices made or not made and the guilt of survival. Her stories show war grief that lasts through generations, passed on to Lamas Carísimo and, through her, passed on to her children. While her stories are limited to a specific class and area of Paraguay and thus do not offer the complete story of women during the War of the Triple Alliance, her stories offer a beginning voice for women who had not previously been heard and that narrative voice offers a public presence that gives women more recognition and agency in history. The women of her story represent the voices of the survivors of Paraguay, those with a story to tell and those who endured with pain, loss and memory when the war ended.

CHAPTER 3:

IN THE SHADOWS OF MELANCHOLIA

Don Inca by Ercilia López de Blomberg

Author Ercilia López Carrillo y Otazú de Blomberg (1865-1962) was born the year the war of the Triple Alliance began. In the third year of the war, López de Blomberg, her mother, Manuela Otazú Machaín, and her brothers evacuated Asunción and lived in exile in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Part of the reason for the exile was the arrest of her father, Venancio López, for suspicion of treason by his brother, Mariscal Francisco Solano López, president of Paraguay and leader of the war. Other members of the López family, including their mother, were arrested as suspected traitors. López de Blomberg hardly knew her father because when the war ended in 1870, he was found dead after imprisonment near Cerro Corá, the battlefield where Mariscal López also died. These autobiographical facts represent details and history that López de Blomberg includes in her only novel, *Don Inca*, written in 1920, but not published until 1965 after her death. Though she lived most of her life in Buenos Aires with her English Argentinean husband and their children, López de Blomberg considered Paraguay her *patria*, and her novel is regarded as the first novel by a female Paraguayan author and one of the only novels written by an author who lived during the time of the War of the Triple Alliance (Langa Pizarro). Her other writings emphasized Paraguayan culture, including a patriotic poem, "Al Paraguay," and a grammar for the Guaraní language (Méndez-Faith).

Don Inca begins in Asunción in the 1880s, after the war and after the occupation of Paraguay by Brazil and Argentina. This setting mirrors the time in López de Blomberg's personal life when she returned to Asunción with her mother to settle the

family estate, and during that time, her mother died. After her mother's death, a Paraguayan general in exile agrees to care for López de Blomberg in Buenos Aires. In *Don Inca*, the experiences of a mother, Fernanda, and her daughter, Genoveva, closely resemble López de Blomberg's life. Genoveva, like López de Blomberg in the 1880s, is an adolescent, and Fernanda, like López de Blomberg's mother, Manuela, suffers ill health and dies shortly after a return visit to Asunción. In addition, Genoveva returns to Paraguay later in her life in the novel at approximately the time that López de Blomberg wrote the novel. Like its exotic title suggests, *Don Inca*, presents the romantic but ill-fated love story between a mysterious Peruvian gentleman, Félix de Lerma, and a young Paraguayan woman, Mónica, both who come from families devastated by death and political events. Their love story is woven within the novel but does not comprise the only plot. The novel explores the effects of War of the Triple Alliance on an extended Paraguayan family that loses most of their men during the war; those effects become evident in excursions that describe aspects of culture and places of battle. The family represents of the old aristocracy of Paraguay that was supported by servants, including a former slave. The country house (Casa de Campo) becomes the center for conversations and dinners during which other characters, many veterans of the war, visit, and it also represents a space of insular protection during postwar strife, especially for the women. The story builds upon the arrival of a stranger who buys a nearby ruined estate and becomes known as "el desconocido" because he hides his identity and background. His violent death and the ill health and the deaths of other family members show the tragic, rippling effects of war amidst the political instability and unresolved grief that follow. In *Don Inca*, López de Blomberg emphasizes the melancholia that afflicts a fractured but

privileged family in Paraguay who tries to survive after the War of Triple Alliance but cannot keep the past from impacting the next generation. Sadness permeates the novel through direct references to melancholia, through metaphors of light and dark in the landscape, and through characters who struggle with present and past violence and loss. Melancholia also reflects class and gender distinctions because the condition afflicts the upper-class women in the novel who cannot express their pain like the men.

The opening sentence of *Don Inca* introduces the metaphor of tension between darkness and light that characterizes the conflict between despair and hope in the novel: "Era necesario apresurar la partida para llegar a la Casa de Campo antes de la salida del sol" (9). The lack of electricity along with political disturbances restricted public activity and travel. Asunción was considered dangerous because of the increase of crime and the lack of police protection (Capdevila 158). Various characters in the novel warn of hazardous roads due to the presence of armed men and the threats of anarchy (21, 34). The novel begins with the departure of two wealthy war widows, Fernanda and María Josefa, and their adolescent daughters, Genoveva and Mónica, who leave the city in the early hours of dawn with the assistance of servants who hold candles to guide them down the staircase and out the door. Servants and nephew Gabriel Zalazar, a veteran of the war, accompany the women in their carriage on their journey to the country house.

As the family leaves the city, the moon, stars and fireflies offer the only light in the obscurity of country roads. Nature, as the novel shows, brings solace and hope to the family because it reminds them of the beauty of Paraguay. The love story begins in nature; Mónica and Don Inca meet outdoors near a river, a place that the young women visit during the day. Along the route on the initial trip to the country house, the family is

also reminded of the ugliness of the war. They pass the remains of Telléz-cué, a place known to them as "Casa de los duendes" (house of goblins). The ruins contain gloomy dark shadows and recall the tragic deaths that occurred there during the war (11). Telléz-cué also foreshadows the future tragedy of Mónica and Don Inca's love story because Don Inca purchases the property that will become their home. When the travelers finally arrive at the country house, the mood has shifted with the change in light. The sun shines brightly and indicates noon time when the whole family shares a daily meal. Daylight brings happy family times and excursions in the country. In contrast, nightfall brings an inhibiting darkness that represents danger, anxiety and sad memories. Light and its absence affect mood, as twentieth century research on light and depression confirms (Wirz-Justice et al.1). Early in the novel, Genoveva uses the light/dark metaphor to explain the family's experience in the War of the Triple Alliance, a past she is just beginning to know, "Todo ese pasado me parecía una niebla triste, una noche oscura que me daba miedo" (31). Genoveva's journey of lost innocence and illusion frames the novel.

The avoidance of darkness in the opening scene corresponds to another avoidance of the family, the discussion of the war and present political dangers. At the end of the first chapter, Rosalia, owner of the country house with her husband Felipe, asks Gabriel if the city is peaceful. Gabriel quickly dismisses her questions, not wanting to tell her about the developing problems (15). Likewise, Felipe speaks in a low voice to other men when he talks about the need to carry weapons for protection on the roads, not wanting the women to hear his concerns (34). Felipe and Gabriel also reinforce the family rules about not speaking of the war. Genoveva recognizes that the war represents

"el terrible drama jamas mencionado" (18). The secrecy of the family reflects a public code of silence in postwar time. According to Luc Capdevila, "Los veteranos o los supervivientes hablaban poco públicamente de la contienda y no publicaron testimonio sobre su experiencia hasta la mitad de los años 1880" (4). Veterans worried about repercussions during occupation by Brazil and Argentina. Consequently, histories of the war written by Paraguayans were not published until the end of the nineteenth century (Capdevila 182). On another level, according to Caruth, silence and delayed expression after a catastrophe can also indicate the nature of trauma that is often "unspeakable" and "incomprehensible" (1-9). Within the Zalazar family, silence about the war describes the behavior of the women more than the men. Fernanda and Rosalia play chess and converse about everything but the war; "Ambas evitaban mencionar la terrible guerra que durante cinco años había asolado al país y destruido una generación" (17). Maria Josefa and her daughter Mónica speak little about anything and remain in constant conflict with each other. Sixteen-year-old Genoveva pleads with family friend and veteran, coronel Nicolás Narváez, to tell her how her father and uncles died, "Aqui no se debe hablar de cosas que entristezcan a mamá y a mis tías" (28). Narváez complies, but, interestingly, López de Blomberg does not quote his answers in the text, only Genoveva's emotional reactions. While Genoveva and Fernanda reflect López de Blomberg and her mother, López de Blomberg carefully censors the gory details of her father's death in the novel. The conversation between Narváez and Genoveva provokes a reaction when family members notice tears forming on Genoveva's face. Gabriel chastises Narváez and Genoveva about talking about the past because they are creating worry for Fernanda, a woman with poor health (29). Later, in the chapter, Narváez himself becomes concerned

when he notices that Genoveva appears morose. He tells her that the family wants her to be happy, not sad (31). Denial can be their survival strategy and give the family members some sense of control over an incontrollable past, but control of the dialogue, as the novel shows, does control the impact of that past nor does it heal wounds. The upper-class lifestyle creates a protective barrier for the family, but the insularity of Mónica and Genoveva leaves them less confident and able to handle the losses they will face in their lives. Like their mothers, they both become vulnerable to melancholia.

The War of the Triple Alliance undermined the family's aristocratic position, another cause for grief in the family. Privilege did not protect them from the death and destruction of war. The family maintains the pretensions of the aristocratic life in structure, possessions, attitudes and isolation. Genoveva, in her imagination and love of noble legends, compares her elegant uncle Felipe, now leader of the family, to an "hidalgo" from ancient Spain (16). Felipe, who did not fight in the war because he was unable to return to Paraguay from Europe, tries to maintain the public image of a worldly gentlemen as he entertains all the "educated men" who come from other countries, and as he tries to negotiate the unstable postwar political conflicts (56). Don Froilán, a veteran now building an anarchist group, requests his help with a mission and also asks him to consider becoming a presidential candidate, but Felipe refuses, not wanting to be under the control of one faction and the enemy of another faction. The family lives separated from the struggling lower classes and expresses racial and class stereotypes. Taná, the former family slave, is praised as physically brave and strong but also noted as man of "pocas ideas" (20). He is kind and helpful to the family, but, according to Genoveva, "un pobre ignorante" incapable of explaining the past to her (29). He symbolizes the family's

colonial status, and López de Blomberg's description of him as a man who still befriends his former masters romanticizes the family's participation in slavery.

Behind the pretensions of the family lies a crumbling aristocracy. Nearly all the men in the family fought in the war and died as soldiers. When the war ended, only Gabriel came home to his three widowed aunts and their fatherless children. Former estates now lie in ruin, without owners, some inhabited by "toda clase de vagabundos" (30). María Josefa's house in San Joaquín is mismanaged and threatened by robbery. Genoveva experiences a social life in Buenos Aires that she does not in Paraguay. The war also brought dishonor to the family in the disgrace in the suicidal death of María Josefa's husband after he was arrested for cowardice and treason. Similar shame may surround the deaths of Rosalia's and Fernanda's spouses and contribute to their silence. The privileged class continues traditions but has lost its numbers and protections. Violent deaths continue to occur in the family, and by the end of the novel only Genoveva and Gabriel remain, and most of the original family properties are sold. A family legacy is ending, and its demise contributes to the tragic, sad world view of the novel.

López de Blomberg's excludes the details of the horrific experiences of her López ancestors in her novel, but those experiences are suggested through characters and may contribute to the generally sad tone of the novel. López de Blomberg's father was one of five López siblings, three men and two women, the same number and distribution as in the Zalazar family in the novel. In turn, the López and Zalazar family experience the same number of deaths in the war: five adult men. In 1868, Mariscal López initiated an investigation of a suspected conspiracy to overthrow his rule, especially among his family and members of the upper class. His investigation lead to the development of a

series of two-men military courts referred to by the people as "el Tribunal de Sangre" because the tribunals led to brutal atrocities. The military courts had the authority to arrest, to imprison, to interrogate, to use torture, and to execute whomever they deemed to be traitors. Often if one member of a family was suspected, all family members were arrested and interrogated. Among those arrested and interrogated were all the adult members of the López family, including Mariscal López' mother, Juana Pabla Carrillo, and his two sisters, Rafaela and Inocencia (Rodriguez Alcala, G, "Residentas" 47-48). López de Blomberg's mother fled to Buenos Aires after the arrest of her husband, Venancio López, and, as a result, evaded the likelihood of her own arrest, interrogation and possible execution. While López de Blomberg's father died in captivity at the end of the war, another brother, Benigno López, and two brothers-in-law were executed earlier as traitors. Mariscal López's mother and two sisters survived in the prison camp by "chewing cowhides;" they were flogged and then released (Whigham 400-401). In *Don Inca*, the losses in the war of Genoveva's aunt, María Josefa, involve the tribunal; the causes of other family deaths during the war are left unclear. López de Blomberg hints of other atrocities through the reactions of Genoveva when she hears stories from Narvaéz and later when she mentions the sad stories Fernanda tells on her death bed. Genoveva refers to her father and uncles as "tantos valientes, tantos desgraciados" when she mentions their deaths (32). María Josefa's husband is also described in the novel as "valiente y leal" when the accusations against him and his subsequent suicide are described (54). López de Blomberg does not refer to Mariscal López by name in the novel and avoids any discussion of his defects or heroism, yet she emphasizes the horrors of "el Tribunal de Sangre" in multiple places. Other characters provide glimpses of the

court's cruelties, such as the story of Juan de la Cruz Telléz, a neighbor who was accused of treason and shot in front of his home and his father (40). The silence, isolation and melancholia of the family can also indicate the demeanor and coping strategies of a family trying to recover, not just from war deaths, but also from horrific abuse and indignities.

In the nineteenth century, melancholia had a medical diagnosis with a fluctuating set of definitions (Kendler E1). At the beginning of the century, melancholia represented a disorder of the intellect and partial insanity created by abnormal beliefs, but, by the end of the century, the melancholia was diagnosed as an affective disorder without delusions. However, profound and unremitting sadness remained a universal symptom of melancholia. To show the complexities of the diagnosis, a Scottish asylum physician Thomas Clouston in 1883 defined melancholia as "mental pain, emotional depression, and sense of ill-being, usually more intense than in melancholy, with loss of self-control, or insane delusions, or uncontrollable impulses toward suicide, with no proper capacity left to follow ordinary avocations, with some of the ordinary interests of life destroyed, and generally with marked bodily symptoms" (qtd Jansson 6).[12] López de Blomberg uses the word melancholia throughout the novel to emphasize the sad mood and threatening illness that lingers in the background of family events and activities. "Melancholic" describes the weather, the climate, the scenery and the characters. The first use of the term occurs in chapter four when López de Blomberg describes melancholia as a condition that arrives at sunset, "Las lejanas campanadas solemnes del Angelus aumentaban la melancholia y la belleza del atardecer" (35). Darkness serves as a metaphor for the negative thoughts and depression of melancholia. Nature reflects and

influences the sadness in Paraguay. The birds sing "melancholic" songs at night (60). Days of perpetual rain without the sun bring "melancholia" to the family as they try to occur themselves indoors, and the gloomy weather affects the mood of the country, "El arroyo desbordado inundaba una ancha zona de la explanada y contribuia a entristecer el paisaje" (69). Memories stir melancholia in Genoveva, as she visits the town where she was born (74-75). She feels sad to see places, like the cathedral of her childhood, now deserted and to be leaving the beauty of Paraguay and her history to return to Buenos Aires with her ill mother. The character Don Inca prefers to be alone at twilight; the fading sun brings melancholia as he thinks about the words in a letter he received from his friend Larry, "El proceso convencional de las emociones humanas está sujeto a muchas alteraciones—se decía--, y hay momentos en que nos desconocemos a nosotros mismos" (85). Like Genoveva, Don Inca lives between two worlds; for him, a past in Peru and a new life in Paraguay. The instability of emotions in the novel reflects the instability of life. Melancholia represents a mood that infects Paraguay in the postwar era and alters the routines of daily life. Reminders of the country's wounds and the mourning those wounds demand constantly challenge the survivors.

Melancholia becomes a sickness in *Don Inca*, a way of managing grief that afflicts the women more severely than the men. Male characters suffer pain from the war but are able to grieve without developing melancholia. Gabriel fought in the war and was injured, a condition that lead to his capture and imprisonment in Brazil. When he returns to Paraguay, his body has healed, but he appears to be a broken, disturbed man. López de Blomberg describes him as "disorientado y desesperado" when he sees his humiliated, ruined country and wonders for what purpose he fought; "A su primer arranque de

punzante y rabioso dolor sucedió apatía profunda. Se encerró a vivir solo en la vieja casona solariego desierto y desmantelada, rodeada de sus tierras incultas" (20).[13] He spends days lying in a hammock and drinking alcohol. One day, his aunt Rosalia visits. She speaks to him in a low voice while holding his hand and crying. In response, Gabriel opens his eyes and releases a loud sob. After that day, his health improves and slowly he "returned to reality," recognizing he had "rights and responsibilities" (21). In essence, he expressed his pain and found new meaning in his life through work with his uncle, Felipe.

Don Inca, or Félix de Lerma, shows a similar recovery from loss. When he arrives in Paraguay, his identity remains mysterious, but those he meets see hidden pain in his eyes, "los grandes ojos tristes" (37). His tragic secrets torment him, especially when he is alone at night. He does not tell others in Paraguay that he fled execution in Peru after a court martial for treason and that he left behind a very ill wife who suffers madness since the death of their son. His dark memories return one evening,

> Volvieron a su memoria horas muy felices, de ensueños realizados, de plenitud de vida; y luego las horas negras, amargas, increíbles.
>
> Al llegar a este recuerdo el Inca se detuvo como al borde de una negra sima, con un angustioso sobresalto. El vuelo de un ave nocturna que cruzo el corredor lo volvió a la realidad. (68)

That same night he suffers a nightmare, another indicator of inner wounds:

> En sus sueños inquietos aparecieron hermosos cabellos rubios enredados en las puntas lucientes de las bayonetas. Una sombra inquieta y hosca agitándose en el fondo insondable de un abismo, y después, las costas acantiladas del Estrecho de

Magallanes, sobre las que paseaba Larry batiendo funerala en un tambor enlutado. (68)

Like Paraguayans, death and violence haunt him. However, during a trip that the men make, he is able to share his story with Roberto Morrison, the English consul who befriends him. Next he tells his story to Mónica, his new love interest. Eventually, he gets assistance with his political problems while his friend Larry cares for his wife in Peru. His wife dies, and a newly elected Peruvian President overturns his death sentence and his false charge of treason. His dark nights of sorrow now brighten with marriage to Mónica. He feels transformed with new purpose as he sits in the sunny orange grove and waits for Mónica, "un hombre nuevo había nacido" (144). When they marry, the President of Peru sends Mónica a shining gold sun, "un sol de oro rodeado de brillantes," a symbol of Peru and of light that has now entered their lives (185-186). Don Inca dies a tragic, premature death, but he had resolved his past losses and grief, and according to Morrison, died a man "en plena felicidad," "la mas complete que la vida puede ofrecer" (194-195). Unfortunately, his widow, Mónica, becomes the figure with irresolvable grief.

Five of the men take a trip together that represents a healing experience and a postwar educational journey for them and the reader. Felipe, Gabriel, Don Inca, Narváez, and Morrison travel by horseback and train through parts of the countryside, including old battlefields and encampments. The men keep sadness and war stories from the women, but, on their excursion, share their stories. Time has not removed the reminders of the war in the country or in the men. Morrison observes, "Todas las primaveras que habían florecido sobre aquel suelo no habían acabado de borrar las huellas del pasado"

(110). They visit Azcurra, the location where infamous military courts were held. Their nervous guide with white lips points to an abandoned camp and building and identifies the place by saying, "Murió mucha gente. Llovia, llovia siempre. Esta casa era el Tribunal de Sangre…" (111). The remains are now inhabited by a swarm of bats, the symbolic guardians of death (Ferber 19). The men share the place's terrible history. Their excursión not only confirms the existence of the tribunals but reveals a judgment of history in the desecration. Don Inca offers consoling thoughts, "Cuando hayan pasado algunas generaciones, el horror y el odio se habrán borrado… Quedaran la enseñanza y la poesía que se desprende de los grandes dolores" (111). The men are able to acknowledge and process realities that the women avoid. They confront the past physically and emotionally as a group.

The veterans on the trip also identify their losses and express their grief. Gabriel's battle scar hurts, and Narváez remembers the humiliation of evacuation during the war:

> Gabriel sentía el dolor sordo que molesta a los veteranos cuando algo toca la cicatriz de sus antiguas heridas. Narváez, como el corcel fogueado por la pólvora y que oye el toque del clarín, se sentía inquieto y exaltado. A través de sus años, de su filosofía y de sus desgracias, sentía renacer la emoción de los pasadas días de reñidos combates, de audaces e ingeniosas sorpresas al enemigo, de infinitos peligros que hacían intenso y palpitante cada día, cada hora de la terrible y trágica "vía crucis" (91-92).

Feelings and pain return through the memories revived on the trip. The men find wooden crosses along the deserted roads that they call "melancholic monuments" to the dead, each cross maintained with flowers and a candle and representing a someone who died in

the war. Morrison observes that the many crosses create a memory for travelers of the war's impact and show the "poetry" of the people, "y no hay más honda poesía que la que brota espontanea de los pueblos que han sufrido" (108). The crosses prompt Narváez to share the story of his three sons, all who died as soldiers in the war. Gabriel praises the sons as men who died without knowing defeat, "Ellos murieron llenos de ilusiones; tuvieron muerte gloriosa y no sintieron el dolor de la derrota" (109). Gabriel's face fills with tears as his finishes his comments. The veterans are able to mourn and receive consolation from each other. At the beginning of the novel, two young brothers discuss the ankle injury that one brother suffers. The uninjured brother cautions his brother about showing emotion, saying "hombres no lloran" (23). López de Blomberg challenges that masculine stereotype in her portrayal of men in grief. Her men do cry.

The men's trip offers a panoramic view of the culture and suffering of postwar Paraguay, a view not seen in the secluded and protected spaces of the women in the country house. They visit a veteran who now makes a living by cutting down gigantic palm trees and selling them for oil and other commercial purposes. A palm tree branch appears on the Paraguayan flag as a sign of peace and victory; now, in the novel, the palm tree represents postwar sacrifice and survival, another sign of melancholia: "Las palmeras de inmensa altura prestaban carácter y melancolía al paisaje severo de esta comarca" (101). The travelers also observe the poverty in the country and the noticeable lack of men. According to Narváez, the available men "hacen revoluciones," and fight the new political battles; while women were called "co-citizens" ("con-ciudadanas") for their support during the war, they did not gain access to political participation after the war (Capdevila 144; Potthast 95). Yet, the men extol the enterprising ways women engage in

the economy to survive; they do the agricultural work in the fields next to their children and sell goods in the marketplaces.[14] Near the markets, some women also work as prostitutes near the markets, and some men hold cockfights. The men discuss the hunger that killed many during the war and observe the signs of extreme poverty they see now, such as a destitute woman on the train route who tries to sell all that she has. As the train departs the station, current political tensions rise between the people in the station and passengers on the train who throw rocks at each other and trade insults, "¡Legionarios!" "¡Lopiztas!" "¡Traidores!" "¡Verdugos!" (16). The trip leaves the men with a broader perspective of Paraguay that extends beyond their own sufferings and connects them to society. The aristocratic women, however, in their protected spaces, lack access to the same experience.

In contrast to the men, most of the women in the novel do not express their grief in words or find resolution. In *Don Inca*, the women appear vulnerable to melancholia. Sigmund Freud, in his 1917 article, "Mourning and Melancholia," distinguishes the process of mourning from the condition of melancholia. He writes, "Mourning is regularly the reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as one's country, liberty, an ideal, and so on" (243). Freud goes on to explain that mourning requires time for reality-testing the loss, "and that when this work has been accomplished the ego will have succeeded in freeing its libido from the lost object" and able to replace the lost object with a new and different one (249, 252). Gabriel, Don Inca, and Narváez employ the tools of mourning, such as remembering, returning to painful places, expressing sorrow, and talking about their losses and experiences. Rosalia does not talk about the

loss of her first husband in the novel but appears to have mourned her past and found a new purpose; she remarries Felipe and supports the needy members of her family. In fact, she becomes a motivator and counsel for Gabriel in his recovery, reminding him of duty. On the other hand, Beatriz, the first wife of Don Inca, represents what Freud might call a "pathological disposition" in mourning (243). After her son dies, she develops insanity and dementia and dies in a vegetative state; according to her husband, she suffers a possible "herencia patológica" (102). However, Beatriz remains an undeveloped character, only known through the brief comments of Don Inca and his friend Larry, her caretaker. According to Freud, melancholia resembles mourning but is marked in its pathology by "a disturbance of self-regard;" the person in grief cannot separate from the lost object and internalizes the anger (244). The main female characters in *Don Inca* show varying degrees of melancholia. The repression of Fernanda and Maria Josefa, in particular, appears to sicken them physically and emotionally and affect their daughters.

Fernanda's melancholia appears through physical ailments. In the mystery surrounding her husband's death, Fernanda explains her exile to Buenos Aires as a move prompted by her desire to fulfill her husband's wishes to educate their children in a more peaceful place. She creates a different narrative, a type of myth, about their exile than the likely reality that she had to flee for personal safety. Her weakened health is attributed to the financial struggles and worries she experienced after her husband's death (119). She returns to Paraguay to plan for her death and appears fragile; on the days of rain and storms, for example, she was unable to eat or sleep (70). However, she maintains a positive relationship with her daughter and family, and, on her death bed, finally tells her

children about the past, an action that offers some release for her and some understanding and healing for her children.

Fernanda's life of silence about the past does not protect Genoveva from struggling with an increasing sadness as she matures. Genoveva possess a vivid imagination and is drawn to romantic and dramatic illusions. She thinks about characters in novels and creates myths; she playfully nicknames the mysterious stranger "Don Inca" because she imagines that he is a descendent of one of the lost Inca kings. Her curiosity drives her to understand her identity and past history, but sadness enters her carefree and innocent life as she absorbs her family history. Her sadness compounds into a type of melancholia as she confronts death personally in the deaths of Don Inca and her mother, both deaths occurring on the same day. She does manage to create a future in Buenos Aires. She marries and has children, and at the end of the novel, she decides to return to Paraguay with her children to explain and show them their history. She will not keep it from them as it was kept from her. At the end of the novel, "melancholia" describes her as she looks at Paraguay for the last time, "Genoveva, con indecible melancolía, evocaba sus fantasmas queridos y veía desvanecerse un pasada noble y dramático, transformarse un escenario de sugerente belleza primitiva, desaparecer para siempre una generación heroica y legendaria" (201). She cannot return to Paraguay, she tells Gabriel, because Paraguay holds too much sadness in the full weight of all the losses and tragedies in her family. Paraguay as it was for her exists no more; she cannot find comfort in Gabriel's pride about the progress in the country. The life she has known in Paraguay and her noble relatives have all disappeared. Her childhood illusions have been shattered.[15] An earlier scene in the novel hints of Genoveva's perspective at the end of the novel. Genoveva

thought about birds that try to fly with a broken wing and how she had begun to struggle with melancholia (158). The bird becomes a metaphor for Genoveva as an adult. She has learned to live with the broken wing of melancholia. Sadness remains a part of her Paraguayan legacy.

María Josefa and Mónica represent a more complex view of melancholia. Maria Josefa's reactions to past losses are described in the novel but never mentioned directly by her. When she learns of her husband's disgrace and suicide during the war, she suffers a concussion ("conmoción cerebral"), but she is summoned to testify about her husband before the military tribunals (54). She leaves Mónica in the care of Rosalia and travels with her teenage son. On the trip, her son develops measles and dies. In the middle of her testimony before the tribunal, she experiences a sudden fever and becomes delirious and unconscious. The army, called back to the battlefield, abandons the court; María Josefa remains in the town in the care of a family friend until the end of the war. In the novel, María Josefa speaks little but has an angry, controlling and difficult personality. She complains about her choice of servants and the problems she faces trying to manage her inheritance. Her judgment is weak and distorted as she pushes Mónica to marry to a rich, older man who is organizing an anarchist group. In his analysis, Freud describes how the low self-esteem of melancholia hides behind an externally proud personality like María Josefa,

> …they make the greatest nuisance of themselves, and always seem as though they felt slighted and had been treated with great injustice. All this is possible only because the reactions expressed in their behavior still proceed from a mental

> constellation of revolt, which has then, by a certain process, passed over into the crushed state of melancholia. (248)

When Mónica marries Don Inca, María Josefa pressures him to check on one of her properties, an action that leads to his death when he is shot by men who think he is a bandit.

Mónica possesses a personality like her mother because she speaks little and acts haughtily. Yet she rebels against her mother and longs to get away from her. Her attraction and love for Don Inca bring an opportunity for passion and light to enter her dark life, "Su mundo vacio y gris se había colmado y se había iluminado" (38). However, his tragic death produces in her a sadness that leads to deep, incapacitating melancholia.

> Solamente que su dolor intimo, silencioso y desesperado, no pudo ser consolado nunca. /Volvió a la Casa de Campo a vivir rodeada de sus recuerdos, como ella prefería; allí donde todo le hablaba con tan terrible elocuencia. No habló a nadie de su mal, y cuando fue evidente, se negó a ponerse en asistencia (196)

She loses all interest in life and plans for Genoveva to inherit all her jewelry and possessions. Furthermore, she cannot forgive her mother whom she blames for Don Inca's death. Quickly, she becomes "una sombra" (196).

Though Fernanda and María Josefa do not speak about the past to their daughters, their daughters still inherit their sorrow. According to transgenerational trauma research, trauma from the past can be conveyed to the next generation through parental attachments and emotional nuances. Gabriele Schwab in her book, *Haunting Legacies*, notes that family secrets become the basis for the transmission of trauma, "Family

legacies of transgenerational haunting often operate through family secrets and other forms of silencing" (13). Holocaust studies after World War II revealed that parents can pass on their pain and sadness to their children without speaking of their history. Schwab describes the process:

> It is almost as if these children become the recipients not only of their parents' lived memories but also of their somatic memories. Children of a traumatized parental generation, I argue, become avid readers of silences and memory traces hidden in a face that is frozen in grief, a forced smile that does not feel quite right, an apparently unmotivated flare-up of rage, or chronic depression …The second generation thus receives violent histories not only through the actual memories or stories or stories of parents (postmemory) but also through the traces of affect, particularly affect that remains unintegrated and inassimilable. (14)

Mónica and Genoveva absorb the suffering of their mothers through their relationships and what they observe and experience in their mothers' unspoken pain.

Julia Kristeva's work on melancholia in *Black Sun* provides understanding about the melancholia the women experience. Kristeva writes, "For the speaking being life is a meaningful life" (6). In her analysis, melancholia relates to an inhibition of linguistic expression that can lead to temporary or chronic "asymbolia," the inability to use language and create dialogue and meaning (9, 42). Fernanda and María Josefa struggle with speech, but a loss of speech is particularly notable with the melancholia that afflicts Mónica. Kristeva theorizes that a root cause of melancholia lies in a "mother wound," a lack of separation from the mother figure which thus lessens the development of a self and personal autonomy that is necessary for self-expression and speech. María Josefa

and Mónica's relationship contains a love/hate dynamic that they never resolve or discuss. Applying Kristeva's analysis, María Josefa's controlling behavior limited Mónica's development as a person. Mónica copied her mother's behavior but also tried to separate from her mother. When her marriage to Don Inca ended tragically, she could not cope because in her loss of husband she also experienced the loss of self. Thus, she could not speak and express her sorrow, and her condition deteriorated into melancholia. She becomes what Julia Kristeva calls "living death…[o]n the frontiers of life and death…being witness to the meaningless of Being" (4). In contrast, Genoveva maintained a positive relationship with her mother and was free to develop her imagination and literary interests. As a young woman, she frequently reads and converses about characters in novels. Kristeva notes that artistic interests offer ways of expressing emotions and resolving melancholia.

> Literary creation is that adventure of the body and signs that bears witness to the affect…But that testimony is produced by literary creation in a material that is totally different from what constitutes mood. It transposes affect into rhythms, signs, forms. The 'semiotic' and the 'symbolic become the communicable imprints of an affective reality, perceptible to the reader … and yet dominated, set aside, vanquished. (22)

While Genoveva speaks of her sadness and melancholia at the end of the novel, she acknowledges and accepts the sadness that keeps her from returning to Paraguay again. She makes choices and finds meaning in her exile in Buenos Aires. Mónica, on the other hand, lives in a different type of exile, an internal exile into her undeveloped self and pain that leaves her in a void and vulnerable to the ravages of a disease.

The different reactions between the men and the women in grief reflect the restricted opportunities and modes of expression in a patriarchal society and also reflect limitations women impose on themselves. Agency and expression help heal grief. Fernanda chooses silence about the past and receives the support of her family in her silence, but she learns by the end of the story that she must talk of her past. She also recognizes the interests and individuality of her daughter, particularly when she discusses the future with Rosalia. She wants Genoveva to be able to live in Paraguay or in Buenos Aires as she chooses, a path to which Rosalia agrees. In contrast, María Josefa never expresses her losses or separates from her grief nor permits her daughter to develop as a completely separate identity. She bears a trauma from the war that never healed.

Reading *Don Inca* resembles walking alongside Walter Benjamin's Angel of History, *Angelus Novus*, looking behind at the destruction and debris of the past while being pushed forward to find only the accumulation of more destruction. Benjamin calls that push forward, "progress," a word that echoes in the speech of Gabriel at the end of the novel when he meets Genoveva years later in Paraguay. While she leaves Paraguay behind in the sadness of all the loss and tragedies she has experienced, he praises the progress that has occurred and looks forward. Gabriel finds meaning and purpose in Paraguay; Genoveva lives with the sadness of shattered illusions and cannot stay in Paraguay. López de Blomberg creates a romantic story in the aftermath of the War of the Triple Alliance, a story that, like the war, is destined to have an unhappy and tragic ending. She builds her plot on autobiographical experiences and similar characters but avoids the horrific details of her past. Instead, she emphasizes the political instability of 1880 and the perpetual sadness that lingers in Paraguay after the war, a sadness that

penetrates the atmosphere and emotions. López de Blomberg avoids direct criticism of Mariscal López and also avoids expressing political opinions with the exception of a minor quote on the "vulgarity" of progress that appears in the Epilogue and appears incongruous to the discourse of the novel. The quote may reflect López de Blomberg's sadness about the decline of the aristocracy that resulted with liberalism rather than her advocacy of conservative philosophy. She does emphasize the terrors of "el Tribunal de Sangre," a source of personal pain for her as a descendent of the López family. Her inclusion of the military courts and their atrocities in a 1920 novel about the war remains noteworthy since in the 1920s, the Paraguayan government began to erase records of those tribunals and their association with Mariscal López. The novel also illustrates the consequences of avoiding the difficult truths of the past.

In *Don Inca*, López de Blomberg portrays an upper-class family that functions under the protection of the men and the traditional roles; however, the family has suffered multiple losses, including the deaths of many men and the loss of its noble status and reputation. Through a constant interplay of dark and light, López de Blomberg shows the tension between melancholia and hope in nineteenth century Paraguay. Hope shows through the lasting beauty of Paraguay, in the care of family and in the promise of romantic love. Melancholia lingers in the background where emotional memories and physical ruins of the war remain. The novel presents characters in mourning and characters who suffer the prolonged grief of melancholia, showing a contrast between the men and women in the grief process. Melancholia afflicts more women reveals their conflicts women with repression, autonomy and identity development. Her depiction of men's grief can appear simple and rapid in contrast to the long term, profound grief of the

women, but through her characters, the novel reveals the importance of expression in the work of mourning and the limitations of traditional patriarchal society. The protective status afforded upper-class women in the nineteenth century in particular did not encourage personal resilience that would aid recovery from the enormous losses of war. The family cannot keep the war from affecting the next generation, embodied in the young women, Mónica and Genoveva. Some characters find new purpose; some learn to live with sadness, and some develop debilitating disorders that inhibit their ability to function in life. Along with the main tragic love story in the novel, López de Blomberg sweeps across Paraguay through the various excursions characters make, showing the devastating impact of the war on the lower classes and on the land. Her one and only novel accomplishes multiple purposes in highlighting the country of her birth by showing the damaging effects of the War of the Triple Alliance on a family and a nation.

CONCLUSION

The early Paraguayan narrative from the 1920s focusing on the War of the Triple Alliance, addresses both trauma and the political and historical revisions of the war that confronted the nation in the 1920s. Four stories in *Cuentos y Parabolas* by J. Natalicio González, nine stories in *Tradiciones del Hogar* by Teresa Lamas Carísimo de Rodríguez Alcalá and the novel *Don Inca* by Ercilia López de Blomberg process historical trauma from the War of the Triple Alliance, a war that officially ended fifty years before the authors wrote. The three authors differ in their backgrounds, González as a young man from a campesino town with political and intellectual aspirations, Lamas Carísimo as an aristocratic wife and mother from Asunción high-society, and López de Blomberg as the niece of President (Mariscal) Francisco Solano López who lived most of her life in exile in Buenos Aires. Each author writes stories about the War of the Triple Alliance within different Paraguayan settings, González takes readers to the battlefields and to the city streets after the war; Lamas Carísimo describes women in the background of the battlefield, being in their homes, in camps or on the road during evacuations; and López de Blomberg focuses on family at their country house a decade after the war. Within these settings, each author represents a different aspect of what today would be called "trauma," the invisible wounds to the mind that catastrophic war can inflict. Their stories are limited in scope and do not describe all facets of trauma that Paraguayans experienced nor do they conclude that all Paraguayans suffered trauma from the War of the Triple Alliance. However, the stories combined offer a diversity of perspectives, the first glimpses of narratives about the war and an initial understanding through literature of how the war affected survivors and their families.

In her book, *Unclaimed Experience*, Caruth summarizes the major characteristics that describe the trauma as it is experienced after a disastrous and overwhelming event like war: belated, inexpressive, repetitive, incomprehensible and depressing. In their different ways, González, Lamas Carísimo and López de Blomberg recognize and describe some of these characteristics in their stories. For González, the war represented a haunting past that continued to afflict Paraguayans. He recreates horrific scenes of battlefields in his stories and ghosts that haunt Paraguayans in the modern era governed by the liberal party, Partido Liberal. Lamas Carísimo, on the other hand, uses silence as a way to convey the pain and threat that exceeds language and understanding. She presents women's stories that were passed on to her from her family and shows how silence "speaks" for the characters whose testimonies she describes. López de Blomberg emphasizes the melancholia that comes after war in the time of reconstruction. Sadness permeates the atmosphere as memories become known of the past and as new tragedies of survival are confronted. Through their understanding of the emotional wounds of war, the authors identify the lingering presence of historical trauma in their characters and in society. Their use of narrative also provides a mode for expression and healing of wounds, particularly through the stories of Lamas Carísimo and López de Blomberg that are based on personal experiences, passed to them intergenerationally. Lamas Carísimo acts as both a witness and a narrator as she organizes the chronology and meaning of testimonies given to her by relatives. López de Blomberg also creates story from her autobiography and demonstrates through the characters she constructs the importance of verbalization of the past. González's fictional stories are written in the third person and lack a personal connection; healing for him connects to political and historical change that creates meaning through emphasizing heroism in the past.

As the war stories of González, Lamas Carísimo and López de Blomberg illustrate trauma in postwar times, they also respond to the historical revisionist movement of the 1920s that had a national interest in rejecting the negative liberal narrative of the war in favor of an idealized, heroic one. Each author responds to the trend in what they say, whom they criticize and in what they do not say through their stories. González, as a disciple of the leading revisionist Juan O'Leary and as a member of the conservative party, el Partido Colorado, presents the strongest arguments against liberalism and the strongest examples of historical revisionism in his stories. The use of the haunting past expresses trauma as a way to impose his message. In "La Cruz de Corrales," the dying veteran who begs on the city streets functions like a haunting ghost. All around him wealthy Paraguayans celebrate extravagantly but ignore his need, and he dies. He survived the war but cannot survive liberalism that creates ignorant, selfish and materialistic people. Liberals, in González's view, do not recognize their history and do not honor it. González also criticizes liberalism indirectly through his condemnation of a Legionnaire soldier on the battlefield in "El Centinela." Liberalism began in Paraguay with the Legionnaires who returned to Paraguay to set up a new provisional government during the war and during occupation. Legionnaires in González's story are executed as traitors.

Lamas Carísimo and López de Blomberg do not engage in direct criticism of liberalism. Lamas Carísimo extols patriotism, tradition and heroism in her stories and in subtle ways criticizes aspects of liberalism. In her story, "Vengadora," she, like González, also condemns Legionnaires as traitors as she describes a mother who shoots her Legionnaire son when he attacks her other son who serves the Paraguayan army. Treason to the country becomes treason to the family, as the mother's response shows. The mother holds her Legionnaire son responsible for the death of her husband and two other sons in the war. Lamas Carísimo also criticizes Eliza

Lynch, the mistress of Mariscal López, in her stories, "El retrato" and "Pancha Garmendia." She blames Eliza Lynch for arranging the death of Pancha Garmendia. At times, she refers to Lynch as "la inglesa," emphasizing Lynch's lack of Paraguayan heritage (LC II 89). When Lynch appears, she is egotistic and materialistic, showing similar weaknesses to the people on the street in González's story about the dying veteran. Lamas Carísimo excuses the passions and immorality of Mariscal López but not Lynch. Lynch thus represents a "foreign woman" with "foreign ideas" that do not represent Paraguay, a criticism leveled at liberalism by conservatives. In turn, López de Blomberg does not engage directly in a debate on liberalism. She describes the differences between political parties, but presents her characters, such as Felipe, as persons who diplomatically avoid aligning with either party. At the end of the novel, in the scene that occurs in the 1920s, her major character Genoveva returns to Paraguay and briefly discusses "progress" with her cousin Gabriel, the only living relative left in Paraguay. After Genoveva tells Gabriel that she will not return to Paraguay, Genoveva recalls the words of her English friend, Larry, who criticized the "vulgarity" of progress that has changed the city, the people and life (200). The comment may represent a way for López de Blomberg to connect her novel to 1920s political thought, but it may also represent another way for her to explain her continuing exile as she feels melancholia, mourning the life that no longer exists for her and her family in Paraguay as a reality or as an illusion.

The representation and the lack of representation of Mariscal López in the authors' narratives present and subtly question the revisionist view that sought to portray him as the nation's hero. González endorses the revisionist view in his representations of Mariscal López in two of his stories. In "La Batalla de los Muertos," Mariscal López appears on the magical battlefield reenactment as a mythical figure, the man on horseback who remains alive and

continues to fight the last battle of the war. He does not accept defeat, and thus neither should other Paraguayans. Defeat should not define the memory of the war or the memory of Mariscal López, as the revisionists of the early twentieth century argued. González's other stories of battles do not show the outcome, only the heroic actions of Paraguayan soldiers in the middle of battle. Mariscal López, in González's depiction, continues to "live" in memory as the protector and hero of Paraguay. The couple who spend the night in the battlefield are left with a revised memory of Mariscal López and of the war to share with others. González also revises López's image in another story, "El Centinela." Mariscal López meets with the captured Legionnaire soldier. He confronts the soldier with his treason against his own people, but he treats the soldier fairly and rationally. He exemplifies patriotism and justice, not cruelty to traitors. His demeanor contrasts with the nineteenth century image of Mariscal López as a barbaric tyrant and suggests that stories about his mistreatment of traitors are false.

In contrast, neither Lamas Carísimo nor López de Blomberg exalt Mariscal López as a hero, but they do not denigrate him. They carefully avoid references to him in their stories or offer excuses for questionable actions. Lamas Carísimo mentions Mariscal López in passing when she describes his attendance at social activities before the war and describes him specifically when she tells the story of Pancha Garmendia. She describes Pancha as a "residenta," someone who followed Mariscal López and the army because she had to evacuate Asunción. She does not mention Pancha's arrest as a potential traitor or her being sequestered as a "destinada." Instead she fabricates conversations with Pancha, Mariscal López and Lynch that leave Pancha as a martyr, Lynch as the jealous woman guilty of murder, and Mariscal López as an innocent bystander who mourns Pancha's death. Her story revises the story of Pancha's death and absolves Mariscal López in the process. López de Blomberg does not mention Mariscal

López directly in her novel, only through a passing reference to "lopismo" or to describe a doctor as one who had cared for the López family in the past. She creates characters who avoid the truth of the war, and, as a writer, she too edits the truth of the war as she experienced it in the autobiographical characters she creates. Her actual stories of Mariscal López would be too incendiary for a time that was beginning to revere him. López de Blomberg, however, emphasizes the existence of the military tribunals that Mariscal López established to investigate a suspected conspiracy and any potential traitors, including his own family. Those courts lead to hasty imprisonments, torture, trials without defense, and execution. López de Blomberg uses the popular term for a tribunal, "el Tribunal de Sangre," when the men in the novel visit the former location of the tribunals. Their visit in the novel establishes the physical location, and, in two instances in the novel, López de Blomberg gives examples of the tribunals' methods. A neighbor is executed by firing squad as a traitor. Her aunt testifies before the tribunal in defense of her husband who was accused of cowardice and treason. López de Blomberg's own experience as a niece of Mariscal López validates the existence of the tribunals since those military courts lead to the death of her father and three uncles and to the torture of her grandmother and aunts. Her brief references in the novel keep the memory of those atrocities alive at a time when Paraguay was erasing the historical documents that verified their existence. In addition to her inclusion of the tribunals in her novel, the character development of Genoveva shows the negative aspects of creating myths and of hiding the truth. At the beginning of the novel, Genoveva appears as an innocent, naive young girl who lives in her imagination and illusions. She is responsible for naming the mysterious stranger "Don Inca" and creating a myth about him as a descendent of ancient Peruvian kings. In Paraguay, she looks to find the legends and ideals that she reads about in her novels. Genoveva has been protected from the ugly facts of

her family's history in the war and is ill-prepared to handle loss. Gradually, as she learns the truth and faces loss in her family, she experiences profound disillusionment and melancholia that limit her connection to Paraguay. While her story can be interpreted from different perspectives, it can also serve as a warning about the avoidance of truth and the creation of myths that became part of the revisionist movement.

In different ways, the authors also bring women into the history of War of the Triple Alliance. Together, Lamas Carísimo and López de Blomberg, as the first women of Paraguay to write books, present glimpses of women's experiences during and after the war not described before in Paraguayan literature. Lamas Carísimo illustrates the roles of aristocratic women and gives their experiences recognition and agency through her published testimonial stories. The silence of women in her stories shows their thoughtfulness, their emotional depth and their resilience. In other cases, some women in the war, like Pancha Garmendia, became victims, though Lamas Carísimo idealizes as a model of purity who died as a martyr. With the exception of Eliza Lynch, she presents the women as heroes who endured great losses with dignity, who care for their country and for the Paraguayan people. López de Blomberg adds to the picture of women who experienced and survived the war in her novel. She, too, portrays aristocratic women as her primary characters, all women who suffered the loss of a spouse in the war and handle the loss in different ways. Through the travels of the men, López de Blomberg shows the struggles of women of lower classes who dominate the agricultural fields and sell goods in the markets with their young children in tow. The men praise the women they see. Her novel also highlights a difference in the way men and women grieve. The men in the novel find a way to grieve, but most of the women remain locked in melancholia, unable to express themselves and find meaning in life after losses. Men and women in her story both shed tears, but men have

freedom of movement and more options in work and society that help them grieve. For the women, loss of spouse revealed the loss of self and thus a lack of self-expression that could help them heal. González does not emphasize the roles of women in the war, but he makes one of his heroes a woman, a woman that fights ferociously in battle and willingly sacrifices all for her country. Her boyfriend, in contrast, is a traitor that she rejects. In addition, a wife shares the nightmare in the battlefield with her husband. González indicates that women are also patriots who share in the history of Paraguay. War became the great equalizer in the country. Men from all classes served and died. Women supported the war. The war brought changes to the traditional structures of life. Unfortunately, the War of the Triple Alliance did not alter the status of women after the war, even though they acted as co-citizens during the war.

González, Lamas Carísimo and López de Blomberg represent the first three Paraguayan writers of narratives about the War of the Triple Alliance. Collectively, their stories present a diversity of perspectives on the war and on the emotional trauma that lingers in the mind and emotions after war. They represent a particular political decade of historical change and the rejection of liberalism in the decade of 1920-1930. As the literature of the war shows, other writers that followed them also wrote of the war and have not been studied. The memory of the War of the Triple Alliance not only drove the revisionists during the early twentieth century but also helped to justify the dictatorship of Alfredo Stroessner who compared himself to the great heroes of Paraguayan history, like Mariscal López.

Two future projects come to mind as a result of the research conducted for the current project. First, a similar study to this thesis could be done of war stories written after the Chaco war with Bolivia ended in 1935. Two factors would make a difference in the analysis of war stories. Paraguay won the Chaco war, and liberalism had lost power. Thus, in 1936, Mariscal

López's remains were moved to the Pantheon of Heroes, his memory officially vindicated. Potential research questions could address how the War of the Triple Alliance is presented in literature during those historical circumstances when defeat and liberalism are no longer issues in the same way, or how the emerging nationalism affected the treatment of the war and the national image and identity of Paraguay. It would be interesting as well to examine whether signs of trauma from the Chaco war appears in literature and if any trauma from the War of the Triple Alliance persists through another generation.

As a second project, I can envision a study of the War of the Triple Alliance literature written in the post-Stroessner era when writers began to discuss the "revision of revisionism" or "demitification." Potential research questions could address how stories of the War of the Triple Alliance in post-Stroessner time differ from stories written during his dictatorship, or how the representation of Mariscal López differs in post-Stroessner time compared to pre-Stroessner time.

Besides possible future endeavors, the current study of the War of the Triple Alliance and its 1920s literature easily leads to a question about whether catastrophic war ever ends in a country and its culture, especially for the defeated country where most of the war was fought. History of course records the beginning and ending dates of the war. Soldiers leave the battlefields and go home, and the last bodies are buried. Treaties are signed. However, in reality the War of the Triple Alliance did not really end in 1870. Occupation followed and then years of instability in government with constant changes in administration by choice or force. The land and the economy had to be rebuilt which meant more immigration and the sale of public lands that affected the livelihood of *campesinos*. Public debates followed on how to remember the war, and those debates created new histories, new statues, and new commemorations. The

memories of the war continued publicly and personally. The veterans who returned home had to face physical and mental injuries, feeling guilt for surviving or for being part of disaster. Fractured families had to find a way to grieve and continue without significant family members. Survivors pass their stories on to their descendants either verbally or non-verbally through the pain they still experience. Histories are written and interpretations will be argued over generations. For Paraguay, it is difficult to believe the War of the Triple Alliance ended. Now over 150 years later, stories are still being written, and the history still being revised.

APPENDIX

NOTES

[1] For additional studies of intergenerational trauma transmission, see Auerhahn, pp. 215-219; Danieli, Norris and Engdahl, pp. 1-4, 8-11; Harris, pp. 70-71, 73-81; Jacobs; Kellermann, pp. 256-266; and Lev-Wiesel, pp. 76-78, 88-92.

[2] The full list of writers of Generación de 900 includes: Moisés Bertoni (1857-1929), Guido Boggiani (1861-1901), Carlos R. Centurión (1902-1969), José Segundo Decoud (1848-1909), Diógenes Decoud (1857-1920), Viriato Díaz Pérez (1875- 1958), Manuel Domínguez (1868-1935), Blas Garay (1873- 1899), Juan Silvano Godoi (1846-1926), Manuel Gondra (1871-1927), Fulgencio R. Moreno (1872-1933), and Ignacio Pane (1880-1920).

[3] According to Guido Rodríguez Alcalá, Barrett "se sorprendio de la atención que se le concedia al pasado en un país con graves problemas presentes" ("Imágenes de la Guerra de la Triple Alianza" 114). In recent literary scholarship, French analyzed intergenerational trauma that Barrett expressed through his observances of suffering Paraguayan workers ("El peso de tanta pena" 321-342). In another recent study, Alejandro Quin applies biopolitical theories of Michel Foucault to Barrett's advocacy in *Lo que son los yerbales* for the oppressed workers as the place in liberalism where the war continues (13).

[4] More women writers published and wrote about the war in the mid-twentieth century, such as, Dirma Pardo in *Verdad y fantasia* (1955), a short story collection that includes, "La odiesea del regresso," a story that compares Mariscal López to Ulysses, Concepción Leyes de Chávez with *Madame Lynch* (1957), a biography of Mariscal López' mistress, Eliza Lynch, and Ana Iris Cháves with *Crónica de Una Familia* (1966), a novel that shows the evolution of thought about the memory of the war between 1870-1950 (Langa Pizarro, "La Guerra"). In her short stories collections published in the mid-twentieth century, Josefina Plá included stories

about women from the War of the Triple Alliance, presenting them in realistic portrayals as hard-working women who continually sacrificed for others, “El Canasto de Serapio,” “Vaca Retá,” “Jesús Meninho” (Mateo del Pino 286, 289, 290).

Paraguayan politics continued to be turbulent and to influence authors in the mid-twentieth century. The civil war of 1947 lead to the dictatorship of Alfredo Stroessner in 1954 and also to the exile of a number of Paraguayan writers, including Augusto Roa Bastos and Juan Bautista Rivarolla Matto who both addressed the War of the Triple Alliance in their works. Among his many works, Roa Bastos wrote poems, stories and a novel about the war, such as, “El ojo de la luna,” “Frente a frente” and “El sonámbulo.” “El sonámbulo” depicts the war as a nightmare that only a sleepwalker can comprehend and later became integrated into the novel, *El Fiscal*, that Roa Bastos published in 1976. *El Fiscal* represents the last work in his trilogy that began with *Hijo de hombre*. French analyzes two poems Roa Bastos wrote about the War of the Triple alliance in an article, “‘Letras Terribles’: Mourning and Reparation in Two Poems by Augusto Roa Bastos.” In her analysis of *Viaje Nocturno de Gaulberto*, French compares the similarities of the story of Juan Crisóstomo Centurión to “El sonambulo” (47). Helene Weldt-Basson’s studies on Roa Bastos include articles on *El Fiscal*, particularly on his use of the “double” in creating fictional characters that resemble historical figures in Paraguay**.** Another Paraguayan author in exile, Juan Bautista Rivarola Matto, published three novels with the war as a major theme. *Diagonal de sangre* (1986) provides an analysis of war; *La isla sin mar* (1987) questions the historical revisionism that began in the early twentieth century and argues that the Stroessner dictatorship is a continuation of the War of the Triple Alliance. *El santo de guatambú* (1988) relates the story of Paraguayan cleric, Fidel Maíz, one of the judges in the treason investigations and trials that Mariscal López initiated during the last part of the war.

Rivarola Matto's revision theme reflects the work of other Paraguayan authors in the late twentieth century. Authors composed revisions of earlier works. In *Angola y otros cuentos* (1984), Helio Vera published a story based on the 1868 testimony of Dorotea Duprat, a Frenchwoman who jailed under suspicion of treason during the War of the Triple Alliance. In her short story collection of 1986, *La Seca y Otros Cuentos*, Renée Ferrer, includes a story, "Santa," that revised the war story, "Vengadora," by Teresa Lamas Carísimo de Rodríguez Alcalá in *Tradiciones del Hogar* (1921). In 1986, Guido Rodríguez Alcalá published a novel, *Caballero*, that presented the story of Bernardino Caballero, one of Mariscal López's generals and one of Paraguay's early presidents, 1880-1886. He based his work on a biography written by Juan Emiliano O'Leary in 1970, *El Centauro de Ybycuí. Caballero* criticizes Mariscal López and contradicts the positive, heroic view that the revisionists of the early twentieth century implemented. In the novel, Rodríguez Alcalá portrays Mariscal López as a paranoid coward and portrays the main historical character, Bernardino Caballero, considered a hero of the war and rebuilder of the country, as an inept fool (Langa Pizarro "Guido" 223-249). The author uses the novel to accomplish what he calls "la desmitificacion de la historia," a revision of revisionism that represents a concept in the new historical novel of Hispanic America (Langa Pizarro "Guido" 215). For Rodríguez Alcalá, a way to criticize current government is to criticize the history (Langa Pizarro "Guido" 215). After *Caballero*, in 1988, he followed with *Caballero el rey*, a novel about Bernardino Caballero's presidency.

The War of the Triple Alliance has continued to be a theme for writers in the years after the overthrow of dictator Alfredo Stroessner in 1989, years marked by public recognition of exiled writers and by ambivalence or negation of conservative political culture and historiography. *Facundo Meza y la Guerra del Paraguay* (1997), a novel by Marcelo Galli

Romanach, still supports the traditions of the Colorado Party. In contrast, in 2000, Maybell Lebrón, a supporter of both Rivorala Matto and Rodríguez Alcalá, published *Pancha*, a novel about Pancha Garmendia. Other recent novels present modern twists on the history of the War of the Triple Alliance (Langa Pizarro). *Una Herencia Peligroso* (1993), a novel by Michael Brunotte, uses a police story to addresses the war. *El Dedo Trémulo* (2002) by Esteban Cabañas creates a novel with a fragmented and inconclusive simulations about Eliza Lynch. *El Goto* (1998) by Jose Eduardo Alcazar uses a science fiction approach to its portrayal of despots and caudillos. Margarita Prieto Yegros published war stories, *Cuentos de la Guerra Grande* in 2001 and *Nuevos cuentos de la Guerra Grande* in 2006.

[5] For more information on the development of magazine *Guaranía*, see articles by Tutte, A., and González de Bosio, B.

[6] Trauma distorts time and alters chronology of time; see the analysis of O'Brien, W.

[7] González wrote a poem, "Solano López," that was published posthumously in a 1984 anthology of his poetry. For a copy of the poem, see the *Antologia de la Literatura Paraguaya* by Méndez-Faith. In the poem, González speaks to Mariscal López personally and praises him vigorously, comparing him to the mythological figure Agamemnon, calling him "el neuvo Atrida;" Mariscal López was "el mirto y el laurel" and stands as "símbolo eterno de la Raza."

[8] Serafina Daválos is considered the first feminist and first woman to become a lawyer in Paraguay. Feminism was the theme of her 1907 thesis, *Humanismo*. She argued that feminism was humanism. Her thesis has been republished in two editions, one celebrating the one-hundredth anniversary of its publication. See Daválos for a link to full work with commentaries.

[9] Remarkably, the maternal grandfather of Lamas Carísimo, Pedro Carísimo Jovellanos, died in the same battle on the same day. See Caballo Aquino, Ricardo, "Teresa Lamas Carísimo."

[10] Lamas Carísimo describes her personal grief at greater length in stories she added to later editions of *Tradiciones del Hogar* published after 1930. For a discussion of those stories, see the French article, "'El peso de tanta pena' La Guerra de la Triple Alianza como trauma intergeneracional," pp. 332-335.

[11] O'Leary's mother, Dolores Urdapilleta de Jovellanos, was a "destinada," See Rodríguez Alcalá, G, in *Residentas, Destinadas y Traidoras*, pp.72-77. In "'El peso de tanta pena' La Guerra de la Triple Alianza como trauma intergeneracional," French discusses the relationship between Lamas Carísimo and O'Leary and also discusses O'Leary's intergenerational trauma.

[12] For a summary of the history of melancholia in the nineteenth century, see the article by Berrios, G.E.

[13] His disorientation, though briefly described in the novel, resembles the disorientation of the veteran protagonist in the 1877 autobiographical novel by Juan Crisóstomo Centurión, *Viaje nocturno de Gualberto o Recuerdos y reflecciones [sic] de un ausente, por el paraguayo J. C. Roenicunt y Zenitram.*

[14] For an analysis of the women's participation in the economy after the War of the Triple Alliance until the Chaco War, see the article by Dalla-Corte Caballero.

[15] For an analysis of the process of "illusionment" and disillusionment with discussions about Freud and trauma, see the article by Margulies, A., pp. 290-296, 298-302.

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