THE INDIAN IN THE NOVELS OF CIRO ALEGRÍA

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THE INDIAN IN THE NOVELS OF CIRO ALEGRÍA

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Justification

Ciro Alegría's name has been familiar in literary circles since the late 1930's and early 1940's when he became a prize-winning novelist three times. A host of critics have acclaimed his literary merit. In The Epic of Latin American Literature, Arturo Torres Rioseco has called him ". . . the leading contemporary novelist of Peru."[1] Avis Weir, in the introduction to her translation of Los perros hambrientos, has agreed and added that Alegría is the outstanding writer of novelas indianistas today.[2]

Alberto Escobar, a scholar of Spanish literature, has said this of the writer's El mundo es ancho y ajeno:

> This book lifted the name of its author from the list of good Latin-American writers and placed him among the masters of Spanish fiction.[3]

More specifically, Edith Isaccs has compared him with the great Spanish novelist Pío Baroja.

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[1]Arturo Torres Rioseco, The Epic of Latin American Literature (Berkeley, California, 1959), p. 109.

[2]Avis Weir, "Ciro Alegría's Los Perros Hambrientos, A Translation, With Summaries, Notes and Introduction," Unpublished thesis (Austin, Texas, 1947), p. xvi.

[3]Alberto Escobar, "Ciro Alegría's Worlds," Américas, Vol. 15, No. 2 (February, 1963), p. 7.

> The pictures in Broad and Alien is the World [English translation of El mundo es ancho y ajeno] unroll like a great social diorama, the way Baroja's do, against a beautiful natural background, and they narrow down from time to time, as his do, into fine single scenes distinctly dramatic in their speech, their dialogue, their human conflicts.[4]

Jefferson Rea Spell, on the other hand, has called attention to Alegría's timely topics and his deeply felt sense of right and wrong, as well as his artistry as a writer.

> . . . he is interested in certain groups of people who generally on account of social injustice, are in a tragic situation; and . . . he is, particularily in the manner of style, a literary artist.[5]

> . . . and the strength of its [El mundo es ancho y ajeno] power lies principally in the high quality of the mental and moral fiber of the author himself, who in his defense of the downtrodden, has set forth a fundamental and vital problem of the people of Peru and treated it both energetically and fearlessly.[6]

Therefore, considering these critical opinions, it can be concluded that Ciro Alegría is artistically and philosophically worthy of the attention of the Master's degree candidate in a thesis of this nature.

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[4]Edith J. R. Isaccs, "Sobre: Ciro Alegría, Broad and Alien is the World," Theatre Arts Monthly, Vol. XXVI (1942), 281.

[5]Jefferson Rea Spell, Contemporary Spanish American Fiction, (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1944), p. 256.

[6]Spell, p. 268.

In addition to discussing the merit of the writer, it is important quickly to review what studies have been made about Alegría to date. Of course many reviews of his novels exist, and there is mention made of Alegría in most of the histories of Latin American literature. Short critical and analytical articles, such as Alberto Escobar's "Ciro Alegría's Worlds"[7] and Hubert Mate's comparison of Alegría and López y Fuentes,[8] are to be found. Most of these, due to their brevity, fail to cover the author's many aspects adequately.

Theses dealing with Alegría are more complete. Patricia K. Hull's "Ciro Alegría, novelista peruano"[9] is a very extensive study of Alegría. She states her purpose as follows:

> Aquí me propongo hacer un estudio breve del ambiente peruano de donde salió Ciro Alegría; de su personalidad, carácter y vida; y de su obra. Además, quiero analizar, de la manera más completa que pueda, los elementos peruanos du sus tres novelas: La serpiente de oro, Los perros hambrientos, y El mundo es ancho y ajeno.[10]

Avis Weir in her M. A. thesis has made a fine translation

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[7]Escobar, pp. 7-10.

[8]Hubert E. Mate, "Social Aspects of Novels by López y Fuentes and Ciro Alegría," Hispania, Vol. 39 (September, 1956), 287.

[9]Patricia Kay Hull, "Ciro Alegría, novelista peruano," Unpublished thesis (Columbia, 1946).

[10]Hull, pp. 1-2.

of Los perros hambrientes.[11] Her introduction is a general criticism of Alegría's work with emphasis on the novel she translates.

William Archer has written a literary criticism of Alegría for his M. A. thesis. "The Novelistic Art of Ciro Alegría," his thesis, is particularily fine as an example of comparative literature.[12]

A. S. Villa has made a study of the "Aspectos lingüísticos de las novelas de Ciro Alegría" for his M. A. thesis.[13]

Jessie Tayler O'Bannion's work, A Comparative Study of four South American novelists of this Generation (Gallegos, Rivera, Güiraldes, Ciro Alegría),"[14] is another M. A. thesis.[15] Since it is a comparative study, however, one would assume that it is not devoted to the Indian in the works of Alegría as is this paper. Also it was written in 1939, two years before Alegría's most important book concerning the Indian was published.

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[11]Weir.

[12]William H. Archer, "The Novelistic Art of Ciro Alegría," Unpublished thesis (Knoxville, Tenn., 1948).

[13]A. S. Villa, "Aspectos lingüísticos de las novelas de Ciro Alegría," Unpublished thesis (Los Angeles, Calif., 1947).

[14]Jessie May Tayler O'Bannion, "A Comparative Study of four South American Novelists of this Generation (Gallegos, Rivera, Güiraldes, Ciro Alegría)," Unpublished thesis (Chicago, 1939).

[15]This thesis is not available through inter-library loan, so this writer has been unable to analyse it.

Because of its emphasis and date it is doubtful that the above thesis would invalidate this study.

By far the most complete analysis was published in 1956 in Santander. Las novelas de Ciro Alegría is the result of seven years' work on the part of Matilde Vilariño de Olivieri.[16] She earlier had written her M. A. thesis on Ciro Alegría, and the expanded volume is her published PhD dissertation. Its emphasis, however, is not on the Indian in the novels as is this study.

Works about Alegría, therefore, fall into three categories: (1) reviews of his works; (2) general criticism; (3) scholarly research, namely, four theses and one dissertation.

Many of these works have been of great help; their bibliographies were particularily valuable. This thesis' purpose is to build on these works and to add new color and dimension to the kaleidoscope analysis that is warranted a talent such as Ciro Alegría.

It is obvious that Alegría has not been exhausted as a subject for literary analysis. More study of the man and his works certainly is justified. In addition, there has been no work which is devoted to the Indian as a personality as he appears in Alegría's novels. It therefore seems that a study of the Indian in Ciro Alegría's novels might add to the continuum of knowledge in the discipline of Spanish American Literature.

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[16] Matilde Vilariño de Olivieri, Las Novelas de Ciro Alegría (Santander, 1956).

In order to explain the significance of the Indian as an element in contemporary Latin American literature, it is necessary to examine the movement called indianista, and the position Ciro Alegría holds in relationship to this school of writing. Herman Hespelt in his book An Outline History of Spanish American Literature explains the beginnings of the movement as follows:

> The period opens with the Mexican Revolution of 1910, the first significant movement for social and economic reform in America--all other revolutionary attempts of the past having been fundamentally and almost exclusively political, the attempt of the ousted to regain control. The submerged masses--the Indian, the laborer, "los de abajo" in general--soon became the theme of those writers who sought to document and to give impetus to the conflict that spread in varying degrees throughout most of Spanish America. Literati everywhere took up the fight for reform, exposing and denouncing injustice and tyranny and championing the cause of the "forgotten man," regardless of his race--Indian, Negro, or mestizo--or of his origin--Amazon jungle, Venezuelan "llanos," Andean plateau, or festering urban center. Literature was brought down out of the "ivory tower" of the modernists to record the social trends of the day. Even the so-called "novela indianista" cast off the romantic coloring of its past to join the family of the starkly realistic, proletarian-type novel of the last decade.[17]

Although that critic sees the movement as a direct result of political revolution in Mexico, Henríquez Ureña traces the beginnings to the poem of 1913, "¿Quién sabe?" by the Peruvian,

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[17]Herman E. Hespelt, ed. An Outline History of Spanish American Literature (New York, 1941), p. 120.

Santos Chocano.[18] Ureña recognizes the later writers César Vallejo, Carrera Andrade, and Jacinto Fombona Pachano.[19] He agrees, however, with Hespelt as to emphasis.

> Most of the literature concerning the Indian took the shape of fiction. The most famous novel of this type, and one of the earliest, is The Under Dogs (1916) of the Mexican Mariano Azuela (b. 1873).[20]

Then he goes on to list the best known of the indianista novelists.

> The best-known authors are the Peruvians Vallejo, Falcón, and Alegría, and the Ecuadorians Jorge Icaza, Fernando Chaves, and Enrique Gil Gilbert, the Bolivian Alcides Arguedas, and the Mexican Gregorio López y Fuentes.[21]

It is evident that some of the finest scholars in the field of Latin American literature have recognized the literature concerning the Indian and the significance Alegría plays in the movement. To further elaborate, M. J. Bernadete in "A Novel of Peru" (which appeared in The Nation, 1941) has listed the following leaders in the history of the struggle for Indian rights.

(1) Father Las Casas
(2) Rubén Darío
(3) Chocano
(4) Gabriela Mistral
(5) Manuel González Prada
(6) José Carlos Mariátegui

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[18]Pedro Henríquez-Ureña, Literary Currents in Hispanic America (Cambridge, Mass., 1945), p. 196.

[19]Henriquez-Ureña, p. 197.

[20]Henriquez-Ureña, p. 197.

[21]Ibid.

(7) Haya de la Torre
(8) Ciro Alegría[22]

Although the theme or purpose of the movement may be superficiously self-explanatory, it is interesting to see what the critics have said in this regard. Escobar says,

> In addition to its political cast, Indianism includes artistic expression in painting, sculpture, and literature, but especially in the novel. Taking the human problems of the Indian as its main theme, among the difficulties that face the Indian it has emphasized the theme of the land.[23]

Harriet de Onís in her "Afterward" to The Golden Serpent (the English title for La serpiente de oro) in reference to the new Peruvian writers of the 1930's states the purpose thusly, "Their artistic purpose was to discover and give expression to the reality of their own land and people."[24]

Most valuable to this study is the purpose as seen by Ciro Alegría himself. In an article he calls "Aprismo" which appeared in Books Abroad, he has said that the new literature must be of the soul of the new land.

> There must be created, then a literature rooted in the very soul, in the very flesh, in the very soil of America.
>
> Is it then a social literature? Yes, naturally, if we consider that all literature. . .

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[22]M. J. Bernadete, "A Novel of Peru," Nation, Vol. 153 (Nov. 29, 1941), 542.

[23]Escobar, p. 7.

[24]Harriet de Onís, "Afterward" in The Golden Serpent by Ciro Alegría (New York, 1963), p. 187.

> has a social influence. But since that adjective social is particularly liable to misunderstandings, we must make it clear that it does not pursue the immediate objects of cheap propaganda. Its objectives are higher and deeper.[25]

In summary, it is evident that the indianista novel is a type worthy of study because of its history, its purpose, and its political relationship to the dynamic quality of South American life and literature.

Before the justification can be drawn to a close, it is essential to examine briefly the importance the Indian has played in Alegría's novels and in his life. Is he someone who knows Indians, their customs and life well enough to even warrant a consideration of the topic?

When the experts are consulted regarding this question there seems to be a resounding affirmative. As was noted before, Alegría has been called an "Outstanding writer of novelas indianistas."[26] As further proof, various critics have recognized Alegría's treatment of the Indian. Gerald Wade, for instance, notes that the first novel, La serpiente de oro (1935), is a treasury of cholo and Indian customs.[27] In addition, Avis

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[25]Ciro Alegría, "Aprismo and Literature," Books Abroad, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Winter, 1938), 9.

[26]Torres Rioseco, p. 189.

[27]Gerald E. Wade, "Introduction," El mundo es ancho y ajeno by Ciro Alegría (New York, 1945), p. xiv.

Weir says, "The book is a storehouse of legends, customs, and superstitions of the cholos and Indians of the upper Marañón."[28] The same critic says this of Los perros hambrientos (1938): "An excellent feature of the novel is the picture of the life of the native in the Peruvian highlands."[29]

Because El mundo es ancho y ajeno (1941) deals directly with the Indian problem, it is much more concerned with the everyday life of the Indian. Spell has recognized and commented on this aspect of the novel.

> In regard to the medium in which these numerous and varied characters move, there is a great store of information, treating not only their physical background, but their beliefs, their love, their way of life, and their amusements and diversions. In fact, it is very doubtful whether there exists in all Peruvian literature any other book so rich in this respect.[30]

The critic and scholar Fernando Alegría clarifies the author's importance in the relm of indianista novels.

> . . . Ciro Alegría consigue una perfecta identificación del ser humano con el paisaje, un equilibrio de valores pictóricos y psicológicos que alza la narración a un plano de clásica belleza. En su lenguaje se acentúa la tendencia lírica. Ya en esta obra la crítica ve claramente que la novela indianista hispanoamericana tiene en Ciro Alegría un intérprete original, marcadamente distinto de los ecuatorianos y mexicanos. Mientras aquéllos, con Icaza a la cabeza, explotan la violencia, el primitivismo

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[28]Weir, p. xxii.

[29]Weir, p. xxx.

[30]Spell, pp. 266-267.

> psicológico y el dialectismo local, Ciro Alegría describe líricamente y narra sin prisa, acumulando riqueza folklórica, tradiciones, cuentos, abriéndose con ternura hacia el alma de los indios, alumbrando sus gestos, sus acciones y sus palabras con una dimensión filosófica inesperada. Los ecuatorianos le superan en fuerza expresiva, él les supera en profundidad, en simpatía humana, en lirismo, cualidades todas de significación universal.[31]

Alegría had firsthand knowledge of the Indian and cholo. As a child he played with them.[32] Later he worked and lived among them.[33] For these reasons, (1) wealth of material in the novels, and (2) personal contact with the Indian, it would seem that the Indian is represented in detail in these novels, and in a kind of detail that only can be found through intimate knowledge of the Indian.

In summary then, there are four reasons for making this study.

(1) Alegría is recognized as a master writer.

(2) Comparatively little scholarly research and criticism

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[31]Fernando Alegría, Breve historia de la novela hispanoamericana, (Berkeley, Calif., 1959), p. 254.

[32]Current Biography, Vol. II (1941), 16.

[33]Luis Alberto Sánchez, "The myth of the gloomy Forrest," Books Abroad, Vol. X (1936), 273.

has been made on Alegría, and nothing has been written emphasising the Indian personality he depicts.

(3) The *indianista* movement has been an important one in contemporary Latin American literature and deserves emphasis and continual study.

(4) Alegría is considered an outstanding writer in regard to Indian lore and personality, therefore an important writer of the *indianista* movement.

Thesis Statement

Because it is evident from the above mentioned proof that Alegría is the champion of the Indian, it was found that a more detailed examination of the Indian as seen in Ciro Alegría's novels was needed. Following this conclusion, and further research, it became evident that Alegría saw the Indian as an individual with a complex personality and a dignity stemming from his ancient culture. The Indian as an individual with human rights and desires therefore became the focus of interest of this thesis. From the above general statement, the following thesis was divised: In his novels Ciro Alegría depicts the Indian as a worthy member of human society. A detailed discussion of this statement follows.

The term *depicts* needs further explanation. The word suggests a picture. Indeed, all creative artists must be selective, giving details to support their points of view. Therefore, it is recognized that Ciro Alegría has painted a picture that ex-

presses a point of view. This study is not concerned with the truth of the point of view, but rather in describing and analyzing the picture Alegría paints.

The Indian here shall be of three types: (1) the communal Indian, (2) the Indian of the river Marañón, and (3) the Indian of the Andes. These have one distinctive thing in common; they exist outside the white culture. Since the cholo sometimes moves from white to Indian culture, his case presents some problems of limitation for this study. As closely as possible he will be discussed only when living as a member of the Indian society. Otherwise he will be considered an outsider, one who relates to the Indian, but is not an Indian.

This study is interested only in the Indian as an individual. General statements will be made at the close of the thesis concerning the Indian as a group, but basically the question to be answered here is not what contributions can the Indian community as a whole make to civilization, but what is the worth of the Indian as a person.

Worthwhile suggests that there is no drain on society from this member, and it would be expected that he would make contributions to better mankind. To be specific, he can govern himself and care for himself without being a burden to others. What is more, he contributes to the knowledge and sensitivity of mankind through all or some of the fields of science, government, philosophy, and art.

Human society is of course a reference to an anthropological and sociological view of mankind. The Indian will not be judged against the standards of the "civilized" Spanish culture (as he has been to his great disadvantage for four centuries). Rather, the Indian will be evaluated with a wider view of civilization in mind.

Recapping these definitions then, the thesis statement could read: In his novels which have Indian theme and realism, Ciro Alegría has pictured the primitive Andean as a member of the long chain of civilized men who are self sufficient and active in endeavors which enrich all mankind.

Limitations

Ciro Alegría has done considerable writing as may be seen by turning to the bibliography of this thesis. Those works which are omitted include poems, short stories, essays, and children's books. There are several reasons for their omission. In the first place, the poems are not well known. Alegría himself has dismissed them as better not read.[34] The essays were studied for elements concerning the Indian, but on the whole

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[34]Wade, p. xii.

they deal with subjects unrelated to the thesis topic. The newest book, a collection of short stories, does not concern itself with the Indian.[35]

The earlier short stories were not included because they would provide much more material than could be handled in a M. A. thesis. They do not lack merit as literature, nor do they lack insight into the character of the Indian. Instead they are numerous and complex, and are worthy of a separate study.

The Indian as discussed here will not be the Indian in every setting and environment in Peru. Alegría concerned himself with the Indian only as seen in the highlands of the Andes (Los perros hambrientos), the communities of the lower slopes (El mundo es ancho y ajeno), and the Indian found along the banks of the river Marañón (La serpiente de oro). Therefore this study seeks only to discuss these specific groups.

The two limitations then are in regard to the amount of writing of Alegría and the Indian he discusses.

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[35]Ciro Alegría, Duelo de caballeros (Lima, 1963).

CHAPTER II

THE AUTHOR

Biography

The modern concept of literary criticism has adopted the practice of psychology, contending that in order to understand one phase of a man or his works, the whole man must be studied. This is a major reason for analyzing the life of Ciro Alegría in a paper such as this. There are other justifications, but these seem to be only a more specific wording of the same reason. One such wording is given by William Archer when he states that Alegría used his own background in his novels.[1] If this is taken to be true, Alegría's background must be studied in order to obtain a more mature view of his works. Therefore, the attention of this study now turns to Ciro Alegría's biography.

The outstanding character in the ancestry of Ciro Alegría is his great-grandfather. Current Biography says of him,

> . . . his great-grandfather on both sides was an Irishman named Diego (James) Lynch who amassed a fortune and settled down among his mines in Peru. He was known as a generous and convivial neighbor, and the Lynches lived in comfort until a flood destroyed the mines and

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[1]William H. Archer, "The Novelistic Art of Ciro Alegría," Unpublished thesis (Knoxville, Tenn., 1948), p. 53.

> ruined Diego Lynch. "He left his heirs a fine memory and a dozen silver spoons."[2]

The quoted sentence is from Alegría himself.[3] The Celtic element in Ciro Alegría's writing is sometimes mentioned, and Edith Isaacs compares him to the modern Irish playwright John Millington Synge.[4] In addition to the Irish-Spanish stock, the Alegría family has a mixture of mestizo blood.[5] The Indian blood is of particular note to this study with its emphasis on Alegría's sympathetic attitude toward the Andean.

The writer's parents, Herminia Basán Lynch and José Alegría Lynch were cousins. José Alegría Lynch was a journalist in Trujillo. Among his writings is a criticism of his son's novel La serpiente de oro, which Angel Flores terms an excellent critique.[6]

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[2]"Alegría, Ciro," Current Biography, II (1941), 16.

[3]It is interesting to note that two important characters of El mundo es ancho y ajeno are benevolent, wealthy people named Alegría. The whole chapter can be studied to show similarities between this fictional family and the Alegrías themselves. This can be found in the following reference. Ciro Alegría, El Mundo es ancho y ajeno (Santiago de Chile, 1941), pp. 99-131.

[4]Edith J. R. Isaacs, "Sobre: Ciro Alegría, Broad and Alien is the World," Theatre Arts Monthly, XXVI (1942, 281.

[5]Gerald E. Wade, "Introduction," El mundo es ancho y ajeno by Ciro Alegría (New York, 1945), p. ix.

[6]Angel Flores, "Four Latin American Writers: Ciro Alegría," Panorama (January, 1942), p. 1.

Ciro Alegría was born the eldest in a family which later consisted of five boys and one girl, on November 4, 1909.[7] The critics disagree as to the exact birthplace of the writer. Weir has found four different sites given.[8] Most biographers, however, give Trujillo as his birthplace.[9] Flores, on the other hand, specifies that the birthplace was the "remote country estate of his maternal grandfather in northern Peru," in the district of Sartibamba in the province of Huamachuco.[10] The significance of this birthplace is that this very district appears as the setting for his novel La serpiente de oro. From available sources it seems accurate to judge that as a boy young Ciro divided his time between the city and the country.

The young Peruvian attended elementary school at Cajabamba[11] where the poet César Valleje was one of his early teachers. Flores relates that Alegría still harbors warm admiration for the older poet.[12] Of the relationship Harriet de Onís has written:

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[7]Ibid., p. 1.

[8]Avis Weir, "Ciro Alegría's Los Perros Hambrientos, A Translation, with Summaries, Notes and Introduction," Unpublished thesis (Austin, Texas, 1947), pp. v-vi.

[9]"Latin American Novel Prize Awarded," Publisher's Weekly, CXXXIX (1941), 1126.

[10]Flores, p. 1.

[11]Wade, p. ix.

[12]Flores, p. 1.

> . . . one of his teachers was César Vallejo, that gifted, tormented poet who may have communicated to his equally gifted pupil something of his own impassioned thirst for social justice.[13]

Following his elementary education the boy spent much time at the estate of his paternal grandfather, which was also in the Huamachuco region. Flores evaluated the stay in the following manner.

> The period in Marcabal served to familiarize the impressionable boy with Nature, farm husbandry, and the speech characteristic of that region, especially of the Indians. The young Alegría camped with them by the fringe of the forest where they were clearing trees, and listened to their yarns and conversations. Ciro slept in a cabin made of palm leaves and in the day roamed about in the fields, watching with inquisitive eyes the habits of the animals and picking fruit under the tropical skies.[14]

Current Biography also comments on Alegría's education, which was so largely gained from the experiences of living.

> Surrounded by Indian and chola. . . workers, Alegría and his brothers and sisters [sic.] were attached to the peons, an attachment which worried his mother, who was still haunted by the family's former grandeur.[15]

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[13]Harriet de Onís, "Afterword," The Golden Serpent, by Ciro Alegría (New York; 1963), p. 188.

[14]Flores, p. 1.

[15]Current Biography, II, 16.

Sánchez has said this of the experience:

> Alegría lived for a long time in the scene of his novel, on the "brow of the mountain" watered by the Marañón. He was a character in its dramas and took part in its festivals. From it he drew the personages, the incidents and plot of his Serpiente de oro. . .[16]

Isaacs also refers to Alegría's closeness with nature and native.

> . . . he learned to farm and familiarized himself with the life of the native Indians. He enjoyed listening to them and working with them, roaming about the fields and over mountains, learning the habits not only of men but of animals as he watched.[17]

In secondary school, Colegio Nacional de San Juan of Trujillo, Alegría studied the old Peruvian writers and began his own career, founding an amatuer newspaper, Tribuna Sanjuanista.[18] He soon became a reporter for the newspaper El Norte; Wade says that this was in 1926,[19] while Flores gives the date as 1928.[20]

At this time a short interlude occured in which Ciro Alegría

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[16]Luis Alberto Sánchez, "The Myth of the Gloomy Forest," Books Abroad, X (1936), 273.

[17]Isaacs, p. 281.

[18]Flores, p. 2.

[19]Wade, p. x.

[20]Flores, p. 2.

worked in the capacity of foreman and timekeeper with a road construction and bridgebuilding company.[21] This position gave Alegría another opportunity to become acquainted firsthand with the common man, his problems, pleasures, and dreams.

Although Alegría never did graduate from the University of Trujillo, he attended classes there for several years while continuing his writing for El Norte. It was at this time, 1930, that Ciro Alegría became involved in the work of the ideological APRA (Popular Revolutionary Alliance). Alegría has commented on the Aprista movement. Here is his idea of what APRA basically stood for at that time.

> . . . Aprismo asserts the reality of the new American man, a man of different spiritual mold from his ancestors, whatever be the race from which he sprang: European or indigenous.[22]

Flores states that Alegría's work in the Aprismo movement was untiring. In December, 1931, as a member of the executive committee of the First Northern Sector, he was thrown into jail. It was not until the revolution of July, 1932, that he was freed.[23]

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[21]Flores, p. 2.

[22]Ciro Alegría, "Aprismo and Literature," Books Abroad, XII (Winter, 1938), 9.

[23]Flores, p. 2.

After this he was condemned in absentia to ten years in prison. Shortly thereafter he was caught fleeing through the Marañón River region, hoping to reach Ecuador. This time Alegría was imprisoned for one full year. All in all he spent close to two years in jail, and there seems to be little doubt that his experience is mirrored in the experiences of the hero of El mundo es ancho y ajeno.

> It is unlikely that the outrage of forced confinement could have been so vividly conveyed had not the author experienced an interval in prison himself.[24]

For the following years, 1933-1934, Alegría worked for a daily newspaper, La Tribuna, but finally the government, in an act to rid itself of him without resorting to imprisonment, deported him to Chile. Patricia Kay Hull has a detailed account of his flight from Peru after which he arrived in Chile with only a few centavos in his pocket.[25]

During the seven years Ciro Alegría was in Chile he produced some of his most mature work. He began by writing a short story a month for a Buenos Aires newspaper.[26] By the time his first novel, La serpiente de oro, was begun, the writer had completed

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[24]Archer, pp. 43-44.

[25]Patricia Kay Hull, "Ciro Alegría, novelista peruano," Unpublished thesis (New York, Columbia University, 1946), p. 18-20.

[26]Wade, p. xi.

five stories and fifty poems.[27] The first novel evolved from a short story. Hoping to serialize his assignment of one story per month, or a certain number of words per month, Alegría wrote "La Balsa" in fifty pages. Editors thought it too long and rejected it. The author then enlarged the manuscript to 120 pages, calling it "Marañón." This was rejected by three separate editors. Later Alegría read of a postponed novel contest, and he enlarged his story to the present novel length, renaming the book La serpiente de oro. When the sponsors of the contest read the novel they awarded the book a first prize.[28]

Later he developed tuberculosis, and his doctors suggested writing as a part of his therapy. Taking an old story his grandmother had told him, the patient spun the tale of the great famine, Los perros hambrientos. In 1938, hearing of another postponement of a contest, Ciro Alegría hurried to finish his manuscript. The novel won second prize out of a field of seventy-two in the contest sponsored by Zig-Zag of Santiago.[29]

Alegría's third prize-winning novel, El mundo es ancho y ajeno, was written in 1941. As Alegría was sickly, alone, with

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[27]Archer, p. 2.

[28]Flores, p. 3.

[29]Flores, pp. 3-4.

a wife and two children to support by 1941, it is little wonder that he needed financial aid so that he could devote himself to the novel. A fund was raised by friends and admirers, including his doctors and nurses.[30] After giving close to a year to writing the novel, Alegría finished it and entered it in a new contest sponsored jointly by Farrar and Rinehart, Red Book, and the Pan American Union.[31] El mundo es ancho y ajeno won the first prize. This indeed was a great honor for the young writer. Saturday Review made the announcement in the following terms which seem quite flattering.

> Farrar and Rinehart and Red Book Magazine have chosen Ciro Alegría as the winner of the $2,500 award in the Latin American Prize Contest. The contest was judged by an international jury consisting of Ernesto Montenegro, Blair Niles, and John Dos Passos. It is interesting to note that every Latin American country, with the exception of Uruguay, took part in the contest, totaling over 100 novels. . . The award will be presented by Archibald MacLeish at a dinner on Pan-American day, April 14, given in the winner's honor.[32]

Current Biography describes the honorary dinner as follows.

> The prize was awarded at a dinner at the Waldorf Asteria, April 14, 1941, Pan-American Day. A letter from Secretary of

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[30]Robert Van Gelder, "An Interview with Señor Ciro Alegría," The New York Times Book Review Magazine (June 22, 1941), p. 2.

[31]Current Biography, II, 16.

[32]"Trade Winds. P.E. G. Quercus Associate," Saturday Review of Literature, XXIII (March 29, 1941), 21.

> State Cordell Hull was read by Archibald MacLeish, Librarian of Congress, who presided. . . . A dramatization of a scene from the book was written by Stephan Vincent Benét and produced for the assembled notables by Lowell Thomas and Henry Hull.[33]

This dramatization was broadcast by short wave to Latin America.[34]

During World War II Alegría lived in the United States where he wrote Spanish dialogue for the movies. Later he worked for the Co-ordinator of Inter-American Affairs, Office of War Information.[35]

In 1948 he broke his relations with the Aprista party. For the next four years he remained at the University of Puerto Rico where he taught courses in Spanish American literature and contemporary problems.[36]

From 1953 until 1957 he resided in Havana, Cuba. During this time he devoted himself to literature and journalism. In 1957 he visited Peru after twenty-three years of absence from his homeland. He was acclaimed by his countrymen for his renown gained by his novelistic art. A special assembly in his honor was held in the Estadio de Lima.[37]

Today Ciro Alegría is continuing his writing. Recent works

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[33] Current Biography, II, p. 16.

[34] Publisher's Weekly, p. 1658.

[35] Wade, p. xii.

[36] Arturo del Hoyo, "Prólogo," Novelas Completas, by Ciro Alegría, (Madrid, 1963), pp. xvi-xviii.

have included a book of short stories, Duelo de Caballeros (1963) and numerous short stories and articles which have appeared in periodicals.

His Peru--1920-1940

In connection with the discussion of Ciro Alegría's life, it is important to survey his Peru. As has been pointed out earlier, Alegría lived intimately in the Indian environment, was active in APRA, and is considered enough of a product of his culture for Patricia Hull to devote an entire thesis to the Peruvian elements in his writing.[38] Considering these reasons it is well to turn to the country of Alegría, Peru, as it appeared during the second and third decade of this century.[39]

Geographically, Peru is a nation with great diversity. The coast is low and dry with great ports.[40] There is little agriculture, and most of the coast people are white.

The heart of the nation is the Sierra. Wedge shaped, it is 250 miles wide in the mouth, and narrows to 150 miles in the north.[41] Dividing this rich interior are three spiny fingers of

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[38]Hull.

[39]The authority on this subject appears to be Carleton Beals. His Fire on the Andes (Philadelphia, 1934), and America South (New York, 1938) have been invaluable as works on the social condition of Peru in the 1930's. Also of considerable help was Frances Toor's travel book about Peru, Three Worlds of Peru (New York, 1949).

[40]"Peru," Encyclopaedia Britannica XVII, (Chicago, 1964), 619.

[41]Ibid.

the Andes running parallel north and south. In the valleys the tributaries of the Amazon flow north. The plateaus and river valleys are the homes of the cholos.

> The Sierra is Indian. It swallows the whites. . . . Nevertheless, these few Mistis dominate the Sierra. They own the land, cattle, mines and big business, and dominate the professions. The Cholos are the artisans and small merchants, the Indians, laborers.[42]

The mountains themselves are the land of the Indian. Here he continues to live in his community society, herding his sheep as he has done since Incan times. The roads and bridges are few, and the weather severely cold; so until recently the Indian of the Andes was one of the few isolated men left on the earth.

The third distinct region of Peru is the jungle area. Here savage head-hunters threaten the few whites, cholos, and Andean Indians who seek their fortunes in the rubber industry. Other hardships of this area are the rot and insects.

Now it is important to turn back to the Peru of the first one third of this century, for this is the Peru of which Alegría wrote. Peru was three worlds, the white world of the coast, the Indian-cholo world of the plateau, and the primitive world of the jungle. Yet Peru was somewhat united by its common religion. The Catholic had been a state church, and many of its people were devout to the point of fanaticism. The festivals of the saints provided recreation for the entire country. Moreover,

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[42] Teor, pp. 69-70.

the Church was rich and influential. Some Protestant missionaries did work in Peru, but their numbers were few, and they were often persecuted. The Indian mixed his heritage of sun worship and superstition with Christianity, but this personal interpretation offered no threat to the established Church. Therefore, Peru was one of the real strongholds of Catholicism in the world.

The three cultures of Peru were not equal in numbers. Carleton Beals estimated in 1934 that Peru was a country of 6,000,000 people, with 63% living in the Sierra, 29% living in the jungles, and 9% living on the coast.[43] In the 1940 census the Indian comprised 46% of the population, the cholo and white 53%, and the Oriental 1%.[44]

At that time the coastal culture was judged as similar to that of most European capitals during the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. The highlander lived in a culture associated with the tenth to sixteenth centuries, and in the jungle, life was primitive.[45]

The cities of the coast, principally Lima, ruled the rest of the country. Therefore, 9% of the population decided what was good for 91% of the population. Most writers found the people of

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[43] Beals, Fire, p. 21.

[44] Britannica, p. 624.

[45] Beals, Fire, p. 22.

the cities colonial, fanatic, reactionary and dictaterial. They were hypocritical and pompous, and they exploited the Sierra for their own interest. With the exception of this exploitation, the whites cared little for the country located away from Lima. In fact, the typical Limean's knowledge of the vast areas and native peoples of his own country was negligible. To the city dweller, a trip to the Sierras constituted a daring adventure.[46]

Down the social, economic, political, artistic, and educational ladder one rung from the white was the cholo. Sometimes he lived in the city, but more often he was found in the rural areas and small towns, living much as the ferrymen of La serpiente de oro. Although they lived among the Indians they were not tolerant of them.

The Indian was the man of the third Peruvian world. In some aspects his Incan ancestry was evident. He still spoke the language of the Andes, Quechua, and his life was ruled by some ancient superstitions and rites handed down from the elder culture. The Inca rulers were slow to anger, and they were not easily incited to war. First they would try every peaceful measure.[47] This was true of the Indian of the 1920's and 1930's as well: he would withstand many hardships in the name of peace.

Drinking seemed to be a characteristic of the Indian of this

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[46]Beals, Fire, p. 21.

[47]Beals, Fire, p. 32.

period, and as a rule he chewed coca. There are arguments for and against this use of alcohol and narcotics. Some critics seem to think that only through the use of these sense-numbing devices could the Indian tolerate himself; others felt that this was an evil habit, for it undermines the Indian personality and ambition.[48]

The Indians appeared to many critics to be a hard working group and, on the whole, admirable. Frances Toor found them intelligent, great singers, story tellers, and dancers. To her they were basically a happy group who found most joy during their courting years, as the rest of their life was burdened by back-breaking work. She found them often jailed and abused by the whites.[49]

The Indian's great passion was his land. Eighty per cent of Peru's population lived directly off the land, so it is an important phase of Peruvian culture. The Indian farmers of this period are pictured as an industrious group.

At the time of Alegría's novels, the people of Peru were as varied as the terrain. They fell into three groups: white rulers, cholo artisans, and Indian laborers; the masses of people were in the last two groups. Considering the vast cultural gap, there is little wonder that the conditions which Alegría describes were permitted to exist.

In 1934, while Alegría was a member of the APRA, some saw this movement as one solution to all of the problems of Peru.

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[48]Toor, pp. 97-98.

[49]Toor, p. 125.

The party had high principles and offered more to Peru than any other political group ever had. It was hard to classify APRA into the western concepts of left and right and, as a movement, it could not be compared to other political movements of the time. It seemed a combination of liberal, socialist, and bourgeois philosophies.

The APRA sought to be distinctly Peruvian. It therefore shaped itself to basic Peruvian problems and ethnic groups; APRA especially appealed to the Indian. The special appeals to the Indian are important to this study, for their impact no doubt influenced Alegría's sympathies for the Indian. The party creed stated that, "The Indian's cry is the Aprista cry."[50] The Indian's cry became Ciro Alegría's cry.

These, then were the problems that faced Peru as Alegría wrote his <u>indianista</u> novels. Here was a country of diverse culture, race, language, and interest, little geographic unity, and no sympathy for the downtrodden masses. The Indians were uneducated, but hard working and devoted to their lands. The problems of Peru and the Peruvian loomed large. This is the stage where the novels of Alegría unfold.

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[50]Beals, <u>Fire</u>, p. 319.

CHAPTER III

THE NOVELS

La serpiente de oro

La serpiente de oro is the first of Ciro Alegría's novels. It deals with the balseros of northern Peru whose lives are centered around the river Marañón, or "la serpiente de oro." Their hearts and voices cry unceasingly to the river to let them pass.

> Río Marañón, déjame pasar:
> eres duro y fuerte,
> no tienes perdón.
> Río Marañón, tengo que pasar:
> tú tienes tus aguas,
> yo mi corazón.[1]

The Marañón River, a tributary of the Amazon, meanders through the mountains of northern Peru. It is the river that is the protaganist of this novel. Throughout the story, Ciro Alegría gives a vivid description of the river in all of its varied moods. The cholos of the Calemar region must face these in order to survive. The constant struggle of man against nature is the theme of the work.

The ferrymen of Calemar consider the Marañón a living creature and pay homage to it in an almost pagan way in that they are very careful not to anger the river god.

The daily activities of the balseros and their way of life along the banks and in the river itself provides the main thread

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[1]Ciro Alegría, La serpiente de oro, 2nd. ed., (Santiago de Chile, 1936), p. 11.

of the story. There seems to be little or no plot in this novel. The book is rather than a novel a series of accounts which are held together by the characters involved in each chapter. The only white man who has ventured into the world of the Marañón region is Don Osvaldo, an engineer from Lima who is primarily curious about the world of the balseros. The story is narrated by Don Lucas, one of the old ferrymen of this district. His tales hold the reader's interest, and treat him to some chapters which will always remain embedded in his mind. Four of these outstanding chapters are summarized below.

In one two brothers are stranded in the middle of the treacherous rapids between steep cliffs, making it impossible to reach the shore. Without food or water, their raft is caught on a sharp jutting rock. They have two choices for saving themselves: wait for high water, or challenge the moody Marañón. In the end one is saved, and the other is claimed by the river for his foolhardiness.

In another chapter two pathetic cholos come to the ferrymen to be transported across the river. These men are suffering from an incurable disease called uta; parts of their bodies are rotting, and the smell of death hovers about them. Hopelessly afflicted, they wish only to reach their homeland to die. Their final moments of life are pathetic and almost heroic.

But not all of the novel is filled with bitterness and death. There are various incidents which show the other side of the cholos'

character. The most significant episode is the chapter concerned with the mystery of the blue puma, which is both humorous and exciting. A puma has been plundering a widow's sheepfold. The men of the village become afraid to challenge the beast's prowess because one man who has seen it claims that the puma is blue, and therefore bewitched and immortal. After being terrorized for months, the widow takes matters into her own hands, outsmarting the puma and the men.

The final chapter in the book involves the struggle of the city-bred engineer, Don Osvalde, as he attempts to conquer the natural elements of the Andes. Socially he fits in with the cholos well, and he has great plans to bring wealth to the valley. While relating his plans he is bitten by a deadly golden viper. How ironical that moments before he dies he has said, "¡Aquí la naturaleza es el destino!"[2] and then it is the golden serpent itself which kills him.

The descriptive power Alegría has as a writer is evident in this novel. His strength lies in his ability to pinpoint varied details which make for a panoramic view of a social event or a geographical setting. The opening paragraphs of this novel are a fine example.

> Por donde el Marañón rompe las cordilleras
> en un voluntarioso afán de avance, la sierra

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[2]Alegría, p. 204.

> peruana tiene una bravura de puma acosado. Con ella en torno, no es cosa de estar al descuido.
>
> Cuando el río carga, brama contra las peñas invadiendo la amplitud de las playas y cubriendo el pedrerío. Corre burbujeando, rugiendo en las torrenteras y recodos, ondulando en los espacios llanos, untuoso y ocre de limo fecundo en cuyo acre hedor descubre el instinto rudas potencialidades germinales. Un rumor profundo que palpita en todos los ámbitos, denuncia la creciente máxima que ocurre en febrero. Entonces uno siente respeto hacia la correntada y entiende su rugido como una advertencia personal.[3]

This and other descriptions result in the conclusion that the setting is a very important part of this novel. The Marañón itself is not only a huge living animal, but a god and a demon. Alegría instills in his readers a great awe for the power of the river and a deep appreciation for the beauty of this rugged section of Peru. The mood of the story as well as the plot depends heavily upon the isolation of the village. The <u>chola</u> town is a microcosm--a little world which is regulated by the river and its whims. The theme of the story is concerned with the forces of nature, those both sweet and bitter.

The characters do little or nothing to enhance the theme. They are never analyzed in the psychological sense which is demanded of the modern writer. Their conflicts are all too simple. Human relations and complex situations seem not to exist; rather

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[3]Alegría, pp. 7-8.

the only conflict is that between the river and the men. This gives the characters a strange, paper-doll effect. Alegría has written about symbols, not men. Don Osvaldo represents youthful idealism which is crushed under the raw forces of nature. Lucas, the narrator, is a watery character who never feels any deep passions. He seems to symbolize the golden mean. His most lively moments are those in which he describes his beloved and lustful Florinda. No doubt Lucas represents man totally in harmony with his environment. Yet the reader demands more than this in a man. Lucas remains unbelievable, for he has found complete satisfaction in a routine life which the author himself would have found dull.

Alegría's style is direct, and his language is simple. Figures of speech abound in his writing, and some of his figures are quite fresh and exciting. One such simile is as follows: "Nuestras risas son como galgas por la bajada de la ironía."[4] Others are quite trite. Some of this trite description is detrimental to characterization. Two examples follow: "doña Rosario, señora muy devota,"[5] and "El Arturo, en el colmo de la felicidad."[6] The style of the book is not consistently good or bad.

Alegría betrays his training as a reporter in the extremely

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[4]Alegría, p. 21.

[5]Alegría, p. 47.

[6]Alegría, p. 48.

careful way that he has recorded minute details of everyday life in the village. He is obviously an excellent observer.

The plot of the story is its great weakness. It appears jerky because of its construction. The whole "novel" is really a series of tales about the Marañón. Each short tale, two or three pages long, is exciting or merry. For this short space Alegría is able to sustain suspense and interest, but a sense of total structure to the novel is lacking. The four outstanding chapters mentioned on pages 33 to 34 reveal this weakness. Each one of these chapters is a story in itself. Although forced to write novels, Alegría remains a short story writer. His Serpiente de oro contains a complete story of a blue puma, a complete story of a flood, a complete story of isolation on a raft, a complete story of a capture of a beautiful girl; the only unifying factors are the setting and the teller. The book, therefore, might better have been an excellent collection of short stories rather than a themeless novel with little direction to its development.

To make matters worse, there is a definite anticlimax in the last two chapters. The real climax of the novel comes where Don Osvaldo dies and Alegría makes his point about the Golden Serpent; however, Alegría writes on for many pages. Alegría wishes to give the feeling that life will go on as the Marañón flows to the sea, but he does it at the expense of reader interest.

But the book is not all bad. In it Alegría shows his strengths to lie in his poetic descriptive powers and his ability to build and sustain mood in each episode. This is an exciting tale and one that must be judged excellent as a first novel. It seems to promise greater things.

Los perros hambrientos

The plot of Los perros hambrientos is set in motion by the drought and famine that occur in the uplands of the Peruvian Andes. Here, as the story opens, men and their faithful dogs live together peacefully tending the flocks of sheep.

It is the dogs who play the prominent role in the story. A special breed, these dogs are taken from their mothers as sucklings to be nursed by ewes; thus they are reared as brothers to the sheep. As puppies they are family pets, and their gentleness and loyalty make them a prized animal of the summits.

Soon after the opening description, the peaceful pastoral scene is shattered by drought and famine. Both man and dog feel the awful pinch of hunger. A parallel is drawn between the dogs and their masters, for just when the dogs turn on their masters, the Indians revolt against the landowners. The Indians in desperation request more wheat from the hacendados. They are denied. Angered and made wild by the cries of their hungry children, they storm the granary, and several men are killed.

At the same time the dogs are forced to go without their

daily rations, and to compensate their hunger they attack the sheep in gory delight. The bond between man and dog broken, the master must retaliate by destroying the killer dogs, so one by one the animals are poisoned.

The dogs, however, are innocent victims. Their nobility and faithfulness is continually demonstrated. In one delicate episode a small boy (whose father has been forced into the army) dies of hunger. His faithful dog remains by his side to protect him, and at the end the dog wards off the birds of prey. Another instance of fidelity occurs when one of the dogs, stolen by an outlaw who brutalized him into submission, defends his new master with his life.

The bitter period is broken momentarily by relief from the drought. Small plants sprout and flourish, bringing hope to the Indians. But their hopes are short-lived as nature again withdraws its life-giving waters. Famine takes its toll as more men and animals die.

Ciro Alegría does not end his novel on a bitter note. Both man and beast are torn down by the disaster, but there is promise of new life. The novel draws to a close with the thunder rolling in the distance, the rain drops falling abundantly, and the whimpering old mother dog crawling back to her master. She is ready to take her place along with men and the whole scope of nature in the rebuilding that must be done.

The language of this novel is simple and direct. Told by an omnipresent observer, this tale is seen from several points of view. In some cases the story seems to be told from the dogs' eye view. When Antuca's dog is stolen by rustlers the story is told in the way that the dog reacts to the situation that follows.

As in the other novels of Ciro Alegría, little songs and folk tales are common. Proverbs are intersperced as well. One common saying is "'A gran seca, gran mojada,'"[7] and another describes the landlord as having "'en una mano la miel y an otra la hiel.'"[8]

The language itself can best be shown through examples. This is an instance of the simplicity.

> Y así pasaban el día, viendo la convulsionada cresterías andina, el rebaño balante, el cielo, ora azul, ora nublado y amenazador. La Antuca hilaba charlando, gritando o cantando a ratos, y a ratos en silencio, como unimismada con el vasto y profundo silencio de la cordillera, hecho de piedra e inconmensurables distancias soledosas. Zambo la acompañaba, atentamente, irguiendo las orejas ante el menor gesto suyo, pronto a obedecer, aunque también se permitía reclinar la cabeza y dormir, pero con sueño ligero, sobre la suave bayeta de la pollera.[9]

Alegría is usually direct as well as simple. He never uses

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[7]Ciro Alegría, Los perros hambrientos, 2nd. ed. (Santiago de Chile, 1942), p. 115.

[8]Alegría, Los perros, p. 118.

[9]Alegría, Los perros, p. 14.

the subtle or obscure when the plain word can be used. Often he reveals the situation by using a character's account rather than the author's comment.

> Y dijo la Antuca una tarde en que sintió más que nunca la negación de la naturaleza, su propio dolor y su soledad y los del ganado, resumiendo todas las penurias:
> —Velay el hambre, animalitos. . .[10]

In this novel Alegría experiments with the flashback to some considerable degree of success. The outstanding example occurs where Mateo is called to service. The reaction of the wife and the way she breaks the news to her son are explored before the cruel fact is revealed to the reader. This section is one of the more powerful ones of the book.

Not only is Alegría direct, but he is a master of realism. His respect for, and his ability to describe, even the most minute detail of an action adds greatly to the impact of the novel. This is how the author describes the dogs' delight in eating the flesh of the sheep who were once like brothers to them.

> Era terriblemente alegre empapar en la sangre el hocico y ajustar los colmillos rompiendo huesos, domeñando la elasticidad de los tendones y ablandando la magra carne, y tragar, tragar hasta sentir pesada la barriga y que un nuevo calor recorría el cuerpo y una nueva energía lo entonaba.[11]

Often Ciro Alegría's prose borders on poetry. Several examples illustrate this characteristic.

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[10]Alegría, <u>Los perros</u>, p. 136.

[11]Alegría, <u>Los perros</u>, p. 139.

> Es bella la tierra, y más si está arada. Muelle y tierna, propicia, sabe a fecundidad y despide una vaharada sexual.[12]
>
> Trodavía era tiempo de que germinara el grano, y más si lo mojaba la esperanza del hombre.[13]
>
> Entonces la tierra esponjosa y feraz sería abierta para guardar la semilla hurtada al hambre.[14]

Dialogue is effectively used several times. This is not as common as in the later book, El mundo es ancho y ajeno, but the reader can see the development of a technique which is to become excellent in the third novel. A fine example is found where the Indians beg for food from Don Cipriano and Don Rómulo. The conversation will not be repeated here because it appears in its entirety on pages 70-71 of this thesis.

The plot of this novel is by far superior to the other two novels written by Alegría. It is a shorter story, and in its space Alegría is able to tell one story, the story of the great drought. Although he sometimes digresses as he does in a chapter called "Historias de perros," this digression serves to add much for the reader in regard to appreciation for the faithfulness and characteristics of the sheep dog bred in the Andes.

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[12]Alegría, Los perros, p. 112.

[13]Alegría, Los perros, p. 127.

[14]Alegría, Los perros, p. 178.

The dogs themselves show a careful study on the part of the author. He evidentally is very familiar with the habits and the actions of this breed of dogs. He discusses their ancestry and and explains how the dogs are trained for various life roles.

Alegría is appreciative of their sensitivity and often shows them to be intelligent. He emphasizes the fact that the drought is very hard on the animals who cannot find a substitute feed during the dry years as the sheep and cattle can. He shows them to be cunning in their suspicion of anything unfamiliar that smells of man. Wanka appears almost human when she is tempted to kill the sheep.

> ¿Qué fiebre súbita le caldeó el cuerpo y la aventó sobre el descuido y la inocencia de su víctima? Olvidó las viejas y maternales tetas. De una pechada tumbó a la oveja y ésta no tuvo tiempo ni de balar, pues un feroz mordisco le rompió el cuello. Wanka procedió como si hubiera estado acostumbrada a hacerlo y no se sorprendió de su pericia ni de su éxito.[15]

Characterization in the novel is generally thin. Simón Robles is the strongest character in the story. He is an idealized figure who is hard working and sympathetic. He is humanized by his happy nature and his love for people, which causes him to be a great story teller.

This novel is the richest of all of Alegría's in regard to symbolism. After one of the many deaths in the story the author

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[15]Alegría, Los perros, p. 139.

tells of how all the world seems to be decomposing;[16] with this symbol he pictures life in all of the highlands at the time.

A foreshadowing is found in the storming of Don Cipriano's dinner table by the hungry dogs. In the following chapter the Indians themselves storm the granary in much the same manner. Don Cipriano reacts similarily in both instances; he has the dogs poisoned and the men shot. By the term "perros hambrientos" the author is referring to more than the canine world.

The very name Wanka is symbolic. It is the name of an old Incan tribe which was regarded as very strong and courageous. The dog Wanka is strong and courageous too, for she is the one dog who survives the terrible drought. She is hope; through her the reader knows that the breed of dogs will rise again. On a more abstract plain, perhaps Alegría has meant for the reader to see the dog as a symbol for the Incan race which has suffered through the drought of the white man's oppression and will be able to replenish itself again so that in the future the race may once more flourish.

Moving away from the scenes of beauty of the Marañón, Alegría has shown in this novel his ability to capture character and situation through a short paragraph or less. Here are some samples of Alegría's powerful words.

> Pero seguían resistiendo el hambre. Con los

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[16]Alegría, Los perros, p. 169.

> ijares pegados al espinazo y el pecho convertido en una jaula, persistían en vivir como si los hubiera alimentado el viento. Este más bien trataba de llevárselos o de enterrarlos entre nubes de polvo, pero ellos salían de los terrales semiasfixiados, gruñendo y aullando. Los menos débiles echaban a correr un trecho, con lo que les restaba de fuerzas, y luego volvían al grupo. Se reunían como para defenderse de algo extraño, de una fuerza envolvente y amplia a la que resistirían mejor estando en mayor número.[17]
>
> Ella era todavía buena moza. Su cara lucía una frescura juvenil que el dolor no marchitaba aún. Las curvas de sus senos y sus caderas mal se escondían bajo una blusa holgada y la gruesa bayeta. Si el viento le alzaba el pollerón, dejaba ver sus piernas suaves y ocres, como hechas de morena arcilla pulimentada.[18]
>
> Desdeñando la limpidez agostadora de los cielos, los plantíos del hacendado se alzaban ufanos del agua que bañaba sus raíces y mostraban una lozanía que, en medio del atraso general, adquiría un aire provocador. El maizal, sobre todo, alto, firme y rumoroso como un bosque, abría al sol sus penachos amarillentos y sus hojas de un verde jocundo. En las cañas, de dos en dos, se henchía la gravidez femenina de las mazorcas.[19]

This novel, then, is the strongest in two areas, plot and symbolism. Its very simplicity is its greatest asset.

El mundo es ancho y ajeno

This is the story of a peaceful Indian ayllu (community)

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[17]Alegría, Los perros, p. 163.

[18]Alegría, Los perros, pp. 40-41.

[19]Alegría, Los perros, pp. 81-82.

governed by its wise mayor, Rosendo Maqui, who is the most admirable character Ciro Alegría has created. The idyllic existence in Rumi is destroyed when the Indians are forced to give up their land and community. Don Alvaro Amenábar, the white landowner, has only one motive for forcing the Indian off his land; this is greed, a desire to expand an already vast empire. Under such circumstances the reader cannot help but be moved to deep sympathy for the Indian. Carlos Hamilton has said this of the novel.

> Juan Montalvo había escrito: Si mi pluma tuviera el don de lágrimas, yo escribiría un libro titulado "El indio" y haría llorar al mundo. Alegría escribe sobre el indio andino, y hace al mundo temblar de rabia.[20]

The Indian is indeed downtrodden. He is forced to bear the burden of losing his land, his loved ones, and his dignity. Don Alvaro claims that the position of the boundary lines gives him legal ownership of Rumi. The elders of the village decide to appeal the case, which is lost before it is begun, because the white has all the power of the law, the church, and money working for him. Through intricate maneuvers the villagers are made to look like they are criminals if they should stay in their beloved community. They can either go to work for Don Alvaro or move Rumi. They decide to concede the land to the white man, and they move the village to a rocky barren plateau.

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[20]Carlos Hamilton, Historia de la literatura Hispanoamericana (New York, 1961), p. 129.

Life is hard here, but the Indians begin to find some satisfaction. The older men are more content than some of the younger Indians who did not like the decision to move. These youths go into other parts of Peru to earn their livelihoods. One of these Indians chooses to work in the coca fields; another goes to the jungle to the rubber plantations. Both of these two meet bitter fates when deprived of the protection of their community.

But conditions worsen in the new village. When some of the cattle stray back to their old pastures, Rosendo Maqui goes after them. He is caught by Don Alvaro's men and told that he is stealing cattle, and so is thrown into jail. Years pass, and at last the old man dies awaiting trial. Despite the hardships the Indians doggedly work on, hoping the courts will side with them when their case comes up before the judge.

In the midst of its worst troubles the Indian community is befriended by the outlaw band led by Fierro Vásquez. This is of course a fatal mistake, for now the friends of Don Alvaro can claim that they were the lawless ones, not he. At first the criminals try tricks and minor crimes to combat the injustices, but after all legal means of retaining even their new land have been exhausted, and it is evident that the landowner wants slaves for his mines, not the pitiful land at all, the Indians and their defenders resort to open warfare with the white man. Because he has the strength and money, and machine guns, Don Alvaro is successful in thwarting their defense even when they are led by

the ex-army officer, and foster son of Rosendo Maqui, Benito Castro.

When Benito is killed the village has no other hope, and can only ask itself what lies ahead. The women and children cry alone. The noble Indian has been beaten into a permissive beast.

El mundo es ancho y ajeno is written as if viewed by an omnipresent observer. This makes a great contrast in style with La serpiente de oro, which is told by a cholo in cholo dialect. Sentence structure therefore is more complex, and the whole novel has a less personal tone. In his latest novel Alegría uses less description, and often it is more subtle. This paragraph will illustrate the point.

> Es el son hecho trigo y es el trigo hecho gavillas. Es la siega. Fácil y dulce siega sobre el manto pardo de la tierra. Las hoces fueron sacadas del alero, donde estaban prendidas, y llevadas al trigal. Ahora cortan produciendo un leve rumor, y las rectas pajas se rinden y las espigas tiemblan y tremolan con todas sus brisnas mientras son conducidas a la parva. Los hombres desaparecen bajo los inmensos cargamentos de haces, que se mueven dando la impresión de que andan solos. Mas se conversa y se ríe bajo ellos. En la era el pilón crece y los recién salidos cargadores beben un poco de chicha y tornan hacia donde los segadores merman y merman la altura de un muro que no se derrumba sino que va retrocediendo. Ya está todo el trigal en la parva. Un pilón circular, alto y de rubia consistencia, es la fe de los campesinos que se curvaron todo el año sobre la tierra con un gesto que se han olvidado de atribuírselo a Dios.[21]

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[21]Ciro Alegría, El mundo es ancho y ajeno, 2nd. ed. (Santiago de Chile, 1941), p. 148.

In addition to the sophistication of the description, these passages are lucid and sometimes serve to move the plot. Here is an example.

> El agua de rato en rato, parecía crecer, parecía abultarse e hincharse, parecía volverse inmensa. Sin duda estaba lloviendo más arriba. Una avenida comenzaba a llegar. Podía traer inclusive palos. Entonces estarían perdidos. "¡Ballo!, ¡Ballo!" Sus voces sonaban dura y enérgicamente en la noche. Salieron una vez más de otra parte honda. Y estuvieron de arriba para abajo, con bastante fortuna, eludiendo malos pasos o venciéndolos cuando no había otro remedio.[22]

Dialogue is used by the author with great ease. An example occurs on the highway where Rosendo meets some Indian shepherds while riding about looking for markers. This passage is quoted in full on page 65 of this thesis. Through the conversations between Rosendo and the men from the village Alegría is able to tell much of the life of the highland Indians without really resorting to narrative or forced dialogue. Short little songs are interwoven into the plot to add color and realism. Very often they relate to the dialogue.

Sometimes in his writing Alegría is quite poetic. When Maqui is in prison he thinks about the growth of his soul and Alegría says,

> ¡Si pudiera llorar! Pero no puede llorar, pues adentro se le ha secado, como a los troncos viejos, el corazón. Los troncos también tienen corazón y mientras él resiste hay posibilidad de que retoñen y vivan. ¡Corazón de hombre!

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[22]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, p. 122.

¡Corazón de tronco![23]

Alegría's writing is quite realistic. He has the ability to place the reader in the character's situation giving a sense of vitality to the novel. Through a series of questions he is able to help the reader feel the pain and suffering born by Casiana as she searches for her bandit lover.

> Continuó por una falda, al parecer muy escarpada, aunque ella no lograba ver el fondo. Las tinieblas se apretaban abajo formando un lóbrego abismo. Y Casiana tenía un instintivo miedo equilibrado por un valor hecho de fuerza y experiencia. En las zonas muy inclinadas se cogía de las salientes de las rocas o las ramas de los arbustos. Algunas espinas le punzaron las manos. Los pies comenzaron a dolerle de nuevo, y todo el cuerpo le pesaba extrañamente, y tenía miedo. Ya terminaba la falda felizmente. Se abrió una nueva planicie y más allá habría de seguro otra cadena de rocas. ¿Podría cruzarlas? Desesperaba de encontrar al Fiero.[24]

In true realistic fashion Alegría spares none of the details of horror when he describes a horrible scene. His description of Fiero Vasquez's decapitated head is an example.

> Torva, tumefacta, la piel se había amoratado y distendido dilatando las huellas de la viruela y del escopetazo. Los ojos se entrecerraban debido a la hinchazón de los párpados, pero todavía miraban por las rayas viscosas, con dura fijeza, la pupila parda y la pupila de pedernal. La nariz crecía hacia la disgregación, y la gran sonrisa de otrora estaba

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[23]Alegría, El mundo, p. 419.

[24]Alegría, El mundo, p. 230.

> reducida a una mueca que no se sabía si era de dolor o de desprecio. Entre los labios abultados y violáceos se filtraba el reflejo de los dientes nívees, el cabello desgreñado caía sobre la frente y las sienes y en el cuello negreaba la sangre coagulada. Daba asco y pavor.[25]

Alegría has interspersed many short tales throughout the novel; these help to enrich the story. Yet in some sections the short stories tend to weaken the plot. Alegría's development is clearer than that of his first novel, but there still is a lack of focus. He tries to tell too many tales, too many stories. He goes into the kindliness of the Alegrías who helped Fiero Vásques; he tells of all the adventures of Benito Castro as an army sergeant. He tells the long tale of one of Fiero's gang, El Manco, and how he came to lose his arm. He tells tales of crookedness and crime as Rosendo hears them in jail. In short, he tells too much unrelated detail. The material in <u>El mundo es ancho y ajeno</u> is more than enough for one book; these tales might better have been saved for another novel or two. Yet they are not totally bad literature. They are interesting and do serve the plot in a way. Through telling an unrelated tale Alegría is able to show the passing of time without saying something so common as "later," or "after a short time." The lapse of time is therefore recognized without being announced.

In the plot Alegría is able to handle total suspense. He builds false hopes slowly. Just as the new community appears to

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[25]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, p. 439.

be succeeding it is crushed into the very rocks. This makes for a dramatic climax. As the plot begins to move faster toward the last third of the book Alegría uses the technique of skipping from scene to scene showing first one person and then another, one side of the war and then the other, much as the movies use this technique. His subchapters are sometimes as short as one paragraph, and they move the plot at racing speed.

The characterization in El mundo es ancho y ajeno is the most complex that the writer has developed. Rosendo is certainly believable and three dimensional. Even though Bismark Ruiz is the epitome of evil, the cholo lawyer is also sympathetic; for he is only soft, and his love for money and women have driven him to this softness. Surely his weaknesses can be understood if not forgiven.

Of all the characters ever created by Ciro Alegría, perhaps Fiero Vásquez is the most interesting. His personality is as divided as his face. Vásquez was the victim of some violence which left one side of his face ugly; the other remained handsome. His personality has an ugly and handsome side as well. Here is a man who can rob and kill in cold blood, but under his baser motives he loves the poor and weak. He develops into a serious, tough and tender Peruvian Robin Hood.

Alegría's women are never strongly drawn. They are good products of the earth who are essential, life giving, and comforting; but they never appear as real people. In this book as

in other of Alegría's novels, this is a man's-eye view of a man's world.

Character revelation is handled quite skillfully throughout the novel. One particularly outstanding example is the long section where Don Alvaro explains his feelings regarding the Indians to his white lawyer, Iñigues.[26] Alegría is also able to reveal character through events. Here he shows how a young Indian is won over to Don Alvaro's camp.

> Ramón cogió alegre y angustiadamente la carabina. No se podía decir que fuera muy liviana; antes bien, tenía el peso que había calculado, el necesario a la fuerza. Cogió también las balas, frías, brillantes, con su fulminante rojo, su casquillo áureo, su plomo pesado y neto. Una a una, las fué metiendo por la válvula de la caja. Era una lámina de metal que cedía a la presión y después se levantaba sola para quedar en su sitio. Todo se presentaba sabio y exacto. Ramón temía y anhelaba.[27]

Again Alegría has reported carefully concerning folk life and folk ways. The detailed description of the Indian burial is a fine example.[28] Page after page of the novel is devoted to the everyday life of the Indians showing all the various phases of that life.

Although this novel cannot be called rich in symbolism, what symbolism there is does serve to enrich the story. The symbolic significance of Vásquez's physical appearance has already been

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[26]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 173-178.

[27]Alegría, El mundo, p. 183.

[28]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 47-53.

cited, and there are other symbols. Early in the novel a snake crosses Rosendo's path. This bad sign or forewarning is referred to time and again in the novel. Mother earth is a symbol that hovers over all the book. She seems to be the spirit of the Indians.

> Un día amaneció la novedad de que una mujer vieja había pasado por la Calle Real, a media noche, llorando. Su llanto era muy largo y triste, desolado, y se le oyó desaparecer en la lejanía como un lamento. . . La tierra se volvió mujer para llorar, deplorando sin duda la suerte de sus hijos, de su comunidad inválida. ¡Tierra, madre tierra, dulce madre abatida![29]

Toward the close of the book the Indians shoot and kill several bucks in a herd of deer. After the leader is killed the frightened beasts scatter, and confusion reigns among the pathetic creatures. Shortly thereafter Benito Castro is killed; and the Indians, like the deer, scatter crying "¿Adónde?" "¿Adónde?"

The theme of the novel is never obscure. It is clearly social protest and clearly the Aprismo cry for justice for the Indian. For the white man there is sarcasm, for the Indian pathos. The Indian's dedication to right is dominant, and the whole conflict appears to be the love of the land versus the love of money.

Alegría's weaknesses lie in his handling of the amount of material he has, and in his inability to develop women characters. His strengths in his novel are in theme, folklore, and style.

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[29]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, p. 206.

CHAPTER IV

THE GENERAL APPROACH TO THE INDIAN IN ALEGRÍA'S NOVELS

There can be no doubt that Ciro Alegría is greatly moved by the plight of the Indian in Peru. His sympathies for him cry out on page after page of his novels. Although other white men may have felt the same way, few, if any, have contributed so much to the dignity of the Indian. Alegría has written more than novels of social protest. Harriet de Onís considers his work to be art as well as propaganda. She is sure that the novels will live long after the situations that they protest have been resolved.

> . . . Alegría's books will stand as a vision of the tribute to the courage, endurance, and rectitude of his countrymen when the circumstances which elicited his protests have disappeared.[1]

The white man of Peru historically has had no respect for the Indian. As was pointed out in Chapter II, the Indian has been both ignored and insulted; he has been considered the lowest type of beast. During natural disasters such as drought, the forces of society seem to have compounded his problems. In El mundo es ancho y ajeno a minor character, Honorio, loses his family; and as if that were not enough, he is taken off to jail.

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[1]Harriet de Onís, "Afterword," The Golden Serpent by Ciro Alegría (New York, 1963), p. 189.

The reason his jailers give for his imprisonment is that he must have been guilty since he can not prove where he was for a number of months. In reality he was searching for his family. Of course the real reason he is seized is fear. The white officials fear an Indian wandering about aimlessly; there is too much an Indian can do when he is not watched. So in this incident natural calamity combines with social pressures to make the Indian's life one of misery. When Honorio is arrested, he is deeply insulted. He was only looking for his wife and parents. When he explains the reasons for his absence the whites reply, "«¿Un indio va a tener esos sentimientos?» Se quedaba tan tranquilo de no dedicarse al cuatreraje».[2]

Ciro Alegría certainly did not picture the Indian without feelings. In fact, the Indian he presents is an extremely sensitive individual. This is the result, no doubt, of the personal contacts Alegría made with the Indian. Few other white writers have had this experience. Alegría had lived with them, worked with them, played with them. Since his boyhood he had thought of the Indian as his fellow man, his equal. Alegría understands both the Indian mind and character.[3]

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[2]Ciro Alegría, El mundo es ancho y ajeno, 2nd. ed., (Santiago de Chile, 1941), p. 328.

[3]William H. Archer, "The Novelistic Art of Ciro Alegría," Unpublished M. A. Thesis (University of Tennessee), 1948, p. 4.

The novels of Alegría not only praise the Indian, but they condemn the white man of Peru. Alegría states that the Indian problem is a white problem, for it was created by the white man.[4] Before the white man came to the country the Indian had a meaningful culture. This he has destroyed, and the ugly Indian of Peru is a result of white supremacy. Therefore, Alegría shows the Indian as he exists free from white culture where he is complete, happy, and useful.

Alegría is not totally involved with masses. He is interested in the Indians he wrote about as individuals. Their personality traits: courage, love, and nobility are subjects of his exploration. The inherent characteristics of the Indian are also studied. These include a love for the land and community, a deep feeling for their fellow men, and a joy in achieving the simple needs of life. Alegría delves more deeply into the individual personalities in his novels than most writers of the <u>indianista</u> movement.

Reiterating, Alegría appears to show the Indian in a manner far from the typical white man's stereotype. This chapter seeks to illustrate that point.

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[4]Gerald E. Wade, "Introduction," <u>El mundo es ancho y ajeno</u> by Ciro Alegría (New York, 1945), p. 4.

Everyday Life

Physical Characteristics

One white man in El mundo es ancho y ajeno comments with scorn that all Indians look alike.[5] Of course this is not true; yet Alegría does not hide some of the predominant Indian characteristics. He notes that the cholo has cheekbones not so high, a smaller mouth, and longer nose than the Indian;[6] so he sees the Indian as having high cheek bones, a large mouth, and a wide nose. A fourth characteristic he mentions is the predominent Indian abdomen.[7]

In regard to dress, the Indian women present a colorful sight. Their multicolored costumes are described in La serpiente de oro.

> Allí las indias con las chillonas polleras rojas, verdes, amarillas cuya gritería es atenuado un tanto por los bajos tonos ocres de los ponchos varoniles; los togados con los vestidos de dril almidonado que crujen al andar; . . .[8]

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[5]Alegría, El mundo, p. 328.

[6]Alegría, Los perros hambrientos, 2nd ed., (Santiago de Chile, 1942), p. 27.

[7]Alegría, Los perros, p. 35.

[8]Ciro Alegría, La serpiente de oro, 2nd ed., (Santiago de Chile, 1936), p. 36.

Physically Antuca, the shepherd girl in Los perros hambrientos, is still a little girl, small and immature at age twelve.[9] Martiana, the mother in the same novel is both sensual and goddess-like. At middle age she is described as still physically attractive.[10]

The men in this novel are described as dark, strong, muscular, with a trotting walk.[11]

Alegría's outstanding physical description is made of his strongest character, Rosendo Maqui. In the Indian he sees all the giant forces of nature so familiar to the Indian in his native Peru.

> Tenía el cuerpo nudoso y cetrino como el lloque--palo contorsionado y durísmo--, porque era un poco vegetal, un poco hombre, un poco piedra. Su nariz quebrada señalaba una boca de gruesos labios plegados con un gesto de serenidad y firmeza. Tras las duras colinas de los pómulos brillaban los ojos, oscuros lagos quietos. Las cejas eran una crestería. Podría afirmarse que el Adán americano fué plasmado según su geografía; que las fuerzas de la tierra, de tan enérgicas, eclosionaron en un hombre con rasgos de montañas. En sus sienes nevaba como en las del Urpillau.[12]

In summary, Ciro Alegría paints the physical portrait of the

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[9]Alegría, Los perros, pp. 12-13.

[10]Alegría, Los perros, pp. 40-41. See page 45 of this thesis for the quotation.

[11]Alegría, Los perros, p. 31.

[12]Alegría, El mundo, p. 11.

Indian using general traits, but taking into account and emphasising individaul differences. Very often the personalities of the characters are reflected in their physical characteristics.

Surroundings

In Los perros hambrientos Ciro Alegría lists the objects the Indian finds familiar to his daily life. They are (1) the gourd for food, (2) the hoe, (3) the white hat, (4) the plow, and (5) the bed.[13] From birth to death these constitute his material wealth and his physical surroundings. The house he lives in is small, usually clay or adobe.[14] Most of the Indian's activities center out of doors; so the homes do not have to provide more than room to sleep and eat, and a little shelter from the storm.

The Indian delights in his work. He takes great pride in his animals: sheep, dogs, horses, and cattle.[15] Alegría sees the Indian as ambitious and hard working, showing wisdom in the ways of farming.[16] The Indian is seen to be inventive and able to solve most of his problems. For instance, he has developed a

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[13]Alegría, Los perros, p. 36.

[14]Alegría, Los perros, p. 11.

[15]Alegría, Los perros, p. 12.

[16]Alegría, Los perros, pp. 12-13.

simple system of mathematics which goes up to the number two hundred. Calculation is done by counting by pairs. Further figuring is unnecessary, the Indian believes.

> Contar es faena de ateseradores,y un pueblo que desconoció la moneda y se atuvo solamente a la simplicidad del trueque, es lógico que no engendre descendientes de muchos números.[17]

The Indian women are of interest as a category by themselves. Alegría extols their natural simplicity and beauty.

> Vestían polleras roja y verde. Se habían quitado el rebozo para realizar su faena y veíase que la sencilla blusa blanca ornada de grecas, dejando al descubierto los redondos brazos, ceñía la intacta belleza de los senos núbiles.[18]

Sex to the Indian woman is as natural as breathing. Alegría sees her as a segment of nature acting in a natural manner when she gives of her body.

> Las indias que se entregan en los campos no lo hacen por plata. Se acuestan sobre la ancha tierra y, mirando el cielo azul o las estrellas, reciben al hombre noblemente y una ruda y pura voluptuosidad les alumbra la vida.[19]

In their work experiences Alegría describes the women as silent, often humming happily, and never idle; for they are con-

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[17]Alegría, Los perros, p. 12.

[18]Alegría, El mundo, p. 64.

[19]Alegría, Los perros, p. 141.

stantly spinning the wool which has been shorn from their sheep.[20] Despite their silent nature, they are not slaves. They speak their minds, and sometimes they give their opinions at the communal meetings. The opinions are not ignored by the men of the village. One such incident occurs in El mundo es ancho y ajeno as Chabela defends old Rosendo's mayorship when that position is threatened.[21]

For amusement in daily life, the Indians rely heavily on relaxing to the music of the pipes.[22] They also sing and whistle,[23] and hum as mentioned before. One amusement mentioned in El mundo es ancho y ajeno is a horse race. This constitutes one of the most exciting chapters of the novel, and shows the Indians at one of their most lighthearted moments.[24]

Ritual is important in some aspects of daily life. One such ritual is the one performed at death. This is very carefully reported in El mundo es ancho y ajeno when Rosendo's beloved wife dies. The body is laid in its best clothes on a blanket within the hut. Candles placed around the body are lighted. The food that the dead loved one liked best is laid at the head of the bed

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[20]Alegría, Los perros, p. 12.

[21]Alegría, El mundo, p. 228.

[22]Alegría, La serpiente, p. 53.

[23]Alegría, Los perros, p. 53.

[24]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 157-159.

to provide food for the journey to the other world. The mourners take turns chanting praises for the dead woman. Since this is the mayor's wife, the chole governor comes to mourn with a group of dignitaries. All kneel, removing their hats, and reciting the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary and the Creed for the wake which lasts all night. At dawn the body is born in a procession through the village to the little cemetery where it is buried.[25]

This, then, is everyday life. The rhythms of nature reflected in the simple works of a humble people who have found a meaningful way of life and death. But these peaceful incidents are not the bulk of the novels, for Alegría concerns himself with the interruption of the natural rhythms: the drought, the flood, and white man's intervention. Without these interruptions Alegría pictures the Indian's daily life as serene and beautiful.

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[25]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 47-54.

CHAPTER V

PERSONALITY AND BELIEFS

Personality

What kind of a personality does the Indian have? Luis E. Valcárcel, the author of Indians of Peru, says that the Andean is resigned, a man of fairs and fiestas who seldom is wrathful or rebellious. He calls his life one of silence and acceptance.[1] To some extent Alegría agrees. But he adds another dimension to the Andean which makes him a more believable person. More specifically, he explains the motivations for these characteristics. Consider the characteristic of acceptance. Patience is a virtue to the herder, and Alegría says that he must develop this trait if it is not natural to him.

> Si carecen de ella, han de adquirirla, y mucha, para conducir la recua o la tropa y no desesperar de los trajines que imponen en tierras sin posadas, sin difensas, sin caminos o con malos caminos que no tienen ni puentes ni cercas y van siempre por zonas desoladas o por otras llenas de bosque, malos vados y riscos. . .[2]

This deeply engrained patience, no doubt influences the Indian in

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[1]Luis E. Valcárcel, Indians of Peru, (New York, 1950), p. 1.

[2]Ciro Alegría, El mundo es anche y ajeno, 2nd. ed., (Santiago de Chile, 1941), p. 83.

his other dealings, and makes him seem docile by white standards.

In regard to his quietness, the Indian can also be forgiven. The Indian thinks more than he talks. Germán Arciniegas says that he carries the truth in his heart although he may not speak the truth all of the time.[3] When the Indian speaks, he is laconic. The following, according to Alegría, characterizes the Indian speech.

> —¿De dónde vienes?
> —Bambamarcas, taita.
> —¿Vas al Marañón?
> —Sí, taita.
> —¿A traer coca o plátanos?
> —Sí taita.
> —¿Llevará hoy?
> El indio contempla el cielo volviendo la cabeza a todos lados.
> —Nuay ser, taita.
> El ingeniero espolea su zaino y alcanza al guía, que se ha adelantado, pensando si conseguirá que hable un poco más.
> —¿Por qué no hablan los bambamarquinos?
> —Asies su ser, taita.
> —¿Y tú?
> —Tamién pué, taita.[4]

Despite his quietness and patience, the Indian is ambitious. The dream of the villagers is a herd of one hundred cows and a school so that the bright children may become doctors or lawyers.[5] Yet to characterize the Indian as only ambitious, patient, and

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[3]Germán Arciniegas, ed. The Green Continent, (New York, 1944), p. 44.

[4]Ciro Alegría, La serpiente de oro, 2nd ed., (Santiago de Chile, 1936), pp. 79-80.

[5]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 147-148.

silent is wrong according to Alegría. He shows his characters to be more complex men with all the weaknesses and strengths of other men. The selectmen from El mundo es ancho y ajeno, for instance, bear similarities to politicians world-wide. Some are vain, some prideful, some sensible.[6]

In the same novel mischief is called typical for the young village men.[7] Certainly there needs to be no documentation to the statement that youth is the time of mischief for all men.

Alegría does not overemphasize patience and subservience. When Bismark Ruiz, the crooked lawyer, is in need, one Indian finds satisfaction in revenge. Bismark demands a donkey from the Indian.

> —Haz esa caridad. La señorita no puede caminar, está enferma. Nos han robado los caballos y ella no puede caminar. . .
> El indio los miraba como diciendo: «¿Qué me importa? Friéguense alguna vez, futres malditos. ¿Tienen ustedes pena de nosotros?» Ese era lo que pensaba realmente. Dió un tirón para que el asno continuara y dijo:
> —No es mío el burro.[8]

In another incident from the book, Dorotee, the most militant of the villagers, joins Fiero Vásquez' band of criminals for, ". . . el pecho le quema como una llaga que hay que curar con

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[6]Alegría, El mundo, p. 133.

[7]Alegría, El mundo, p. 87.

[8]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 277-278.

sangre."[9] This is hardly a patient, servile attitude. Ciro Alegría's Indian characters are men first, and Indians second. Fiero Vásquez is termed powerful and dynamic,[10] and Benito Castro holds the belief that man must be free, strong, and happy.[11]

These are some characteristics of the Indians. Others are simplicity, wisdom, sensitivity, humor, bravery, and dignity. Each one will be considered below.

Simplicity

The Indian in some senses is a very simple creature. His world is simple: his wants are simple. When he is confronted by the complexities of the law as outlined by the white man he is at a loss. Alegría describes the Indian simplicity this way.

> Hombres de campo, adoctrinados en la ley de la tierra, desenvolvían su vida según ella e ignoraban las demás, que antes les eran innecesarias y por otra parte no habían podido aprender.[12]

Simplicity manifests itself in other ways. Often the Indian knows only one occupation such as weaving;[13] his life is built around his only skill. Alegría does not ignore the fact that Indians are not all noble savages; he even calls one man of the

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[9]Alegría, El mundo, p. 368.

[10]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 409-410.

[11]Alegría, El mundo, p. 490.

[12]Alegría, El mundo, p. 207.

[13]Alegría, El mundo, p. 185.

village dull.[14] Others are made to look ridiculous because of their lack of information. When the war with Chile is discussed they believe that the adversary is a man named Chile.[15] In the novel Los perros hambrientos, Martina has no idea where her husband has gone when he is drafted. All she knows is that he has gone far away, probably never to return.[16]

Even the intelligent Rosendo Maqui finds himself too poorly informed to combat the complexities of the white courts. His reaction to the legal prodedure is emotional rather than logical.

> De pronto se sintió perdido en ese mundo de papeles, olor de tobaco y aire malo. En un momento tuvo la sospecha de que todos los legajos y expedientes que blanqueaban en los estantes y sobre la mesa del juez terminarían por ahogarlo, por ahogarlos, por perder a la comunidad.[17]

Wisdom

Yet Alegría emphasizes the Indian's wisdom. He pictures the Indian as an enormously practical man. In the final analysis wisdom usually wins over superstition as it does in the case of the blue puma from La serpiente de oro.[18]

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[14]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 182-183.

[15]Alegría, El mundo, p. 24.

[16]Alegría, Los perros hambrientos, 2nd. ed. (Santiago de Chile, 1942), p. 36.

[17]Alegría, El mundo, p. 196.

[18]Alegría, La serpiente, pp. 167-171.

Rosendo Maqui, Alegría's greatest character, is noted for his wisdom in difficult situations. His methods of group control show that he truly understands men and the psychology of the masses. Here is one instance of his clever use of maneuvers to win the rest of the village over to his point of view.

> Rosendo sentóse con calma. Esa actitud confundió a los adversarios. He allí que él imponía la compostura aun a su propio hijo y por otro lado, se mostraba firme, sin que le importara un insulto, dispuesto a encarar solo todos los ataques.[19]

As a judge Rosendo is considered dependable, fair, and prudent.[20] Rosendo had first been chosen a selectman because of the foresight he showed when he saved the wheat crop from rotting by having the rank growth cut. In that way, a new crop had time to grow and mature. The section that the elder men insisted should be left standing grew top heavy and bent to the ground, ruining all the section.[21] This foresight established Rosendo as a wise man.

Later when one of the villagers bought a gun and began to hunt deer many Indians grumbled. To save the situation, selectman Maqui pointed out the fairness of hunting deer, and the right of the hunter to keep his kill. This decision won the mayorship for Rosendo.[22] In the role of mayor, his reputation as a judge

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[19]Alegría, El mundo, p. 225.

[20]Alegría, El mundo, p. 11.

[21]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 11-14.

[22]Alegría, El mundo, p. 11-12.

grew. In a dispute over the ownership of a colt, Rosendo had the mares of the feuding men brought to an open area. The colt was let loose, and he trotted to his mother. Therefore the owner of the mother was the owner of the colt. When this case was referred to a higher court, the white judge upheld the decision, saying that this judgment was worthy of Solomon. Knowing Solomon to be the most revered wise man of all time, Rosendo felt the deepest kind of happiness.[23]

The Indians in Los perros hambrientos are equally intelligent. They are very careful to conserve as many provisions as they are able during the drought, for in their wisdom they know that they must save for even worse times.[24] Simón Robles, the hero of Los perros hambrientos, shows a great deal of wisdom in his eloquent, yet simple, plea for some grain from the wealthy landowner.

> —Patrón, ¿cómo que muy nada? Sus mulas y caballos finos tan comiendo cebada. ¿No vale más quiun animal un cristiano? Y también ay tan sus vacas, punta grande, patrón. Bienestá que haga pastiar, que no le roben. . . Pero hoy es el caso que debe matar pa que coma su gente. Peyor que perros tamos. . . Nosotrus sí que semos como perros hambrientos. . . Yo tuavía, gracias a Dios, tengun poco, perotros pobres, esos huairinos, botaos po los campos buscando, llorando, suplicando. . . , y nunca hallan nada. . . , ni robar pueden. Y tenemos mujeres y también hijos. . . Piensen los diustés, patrón.

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[23]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 13-14.

[24]Alegría, Los perros, p. 28.

> Hágalo po su mujer y su hijos. . . Si tienesté corazón en el pecho, patrón, conduélase . . . Y si tiene pensar e hombre derecho, piense, patrón. . . Con nustro trabajo, con nustra vida sian abierto tuesas chacras, sia sembrao y cosechao to lo que usté come y tamién lo que comen sus animales. . . Algo deso denos, siquiera onde los más necesitaos. No nos deje botaos como meros perros hambrientos, patron. . .[25]

The wisdom of the Indian reaches beyond the practical. He can also think in the abstract, and his thoughts are comparable to the great thoughts of all ages. Here are some examples. One is Rosendo's comment at one point that it takes more courage to refrain from giving a blow than to give one.[26] Simón Robles is a great storyteller, and when his daughter comments on the implausibility of a story he tells, he makes a literary criticism which is worthy of any theorist. "Cuento es cuento."[27]

His wife is also clever. When explaining a certain difficult situation, she likens it to her weaving.

> --Todues enredao y no se ve, como la punta el hilo en la madeja, pero ay ta. . . Sólo quia veces la madeja ta muy grande. . .[28]

Finally, Simón, the master storyteller, makes a most poetic comparison of the foxes and the rich whites in order to comfort the

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[25]Alegría, Los perros, p. 173.

[26]Alegría, El mundo, p. 248.

[27]Alegría, Los perros, p. 27.

[28]Alegría, Los perros, p. 28.

Indians when they see the injustice of the Indian starving while the white man hoards food.

> --Yaura pongamos el caso, la sequía nos fregará onde nosotrus y tamién onde don Cipriano y don Juvencio, y onde chicos y onde grandes. Sólo questos zorros caen sin lluvia . . . Pero ellos tienen nomá sequía e los cielos. . . Nosotrus, los pobres, tenemos siempre sequía e justicia, sequía e corazón. . .[29]

In summary, Alegría shows the Indian to be wise in a number of ways: practically, judicially, and philosophically.

Sensitivity

As was pointed out before, Alegría sees the Indian as a most sensitive individual. Robles, for instance, has a great feeling for life. He loves to play the flute and drums, and one of his most enjoyable pastimes is naming animals and people.[30]

A love and respect for animals is common to most of the Indians. From the tiniest boy feeding a puppy, to the weathered old Rosendo mourning his lost oxen, the Indians alike show their love for the beasts. This is most evident in the story of the great drought. Simón looks at his beloved sheep, who he knows will starve, and he speaks.

> ¿Tendrían que comérselas todas? ¿Se quedarían sin lana para las bayetas? Le dieron pena las pobres ovejas tiradas allí,

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[29]Alegría, Los perros, p. 120.

[30]Alegría, Los perros, p. 26.

> sobre el suelo, dulce y sencillamente,
> ignorantes de su suerte.[31]

Toward the close of the story, Simón's daughter is found still to love her pet who has turned rebel during the hard times; and as the dog dies she cradles him in her arms.[32]

At the end of the long drought, when the mother dog returns, Simón cries with happiness.

> —Wanka, Wankita, vos sabes lo ques cuanduel pobre yel animal no tienen tierra ni agua. . . Sabes, y pueso has güelto. . . , Wanka, Wankita . . . Has güelto como la lluvia güena . . .
> Y para Wanka las lágrimas y la voz y las palmadas del Simón eran también buenas como la lluvia.[33]

Just as moving are Rosendo Maqui's feelings as he views the corpse of his faithful black ox.

> Maqui lo quería. . . . Parecía un cristiano inteligente y bondadoso. El viejo alcalde recordaba con pena la visión de las carnes sangrientas y tumefactas, del asta tronchada y el ojo enjuto. El lloró, lloró sobre el cadáver de ese buen compañero de labor, animal de Dios y de la tierra.[34]

The human feeling for fellow creatures is not limited to beasts. The Indian is often kind and tender to his fellow man, even when he is an outsider. Rosendo's heart is almost broken by the suffering he sees when imprisoned. He befriends the lonely,

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[31]Alegría, Los perros, p. 128.

[32]Alegría, Los perros, pp. 161-162.

[33]Alegría, Los perros, p. 179.

[34]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 39-40.

friendless, and hungry.[35] Here is one such incident.

> Una tarde, un indio angustiado fué a mirarse en los ojos de Rosendo como si quisiera preguntarles por sí mismo. Parecía loco. . . . «Taita, me quiere matar por mi ovejita negra». «El muerto, el muerto» . . . El angustiado se pegó al pecho de Rosendo y éste le abrió los brazos y lo protegió del muerto estrechándolo contra su pecho. El pobre indio lloraba y Rosendo también lloró.[36]

Benito Castro, man of the world and ex-army officer, who would seem hardened to most of life, is tremendously touched by the plight of the villagers. He returns to Rumi to find it deserted.

> De pronto, se sintío húmeda la cara. Lloraba, quieto y callado como esas viejas piedras de las montañas que rezuman humedad.[37]

Benito is one of the foster children raised by Rosendo and his wife. The other is Anselmo, the crippled harp player. Benito was rejected by his natural parents, and Anselmo was left an orphan by a plague. The compassionate Maqui family took pity on them and reared them as their own.[38]

Family ties are very close among the Indians. At one place Rosendo is said to have an overflowing heart for his grandson.[39] Rosendo's family has much tenderness of feeling and loyalty to one another. In one sensitive act his son, the spoon maker, gives his father a delicately carved orangewood spoon as a symbol of his

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[35]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 323-324.

[36]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 336-337.

[37]Alegría, El mundo, p. 476.

[38]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 16-17.

[39]Alegría, El mundo, p. 57.

love during his father's most difficult experience.[40] Later, when Rosendo is jailed, his family visits him as often as they are able.[41]

Martina of Los perros hambrientos displays an overpowering emotion for family. When her husband is drafted, she knows she must tell her son; but she does not know how to do it. At last both the child and the mother comfort each other in a loving embrace.

> Piensa que es necesario explicarle al hijo lo que pasó, pero no sabe cómo hacerlo y se queda silenciosa. El silencio es tenso, pues el Damián la mira con ojos llenos de preguntas. Súbitamente ambos rompen a llorar. Es un llanto ronco y entrecortado, sombrío y mudo, pero que los liga, que los junta.[42]

Alegría always depicts a tender relationship between man and woman. He discusses love in all phases: youth, middle age, and old age. There is the teen-ager's first ideal love. One incident involves Pancho, a young boy in Los perros hambrientos, who tells Antuca, his girl friend, that he is saddened by a tale of unrequited love. "Cómo será el querer, cuando llora así. . ."[43] Antuca is equally moved by the story of a priest in love with a beautiful young girl who dies.

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[40]Alegría, El mundo, p. 222.

[41]Alegría, El mundo, p. 322.

[42]Alegría, Los perros, p. 36.

[43]Alegría, Los perros, p. 15.

> Pero en el fondo de sí misma deseaba oírlo, sentía que el desgarrado lamento del Manchiapuito le recorría todo el cuerpo proporcionándole un dolor gozoso, un sufrimiento cruel y dulce. La cauda temblorosa de la música le penetraba como una espada a herirle rudamente, pero estremeciéndole con un tremor recóndito las entrañas.[44]

A more complex sense of love is found in most of the characters who have reached maturity. Even the bandit Vásquez has a sense of tenderness. This is his feeling for his youthful mistress.

> El bandolero no hablé nada por temor de que le temblara la voz. Aún le quedaba corazón para sentir el dolor de los pobres, que había sido el suyo en otro tiempo. Entendié todo lo que significaba él mismo como integración de la vida de Casiana, y la estreché amorosamente.[45]

Yet when he discovers that his old wife is still alive and wants to come back to him, he is touched by strong emotions for her as well. At last he sends her away, for he knows their life together can not be happy again.[46]

The Indians feel a great kinship to all of nature. They are romanticists in the literary sense of the term. Here are some samples of this feeling.

> Daba gusto el colorido lozano de los campos de siembra. Los bohíos grises humeaban en medio de las multicolores chacras. Un frondoso bosque de eucaliptos rodeaba la casa hacienda de

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[44]Alegría, Los perros, p. 15.

[45]Alegría, El mundo, p. 109.

[46]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 411-412.

> Pucar. Las quebradas cortaban el paisaje con sus verdinegras líneas de monte, descendiendo a la encañada llena de valles formada por el río Yana. Hombres y mujeres de trajes coloreados transitaban por los senderos amarillos. Alguien ensillaba su caballo a la puerta de una casa. Camino de la altura, ascendían lentamente otros blancos rebaños.[47]
>
> No era solo el cuerpo del hombre, entonces. Era vida orgánica lo que se necesitaba. Sí, ciertamente, puesto que el hombre prefería vivir en un campo arbolado y no en un desierto.[48]
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> Muchos comuneros tenían pena de las torcaces y otros añoraban su canto. Quien más lo añoraba era Demetrio Sumallacta, el flautista. Se había encariñado con la dulce melodía y la esperba, sobre todo, a la hora del crepúsculo. Le parecía que el melancólico canto era necesario al véspero como un tinte más. Digamos nosotros, con nuestro amigo el flautista, que el canto de las torcaces en la hora del ocaso nos ha producido un original embrujo. Es como si los colores y las notas llegaran a confundirse. A ratos parece que el crepúsculo está mágicamente coloreado de música y a ratos que el canto está musicalizado de color. El hombre no despierta ya sino con la sombra.
>
> Demetrio, a veces, creía escuchar un lloroso y ahogado canto lejano. Era el de su propio corazón.[49]

Humor

The Indian is not just a gloomy bundle of emotions. He has a real sense of joy in life, and loves to laugh and joke; illus-

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[47]Alegría, Los perros, p. 52.

[48]Alegría, El mundo, p. 313.

[49]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 83-84.

trative of this joy is the description of the fiesta found in La serpiente de oro.

> Fiesta, alegre fiesta de todos los años! Levántense voces cantoras; giman flautas, bramen bombos, sollocen antaras, trinen guitarras, que nuestras privaciones y nuestras harturas, nuestras vencimientos y nuestros esperanzas, nuestros dolores y nuestras alegrías giran ahora hechas una sola euforia de ebriedad y de danza![50]

The Indian children hava a natural enthusiasm for life as children everywhere. They laugh and call to the moon gaily in El mundo es ancho y ajeno.[51]

Some of the jokes that delight the Indian are quite simple and display not humor so much as an appreciation for living. Antuca, Simón Robles' daughter, has such an appreciation for life. She loves to call to the wind while she is tending her sheep.

> Ella, si estaba un perro a su lado--siempre tenía uno acompañándola--, le decía en tono de broma:
> --¿Ves? Vino el viento. Hace caso. . .
> Y reía con una risa de corriente agua clara. El perro, comprendiéndola, movía la cola coposa y reía también con los vivaces ojos que brillaban tras el agudo hocico reluciente.[52]

The same happy girl is seen to be a bit of an actress, enjoying playing a role.

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[50]Alegría, La serpiente, p. 137.

[51]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 31-32.

[52]Alegría, Los perros, p. 13.

> Imitó el silbido de la vizcacha de manera muy cómica, y por eso, y también porque deseaban reír, estallaron ambas en una cantarina carcajada.[53]

Her father shows his sense of humor in the names he bestows on the creatures he contacts.

> A una china aficionada a los lances galantes le puso "Pastora sin manada", y a un cholo de ronca voz y feble talante, "Trueno en ayunas"; a un magro caballo, "Cortaviento", y a una gallina estéril, "Poniaire". Por darse el gusto de nombrarlos, se las echaba de moralista y forzudo, ensillaba con frecuencia a Cortaviento y se oponía a que su mujer matara la gallina.[54]

In fact, Simón Robles is probably Alegría's wittiest character. His stories are full of humor which he uses to make life more bearable. One pokes fun at women, and he tells it to tease his wife. The story is able to restore good feelings and happiness to the family circle even during the hard times.[55] Simón always has an answer. When his witty daughter asks how the old woman in a story could anticipate that she should name her dogs Güeso y Pellejo, in order to save herself, he replies,

> —Se los puso y después dió la casualidá que valieran esos nombres. . . Asies en todo.[56]

One clever comment comes out when the Indians are holding a

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[53]Alegría, Los perros, p. 53.

[54]Alegría, Los perros, p. 26.

[55]Alegría, Los perros, p. 80.

[56]Alegría, Los perros, p. 27.

horse race in El mundo es ancho y ajeno. A rider is found to have only one spur, and someone quips, "Como te vas con una espuela nomá, sólo un lao del potro va a querer andar."[57]

The Indians love riddles. Here is one they often tell.

> En el monte monterano
> hay un hombre muy anciano:
> tiene dientes y no come,
> tiene barbas y no es hombre. . .
> ¿Qué será?[58]

The answer is corn.

Often the natives are able to see the humorous side of a bad situation. The health commissioner in El mundo es ancho y ajeno, whom the Indians see as anything but healthy himself, is seen through humorous eyes. When he demands a hygenic school, one Indian says,

> —¿No es un jutrecito el comisionao? Lo conozco, lo conozco. . . En la tienda de ño Albino pasa bebiendo copas. ¿Cree que tomar tarde y mañana es güeno pa la salú? El sí no es higiénico. . .
>
> Y entonces rieron ambos mascullando la dichosa palabreja entre risotada y risotada. Se sentían muy felices.[59]

As seen in this quotation, the Indian can be quite satiric. Another instance occurs when the poet of Rumi composes a clever rhyme about the villain, Alvaro.

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[57]Alegría, El mundo, p. 143.

[58]Alegría, El mundo, p. 136.

[59]Alegría, El mundo, p. 59.

> A unos los mata el susto,
> a otros la enfermedá.
> Dicen que va a morir uno
> de comer comunidá.[60]

The humor of the Indian, therefore, is seen to range from a simple joy of life to clever satire. This is no doubt one of the aspects that Alegría treats which makes his view of the Indian more complex and less stereotyped than other literary Indians. Behind that stoical face and bearing Alegría sees a heart full of joy.

Bravery and Perseverance

The writer gives emphasis to the Indians' bravery and perseverance. In the face of ominous odds, they fight on as best they are able. Jerónimo Cahua from El mundo es ancho y ajeno is one such man. He says:

> —Sobre irse, creo que no nos vayamos, y está pa no entregar la comunidá. Está pa defendela. Nadie nos podrá quitar si todos le defendemos con machetes, con piedras, con palos, más que sea arañando. Yo perdí mi escopeta, pero tengo mi honda. . .[61]

Even the children are brave. Augusto, Rosendo's teen-age grandson, makes a most daring spy mission for the village.[62] The women are as strong as the men. The pregnant Casiana, mistress of Fiero Vásquez, makes the hard and dangerous trip up the steep, rough

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[60]Alegría, El mundo, p. 325.

[61]Alegría, El mundo, p. 224.

[62]Alegría, El mundo, p. 210.

mountains barefoot and in cold weather to her bandit to tell him that the village needs him.[63]

Despite century-old superstitions that warn about the mysteries of the high areas, the villagers move to the mountain when they are forced off their land.[64] And in this desolate mountain they persevere and seem to win over the adverse forces of nature.

> Y el indio, con sencillez y tesón, domó de nuevo la resistencia de la materia, y en la desolación de los pajonales y las rocas, bajo el azote persistente del viento, brotaron las habitaciones, manteniendo sus paredes combas y su techo filudo con un gesto vigoroso y pugnaz.[65]

Dignity

These hardships add to the dignity of the Indian. Alegría shows him as a most respectable and respected man. Rosendo epitomizes this respect.

> El viejo alcalde les inspiraba respeto primero y luego, cuando lo trataban, veneración. «Eres gueno, taita».[66]
>
> Rosendo callaba con tranquilidad. Los caporales, medio borrachos, no sabían qué actitud tomar ante ese despectivo silencio.[67]

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[63]Alegría, El mundo, p. 227.

[64]Alegría, El mundo, p. 253.

[65]Alegría, El mundo, p. 254.

[66]Alegría, El mundo, p. 327.

[67]Alegría, El mundo, p. 219.

Summary

Ciro Alegría sees the Indian with a complex personality. More importantly, he shows each character to be an individual. A complete range of personality traits are shown by the author. He writes about the very stupid and the very wise, the honest and dishonest. Universally, however, every Indian is seen to be unusually sensitive to nature and his fellow man.

Beliefs

Philosophy and Religion

The Indian as seen by Alegría has definite philosophical attitudes. As mentioned before, he has a great sense of brotherhood for all men. He puts his love for fellow man to practice, and he lives very peacefully. It is not surprising that Dorotea, the faithful Rumi villager turned criminal, finds killing such a difficult task to perform.[68]

The Indians believe in compensation in the Emersonian sense. They say, "Todo se paga en la vida y el mal tiene inmediatamente, o a la larga, su castigo."[69] Rosendo has a mature view of the meaning of life. He sees the ebb and flow of life in the same way poets and philosophers have for all ages.

> Hemos visto que la misma consideración consolaba a Rosendo. En la vida del hombre y

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[68]Alegría, El mundo, p. 275.

[69]Alegría, El mundo, p. 194.

> la mujer había tiempo de todo. También, pues, debía llegar el tiempo de morir. Lo deplorable era una muerte prematura que frustra, pero no la ocurrida en la ancianidad, que es una conclusión lógica. Así pensaba sintiéndose muy cerca de la tierra. Observaba que todo lo viviente nacía, crecía y moría para volver a la tierra.[70]

Rosendo also has a great sense of self and a sensitivity to time. Often he seeks comfort from nature.

> . . . él, Rosendo, gustaba en ciertas horas de la soledad. Por eso trepaba cumbres. Bien mirado, había en su voluntad de altura un afán de más grande compañía.[71]

His deepest thoughts he hoped to share with someone, so he went to the priest for a philosophical discussion. The white man was astounded by Rosendo's ability to grasp deep subjects.

> Rosendo consideraba únicamente la soledad que le correspondía. Cierta vez, planteó el asunto de la compañía silenciosa al cura y éste le dijo: «¿Cómo se te ocurren esas cosas siendo un indio?» tal si a un indio no se le pudieran ocurrir cosas. Luego sentenció. «Es la comunión de las almas.»[72]

The Indians, as seen by Alegría, retain some of their pagan beliefs, finding God in the tallest tree and largest river.[73] They take on the elements of Catholicism that appeal to them, and reject those that are not appealing. Rosendo, for instance, does

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[70]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, p. 57.

[71]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, p. 313.

[72]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, p. 313.

[73]Alegría, <u>La serpiente</u>, p. 75.

not think he really believes in Hell.[74]

Because saints are an appealing aspect of Catholicism, each village has its patron saint, usually one connected with the soil. The Indians of Los perros hambrientos worship Our Lady of Carmen, the supreme rain giver.[75] In Rumi the Indians pray to Saint Isidore, patron saint of the farmer.[76] They believe that he has the power to move of his own will, and that he does move; they tell tales of how he moved to a certain spot even when placed elsewhere several times. This determined the place their church was to be built.[77] It is he whom they expect to save them from the threat of Don Alvaro.[78]

Doroteo believes in the power of a prayer which is part Scripture, and part pagan. It has been the charm of his life, so he teaches it to the bandit leader, who saves him in return. This is the advice regarding the Prayer of the Righteous Judge which Doroteo gives Fiero.

> La perfección era muy importante, pues si el rezador se equivocaba, la oración perdía toda o gran parte de su eficacia. En cambio, si la decía bien, con fe y justeza, era tan

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[74]Alegría, El mundo, p. 66.

[75]Alegría, Los perros, pp. 121-126.

[76]Alegría, El mundo, p. 29.

[77]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 133-134.

[78]Alegría, El mundo, p. 197.

> poderosa que Dios, aunque no quisiera, tenía que oírla.[79]

Superstition

In addition to these beliefs, the Indians have many superstitions. Rosendo, early in El mundo es ancho y ajeno, is frightened by a snake, a bad omen.[80] The Indians believe that the bell in the village chapel is made partly of human blood, giving it a human tone.[81] In order to encourage the growth of the cattle, Inocencio, the herder, buries a little stone calf in the barn yard. He pours milk over the spot and often leaves a little cake for the calf.[82]

Nasha, an old woman in the same novel who is reputed to be a witch, is said to do many supernatural things. She can make people lame by picking up the dirt they walk on; she can make a doll in the likeness of a person and injure him by sticking pins into it; she can cause people to waste away, and to become insane; she can drive people's eyes out and bewitch them. In addition, she is said to be able to turn herself into an animal; and she looks into the future with the aids of coca, the flight of birds, and the sun.[83] Using salt she can break any spell cast by another

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[79]Alegría, El mundo, p. 104.

[80]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 7-8.

[81]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 34-35.

[82]Alegría, El mundo, p. 38.

[83]Alegría, El mundo, p. 191.

witch.[84] Not all of the Indians believe in her powers, yet they are not sure what to believe. When she puts a spell on Don Alvaro, Rosendo is hesitant.

> Rosendo Maqui creía y no creía. ¿Era que las fuerzas secretas de Dios, los santos y la tierra podían ser administradas por el hombre, en este caso por una mujer feble y extraña? Además, la coca había respondido desfavorablemente a la misma Nasha. Salvo que ella pensara que una cosa era don Alvaro y otra el inmutable destino.[85]

However, Rosendo is superstitious in his own way. He goes to the top of Mount Rumi to make offerings to the god of the mountain, Father Rumi. He takes coca, leaves of dark bread, and a gourd full of chicha. With the help of the coca he hopes to get a "message" from the god of the mountain.[86]

The villagers believe strongly that there is a bad spirit of the lake. When some progressive men suggest that the lake be drained they are extremely upset.[87] The lake is drained anyway, and nothing happens. In fact, the village grows and prospers.[88] So the superstitions seem to be fading away in some cases.

Medicine

Superstition plays a large role in the practice of medicine.

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[84]Alegría, El mundo, p. 193.

[85]Alegría, El mundo, p. 194.

[86]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 255-257.

[87]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 251-252.

[88]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 495-497.

The Indians believe the grippe to be a woman dressed in white who gallops through the high lands spreading diesase.[89] They also believe that the rainbow causes illness, and that the unwinding of a ball of many colored yarn will cure illness.[90] Yet Rosendo blames small pox, which had ravaged the village many times, on fate, not on wickedness nor a woman.[91]

Nasha, the good witch, has many cures for various illnesses. With a special broth and cock's comb she can ward off the "evil eye." To cure fright, she makes faces at the spot where a ghost was seen. In another cure for the same thing, she takes a guinea pig and rubs him over the patient until the pig dies. Then she dissects the pig, removing a diseased organ.[92] In order to cure animals the natives string lemons about the necks of the beasts.[93]

Some superstitions Alegría sees to be dying. The belief that water in which steel has been tempered makes a good tonic is being abandoned.[94]

Despite all the witchcraft, the Indians are masters of some operations, considering their scant scientific knowledge. When a bandit is injured, his arm is amputated with a razor blade. Salves

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[89]Alegría, El mundo, p. 480.

[90]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 15-16.

[91]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 21-22.

[92]Alegría, El mundo, p. 190.

[93]Alegría, El mundo, p. 43.

[94]Alegría, El mundo, p. 199.

are applied to the stump, and the man recovers.[95] A skull fracture is repaired successfully with the use of the old Incan operation. These are the steps followed. First, a brew is given the victim in order to deaden the pain. Then everything is sterilized; the Indian calls this doing the operation with calidez. Next the pieces of the fracture are cut away. A squash skin is used to cover the opening, and the whole skull is covered with a poultice. The operation is successful.[96]

Modern science is seen to be changing these ways. The priest has opened a drug store, telling the Indians that it is a sin to believe in superstitious healing.[97] The resulting use of quinine for malaria and other pills for various ailments has cut the witch doctor's business.[98]

Women and Sex

What do the Indians believe the role of women should be? Although they are usually subserviant and reticent, they sometimes speak out at village councils as Chabela does.

> —¿Quién lo hará mejor que Rosendo? Desde que tengo memoria, lo veo cumpliendo lo bueno y evitando lo malo. Se ha güelto viejo en el

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[95]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 234-236.

[96]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 188-189.

[97]Alegría, El mundo, p. 480.

[98]Alegría, El mundo, p. 190.

> servico de la comunidad. Aura en estos tiempos, ha luchao, ha padecido más que todos po ser viejo, po ser alcalde, po ser autoridá, po ser güeno. Los otros viejos están sentaos en sus casas. El jineteó un viaje tras otro. ¿A quién iba a hacer declarar si no querían? ¿A quién lo iba a obligar a defender si no querían? Leguas de leguas ha caminao po muestro bien; desaires y malos modos ha padecido po el bien de todos. Aura mesmo, véanlo ahí, sentao y tranquilo, empuñando su bordón, esperando con paciencia y bien sereno que lo boten, porque él es güeno tamién cuando se trata de perdonar la ingratitú . . . . Pero naide lo botará. ¿Quién es el hombre de corazón cobarde que quiera desconocer y ofender? ¿Quién es la mujer que no lo mire como a un padre? Se quedará, se quedará en su puesto nuestro querido, nuestro güen viejo Rosendo.[99]

But the basic purpose of the women of El mundo es ancho y ajeno is the same as the purpose of the soil, fecundity. This is how a young girl is seen to be growing into the ideal of womanhood.

> Marguicha fué creciendo como una planta lozana . . . . En el tiempo debido floreció en labios y mejillas y echó frutos de senos. Sus firmes caderas presagiabanla fecundidad de la gleba honda. . . Ella, en buenas cuentas, era la vida que llegaba a multiplicarse y perennizarse, porque la mujer tiene el destino de la tierra.[100]

Rosendo's daughters are the ideal Indian women. They can do everything expected of a female of their race: spin, weave, cook, and bear strong children.[101] These women are good mothers and teach their children respect for their elders.[102]

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[99]Alegría, El mundo, p. 228.

[100]Alegría, El mundo, p. 44.

[101]Alegría, El mundo, p. 16.

[102]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 93-94.

Sex is something as natural to the Indian as the spring. One adolescent Alegría describes is Augusto, the grandson of Rosendo. As he reaches the early teens he finds himself crazy about every girl he sees.[103] The next phase in love-making is demonstrated by Juan and Simona, friends of Augusto. During the corn harvest they flirt, then wrestle.

> Simona descubrió la alegría de su cuerpo y del hombre, y Juan, que ya había derribado muchas chinas a lo largo de los caminos y a lo ancho de las chacras y las parvas, sintió ese oscuro llamado, ese reclamo poderoso que rinde alguna vez al varón haciéndole tomar una mujer entre todas.[104]

In the act of love the woman gives herself completely. There is no frigid Indian woman.

Every man must fulfill himself through a woman. The brother of Doroteo's wife and Vásquez's mistress has lived a life of a hermit, seeming more like a beast than a man. Yet in the village of Rumi he finds desire and love.

> ... y una tarde, ya bien oscuro, vió que Tadea iba con una calabaza amarilla por agua a una acequia que entraba a las viejas casas tumbadas, y ella dió una vuelta para no pasar por las casas y él la derribó en una hondonada y ella se resistió, pero después quiso y él supo que era caliente y tierna la mujer, y su cuerpo tuvo gusto...[105]

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[103]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, pp. 80-81.

[104]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, p. 139.

[105]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, p. 347.

Rosendo had loved his wife with a great passion as a young man, and this was one of the great comforts of his life.

> En su mocedad se amaron de igual modo que ama al agua la tierra ávida. El la buscaba, noche a noche, como a un dulce fruto de la sombra, y ella, a veces, se le rendía bajo el sol y en medio campo, cual una gacela.[106]

Indian women are usually true to one man. The wife of Amadeo, the coca picker, is raped by an overseer, and she weeps bitterly over her humiliation.[107] Despite her shame, and the evident shame of other Indian women, Rosendo views rape and promiscuity with a humanitarian eye. He begs for forgiveness for the women who had been unfaithful with the soldiers during the war.[108] One may assume that faithfulness is encouraged, but violated women are not totally ostracized.

Community and Land

The workings of the government are quite interesting and show the conscientious thought which has been given to self-rule by the Indians. The important posts in the community are given only to married men. Usually they have descendants, for this gives the man a certain amount of added responsibility and insures that the selectman is involved with the future of the community.[109] The community

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[106]Alegría, El mundo, p. 16.

[107]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 298-299.

[108]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 30-31.

[109]Alegría, El mundo, p. 137.

is a fine example of democracy at work. Freedom of speech is employed as well as the freedom of assembly and equality for all. Youth takes a part in the decisions, and representatives are chosen much as they would be at a New England Town Meeting.[110]

The community is almost sacred to the Indian. When the community dispersed in El mundo es ancho y ajeno Alegría says that Rosendo is deeply affected, even though he realizes that the community can only offer slavery and hunger.[111] In keeping with the Indian's feelings, Alegría portrays the community as a personality. This is how he compares it to a living thing.

> La tierra parecía muerta. El pueblo, el buen pueblo comunero, trepaba lenta y penosamente, llevándose sobre las espaldas, curvadas de pena y de cuesta, una historia tronchada y reacia a morir como los grandes árboles talados cuyas hojas ignoran durante un tiempo los estragos del hacha.[112]

The land is as dear to the Indians as the community is dear. Alegría says that it is the land which can give complete meaning for the Indian's existence.[113] It is during working hours that these people are the happiest. This description of the harvest of the corn is a fine example of their joy in work on the land.

> Las notas del arpa, las risas, las voces, el rumor de las hojas secas y el chasquido de las mazorcas al desgajarse, confundíanse

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[110]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 207-250.

[111]Alegría, El mundo, p. 287.

[112]Alegría, El mundo, p. 244.

[113]Alegría, El mundo, p. 98.

formando el himno feliz de la cosecha.[114]

Much joy is also derived from the tasks of the roundup,[115] and the threshing.[116] In connection with the love of the land, the Indian is shown to be a good farmer, keeping ahead of the weeds and using his ancestral knowledge to make the most productive harvest.[117]

Alegría says that the Indian can be most accurately portrayed as a farmer. He says in an essay which discusses his writing that those who attempt to show the Indian as anything but a farmer present a warped view of him.

> Enrique López Albújar, well known as a short-story writer, is faintly praised by the comment that he has only succeeded in cleverly presenting the Indian as a criminal (a result, no doubt, of his professional experience as a judge) and not as a tiller of the soil and a herdsman, which is precisely where the Indian is most himself.[118]

If the community is sacred, the land is a god to Alegría's Indians. Their suffering is a direct result of their love of the land.[119] Deep within him, Rosendo Maqui believes that the land, the Andes, holds the secret of life.[120] The land does not change, and

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[114]Alegría, El mundo, p. 138.

[115]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 139-148.

[116]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 148-149.

[117]Alegría, Los perros, p. 32.

[118]Ciro Alegría, "Aprismo and Literature," Books Abroad, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Winter, 1938), p. 10.

[119]Alegría, El mundo, p. 433.

its strength causes men to flourish.[121] Rosendo loves to climb his mountains and absorb the strength and beauty of them.

> En realidad, subió también porque le gustaba probar la gozosa fuerza de sus músculos en la lucha con las escarpadas cumbres y luego, al dominarlas, llenarse los ojos de horizontes. Amaba los amplios espacios y la magnífica grandeza de los Andes.[122]

His love is so strong that he has great difficulty deciding which in him is stronger, the love for his wife, or the love of his land. Alegría hints at the answer.

> Y Rosendo Maqui acaso pensaba o más bien sentía: «¿Es la tierra mejor que la mujer?» Nunca se había explicado nada en definitiva, pero él quería y amaba mucho a la tierra.[123]

Freedom

In addition to these loves, the Indian believes fiercely in his freedom. Mention is made of the pride felt by all the Indians in discussing the revolution of 1885.[124] Working for himself, the Indian is most happy; as a ranch hand his life is sad, and his work slow and lifeless. It is as if his strength is not enough without the heart which he has left on the land that was his.[125]

As a prisoner, Rosendo is most discouraged because he finds

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[121]Alegría, El mundo, p. 44.

[122]Alegría, El mundo, p. 9.

[123]Alegría, El mundo, p. 10.

[124]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 168-169.

[125]Alegría, El mundo, p. 168.

himself and his life there sterile, without any kind of creativity, very far removed from the vitality of life that he derived from growing the plants on the land he loves.[126]

Without his freedom the Indian is an incomplete man. Benito Castro's cry to the villagers to defend themselves is a fine example of the relationship of the community, land, and freedom. His appeal is to the Indian's love of each.

> Defendamos nuestra tierra, nuestro sitio en el mundo, que así defenderemos nuestra libertá y nuestra vida. La suerte de los pobres es una y pediremos a todos los pobres que nos acompañen. Así ganaremos. . . Muchos, muchos, desde hace años, siglos, se rebelaron y perdieron. Que nadie se acobarde pensando en la derrota porque es peor ser esclavo sin pelear. Quién sabe los gobernantes comiencen a comprender que a la nación no le conviene la injusticia. Pa permitir la muerte de la comunidá indígena se justifican diciendo que hay que despertar en el indio el espíritu de propiedá y así empiezan quitándole la única que tiene. Defendamos nuestra vida, comuneros. ¡Defendamos nuestra tierra![127]

Summary

What, then, does Alegría show to be the beliefs of the Indian? In the first place this varies from individual to individual. Basically, life centers around the community, the land, and the family. His particular beliefs in regard to religion and medicine are sometimes tempered with superstition. But the Indian's real religion is his worship of the land.

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[126]Alegría, El mundo, p. 409.

[127]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 500-501.

CHAPTER VI

FOLKLORE

Crafts

The Indian is an artistic craftsman in several ways. The women are constantly weaving and spinning. Carving is also a craft. In La serpiente de oro, a gourd holding lime used to aid in the chewing of coca is described as having a carved horn rim and a grinning monkey on the cover.[1] Mat making and rug weaving is also practiced by these people.[2] Although there appears to be no fine art, some characters seem attuned to the symbolism of art. Fiero Vásquez, for instance, dresses totally in black. When told he should stop dressing in this manner because it gives his identity away, he gives an artistic reaction to the color. "¿Y qué? Negra es mi vida, negras mis penas, negra mi suerte."[3]

Dance

Dance is one of the folk arts. One such dance is described in El mundo es ancho y ajeno. This folk dance is called the silulo. An odd number of people are necessary for the dance. While the couples dance, the odd male dancer takes a few swings with an axe

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[1]Ciro Alegría, La serpiente de oro, 2nd. ed. (Santiago de Chile, 1936), p. 36.

[2]Ciro Alegría, El mundo es ancho y ajeno, 2nd. ed. (Santiago de Chile, 1941), p. 328.

[3]Alegría, El mundo, p. 100.

at a tree. Then the partners change and the odd male takes a swing at the tree. The dance stops when the tree falls.[4] Another dance performed to the accompaniment of a guitar is also described. In this dance the couples make no turns and move with a simple step. This Alegría calls the Peruvian version of the waltz.[5]

Music

Far more important than the above art forms is music. Since this is the favorite art of the Andes,[6] those who do not sing, play an instrument.[7] At the harvest time the thresher with the clearest voice gives a high full musical shout which is answered by a lower chant from the other threshers.[8] Even the littlest shepherdess sings songs. Alegría sees these tunes and the habit of singing as a direct result of the lonely life of the wilds. He says,

> Cantos que son hijos del hambre y el látigo,
> de la roca y la fiera, de la nieve y la
> niebla, de la soledad y del viento.[9]

Music is so ingrained into the Indian way of life, that Resende finds that there is singing and playing of musical instruments in

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[4]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 155-156.

[5]Alegría, El mundo, p. 78.

[6]Alegría, El mundo, p. 269.

[7]Alegría, El mundo, p. 149.

[8]Alegría, El mundo, p. 139.

[9]Alegría, La serpiente, p. 83.

the prison.[10]

The Indian instruments are the harp, vielin, drums and flute.[11] Anselmo, the adopted son of Rosendo Maqui, is a cripple. To compensate for his handicap, he has learned how to be a master of the harp. Of this instrument's value Alegría says,

> El indio ha dado al instrumento extranjero su rural simplicidad, su matinal ternura y su honde quebranto, toda la condición de un pájaro cautivo, y así se la ha apropiado.[12]

This is the way Alegría describes Anselmo's talent.

> Antes, hubiérase dicho que él y su instrumento formaban una sola entidad melódica a través de la cual articulaba sus secretas voces la vida comunitaria. Modulaba el pecho, ayudado por la ringlera de cuerdas tensas y la caja cónica, un himno de surcos, de maizales ebrios de verdor y trigales dorados, de distancias columbradas desde la cima de roquedales enhiestos, de fiestas de amor, de faenas hechas fiesta, de múltiples ritmos y esperanzas.[13]

Music is much a part of the life of the Andean's well-being, and his talents range from the ability to sing simple tunes to the artistry of the community musician.

Storytelling

The Andean loves to tell stories. Alegría himself shares the talent and love, for his novels contain many short stories and folk

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[10]Alegría, El mundo, p. 165.

[11]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 149-150.

[12]Alegría, El mundo, p. 268.

[13]Alegría, El mundo, p. 266.

tales which he puts into the mouths of his characters. Some of his books are old legends told for children.

Rosendo Maqui, Simón Robles, and others are fond of telling tales. Another storyteller is the peddler-magician who figures in the plot of El mundo es ancho y ajeno. Villagers like to have him visit, for then they know they will be entertained.

> El Magico conocía a palmos la extensa zona donde negociaba y tenía mucho que contar de pueblos lejanos, de haciendas, de indios colonos, de comuneros, de fiestas. . . Sus propias peripecias eran pintorescas y las relataba dándoles carácter de extraordinarias.[14]

Storytelling has in some instances reached such an artistic level that not all Indians feel capable of telling a story well. In Los perros hambrientos Mashe wishes to tell the story of the toad who was much chagrined when the lagoon he boasted of dried up, but Mashe is afraid he will not tell the story well enough, so he holds his tongue.[15]

In the hands of Simón Robles, storytelling is a kind of therapy.[16] To others it is a ritual of greeting. When two men meet, they exchange tales.[17] To Rosendo Maqui, storytelling serves another purpose. He feels that stories are history and culture, and he vows to tell all the village tales before he dies, so that

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[14]Alegría, El mundo, p. 92.

[15]Ciro Alegría, Los perros hambrientos, 2nd. ed. (Santiago de Chile, 1942), p. 120.

[16]Alegría, Los perros, p. 39.

[17]Alegría, El mundo, p. 291.

they will not die with him. Unlike music, which is with the Indian in good and bad times, tales are rarely told when the Indian is severely oppressed.[18]

Many of these stories are beast fables. Five of them are particularily outstanding. One explains the death of the birds. Since no one has ever seen a dead bird, it is assumed that when the birds die they go straight up to Heaven.[19] Another tale tells of a foolish toad and a foolish katydid. Both, boasting of their fine voices, ask a heron to judge which sings better. Instead of judging their singing, he judges their flavor by eating them both.[20] There are tales concerning the bird called the quienquién. One goes like this. A city fellow came to the mountains, and when he heard the cry quién, quién, he answered the bird saying, "Yo, Fulano de Tal, el de sombrero negro." This trick amuses the Indian greatly.[21]

In Los perros hambrientos a tale is told in which a white fox covers himself with flour in order to be admitted into the sheepfold. Only a sudden rain, which washes off the flour, saves the flock.[22]

One of the most delightful tales concerns the dogs called

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[18]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 14-15.

[19]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 168-169.

[20]Alegría, El mundo, p. 151.

[21]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 291-292.

[22]Alegría, Los perros, pp. 119-120.

Güeso y Pellejo. It is told by Simón Robles, and is probably one of the best examples of his story telling art. It follows in its entirety.

> Al bautizar a los perros, dijo en el ruedo de la merienda:
> —Que se llamen así, pue hay una historia yesta es quiuna viejita tenía dos perros: el uno se llamaba Güeso yel otro Pellejo. Y jué quiun día la vieja salió e su casa con los perros, yentón llegó un ladrón y se metió bajo e la cama. Golvió la señora po la noche y se puso a acostarse. El ladrón taba calladito ay, esperando quella se durmiera pa augala silencito sin que lo sintieran los perros y pescar las llaves diun cajón con plata. Y velay que la vieja, al agacharse pa pescar la vacenica, le vió las patas ondel ladrón. Y como toda vieja es sabida, ésa también era. Yentón se puso a lamentarse, como quien no quiere la cosa: "Yastoy muy vieja; ay, yastoy muy vieja y muy flaca; güeso y pellejo no más estoy." Y repetía cada vez más juerte, como almirada: "¡güeso y pellejo!, ¡güeso y pellejo!" Yeneso, pue, oyeron los perros y vinieron corriendo. Ella les hizo una señita y los perros se juera contrel ladrón haciéndolo leña. . . Velay que pueso ta güeno questos se llamen también Güeso y Pellejo.[23]

There are other types of tales. One short fable tells how the devil spreads the worst trait of all, discontentment.[24]

According to an old legend told in <u>Los perros hambrientos</u>, men used to fear night the way that they fear the shadow puma. Thus God gave man woman in order to take the fear from the night. The moral of the tale is this. "Yasi jué cómo la mujer lo perdió, po

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[23]Alegría, <u>Los perros</u>, pp. 26-27.

[24]Alegría, <u>La serpiente</u>, pp. 229-231.

que vino conel miedo y la noche."[25]

There is a tale about a young priest who loved a girl so much that, when she died, he dug up her bones to make into a flute. The priest's tune is often played in the hills.[26]

Here is the tale that managed to restore good feeling in the home of Robles. Once there was a widow who complained so much to her second husband that he asked King Soleman what to do about her. The wise king sent him to the burro man who had the perfect solution: for a complaining woman and stubborn donkey there is one cure--a stick.[27]

To the Indian, tale telling is great entertainment, but it is more; it is practical, for it is a method of greeting, an escape mechanism, and therapy for saddened hearts as is all great literature. In addition, it is a form of history, the only history books the Andeans have.

Summary

The folklore of the Indians is varied. Dance and crafts are mentioned, but hardly emphasized. Music and storytelling are their great arts. All of the Andeans are pictured as possessing some kind of musical talent. Certain members of the community are pointed out as great storytellers and musicians.

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[25]Alegría, Los perros, p. 49.

[26]Alegría, Los perros, p. 15.

[27]Alegría, Los perros, pp. 77-80.

CHAPTER VII

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

The Indian and the Cholo

The man of mixed blood in Peru is called a cholo. His social status is lower than that of the white, but considerably higher than that of the Indian. He is often a small shopkeeper in the provinces, and sometimes he has the opportunity, through education, to become a petty professional man. The cholo world is thoroughly explored in Alegría's La serpiente de oro.

In Alegría's estimation, the cholo is quite different from the Indian. He calls the cholo vain and having a tendency to swagger a bit.[1] He is a little less naive in regard to governmental regulations such as army registration.[2] One cholo in El mundo es ancho y ajeno expresses the philosophy of most cholos when he says that the world is for the shrewd and that people who let themselves be fooled are responsible for this fault.[3]

Some cholos are pictured as less humane than the Indian. The Celadonios, a cholo family in Los perros hambrientos, are cattle

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[1]Ciro Alegría, La serpiente de oro, 2nd. ed. (Santiago de Chile, 1936), p. 37.

[2]Alegría, La serpiente, p. 45.

[3]Ciro Alegría, El mundo es ancho y ajeno, 2nd. ed. (Santiago de Chile, 1941), p. 86.

rustlers. They steal one of the Robles' dogs and are very cruel to the beast.[4]

Cholo lawyers and judges are pictured as a ruthless lot.[5] The arch type of these is Bismark Ruiz, the lawyer the community of Rumi hires to defend them against Don Alvaro.

> El tinterillo vestía un terno verdoso y lucía gruesos anillos en las manos, y sobre el vientre, yendo de un bolsillo a otro del chaleco, una curvada cadena de oro. Sus ojuelos estaban nublados por el alcohol y todo él olía a aguardiente como si de pies a cabeza estuviera sudando borrachera.[6]

The cholo has little respect for the Indian, and considers him to be a drunken wanderer.[7] So the Indian and cholo differ in the estimation of the author; basically they differ because the Indian is free of the meanness and greed attributed to the cholo.

The Indian and the White Man

There is a sharper clash between the Indian and the white man. The Indian does not envy the white man's life. He has wisdom enough to see that despite his progress, the white is still unhappy.[8] Yet some of the Indians, Benito Castro, for instance, see

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[4]Ciro Alegría, Los perros hambrientos, 2nd. ed. (Santiago de Chile, 1942), p. 56.

[5]William H. Archer, "The Novelistic Art of Ciro Alegría," Unpublished thesis (Knoxville, Tenn., 1948), p. 47.

[6]Alegría, El mundo, p. 79.

[7]Alegría, La serpiente, p. 30.

[8]Alegría, El mundo, p. 494.

that it is only through the white man's kind of progress that the Indian can free himself from slavery.[9]

The white man is usually a villain in Alegría's novels. He is the perpetuator of the company-store system,[10] and all other methods he can use to keep the Indian a slave. The shepherd, for instance, must pay for any sheep he loses. The sheep need not be lost as a result of the Indian's negligence. Even those lost through natural causes are charged to the shepherd's account. This means that he is always at the mercy of the white man; to make matters worse, debts are passed down from father to son.[11]

An article which allegedly appeared in La Patria in Lima is a perfect example of the white man's view of the Indian. The article calls the people of Rumi rebels, usurpers, and accomplices to a bandit. The paper praises the work of the local authorities and claims that they are victims of a savage uprising.[12] Later the paper prints the following item.

> «Noticias enviadas por telégrafo a la prefectura del departamento informan de la captura del famoso agitador y cabecilla indio Rosendo Maqui. Se sabe que las fuerzas de gendarmería después de tenaz persecución, lograron apresarlo sin derramamiento de sangre, lo que prueba el tino

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[9]Alegría, El mundo, p. 495.

[10]Alegría, El mundo, p. 290.

[11]Alegría, El mundo, p. 109.

[12]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 281-282.

> y la sagacidad con que las autoridades afrontan el problema del apaciguamiento de las indiadas. Como recordarán nuestros lectores, Maqui encabezó el movimiento sedicioso en el cual murió el conocido caballero Roque Iñiguez y últimamente ha estado merodeando por la región, siendo muchas las depredaciones que ha ocasionado a los ganaderos.
>
> «Si bien la captura del subversivo Rosendo Maqui es una victoria legítima de las autoridades, ella no dará todos sus frutos mientras otros peligrosos incitadores y secuaces continúen en la impunidad. Insistimos en la necesidad de que se envíe un batallón que cooperando con las fuerzas de gendarmería, libre a la próspera región azotada por el bandolerismo y la revuelta de tan malos elementos. Lo reclaman así el progreso de la patria y la tranquilidad de los ciudadanos.»[13]

Yet not all white men are bad. There is Arturo Correa Zavala, a member of the Asociación Pro-Indígena, who tries to provide justice for the people of the village.[14] There is also the Alegría family, which befriends Fiero Vásquez when he is a boy. Don Teodoro Alegría is well respected for his justice,[15] and his wife Elena Lynch is exceptionally kind to the young Indian.[16]

The white landowners in <u>Los perros hambrientos</u>, Don Cipriano and Don Rómulo, seem almost fair at the beginning of the book. The Indians respect their authority, but they are not particularily oppressed.[17] The landlords are haughty, however; they distribute

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[13]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, p. 311.

[14]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, p. 258.

[15]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, pp. 119-120.

[16]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, pp. 115-116.

[17]Alegría, <u>Los perros</u>, p. 112.

food to the starving people in a most patronizing manner, almost as if the Indians were children or animals.[18] Alegría says of Don Cipriano:

> Pero era evidente que esos hombres necesitaban y, siendo de hecho sus colonos, estaba en el deber de protegerlos. Pertenecía a esa clase de señores feudales que supervive en la sierra del Perú y tiene para sus siervos, según su propia expresión, "en una mano la miel y en otra la hiel", es decir, la comida y el látigo.[19]

As the drought continues, the white man continues to dole out small sacks of barley for the starving people.[20] Another act of kindliness is seen when Don Rómulo finds the body of Simón's starved grandson and returns it with tenderness and sorrow.[21]

But the drought becomes too much for the nerves of the white men. When the dogs storm the house in search of food the men poison them.[22] And when the starving Indians storm the full granary, the white men are forced to use guns to protect their supplies.[23] Although the white men in this story are not pictured as kindly, they are not inhumane, only selfish.

Don Alvaro Amenábar has no sympathy for the Indian. Even

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[18]Alegría, Los perros, pp. 111-113.

[19]Alegría, Los perros, p. 118.

[20]Alegría, Los perros, p. 133.

[21]Alegría, Los perros, pp. 152-153.

[22]Alegría, Los perros, p. 168.

[23]Alegría, Los perros, pp. 171-176.

in good times and when he is in a good humor the wealthy man is a despicable person. Many years before the story opens, Rosendo Maqui had suggested that the community and the white man build a road together. Alvaro refused saying he used the road rarely; and at any rate the path was good enough, for it kept one from falling.[24] His whole philosophy seems to be summed up in the following declaration:

> "Yo pienso, igualmente, que esos indios ignorantes no sirven para nada al país, que deben caer en manos de los hombres de empresa, de los que hacen la grandeza de la patria."[25]

One method this white man had of exploitation concerned the grazing animals. He never paid a sol for his animals that grazed the Rumi community property. It was his belief that the community's business was to see that strange animals kept off its lands, yet he did not apply the same theory to himself. He charged the Indians five soles per head of cattle found grazing his lands.[26]

When the Indians decide to move their village further up the mountain, Don Alvaro is furious; for he feels that the Indians should have given up and become slaves in his mines. Here is what he says to them just before the transfer of property is made.

> --Ya estaba en conocimiento de su fuga al pedregal ése, dejando la tierra buena por no

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[24]Alegría, El mundo, p. 66.

[25]Alegría, El mundo, p. 175.

[26]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 146-147.

> trabajar. ¡Holgazanes, cretines! A ver, señor juez, terminemos de una vez porque se me descompone la sangre. . .[27]

The white man is never so repugnant as when he is grouped against the Indian. This is most evident in governmental proceedings. This unethical use of the law has caused Rosendo Maqui to respond to courts and legal dealings in the following way.

> Rosendo Maqui no lograba explicarse claramente la ley. Se le antojaba una meniobra oscura y culpable. Un día, sin saberse por qué ni cómo, había salido la ley de contribución indígena, según la cual los indios, por el mero hecho de ser indios, tenían que pagar una suma anual.[28]

When Rosendo wanted to erect a building to comply with the compulsory-school law, he ran into serious problems. Even after he got the building a teacher could not be acquired, for the Indians could not pay an attractive salary. Then he could not get the pencils, books, slates, and tablets necessary. At last he overheard in the town that the whites and <u>cholos</u> really did not want them to become literate; so Rosendo gave up, knowing that the law was a mockery.[29]

Other unfairnesses are noted by the wise mayor.

> Ahí estaban los impuestos a la sal, a la coca, a los fósforos, a la chicha, a la chancaca, que

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[27]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, p. 245.

[28]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, p. 18.

[29]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, pp. 18-19.

> no significaban nada para los ricos y sí mucho para los pobres. Ahí estaban los estancos. La ley de servicio militar no se aplicaba por parejo. Un batallón en marcha era un batallón de indios en marcha. De cuando en cuando, a la cabeza de las columnas, en el caballo de oficial y luciendo la relampagueante espada de mando, pasaban algunos hombres de la clase de los patrones. A esos les pagaban. Así era la ley. Rosendo Maqui despreciaba la ley.[30]

In a word, as Rosendo reminds his people when they are defeated, the law is a plague.[31]

The officers of the law are no better than the law itself. Once a reformer, a cholo, is shot while making a speech about how the masses must fight injustice. Not only is the cholo killed, but all of the crowd is jailed.[32]

The police are not brave. They will gun down a running Indian if they wish. In Los perros hambrientos this almost happens. Mateo is very frightened by the soldiers who come to take him into the military service. He turns tail and runs, and the soldiers follow him on their horses. He hears their huge rifles being cocked, and he runs harder, but finally he gives up. The officers slap his bewildered wife when she cries and begs for mercy. Immediately they tie Mateo, slap him in the mouth, and drag him off behind one of the horses.[33] Mateo observes that soldiers appear only for evil

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[30]Alegría, El mundo, p. 18.

[31]Alegría, El mundo, p. 208.

[32]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 162-164.

[33]Alegría, Los perros, pp. 37-38.

purpose. They take men, horses, cows, sheep, and hens, and all for no reason discernible to the Indian.[34]

Political candidates are as bad. When Rosendo is imprisoned, Amenábar and Córdova are running for office. Their candidacy is an interesting subject.

> Se armaron grandes discusiones sobre cuál de los candidatos era más malo. El recuento de tropelías fué largo y bastante confuso. Camino de las celdas y cuadras, llegaron a la conclusión de que Amenábar era el peor, pues los Córdova hacía como ocho años que no despojaban a nadie en tanto que estaba fresco el recuerdo de lo ocurrido en Rumi y ahí, entre ellos, tenían al buen viejo Rosendo como un ejemplo.[35]

Low methods are constantly used by politicians. The subprefect in El mundo es ancho y ajeno tries every measure possible to prove he is efficient. In one case, he takes a poor Indian who has no friends and tries to make a case against him so that he can at least hand over one malefactor to the law.[36]

The Church

The white man of the church is no help. Don Gervasio Mestas, the priest for Rumi, is an example. He is a Spaniard, about thirty years old, fat, talkative, and eloquent. Despite the fact that he is considered very wise, his advice to the community is nothing that

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[34]Alegría, Los perros, p. 37.

[35]Alegría, El mundo, p. 416.

[36]Alegría, El mundo, p. 219.

will help the Indian.

> Si don Alvaro peca, Dios le tomará cuentas a su tiempo. . . Idos en paz, buena gente, y que la fe os ilumine y haga que soportéis la prueba con resignación y espíritu cristiano.[37]

And after all their problems the priest scolds the people because they did not paint the statue of San Isidro, and they did not build him a big house where they all could assemble for services.[38]

The priests of the past were no better. One was a ravisher of young girls. Another was a drunkard; another had a disagreeable voice; and all the rest were careless.[39]

In La serpiente de oro the visiting priest drinks rum freely, dances with the prettiest girls, and performs mass baptisms and marriages without much dignity.[40]

Far more shocking is the demand on the Indians for a burial fee for their dead. Without the fee the dead cannot be buried in the sacred ground of the cemetery, so that the soul is condemned to Hell. In Los perros hambrientos the starving Indians are forced to pay the fee out of their meager savings.[41] Sometimes the Indians are able to pay, and sometimes the Indians are not able to pay.

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[37]Alegría, El mundo, p. 213.

[38]Alegría, El mundo, p. 341.

[39]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 211-212.

[40]Alegría, La serpiente, pp. 122-123.

[41]Alegría, Los perros, pp. 152-153.

Alegría notes the dead rest as well outside the fence as inside the fence.[42]

Summary

The Indian seems almost unable to cope with the outside world. According to Alegría, this is not the fault of the Indian. He is held subservient by every social institution, particularly the government and the Church. Also individual greedy cholos and whites are able to use the law to their advantage to suppress the Indian even further.

Weaknesses

Despite Alegría's love and admiration for the Indian, he is capable of seeing and understanding the weaknesses of the Indian. This makes his novels more realistic and more believable to the social critic.

Alegría pictures some Indians as fearful and cowardly. The guides for a hat seller in La serpiente de oro desert the man they are guiding when the Marañon floods.[43] One cholo mentions in the same novel that the cocking of rifles is done by troopers to frighten Indians, not cholos.[44] The Indians are also pictured as weak whimpering creatures constantly fearful of snakes.[45]

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[42]Alegría, Los perros, p. 158.

[43]Alegría, La serpiente, p. 69.

[44]Alegría, La serpiente, p. 49.

[45]Alegría, La serpiente, p. 10.

Alegría speaks in more detail concerning the Indian's superstitions and stubbornness in El mundo es ancho y ajeno.

> De Artemio no podría decirse que fuera muy sabio. Arisco, cerril, desconfiado, trataba de responder al prestigio de su antecesor, oponiéndose sistemáticamente a todo, fiscalizándolo todo. No siempre tenía éxito, y eso lo amargaba. Se creía injustamente postergado. Naturalmente, como ya hemos visto, era enemigo implacable de los foráneos.[46]

And Alegría also pictures some Indians as out-and-out immoral thieves. One is the magician, and another is Fiero Vásquez, yet Alegría gives both a psychological motivation for the life they lead.[47]

Alcohol is sometimes detrimental to the Indian's efficiency. As he threshes wheat he passes the jug around and all become slightly tipsy.[48] The same thing happens during the corn harvest. Here is Alegría's description.

> Algunas muchachas, provistas de calabazas, iban y venían del sitio de labor a la vera de la chacra donde estaban los cántaros de chicha, para proveerse y repartir el rojo licor celebratorio. No se lo prodigaba mucho, y él corría por las venas cantando su origen de maíz fermentado, de jora embriagada para complacer al hombre.[49]

Following the festival described in La serpiente de oro the

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[46]Alegría, El mundo, p. 315.

[47]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 326-329, 336-339, and 374-378.

[48]Alegría, El mundo, pp. 148-150.

[49]Alegría, El mundo, p. 138.

Indians become completely inebriated, and on that evening they sleep where they fall in a drunken stupor.[50]

Alegría excuses the Indian, however, saying that the alcohol helps him over some of the bumps of his hard life.

> No es raro, pues, que a los "chuquis" les gustara el cañazo: tenía sed. También era muy necesario para pasar el mal rato de las pendencias o encorajinarse antes de ellas. Y si a todo esto se agrega que nunca faltan penas que aplacar y alegrías que celebrar, nos explicaremos que los vecinos de Muncha tenían sus buenas razones para dedicarse al trago.[51]

Far more serious is the Indian's addiction to coca, the drug grown in Peru. The Indian chews the leaves of the plant with a little lime to bring out the drug. Since the lime makes him very thirsty, he continually sips pisco alcohol from a little gourd he carries with him. The white man has fostered this habit by encouraging the growth of coca, for it is a most profitable crop. During the Incan times coca was a government monopoly, and it was used only for religious purposes, soldiers campaigning, and for strenuous tasks; so that at that time there was no coca problem.[52]

When Don Osvaldo comes to the cholo community in La serpiente de oro he says that it is the coca habit that he believes is sapping the Indian's vitality, causing him to be listless.[53] Yet he

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[50]Alegría, La serpiente, p. 34.

[51]Alegría, El mundo, p. 51.

[52]Carleton Beals, Fire on the Andes (Philadelphia, 1934), p. 298.

[53]Alegría, La serpiente, p. 78.

becomes addicted to the drug when faced by the difficulties of the altitude of the Andes.[54]

Although Alegría can see the wrong in using coca, he also calls it, "La coca, que consuela siempre. . ."[55] Later he says of it:

> Los comuneros, naturalmente, conocían la dulce coca. Compraban coca. Compraban las fragantes hojas de color verde claro en las tiendas de los pueblos o alguno incursionaba para adquirirla a los cálidos valles donde se cultivan. Al macerarlas con cal, se endulzan y producen un sutil enervamiento o una grata excitación. La coca es buena para el hambre, para la sed, para la fatiga, para el calor, para el frío, para el dolor, para la alegría, para todo es buena. Es buena para la vida. A la coca preguntan los brujos y quien desee catipar; con la coca se obsequia a los cerros, lagunas y ríos encantados; con la coca sanan los enfermos; con la coca viven los vivos; llevando coca entre las manos se van los muertos. La coca es sabia y benéfica.[56]

Alegría's Indians say that coca is better than the corn or other nourishment.[57] And they say that they feel the drug increases one's strength. The coca is reputed to help against the cold,[58] the altitude, and other sicknesses. In Los perros hambrientos the coca increases Simón Robles' desire to talk.[59]

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[54]Alegría, La serpiente, p. 189.

[55]Alegría, La serpiente, p. 211.

[56]Alegría, El mundo, p. 289.

[57]Alegría, La serpiente, p. 107.

[58]Alegría, El mundo, p. 261.

[59]Alegría, Los perros, p. 46.

Some of the religious uses of the drug are maintained. With it the witch Nasha is able to tell the future.[60] Rosendo Maqui uses coca to help him communicate with the god Rumi.

> Rosendo echaba a la bola, para que se macerara, cal que extraía con un alambre húmedo de una pequeña calabaza. La coca continuaba amarga o más bien insípida. No tenía esa amargura de la negación, pero tampoco estaba dulce. «Coca, coca, ¿debo preguntar?» Y la coca proseguía sin hablar. Por mucho que Rosendo la humedecía con saliva y daba al bollo sabias vueltas con la lengua. Mas al fin la faz del viejo se fué adormeciendo sutilmente y el cuerpo entero sintió un gozo leve y tranquilo. La legua probó dulce la coca y el mismo sabor invadió la boca entera. Rosendo entendió. La coca había hablado con su dulzura y podía preguntar.[61]

The sweetness of the coca is sometimes compared to the sweetness of a woman.[62] And Why should this not be true? As Archer points out, drug addiction can hardly be a vice in a world as alien to the Indian as the one that Alegría pictures.[63]

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[60]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, p. 84.

[61]Alegría, <u>El mundo</u>, p. 256.

[62]Alegría, <u>La serpiente</u>, p. 61.

[63]Archer, p. 74.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Alegría sees the Indian as a complete, admirable personality. He is sensitive, loving, and faithful. He has a strong attachment to his land and community. He has developed some arts, particularily music and oral literature. The arts and his religious beliefs enhance his simple life. His life patterns are greatly influenced by his native intelligence. Individual Indians have a variety of personality characteristics. A general problem of all natives is found in alcohol and more so in the coca introduced by the white man. The white man, in fact, is the destructive force in the life of the Indian. His ambitions, habits, and greed have driven the Indian to a subservient position, so that the native is merely a pawn at his disposal in many cases. Left in his native environment, the Indian, in Alegría's estimation, appears to be similar to the eighteenth-century concept of the noble savage.

This thesis set out to prove that Ciro Alegría sees the Indian as an individual with a complex personality and dignity stemming from his ancient culture, and that he also sees the Indian as an individual with human rights and desires. In short, the Indian is a worthy member of human society. In general, this was found to be true.

There can be no doubt that Alegría gives his great characters complex personalities. One needs only to be reminded of Fiero

Vásquez, Benito Castro, Simón Robles, and Rosendo Maqui; their joy of life, sympathy for mankind, and varied talents illustrate this point perfectly. To be more specific, one might refer to Rosendo's talent and wisdom as a judge, and Simón's talent in the art of storytelling. Other Indians are less complex personalities; but on an over-all view they are similar to men everywhere combining the traits of laziness, cowardliness, grossness, and ignorance with ambition, bravery, sensitivity, and wisdom.

Left in his native culture, the Indian has dignity. He takes great pride in his community, and as a member of the community his life is very meaningful. In addition, the Indian has dignity in his work, his love of the land, and his various rites. He is not stupid and knows when the white and cholo make a fool of him. He tries to remain aloof despite relentless harassment. A good example of this is shown in Rosendo Maqui's humane, humble activities as a prisoner. It is the white man who has disrupted the balanced life; the result is a multitude of conflicts for the Indian.

The Indian's great love for his fellow creatures shows him to be most humane. This sensitivity can lead to no other conclusion than that the Indian is certainly far above a beast in a moral sense. The Indian is sensitive to the needs of his fellow men and the needs of his beloved animals. He is willing to share with those in need and mourn with those in sorrow. On the other hand, he is happy to celebrate and laugh with the joyful. Because of his sensitivity, he is worthy of all these rights free men

call inalienable.

The Indian is found to be a worthy member of society. He not only is capable of preserving himself, but he is a contributing member. His contributions are in the fields of the arts and human relations. Here again it is necessary to refer to Rosendo Maqui. His ability to handle the people of his village and keep their hopes alive is indicative of the Indian's capacity for creative and worthwhile contributions to mankind. Much can be learned from the Indian in regard to community life and the brotherhood of man.

Therefore, the Indian can not only be judged by his own culture, but by western culture as well. That is, the Indian measures up to the goals set by the western world. He is able to govern himself and has developed a method of life which is not only meaningful but enriching. His simple desires and joy in achieving the basic drives of mankind make his existence--when undisturbed by outside forces--close to Utopian. In his judgment, Alegría shows the Indian to be a respectable person; westerners might do well to emulate many of his fine qualities.

As a writer Ciro Alegría is seen to be weak in regard to plot handling and characterization. Despite this, his stories are compelling, and through his picture of Indian character a most sympathetic and noble race is described. Although Ciro Alegría will be remembered for his fine reporting and powerful descriptions, his

real contribution to the literature of Spanish America is his portrayal of the Indian as a sensitive human who holds much in common with his white brother.

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