

THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF  
FATE IN THE NOVELS OF CIRO ALEGRIA

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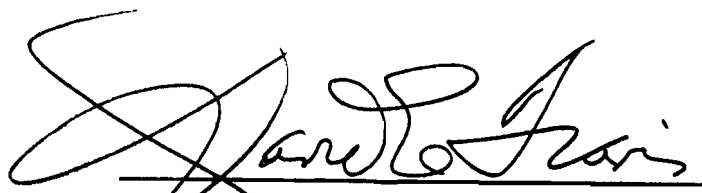
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the Department of Foreign Languages and the  
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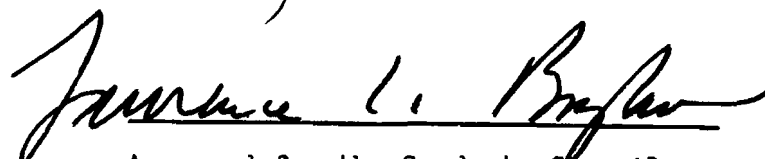
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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to investigate the sociological implications of fate in the novels of Ciro Alegría. Since 1821, when General San Martín declared that henceforth the aborigines would not be called Indians, that they were children and citizens of Peru, and that they would be known as Peruvians, there has been a considerable amount of literature written pertaining to the plight of the Indians of Peru and in other countries of South America.<sup>1</sup>

One of the first writers to concern himself with the problems of the Indians was Manuel González Prada. González Prada believed that Peru lost the war with Chile because of lack of concern for the Indians and a lack of understanding for their reluctance toward progress from their ancient culture. González Prada's essays did not sufficiently arouse the people, and the exploitation of the Indians continued.<sup>2</sup> José Carlos Mariategui, the most serious political thinker in Peru, was much influenced by González Prada and in the early part of the twentieth century wrote his essays on Peruvian reality which dealt with the plight of the Indians and the need for their integration into the Peruvian society. Mariategui's words went unheeded, and the condition of

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<sup>1</sup>Lewis Hanke, South America (New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1959), p. 22.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 23-25.

inequality of the Indian with respect to the other social classes persisted.<sup>3</sup>

An ardent admirer of Mariategui was Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre, who was responsible for the inception of the APRA (Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana). The Aprista party advocated solidarity with all peoples and all oppressed classes which most certainly would have benefited the Indians.<sup>4</sup> Although the APRA's ideas and aspirations gained momentum through the writings of Luis Alberto Sánchez and Manuel Seoane, the party was never able to gain complete control of the government and put the ideas into practice.<sup>5</sup>

It is in this historical perspective that one can observe the development of Ciro Alegría's novels. Alegría, influenced a great deal by aprimo, seemed to have incorporated into his novels a very definite sociological survey of the Indians' perplexing and fatalistic circumstances. As Wade pointed out in his discussion of El mundo es ancho y ajeno, ". . . it is, plunging more deeply into racial psychology, a portrait of an entire people. In its consideration of the tragic social situation that confronts Peru, it is a moving social document."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>4</sup>William S. Stokes, Latin American Politics (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1959), p. 283.

<sup>5</sup>Hanke, op. cit., p. 26.

<sup>6</sup>Ciro Alegría, El mundo es ancho y ajeno; edited by Gerald E. Wade and Walter E. Stiefel, (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1945), p. xvii.

Wade does not stand alone in his assumption that the social theme predominates in Alegría's novels. The Peruvian critic, Luis Alberto Sánchez, also observed the sociological implications in Alegría's works. Alberto Sánchez suggested that between 1920 and 1924 the Peruvian intellect was confronted with a series of events which left a deep impact on its youthful elements. He further reveals that the students and workers began to unite and that the Indian became the focal point of Peruvian writing. The great concern was with social problems. Verse and prose became weapons in this struggle. From this group of young men came the best recognized prose writing of the period: a handful of novels such as La serpiente de oro, Los perros hambrientos, El mundo es ancho y ajeno by Ciro Alegría.<sup>7</sup>

Another individual who concurred with Wade and Sánchez in their belief that there was an element of sociology in Alegría's novels was Alberto Escobar who, speaking of the tremendous number of printings the novels had received in the Spanish language, suggested that El mundo es ancho y ajeno was an intriguing study in literary sociology.<sup>8</sup>

It cannot be agreed, however, that Alegría's choice of theme was particularly original. Since 1920, there has been a very strong trend known generally as the corriente idigenista, or Indianist

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<sup>7</sup>Ciro Alegría, The Golden Serpent; translated, and with an afterword by Harriet de Onís (New York: The New American Library of World Literature, Inc., 1963), p. 188.

<sup>8</sup>Alberto Escobar, "Ciro Alegría's Worlds", Américas, 15: pp. 7-10, February, 1963.

movement. Some of the more gifted writers of this period, concerned with the social problems of the Indians, included Ricardo Güiraldes of Argentina, Rómulo Gallegos of Venezuela, José Eustasio Rivera of Colombia, and José Linís do Rego and Jorge Amado of Brazil. Their purpose was to give expression to the reality of their own land and people.<sup>9</sup> Even though Alegría's theme is not original, he manages to make a vivid exposure of the difficulties facing the Peruvian Indian. In addition to exposing their problems, the novelist incorporates them into the social and physical environment of his people. It is apparent that his novels are full of emoción social.

Alegría's critics all seem to be very much aware of the fact that his novels are concerned with social aspects. However, as far as this writer has been able to find from research, there has not been any critic who specifically involved himself with the sociological implications of fate in the novels of Ciro Alegría. Only one extensive secondary source was found in reference to Ciro Alegría and his work.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Alegría, The Golden Serpent, op. cit., p. 187.

<sup>10</sup>This particular source was a lengthy thesis entitled Ciro Alegría, novelista peruano by Patricia Kay Hull. A reply from a letter written to Dr. Lewis Hanke aided in discovering Hull's work. Hull's work, however, was of a very general nature and proved to be of minor value in the preparation of this thesis. An attempt was made to contact Mr. Alegría by letter, but a reply was not received. A letter was also written to Professor Gerald E. Wade, of the University of Tennessee, and an answer was received. This answer is included in the appendices of this thesis. Professor Wade stated that he had encountered similar difficulties in 1945 when he and Mr. Stiefel wrote an introduction to an edited version of El mundo es ancho y ajeno.



In spite of exhaustive research it was this lack of secondary reference material that impaired the development of the topic more extensively.

Even though extensive secondary sources were not available, the writer was able to find a number of reviews and magazine articles which proved invaluable. Also, the introductions to the novels of Alegría, translated into English by Harriet de Onís, proved to be of great assistance in the preparation of this thesis.

It was the lack of material which dealt with the sociological aspects of Alegría's novels that encouraged this writer to interest himself in the topic of this study. It was felt that one could gain a more definite appreciation of these sociological problems by using fate as the center. Fate appears to be the most recurring sociological implication in Alegría's novels. Using fate as a nucleus, one is able to develop a more enlightening viewpoint concerning the remainder of the social problems of the Indians: poverty, governmental corruption, superstition, and tradition. These latter problems seem to have a direct bearing on the fatalistic philosophy of the Indians.

The term fate as used herein signifies that efficacy is thought to determine one's future. Fate is used synonymously with destiny. As applied to the Indians in the novels, fate denotes that predetermined and inevitable necessity which the Indians believe determines their success or failure in life. Rosendo Maquí aptly expresses this

opinion of fate in El mundo es ancho y ajeno when he says, "la fatalidad es incontrastable".<sup>11</sup>

The definition of sociological implications, as used here, is limited to those social problems which seem to produce a fatalistic attitude in the people which results from the force of nature, the force of society, and the force of inner-thoughts. These problems are poverty, governmental corruption, superstition, and tradition. Poverty is used to indicate the deprivation of the Indians of the material aspects of life. Governmental corruption is used to suggest the defects in the governmental system of Peru. This corruption tends to destroy the purity and validity of the true purpose of the government as a servant of all the people. Superstition is used to indicate that the Indians' beliefs are founded on irrational feelings and the practices inspired by such beliefs, especially fear. Tradition signifies the Indians' adherence to the knowledge, opinions, doctrines, customs and practices of their ancestors. This concept of tradition is appropriately revealed in El mundo es ancho y ajeno when Rumi, a village inclined to rely completely on tradition, says to itself, "El que ha dao guena razón, hoy debe dar guena razón mana."<sup>12</sup>

With the above limitations in mind, the succeeding pages will develop in more detail the concept of the sociological implications of

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<sup>11</sup>Ciro Alegria, El mundo es ancho y ajeno (Santiago de Chile: Ediciones Ercilla, 1942), p. 3.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

fate in the novels of Ciro Alegría. In order to understand the motivating forces which compelled the author to devote his novels to the social problems of the Indians, one must know more of his life; thus the second chapter deals with the life of Ciro Alegría. The remainder of the thesis gives specific attention to fate and its sociological implications. The summary and conclusions endeavor to reiterate the sociological implications of fate in the life of the Indian. Suggestions will also be made in the conclusion as to the changes which must be made in the Indians' life in order for the people to overcome this deep-rooted adherence to fate.

## CHAPTER II

### THE LIFE OF CIRO ALEGRÍA

Ciro Alegría is generally recognized in Latin America as the outstanding novelist of his generation. It has been said that his novels will stand as a vision of and a tribute to the courage, endurance, and integrity of his countrymen when the conditions which brought forth his protest have faded.<sup>13</sup> Perhaps Alegría's previous experiences with the cruelties of life have given him perspective and an all-encompassing vision of his country and its sociological problems. This perspective is one of the unique features of his works. When one observes the environmental conditions which surrounded the novelist in his earlier life, it is not difficult to suggest that he has reasons for dealing with the social plight of the Indians.

Alegría was born November 4, 1909, in that part of northern Peru which his La serpiente de oro describes, the district of Sartimbamba of the province of Huamachuco in the region of the Marañon River. His father was Jose Alegría Lynch. His mother, a cousin of his father, was Herminia Bazán Lynch. The family is of Irish extraction with an admixture of mestizo stock. Ciro was fortunate in his youth to be reared in the country on his paternal

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<sup>13</sup>Alegría, The Golden Serpent, op. cit., p. 189.

grandfather's estate in the province of Huamachuco and at the Hacienda Quillica, property of his maternal grandfather in the same province.<sup>14</sup> He lived in this rural area until he was seven when he was sent to school in the city of Trujillo. While on the ranch, Alegría seemed to have developed a sense of admiration for his paternal grandfather. The manner in which his father administered the ranch had a great deal of influence on the mind of the boy. The novelist mentions this admiration later when he reminisces about his relationship with his father:

Mi padre administraba la hacienda Marcabal, Grande, con ánimo justiciero. El tenía características hispánicas y esa aptitud para rebelarse en ideas y hechos que contrabalancea la aptitud para la opresión que también distingue a la raza.<sup>15</sup>

Alegría also speaks highly of his mother, the person from whom he could listen to words of aliento y fe. When his mother was in a Trujillo hospital, undergoing surgery in 1926, Alegría showed her various stories and verses which he had written. He remarked, "Era la primera persona a quién se las mostraba."<sup>16</sup> He was seventeen years old at this time. He elaborated on her character when he pointed out, "En mi madre se combinaban el lirismo irlandés con la ternura nativa."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Alegría, El mundo es ancho y ajeno; edited by Gerald E. Wade and Walter E. Stiefel, op. cit., p. xi.

<sup>15</sup>Alegría, Novelas completas; (Madrid: Aguilar, S. A. De Ediciones, 1959), p. xii.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. xiv.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. xii.

Alegría obtained his elementary education in Cajabamba and his secondary training at the Colegio Nacional de San Juan in Trujillo. During the years of his secondary education he read widely on the Peruvian authors and began to write himself. A few of these journalistic efforts were published in the Tribuna Sanjuanista, a school paper founded by himself and his fellow-students.<sup>18</sup> His practical newspaper experience began in 1926 when he secured a position as reporter for El Norte of Trujillo. El Norte was dominated by the Apristas, the followers of the political leader Haya de la Torre. After one year of journalistic reporting, Alegría decided to embark upon a completely different career, and he accepted employment as assistant foreman on a road-building project and later acted as time-keeper in the construction of a bridge. This type of occupation fell short of his expectations. In 1930 he returned to Trujillo in the employment of El Norte again. During this time the novelist also attended the University of Trujillo, but he did not receive his degree because other interests, especially literature and politics, had begun to attract his attention. His interest in the former manifested itself in his poetry and short stories. Since 1925, he has written some fifty poems and a number of short stories, the first of which was published in 1928.<sup>19</sup>

As early as 1924, Alegría had a very mature grasp of the social

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<sup>18</sup>Alegría, El mundo es ancho y ajeno, op. cit., p. x.

<sup>19</sup>Loc. cit.

problems confronting Peru. Early in life his deep concern for the salvation of his country directed him toward the principles of the Apristas.<sup>20</sup> When the Aprista party was formed during the long dictatorship of Augusto B. Leguía, Alegría joined the organization. His youthfulness was compensated for by his enthusiasm and ability. Soon he formed part of the Comité Directivo Departamental of this political organization. Almost immediately there was a general political persecution of the Apristas. For his part in aiding the party, the government of Sánchez Cerro and Benavides sentenced Alegría to jail in 1931. The Revolution of Trujillo in July of 1931 gave Alegría his liberty, and he used it to aid in the revolution. The authorities apprehended Alegría and sentenced him to prison in Lima. After one year of prison, Alegría was given his freedom. One could say that this was when his literary career began. He wrote for a newspaper of Buenos Aires and La Tribuna, an Aprista newspaper, of Lima.<sup>21</sup> He was exiled to Chile in 1934 where he remained for seven years. It was in Chile that all of his novels were written.

In the latter part of 1935, Alegría's first novel, La serpiente de oro, was awarded first prize by La Editorial Nacimiento.<sup>22</sup> This novel contained an intimate account of the life of the cholos who lived

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<sup>20</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. xi.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. xi.

by the Marañón River. At the end of 1936, Ciro Alegría became afflicted with tuberculosis and entered a sanatorium. He remained there for two years, but his convalescence was not a period of idleness. Out of it came his second novel, Los perros hambrientos. The author confessed that this novel was based on a tale told to him by his grandmother Juna.<sup>23</sup> It is the story of the similiar destinies of dogs and their masters. Los perros hambrientos won second prize in a contest sponsored by La Editorial Zig-Zag.<sup>24</sup> Alegría's third novel was El mundo es ancho y ajeno. It was an expansion of an episode deleted from Los perros hambrientos before the work was published. In a contest held under the auspices of the Pan American Union, the publishing company of Farrar and Rinehart, and Red Book magazine, El mundo es ancho y ajeno was considered the best of all the novels entered in the competition.<sup>25</sup>

Since 1941 Alegría has written articles for a number of magazines, has written Spanish dialogue for American-made motion pictures, and has taken an active part in World War II by assisting the coordinator of Inter-American Affairs and the Office of War Information.<sup>26</sup> In 1948 he disassociated himself from the Aprista

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<sup>23</sup>Alegría, Novelas completas, op. cit., p. xv.

<sup>24</sup>Harriet de Onís, The Golden Land, (New York; Alfred A. Knopf Company, 1948), p. 253.

<sup>25</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>26</sup>Alegría, El mundo es ancho y ajeno; edited by Gerald E. Wade and Walter E. Stiefel, op. cit., p. xii.



party. His position was set forth in declarations and published articles in the Diario de Nueva York.

He commented that:

No es tiempo de inhibirse éste en que vivimos y es obvio que, sin situarme, "por encima de la contienda" y tratando de librar el buen combate contra todo lo que me parece injusto, mi punto de vista dialéctico está relacionado con la liberación integral del hombre antes que con ningúnísimo circunstancial.<sup>27</sup>

From 1949 to 1953 he remained in the University of Puerto Rico teaching Spanish-American literature and contemporary problem courses. In 1953 he went to live in Havana, Cuba. His life is engrossed in literature and journalism. In December, 1957, Alegría visited Peru. His literature had found its way into the people's hearts, and upon his return they gave him a warm reception.<sup>28</sup>

Except for the three novels Alegría has written, his literary production has not added substantially to his international prestige. These novels, however, so sufficiently came to grips with the problems of the rural Indians and cholos that they have earned Alegría his reputation. Most of the novelists before Alegría had concerned themselves only with Lima. It can be said that Alegría added to the emergence of the backlands and the provinces on the literary scene.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup>Alegría, Las novelas completas, op. cit., p. xvi.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. xviii.

<sup>29</sup>Alegría, La serpiente de oro, (Lima: Ediciones Nuevo Mundo, 1960), p. 189.

As Mr. Jack so ably stated in his review of El mundo es ancho y ajeno, these are situations which all people can envision because they are circumstances pertaining to a people's fight for survival.<sup>30</sup> His ability to personify clearly his characters and their land evidently came from his earlier experience as a journalist.

The lyrical tone in his works reveals the poet who walks hand in hand with the novelist.<sup>31</sup> Indeed, it is easy to draw the conclusion that not all of Alegría's novels reflect the experiences he encountered in his younger life. In 1923, because of illness, Alegría returned from school in Cajabamba. He made the acquaintance of Manuel Baca, one of the twelve peons who returned with him. Baca related many stories to the youngster:

Era un gran narrador de cuentos y sucesos, fuera de ser diestro en cualquier faena. Caída la tarde, frente al sol de venados, que es una laya de sol naranja que dora las lomas a la oración, Manuel parlaba con voz de conseja.<sup>32</sup>

Alegría's playmates were children of the Indians and cholos. These Indians and cholos were similar to those depicted in his novels. From his playmates, servants, and ranchhands, he heard the tales which he narrated and the songs which he recalled. The novelist speaks of the influence these people had on him:

De tal vida no me habría olvidado jamás, y tampoco

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<sup>30</sup>Peter Monro Jack, "El mundo es ancho y ajeno," The New York Times Book Review, November 16, 1941, p. 6.

<sup>31</sup>Onís, The Golden Land, op. cit., p. 254.

<sup>32</sup>Alegría, Novelas completas, op. cit., p. xiv.

de las experiencias que adquirí caminando por los jadeantes caminos de la cordillera, de los hechos de dolor que vi, de las historias que escuché. Mis padres fueron mis primeros maestros, pero todo el pueblo peruano terminó por moldearme a su manera, y me hizo entender su dolor, su alegría, sus dones mayores y poco reconocidos de inteligencia y fortaleza, su capacidad creadora, su constancia.<sup>33</sup>

This feeling of closeness with his people is not a casual one because they seem to have left a deep impression upon him. He described this:

Mujeres de la raza milenaria me acunaron en sus brazos y ayudaron a andar; con niños indios jugué de pequeño; siendo mayor alterné con peones indios y cholos en las faenas agrarias y los rodeos. En brazos de una muchacha trigueña me alboreó el amor como una amanecida quechua. Y en la áspera tierra de surcos abiertos bajo mis pies y retadoras montañas alzadas a mi frente, aprendí la afirmativa ley del hombre andio.<sup>34</sup>

From the information concerning Alegría's life one can ascertain that he was not an Indian or of Indian descent. Actually his lineage is from the ranchowners' class in Peru. One writer surmised that Alegría had betrayed his class. The same writer, however, hastened to add that the novelist's betrayal of selfish class loyalties was to his credit.<sup>35</sup> A study of the earlier environmental background of the novelist leaves the implication that he indentified himself more closely with the poorer class of Peruvian society. It is because of this identification that Alegría expressed so well, in his novels, the sociological problems of the Indians.

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. xviii.

<sup>34</sup>Loc. cit.

<sup>35</sup>"Broad and Alien is the World," Nation, CLIII (November, 1943), p. 42.

## CHAPTER III

### SOCIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF FATE

This chapter is devoted to a discussion of the three main categories of fate as revealed in the novels of Ciro Alegría. The method that is used in connection with this part of the investigation is a subjective one. The vast portion of the information in this chapter comes from the author's novels. The writer has simply organized the material under three main subdivisions.

The most apparent concept, the "predetermined necessity" of life, is revealed in the author's description of the inhabitants' struggle against la naturaleza. Another opinion of fate is demonstrated by the Indians' opposition to the landowners. Fate is also suggested when the author, by placing his characters in certain situations, implying that the Indians are not only hindered by other human beings, but that they are also obstructed by an inner conflict.

#### I. THE FORCE OF NATURE

Perhaps the most illustrative example of man's encounter with the force of nature is found in La serpiente de oro. The men of the Marañón valleys constantly find themselves pitted against the powerful Marañón River. The cholos of the valley elevate the river to a position similar to that of a god. The river personifies the commanding forces of nature with which the Indians have to contend. Their fate rests in the hands

of the river. Regardless of how much effort is put forth by the men when they attempt to cross the river on their rafts, the river always presents an awesome challenge to them. The inhabitants of the valley are aware of their plight. They realize that only eternity can deliver them from their greatest fear of nature, El Marañon. Thus, the narrator in La serpiente de oro points out, "Ya sabemos de la lucha con el."<sup>36</sup> Although the river is considered an enemy, the Indians have an old song which indicates that they enjoy the risks they take:

Rio Marañon, déjame pasar:  
eres duro y fuerte,  
no tienes perdón.  
Río Marañon, tengo que pasar:  
tú tienes tus aguas,  
yo mi corazón. (S. p. 12).

The cholos believe deeply that the Marañon represents their destiny as determined by nature. Yet, perhaps due to their Spanish aggressiveness, they find excitement in attempting to conquer the river. It appears that the Indians delight in overcoming what they consider to be the fate of nature. They do, indeed, force nature to submit to them many times, but they cannot overcome their belief of the existence of fate. This seemingly inconsistent theme appears many times in the novels of Ciro Alegría. From close observation, however, one is able to conclude that the author's apparent lack of uniformity is not lack of uniformity at all, but an attempt to convey his philosophy of life to the reader.

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<sup>36</sup>Alegría, La serpiente de oro, op. cit., p. 12. All references to quotations from La serpiente de oro in the remainder of this chapter will be listed in the text in parenthesis with designation S. p. number to indicate work and page number.

Alegria seems to propose that man's fate is difficult and, to a certain extent, predestined. Like nature man is complex. The author portrays through his Indian characters that life is impaired by the exclusion of any alternate plan of life, but he also asserts his belief that life can triumph. (S. p. 12).

The Indians know full well that the fate of nature is difficult to master because, compared to the greatness of nature, man and his creations are very insignificant:

¡Balsa: ¡fieb!e armazón posada sobre las aguas rugientes como sobre el peligro mismo! En ella va la vida del hombre de los valles del Marañon, que se la juega como en un simple tiro a cara o cruz de moneda. (S. p. 14).

Outwardly, the Indians express doubt that they can overcome what nature has predetermined for them, but inwardly they know they must gamble with nature in the hope of defeating her. According to the cholos of the valley, the river wants to devour men. The waters are greedy and fierce. (S. p. 36). The Indians become acutely aware of the dangerous river when Arturo and Roge meet their tragedy on the night they are leaving Shicun. Fate overcomes Roge, but Arturo manages to escape from the peril. The relatives and friends of Arturo suggest that destiny is the culprit. There is no doubt that Roge's time has elapsed and that nature has granted Arturo an extension on his life. (S. p. 90).

The Marañon is not the only example of man's continuous battle against nature. To a lesser extent, the topography of the land and its relationship to the inhabitants plays a fatalistic role in the lives of

the Indians. A vivid description of the jungle and man's endeavors to conquer it shows the geographical extremes which these people have to face. (S. p. 72). The jungle and the landslides are characteristics of nature which man cannot fight. They know their position concerning the river, but with the landslides it is different. This point is stressed by the author when he indicates that there is nothing to be done to prevent the landslide:

Pero contra los desmontes no hay defensa. ¿Quién va a detener un cerro que cae, con unos cuantos maderos y una pala, por mucho que ellos estén manejados por los recios vallinos que no saben rendirse? (S. p. 138).

The efforts contrary to this will of fate terminate, as do most voluntary exertions, in opposition to fate produced by natural phenomena. The implication seems to direct attention to the fact that the natives of the area believe that if nature cannot succeed in subjugating them by one method, she will devise a more effective one. A similar plight caused by Nature becomes, in part, the theme of Los perros hambrientos.

The Indians plant their crops with the anticipation that the rain will come and aid the cultivated plants in growing; however, Nature again disregards them and the rains do not come for some time.<sup>37</sup> The drought, like the landslide, is an act of God which humans cannot

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<sup>37</sup> Ciro Alegría, Los perros hambrientos (Santiago: Empresa Editora Zig-Zag, S.A., 1944), p. 75. All references to quotations from Los perros hambrientos in the remainder of this chapter will be listed in the text in parenthesis with designation P. p. number to indicate work and page number.

surmount. As a consequence, the people become frustrated and find themselves seeking gratification in activities, which in ordinary times would have been considered violations of their moral law. The actions of Nature, the drought, have motivated the people to see value in the concept of the survival of the fittest. They are able to observe how well the rich are living even during the drought; and in their own minds they know that the wealthy people subscribed long ago to the theory of rugged individualism. To the Indian this suggests that the wealthy believe that one can omit the moral aspects of being interested in his fellow man and can strive to become a success regardless of whom one has to offend. The weak can be eliminated without any damage to society. The Indians, therefore, begin to activate their feelings by implementing this theory. The dogs in Los perros hambrientos begin to pilfer sheep from the more prosperous landowners. This type of behavior is condoned by the Indians because the dogs must have food to live. They have confidence in the fact that the risks involved should be of no concern. The results of the episodes do indicate that the dogs' precarious actions should have been considered. A few of the dogs are killed by the landowners because of the plundering which has occurred. The masters of the dogs in some instances have to suffer the consequences of the actions performed by their dogs. Nevertheless, the primary concern is food and not danger. (P. p. 79).

Even though there are exposures to the changes of destruction by natural phenomena for the Indians, Alegría never fails to insert his



philosophy that a small amount of hope is always present; thus the fate of Nature is rescinded and the rains come. In El mundo es ancho y ajeno the author also implies that one must never completely render his aspirations hopeless. This is implied by the thoughts of Rosendo Maquí when he suggests that perhaps the next generation will be more prosperous. The majority of his constituents, however, do not acknowledge this somewhat optimistic attitude. Indeed, they propose the hypothesis that it is better to think negatively than to suffer a deception or disappointment. (P. p. 29).

The Indians' admission that nature is the formidable and tangible force which originates the vexation in their lives is revealed, to a minor degree, in El mundo es ancho y ajeno. Death occurs as an exemplification of natural fate. It is discussed as an inevitable outcome of life over which man has no control. This concept is expressed by Rosendo Maquí as his wife is dying. "¿Por qué pobre? Ya llegó a viejita y era tiempo que muriera. Un cristiano no puede durar siempre . . ." <sup>38</sup> In the final analysis "Días van, días vienen. . .," and nature is not to be interfered with in her chosen course of action. Rosendo's wife knows she is dying and likewise she is of the opinion that medicines are useless against the predetermined fate of nature.

Rosendo, having an inward tendency to accept any event as an act

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<sup>38</sup> Alegría, El mundo es ancho y ajeno, op. cit., p. 57. All references to quotations from El mundo es ancho y ajeno in the remainder of this chapter will be listed in the text in parenthesis with designation M. p. number to indicate work and page number.

of fate, is not surprised when his wife dies. That very morning, during his walk, he has encountered a black snake and has interpreted this meeting as an ill omen. He explains his feelings by his words concerning the appearance of the snake:

Aprovecharé para asustar a ese cristiano. Pero es verdad también que la condición del hombre es esperanzarse. Acaso únicamente la culebra sentenció: Ahí va un cristiano desprevenido que no quiere ver la desgracia próxima y voy a anunciársela. Seguramente era esto lo cierto, ya que no la pudo encontrar. La fatalidad es incontrastable. (M. p. 3).

This encounter between man and serpent is unavoidable and is, therefore, regarded as an act of fate.

In Los perros hambrientos, Antuca's contemplations while she is tending to the sheep during the time of famine graphically interprets the Indians' viewpoint on natural fate:

Y con el sentimiento pantéista de su ancestro indio, entendió que las oscuras y poderosas fuerzas de la naturaleza se habían puesto contra el animal y el hombre. (P. p. 133).

To the Indians, fate as a product of Nature was inescapable.

## II. THE FORCE OF SOCIETY

Most readers of Alegría's novels are in agreement that Nature is not the only agent that creates the unfortunate events which prevent the Indians from achieving to their fullest capacity. Fate, as related to Nature, is sometimes insignificant in the eyes of the Indians when compared to the fate involved in the inter-relations of the Indians with the rest of society. They assume that fate is also at the root of

their inability to win in contests entered into with the more socially acceptable people of the area. The Indians are in a constant dispute with the landowners. This engagement seems to represent the strained relations among men in general. The people of the villages are always the defeated contestants in the skirmishes with the landowners; therefore, they are prone to believe that fate is against them and on the side of injustice. To the villagers simplicity seems to be synonymous with justice, and the greed of the landowners represents injustice. The fact that the Indians cannot get justice from landowners seems to suggest that they are going to remain, "siempre en el mismo sitio, clavada en una ruda arista del destino." (S. p. 85).

It cannot be maintained that fate, per se, is the only direct cause of the Indians' problems. Indirectly, however, it plays an important role in the people's inability to reach a desired settlement with the more wealthy people. Fate is an easy escape for the Indians. Each incident involving contact with the landowners results in defeat for the Indians, and each defeat is blamed on fate.

When the Indians attempt to subdue the large landowners by legal means, they are unsuccessful. Don Alvaro, the landowner in El mundo es ancho y ajeno, achieves his objective and gains control of the village of Rumi. This occurrence simply serves as a symbol to the Indians that fate is opposed to their wishes. They feel that all of the channels of legality have been employed in their case, but the court rules in favor of Don Alvaro. It is their misfortune to lose. (M. p. 266).

A parallel situation evolves in La serpiente de oro. Arturo and Roge make an excursion to the nearby town of Shicun to enjoy themselves. While they are in town, they come into contact with two guards who insist upon seeing the cholos' draft cards (the inspection of draft cards was a common policy for the government because the Indians often were neglectful about carrying their cards and this was an effective excuse to arrest them). The cholos present their cards, but the guards are not satisfied and become insolent. The officers of the government continue to harass the two young men, but they remain silent. The two boys decide that if the guards are not aroused they can leave and continue as before. The two cholos have been subjected to the old adage which stresses the idea that if one is confronted with a problem, it should be ignored and it will go away. (S. p. 29). But it is not their destiny that the problem should cease. Instead the guards provoke them into a fight and the Indians have to leave town to prevent being arrested. This pacifistic attitude of the Indians also prevails in the mind of Güeso, the dog in Los perros hambrientos, when he is tied to the boat after having been with the bandits for a considerable period of time. "Parecía que vivir en la torturante cautividad de la soga era su destino." (P. p. 56). The dog, like Arturo and Roge, feels that he must submit to this indignity rather than fight for his freedom. It is his fate to live in torture; and if he gives in, perhaps the bandits will become bored with him and give him his liberty.

Another vivid illustration of the belief that man has a predestined destiny in relation to others of society is brought into focus

when Rosendo Maquí is imprisoned by the landowners. During his imprisonment, a prisoner relates to Maquí the story depicting how his wife and parents are killed by the smallpox and his house is burned by the ranchers. The prisoner's explanation for the misfortunes is fate. He concludes that, "El corazón que quiere, suele esperanzarse a ciegas." (M. p. 327). It is very apparent to all the Indians in the novels that their luck is all adverse. The inhabitants of the community in El mundo es ancho y ajeno realize their misfortunes when the landowners win the court case. The people of the community have been forced to move to alien environments, such as the jungle, in order to find work in the rubber fields. The migrants soon discover that their new domiciles also produce hardships. Augusto Maquí's experience with the cruelty of the plantation owners shows that life outside the village is no better than life within. The characters in Los perros hambrientos continue to strive with the problems of hunger, drought, and poverty. Those in La serpiente de oro are forced to endure the perpetual nuisance of nature in the form of the Marañon.

The Indians have developed a very abhorrent attitude toward the more prosperous because they have been overruled in all of their dealings with them. From their subjugated state, the Indians have learned that "ése era un mundo de piedra que solo permanecía a condición de ser piedra." (M. p. 266). It seems that all of their just actions are in vain. The Indians have certainly suffered a great deal, and Alegría makes this more explicit when he uses their songs to tell of their

predicament:

Es contagiosa la tremante congoja de estos cantos que articula el dolor desde las entrañas de una raza sufriendo y paciente, víctima de una servidumbre despiadada y de la cordillera abrupta e inmisericorde. 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. (S. p. 69).

The sorrow expressed in these songs indicate the troubled minds and souls of the Indians. The songs are the result of a long-suffering race.

### III. THE FORCE OF INNER-THOUGHTS

In addition to nature and society, the Indians' belief in fate sometimes stems from the fact that fatalistic attitudes are present in their own minds through inherited ideas and lack of education. Thus, the third impression of fate is revealed. The following aspects will not only describe the Indians' turmoil within their own minds, but also serve to throw light on the causes behind their fatalistic beliefs in regard to poverty, corrupt government and law, superstition, and adherence to tradition.

The characters in Alegría's novels endure indigency throughout their lives. It is because of this poverty which they suffer that they seek, and sometimes find, simple solutions to their problems. They do not realize how complex life is. To the members of the Indian communities, the sprouting of the crops gives them the satisfaction of living. This description is provided:

La siembra, el cultivo y la cosecha renuevan para los

campesinos cada año, la satisfacción de vivir. Son la razón de su existencia. Y a fuer de hombres rudos y sencillos, las huellas de sus pasos no se producen de otro modo que alineándose en surcos innumerables. ¿Qué más? Eso es todo. La vida consigue ser buena si es fecunda. (P. p. 109).

With this type of existence, it is extremely difficult for the Indians to develop wealth. They are apathetic toward the more material things of life. It is much easier to rationalize that fate is in opposition to them rather than actually coming to grips with the realization that their lack of wealth, in part, causes them to be subdued by the more wealthy people. The characters in El mundo es ancho y ajeno cannot realize fully that one of the reasons they are losing the land is because they do not have the influential powers which wealth brings. As Fiero Vázquez points out, they are dealing with people who attach much validity to the philosophy, "Que se frieguen los pobres si son zonzos". (M. p. 410).

The peasants have not had the opportunities to see or to use the various advantages which wealth brings to their enemies. As a consequence, the Indians tend to accept passively their destitute lives. Lack of wealth is an asset to the poor because they are always on the side of right, and conversely the affluent are proponents of the wrong way of life. If poverty leads the Indians into a situation which ends in misfortune for them, fate is given the blame, as is exemplified by the court case in El mundo es ancho y ajeno. They do not venture upon a more effective manner to achieve a better mode of living. Instead, they find an escape from reality through the media of songs, liquor, and

women. This escape, the narrator in La serpiente de oro points out, produces in the people a sense of well-being. (S. p. 110). At these festive gatherings the people discuss their plight and ponder the question as to why, since they are poor and just, fate is taking its toll among them. Their fate is overtaking them.

The people who live in the communities are subjected to many injustices from the outside world because of their poverty. For example, the lawyer, Bismark Ruíz, after taking their money, assures the Indians that the community will remain in their possession. They are unaware that Ruíz is also being paid by Don Alvaro. (M. p. 79). The magician who sells merchandise to the people erects his superior diplomacy over the Indians by persuading them that he is their friend. They do not discover until it is too late that in reality the magician has a very apathetic feeling toward the community. His objective is to obtain money, but the people feel that anyone who appears so sympathetic toward the poor must be honest and trustworthy, so they confide in him. They find out later that the magician is receiving monetary rewards from Don Alvaro for information which he is procuring concerning the community. Don Alvaro is in a position to reward the magician more handsomely than are the villagers, but in general this thought does not enter the minds of the Indians. They believe that the unfortunate results are a product of fate.

The case involving Fiero Vásquez's mother is another indication of the sufferings endured by the poor simply because they are poor. His



mother is very destitute. Yet her neighbor, a wealthy rancher, allows his bull to graze on her pasture and refuses to pay Fiero's mother the adequate grazing fee. She cannot find vengeance against the rancher because she is poor and cannot afford to seek recourse through legal means. She simply has to accept this problem. In the words of Fiero, her fate is negra. (M. p. 118).

The people finally realize that the disappointments they tolerate by relinquishing their rights to their land are due in a large part to a lack of wealth. Instead of reacting with violence or any sort of resistance, the Indians will simply accept the plight. When events become unbearable they will chew the coca leaves to lessen their feeling. For as they say, "La coca es buena para el hambre, para la sed, para la fatiga, para el calor, para el frío, para la alegría, para todo es buena." (M. p. 289). A few of the citizens of the communities leave the community in order to find a more conducive environment in which to reside, but their efforts are wasted. Everywhere they go the situation is the same. They become so deeply indebted to the landowners that they are forced to continue with the menial labor to pay the owner. Where ever they go their poverty follows. The Indians, however, always attribute their condition to fate.

Amadeo Illas' wife's experience with the plantation owners convince her that the poor will always be handicapped by their poverty. (M. p. 299). Alegria himself observes at one point that the rich are always rich, and for all its weight money never comes down. (M. p. 147)

It is highly improbable that the peasants can ever achieve the status the landowners hold. This indicates the fatalistic attitude of the people. If one is born poor then he will of necessity remain poor. It is predestined from birth. It is very true that the Indians have been poverty-stricken for generations and generations. "De generación en generación, de padres a hijos, a lo largo del tiempo los pastores heredaban la obligación, la miseria, el látigo, la inacabable deuda." (M. p. 107).

The Indians have suffered poverty for generations and generations, but they have also suffered from oppressions administered by the government for as many generations. The fatalistic philosophy toward poverty, to a certain extent, is a result of their being exploited by the government.

The Indians are not represented adequately in the government, and as a result they are not permitted to take advantage of the benefits which the government offers. The system in Peru at this time resembles the feudal system of the middle ages. The affairs of state are manipulated by the elite, and the elite enact only those laws which will be beneficial to them. The Indians are the serfs, and the wealthy landowners are the lords. The Indians are provided for only to the extent that one will have cared for his property. This is the care which the cholos in Los perros hambrientos receive from Don Cipriano when they are in hunger. Alegría gives an explanation of the situation which prevails:

Pertenecía a esa clase de señores feudales que supervive en la sierra del Peru 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. Ese era el momento de la miel. (P. p. 115).

The landowners not only have control of the government, but they are very inequitable in the distribution of the powers of government. The corruptness of the government causes the Indians to be fatalistic and to have an apathetic attitude toward political matters. The cholos are isolated from the world of politicians. Mention was made of only one politician who comes to the village of Rumi to secure the votes of the Indians. He has promised to release the Indians from their lowly state. They vote for him, but he loses the election and goes away to Lima. Nothing more is heard from him because all the Indians know of Lima is that the penitentiary is located there.

The political situation has not always been in this deplorable state. According to Alegría the people used to have a complete life, full of happiness. In the times of the Incas there was nothing but communities and then the concept of latifundismo (the name given to the concept whereby one individual owns vast amounts of rural property) began to develop. The large landowners use the Indians as slaves. The peasants are coerced into submitting to the ranchers' will. "Entonces los pobres--proque así comenzó a haber pobres en este mundo." (M. p. 17).

The government's partiality in their selective service program is indicative of the debauched condition of the government. Arturo and Roge's conversation with the guards in La serpiente de oro illuminates the bias on the part of the selective service when it comes to drafting

soldiers. It seems that the officials will always attempt to enlist the Indians first. The same situation is manifested in Los perros hambrientos, when Mateo is inducted into the army.

Even though the people know they are being considered for the draft in a non-objective manner, they persist in their belief that the good of their country is of primary concern. They abide by the government's will with simple faith. It is unusual to find a people so much oppressed yet so nationalistic. Actually, the Indians are insensitive to the problems of the country, but they are very patriotic toward her. The Indians are unaware of the causes of wars and the justification for them. When Alegria mentions the war between Chile and Peru, he says the Indians believe Chile was a man. (M. p. 24). During the Civil War of the early 1900's, which to the Indians is the war between the Reds and the Blues, each side used the villages for camps for no reason the Indians could see.<sup>39</sup>

The inequitable tax structure employed by the government is indisputable evidence of the corrupt practices. The taxes are levied on such items of necessity as salt, coca, matches, corn liquor and brown sugar. These are food products which the Indians bought in great quantities. The luxury items are not used to any great extent by the Indians, but are purchased mainly by the wealthy people. There is very little tax on such items, thus the taxes are burdensome to the Indians but are of little significance to the monied aristocrats. The officials

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<sup>39</sup>New York Times, November 16, 1942, p. 3.

in Lima also inaugurate a poll-tax law by which the Indians have to pay a poll-tax. No such requirement is made of the upper class.

There are other cases which attest to unfair practices by the government toward the Indian. The government embarks upon a program of price-fixing agreements with certain businesses in the country. The law is enforced for the benefits of the "white nobility". The one statute which could have aided the Indians, the law of primary education, is not enforced. The poor people of the communities strive to establish a school, but when they apply to the proper authorities in order to obtain the necessary provisions, their request is delayed indefinitely. In order to secure an instructor they are obliged to pay much more than the community can afford. To teach the ignorant Indians will not be an easy task. (M. p. 19).

It is not surprising that the Indians are unable to achieve an adequate place in society when one considers their handicaps. Each time proposals are made for improvements in the laws, the person who proposes the changes is silenced. On one occasion an idealistic and energetic legislator pleads with the law-making body to pass laws which will establish a minimum wage and abolish compulsory labor. He is restrained in his efforts. Another politician expresses concern for the Indians, but he is silenced permanently. Pajuelo, the other politician, puts his feelings into words before he is killed by an assassin:

Quando los primeros albos de mi razón, lo primero que distinguí fué el señorío de la injusticia reinante sobre

los moradores pobres e indefensos de mi bendito pueblo, may a pesar de llamarse Pueblo Libre. ¿De dónde venía aquella injusticia? Sencillamente de los malos gobiernos, como producto de la complicidad de los mandones y explotadores eternos distritales, que para desgracia de nuestro pueblo aún existen bajo los siniestros nombres de Gobernadores, Alcaldes, Jueces de Paz y Recaudadores. Estos individuos con carota de autoridades no son más que lobos con pellejo de corderos, que cada día ahondan más la miseria moral y material de nuestra raza. Estas autoridades de este distrito son explotadores e incondicionales instrumentos también de explotación de los gamonales . . . (M. p. 162).

The governing officials do not relish the idea of allowing the Indians to exert their rights and change the laws. The philosophy of those in power is that "el Perú necesita de hombres de empresa, que hagan trabajar a la gente." (M. p. 176). The people exist for the benefit of the state rather than the state being a servant of the people. This has been characteristic of almost all administrations in Peru. Alegria points out that Peru has been fortunate enough to have only two or three who have talent and who are genuinely concerned for the people's welfare. On the other hand, there exists a long list of presidents who are not interested in the people. (M. p. 84).

The ruling elite have abused the Indians so greatly that the Indians are beginning to consider themselves of less worth than Los perros hambrientos. They imply that fate is at fault. After various encounters with the injustice of the government, the Indians begin to lose confidence in human justice and in the law. "Law, a mysterious word from some far-off town, means trouble."<sup>40</sup> At the outset, the

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<sup>40</sup> New York Times, op. cit., p. 3.

Indians in El mundo es ancho y ajeno truly believe that there is equality before the law and that justice is administered properly. This feeling continues until Jacinto Prieto, the blacksmith and only witness for the community, receives a jail sentence for supporting the community's rights. Jacinto reaches the conclusion that perhaps the government of Peru is not for the Indian after all, but for the landowners. The point is more vividly presented to him when he wrote to the governor complaining about the unjust manner in which he is arrested. Jacinto has great faith in the governor, knowing that when he reads the letter, he will see to it that Jacinto receives his freedom. The governor, on the contrary, replies to Jacinto saying that he has placed the problem in the hands of the appropriate authorities. This means that Jacinto is no better off than before. He remains in prison.

There are other examples of the corruptness in the government exhibited through its inefficiency. Don Osvaldo, the engineer in La serpiente de oro, insinuates that he obtained a lucrative position with the government as a commissioner of a road which does not exist. His friend also has accepted such a job. The incompetence of the government is also suggested in Los perros hambrientos. Don Fernán, the subprefecto, comes to the village in search of subversives. It is very unusual for him to make such an appearance at this particular season of the year. It happens that he has been receiving a certain amount of criticism from the public, that he is not doing his duty. He is forced to do something spectacular in order to convey the impression that his

duties are being executed. The official chooses a few cholos and arrests them as subversives. (P. p. 84). The cholos are innocent, but he has pleased his public. The bandits, Celedonios, find themselves in a similar predicament when the officials need a scapegoat for a crime that has been committed. The law enforcement agency tries to apprehend the Celedonios, but they fail. The Celedonios brothers, demonstrating their strong ties to the primary group, fight together and escape the arm of the law. They observe that the world is against them, but "dos contra la desgracia son cuatro". (P. p. 73).

Because the governing officials are inclined to seek prestige rather than perform well at their duties, there is a great amount of waste in the government. In El mundo es ancho y ajeno, the nation's officers are to use the most expensive paper even though there are hungry people. The paper must be used to satisfy the sacred domain of the law. The author declares that, on this paper, part of the tragedy of Peru has been written; some of her history has been written by guns and blood. (M. p. 173). Concern for formality and disregard for the law characterizes the system of law in Peru at this time. The law is there, but the unjust use of it by the authorities make it a mockery. Perhaps the outlaw of the Marañon adequately interprets the manner in which the law is enforced when he is accounting for the time he had killed a lieutenant in self-defense. The authorities have accused him of murder and have been in pursuit of him since the event took place. He explains that if the incident had occurred between two poor Indians,



the law would have been apathetic toward it, but he has an entanglement with a "gentleman". The unsympathetic government has created in the bandit a negative attitude toward life. He believes that he has never had any luck. (S. p. 172). The inequitable enforcement of the law is shown in the murder of Pajuelo, the politician. He is murdered during his speech supporting the Indian cause, and the government immediately accuse the Indians of killing him but they did not. Julián's experiences with the law in los perros hambrientos resembles those of the bandit of the Marañón. Julián is considered a thief, but he is not a thief until his master accuses him of being one. From then on he is branded. (P. p. 68).

These situations illustrate the unhealthy relationship which exists between the Indians and the government. The aristocracy demands absolute homage from the Indians. There is a strong central government operated by inefficient and corrupt administrators. This concept of government is diametrically opposed to that of the villagers. They are of the view that a government is best which governs least. The Indians themselves operate their communal system on this latter principle. The Indians who are in positions of authority very seldom exercise that authority.

The Indians have ascribed the causes of their plight to fate because they believe that they have exhausted all avenues of escape. When they become dissatisfied with their lot, it is suggested that they migrate to another area. However, the few who do migrate presented

tangible proof that moving is not the solution. They discover that the world is not theirs. The only universe that appreciates them is the world of the community. The larger segment of society consider the Indians misfits, as implied from this conversation which takes place between Don Osvaldo and the landowners:

Créame que es un placer para mí. Estas soledades lo son tanto, que el encuentro con un ser civilizado, por raro, no hace el efecto de una revelación. Sí mi señor don Osvaldo...sí, mi señor...

Igual que a mí, don Juan. Esos cholos de Calemar son atentos, pero no hablan sino de lo suyo. Uno jamás podría conversar mano a mano con ellos: no nos entenderíamos . . . (S. p. 54).

If the Indians cannot seek refuge in other parts, what then are they going to do? Pajuelo has encouraged the people to overthrow the ruling elite, but this will not be an easy task because the government not only has control of the law and its enforcement, but it also dominates propaganda. There are only two newspapers of any importance in the country. The largest of these newspapers is for maintaining the status quo. When a conflict arises between the poor and the oligarchy or landowners the periodicals will explain the situation in a manner which will be flattering to the government. The other newspaper, because of its support of the Indian cause, is termed radical and receives very little credence from the reading public.

Because the Indians cannot obtain a victory through the legal channels, and because they cannot secure a representative who will express their will, and because of their inability to rally public

opinion in their behalf; the Indians begin to feel even more fatalistic toward the world in general. One individual, Don Teodoro Alegría, in El mundo es ancho y ajeno desires to improve the political situation. He is a landowner but a just man. The right that a poor Indian asks above all else is justice, even if it is a little more severe. Don Teodoro does not succeed in politics because of the well-organized political machinery of the government. As for the law, the poor, after observing its weaknesses, decides that this avenue is also closed to them. While in prison, Rosendo Maquí expresses the fatalistic attitude of the Indians toward justice and law:

¿Qué significaba la justicia? ¿Qué significaba la ley? Siempre las despreció por conocerlas a través de abusos y de impuestos; despojos, multas, recaudaciones. Ahora sentía en carne propia que también atacaban a la más lograda expresión de la existencia, al cuerpo del hombre. El cuerpo del hombre representaba para Rosendo, aunque no lo supiera expresar, toda la armonía de la vida y era el producto de la tierra, del fruto, del trabajo del animal, de los mejores dones del entendimiento y la energía. ¿Por qué lo oprimían? Las manos del hombre ensuciaban la tierra al convertirla en muro de prisión. (M. p. 312).

The same attitude is suggested by Jacinto Prieto's words:

Mentira...mentira...todo es mentira: no hay justicia, no hay patria. ¿Onde están los hombres probos que la patria necesita? Todos son unos logreros, unos serviles a las ordenes de los poderosos. Un rico puede matar y nadie lo hace nada. Un pobre da un punete fuerte y lo acusan de homicidio frustrao...¿Onde está la igualda ante la ley? No creo en nada, máterme si quieren . . . (M. p. 407).

The government and the administration of the law has obviously tended to make the Indians fatalistic. Harriet de Onís observes that the government under which the Indians are now found to live is greatly

changed from their earlier forms of government. As she points out, instead of the equitable justice of their ancestors when each community is a link in the chain of authority extending to the throne of the Inca from which everyone's duties and rights are served, the government has maintained itself only to interfere with their way of life. They are taxed heavily and are conscripted for military service unfairly. The ruling elite look upon the Indians as the villains and the oppressors as the heroes. When the Indians attempt to rebel, they are captured and treated inhumanly. (S. p. 185).

The author, realizing full well that the plight of his people is almost insurmountable, insists that there is space for a small amount of hope. He seems to cling to the faith that someday they will unite themselves and form a true nation.<sup>41</sup> He does, however, seem to believe that this idea is somewhat remote because the Indians have been oppressed for centuries and have attributed their perils to fate. It is their fate to be oppressed by the governing body.

There is so much economic inequality and social conflict between the Indians and the ruling elite that a satisfactory solution does not seem feasible. The difficulty is that the oligarchies, which control the government of Peru also controls education, and they are not interested in raising the cultural level of the Indian. The Indians need an education in order to become knowledgeable in the area

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<sup>42</sup>"Myths Versus Facts", Nation, 170; 226-229, March 11, 1960.

of politics, but the government refuses to educate the Indians because the authorities are afraid of educated savages. They cannot participate intelligently in politics until they become educated, and they cannot obtain an education because the feudalistic system will not allow it. The plight seems to the Indians to be a vicious circle with fate as its nucleus.

It is not only poverty and corrupt government which produced a fatalistic attitude in the minds of the Indians. Superstition also plays a significant role in developing the viewpoint held by the Indians. A typical example of their adherence to superstition is implied in El mundo es ancho y ajeno when the villagers are concerned about finding the most appropriate location for the village of Rumi. The majority of the people decide to construct the village in the valley. The minority agree that it should be built on the high ground. Construction is begun in the valley, but Saint Isidore, the saint whom they worship, transfers himself to the hill each night. After the third occurrence of this miraculous event, the people are convinced that Saint Isidore wants his people to reside on the hill. Feeling that their saint will surely punish them if his wishes are not fulfilled, the people locate on the high area. They build their homes in this area and settle there. After a considerable lapse of time, Saint Isidore is discovered in the valley. The villagers believe that the statue has removed himself from the hill because he is angry with them, and is punishing them. As a result, the villagers also move

to the valley. The people do not realize that perhaps the moving of the statue is an act of man instead of an act of fate. (M. p. 34).

The inclination of the Indians toward superstitious beliefs is inferred from their faith in the ability of the witch, Nasha Suro. According to the people, the witch can tell the future by reading coca leaves. Nasha exhibits her powers when the community becomes involved in the lawsuit with the landowner. She consults the coca concerning the plight of the Indians in regard to the trial and finds doubt that the community's lawyer, Bismark Ruiz, has given them valid assurance that the community will win the case. (M. p. 84). In the same context, Nasha attempts to cast an evil spell on Don Alvaro, the landowner, but he does not succumb to the spell because he considers her powers ineffective. As the witch points out, she cannot obtain possession of his soul. Nasha Suro only prophecies what people hope or fear. She realizes that the Indians' inherent tendencies to accept superstitious phenomenon will convince them that her supernatural powers are worthy of their belief. As a result, most of the villagers have great faith in her powers, and even the wife and daughter of Don Alvaro, in spite of their upbringing and their race, believe in the powers of the witch. They share all the local superstitions. Over the doorway of each one's room hangs a cactus with its roots toward the ceiling. Among their clothes or trunks, one will see a dried skunk's paw. Cactus and a skunk's paw are supposed to be excellent to ward off witchcraft. (M. p. 192).

One must assume that the Indians believe in the witch's powers because they want to. They are not educated enough to deduce that her powers will function only if they believe that she is superhuman. The plight of the people results in part from their own weaknesses. They can be as strong as the rancher if they will develop more self-confidence. The Indians subscribe to the idea that fate must use Nasha as its agent on earth to warn the Indians of their destiny. It is true that a small minority of the white race believe in witchcraft also, but unfortunately a majority of the poor are inclined toward this viewpoint.

Another instance of the witch's supposedly superhuman capabilities is indicated when she administers her healing medicine. If the rainbow gets into the bodies of the people, they become ill. Nasha gives them a ball of wool of seven colors to unravel, and they soon get well again. The Indians bought water in which steel is tempered as a tonic. Since they believe in something as far-fetched as this, it is a simple matter to convince them that unraveling wool will cure the sickness incurred from the rainbow.

The people's adherence to superstition extends farther than their belief in the witch. One finds that the beliefs are handed down from generation to generation. Adán notices, after wringing a dove's neck, that when the dove dies a blue fly escapes from under the wing of the dove. Adán's father explains to the boy that all of the doves carry a fly under their wings to warn them of danger. If the fly becomes careless, the hunter will surprise the dove and kill him. That is why people

say to a person who gets careless, "se te duerma la mosca, hom." (S. p. 25). The young Indian accepts this explanation and in turn will convey it to his children.

This tendency to accept a belief founded on irrational feelings prevents the Indians from using pragmatic solutions in solving their communities' problems. This situation presents itself when the people of Rumi realize that the hill of Rumi descends by stages and does not offer a very steep drainage ditch for the overflow of Lake Yananahui. The solution to the problem is simple. They need to deepen the drainage ditch. At one time, however, a mayor with progressive ideas wants to deepen the ditch; but the people suggest that the spirit of the Lake, in the form of a black, hairy woman wearing a wreath of rushes in her hair, appears to oppose the attempt. They believe the lake of Yananahui is enchanted, thus the drainage ditch is not deepened. When the floods come and make the land unfit for cultivation, the inhabitants of the region blame the malady on fate. (M. p. 252).

Much of the Indian religion is built upon fanaticisms. Some of the religious rituals appear to have been borrowed from the very earliest forms of mythical religion. For example, when a person dies, his favorite food is buried with him because the soul has a very long journey to make and will need nourishment. In addition, they wrap the bodies of the dead in blankets and their heads in sheepskin. The blankets and the sheepskin are tied with a rope. The rope is to keep the soul from escaping from the imprisoned body to wander over the



earth in torment. The soul must leave by the head, thus the sheepskin is not pulled over their heads. (S. p. 123). It is also explained that the soul suffers when it departs. It is believed that the soul will come back for the Christians to comfort it, but the Christians are afraid of the returned soul and therefore give it little comfort. (S. p. 153).

The somewhat paganistic doctrine of the Indians lead outsiders to consider the people infidels. Don Osvaldo, in La serpiente de oro, suggests this thought in his conversation with a long time resident of the area.

¡Infieles!, hace rato que me habla de infieles, así es que no creen en Dios?

To which the old man answered:

Quién sabe, señor...Ellos creen que Dios es el árbol más alto o el río más grande y tienen sus ritos y sus brujos que los adoctrinan. Si se hacen cristianos es por el interés. En tiempos pasados iban frailes misioneros que obsequiaban a los indios con el objeto de atraérselos, porque las prédicas--más todavía teniendo que emplear intérprete--no daban resultado. (S. p. 63).

The old man continues to explain that when the missionaries come to the region they entice great interest in some of the Indians concerning the Virgin Mary, Jesus, and the Blessed Trinity. As long as the religion serves a practical purpose and presents tangible proof of its validity, the Indians will accept it. The missionaries give one individual a number of gifts as a bribe to allow his boy to be baptized. The person permits the baptism to take place, and the following day he brings his son back again in the hopes of obtaining more gifts.

The Indians do not accept the more civilized version of religion expounded by the white man because they have not received any benefits from it. They choose their own religion based largely on superstition. Perhaps there is a very basic reason why the poor do not receive benefits from the socially accepted form of religion. The treatment they receive from the church treats the dark man with apathy as implied from the actions of the priest in La serpiente de oro. The priest refuses to hear confessions from the people who are not financially able to pay his fee. The Indians, in order to be admitted to the mass, are willing to pay what they have, but that is not enough. Even when the poor can afford visitations with the priest, he often times is so concerned with his own welfare that he will not take time to serve them. The priest continues drinking, laughing, and enjoying his women. The poor people become indignant toward the representative of the church and forces him to leave town. Similar circumstances prevails in El mundo es ancho y ajero when the residents of Rumi appears before the priest for assistance in their court battle with the landowner. The priest declares that he cannot assist them because the landowner is a paying member of his church also, and it will not be appropriate for him to aid the Indians.

Those who do subscribe to at least a portion of the more civilized religion add to it their own superstitious interpretations. Simon Robles' grandfather, in Las purgas habrientas, implies that he believes deeply in San Antonio because of an experience he once had with the saint. The

grandfather is going on a trip and he packs a statue of San Antonio in his saddlebags. During the journey the old man loses his mules. He becomes very antagonistic toward Antonio and takes the statue from his saddlebags and decapitates it. He then spies his mules in the distance. He knows that the saint has not turned against him. The grandfather even glues the statue's head on and kneels down before it. (P. p. 120). The old man believes that this is something tangible that the saint has done for him. The fear of the saints is indicated by Marshe in Los perros hambrientos. As he lay dying, he remembers stealing corn. He feels that because of this sacrilegious act he is being punished by the saint. (P. p. 155). As is the case with most of the Indians, Marshe has created the fear within himself.

There is little doubt that superstition plays an important role in developing the mental attitudes of the people, but Alegria does not seem to severely criticize the Indians for their superstitious beliefs. He does imply, however, that their mystical convictions prevent them in part from being assimilated into the white man's culture. The author presents this irrational belief of the Indian from a viewpoint much different than our own. He delights in the simplicity which is implicit in the people's beliefs.

One of the primary reasons the Indians tend to accept fatalistic dogmas is their adherence to tradition. Much of their daily routine indicates the almost complete reliance on traditional practices.

Perhaps the most apparent tradition is the natives' love for the

land and the community system. The people believe that long ago, when there were communities on all sides, life was less cruel because there was enough land for everyone. For the tradition-oriented Indian, there is a very close relationship between the land and human endeavor.

Their offering to God is from the fruits of the land. (M. p. 213).

Rosendo poses an intriguing question concerning the importance of the land. "¿Es la tierra mejor que la mujer? Nunca se había explicado nada en definitiva, pero él quería y amaba mucho a la tierra." (M. p. 10). They relish the land because it is constant and unchanging.

Like the village of Rumi, the land will always be the same. Rumi is symbolized by the Mayor Rosendo Maquí. Maquí makes one realize the worth and dignity of the community.<sup>42</sup>

The Indians believe that their destiny is dismal because so much wisdom, tolerance, and good-humored living is being wiped out by greed and corruption.<sup>43</sup> It is true that their traditional way of life is going to be destroyed but not altogether by greed and corruption. It is going to be wiped out, partly because of their unwillingness to change to meet their future needs. They enjoy speaking of the past rather than the future. In their minds, there seems to exist a feeling of grandeur toward a civilization which no longer exists. With so much emphasis on the past, they fail to plan for the future.

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<sup>42</sup>Jack, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid. cit.

They are unable to adjust adequately to a change. This opinion is illustrated by Güeso the dog, who is symbolic of many of the humans in Los perros hambrientados. Güeso, after being taken by the outlaws, is not easily persuaded to accept this new environment even though the man, after the first few days, begins to treat him with gentleness. Güeso thinks only of the past. (P. p. 59). The Indians of the community, after realizing that they must move, are not interested in making a new environment or a better place in which to live. The only life they are aware of has been inherited from their ancestors, and they are content with it. Their background and environmental characteristics have molded them to the image of tradition. They are products of the past and believe they have no control over their destiny. Tradition has determined their fate.

The villagers' reluctance to leave the community is explained aptly by Rosendo Maquí:

Era hermoso de ver el como jocundo del caserío y era más hermoso vivir en él. ¿Sabe algo la civilización? Ella, desde luego, puede afirmar o negar la excelencia de esa vida. Los seres que se habían dado a la tarea de existir allí, entendían, desde hacía siglos, que la felicidad nace de la justicia y que la justicia nace del bien de todos. Así lo había establecido el tiempo, la fuerza de la tradición, la voluntad de los hombres y el seguro don de la tierra. Los comuneros de Rumi estaban contentos de su vida. (X. p. 11).

The Indians have encountered only the adverse side of civilization and do not realize the good side. Each time they think of the cruelties they have suffered in the outside world, the more attractive the village becomes. In the villages they can be close to nature and this is the

essence of living. ". . . No es otra cosa que el recuerdo físico, la adhesión primaria a la tierra, el agua, el aire y todas las cosas que hicieron vivir." (P. p. 135). If this type of environment does not prevail, life is meaningless. They resist any change which might tend to damage their ancient concept of the land and its purpose. Because of their unchanging ideas, they are tied to the land which is destroying them. According to their philosophy, fate is to blame for their troubles. In actuality, their inability to compete in the progressive world is partly responsible for their plight.

In the realm of government, the Indians also rely primarily on tradition. In their opinion, to serve in their own governing bodies one needs to be relatively constant. When Clemente Yacu replaces Rosendo as mayor, the inhabitants point out that he is a good fellow, but that only time can determine whether or not he is constant. (N. p. 314). An individual is considered qualified for the position of mayor if he has worked diligently in the woods and in the village at the laborious tasks. He does not have to be knowledgeable of governmental problems. The people seek in a mayor a person who will stand fast to the traditional aspect of government. Rosendo, when he first became a candidate for mayor, encountered many of the conservative viewpoints, and Rosendo himself is a very conservative individual. The villagers feel that Maquí is too progressive because of his solution to the problem of the dying corn. He suggests that it is planted too close and if one-half of the corn is plowed under the other

half will grow. The villagers decide to try this solution even though they are convinced it is just another one of those new ideas of Rosendo. His solution works and he gains the respect and faith of the people. They know now that he will make a valuable mayor because they have seen tangible proof of his practical solution to problems. (M. p. 12). He does not, however, apply his pragmatism to the struggle with the land-owners.

The people do not respect a government which varies too far from the past. They expect their officials to carry out their philosophy, and they believe in the old adage, he who governs least governs best. As a result, nothing very significant is accomplished by their governing body. Their representatives say very little and do even less in matters which have a very direct impact upon the community. They simply accept their plight with mouths closed and blame fate for the unhappy events which occur. The general attitude which prevails following a tragedy is expressed only through silence.

In the minds of the Indians, tradition determines right from wrong. For example, during the trial Rosendo is convinced that the people are right in believing that the land of the community belongs to them. The Indians, however, do not base their claim on moral or legal grounds but simply on traditional ones:

Rosendo Macuá declaró hablando con fervorosa sencillez del derecho de la comunidad de Turi, de sus títulos, de una posesión indisputada que todos habían visto a lo largo de los años, de la misma tradición que afirmaba que esas tierras fueron siempre de los comuneros y de nadie más. (M. p. 195).

Rosendo, after this episode, thinks that the older ways of life are more justifiable. Arturo in la siguiente de oro reaches the same conclusion when the two policemen are attempting to abduct his wife-to-be.

The poor people's concept of education is very traditional in that they believe that very practical, simple solutions to all educational problems are available. They are not interested in education per se. They are content to remain uneducated, but they have been told that their offspring will be better off with an education. They believe that the discipline problems which arise should be handled by beatings and corporal punishment administered by the instructor. Their approach to education is as conservative as their approach to government.

Free sexual practices indicate another area where tradition is observed. These indiscrete practices could be another reason why the Indians are unable to assimilate themselves into the new culture. Alegria gives a vivid description of their sexual relationships and implies that this custom has been accepted for generations:

Por ahí estaban, parlándose, el muchacho llamado Juan Medrano, hijo del regidor, y la muchacha llamada Simona, una de las que vimos en el corralón de vacas cierta amanecida. Hacía apenas dos días que intimaron un tanto. Pero ya llegaba la tarde con su reverberante calidez y de la tierra subía un vaho penetrante a mezclarse con el de las plantas maduras. Juan parecía una rama y Simona parecía un fruto y ninguno rebasaba los veinte años. Pasáronse a retosar, separándose del grueso de los cosechadores. Simona corría riendo y Juan hacía como que no lograba alcanzarla. De pronto la atrapó y ambos se poseyeron con los ojos. El habló al fin: --¿A qué te tumbo, china? --¿A qué no me tumbas . . . ?



Bromearon forcejeando un rato--Simona era rosca-- hasta que rodaron entre las volgas. Y cubriendo la gaseosa alianza de dos cuerpos triguños se alzaba el ideal de tener interminable, amorosas cumplidas y barba amarilla. (M. p. 139).

The family relationships of the Indians also leave the implication that they believe in the traditional family concept. The woman's role in the family is to perform the household chores: "Como conviene a la mujer, sabían hilar, tejer y cocinar y, desde luego, parir robustos niños." (M. p. 16). The men have been taught not to seek a frail spouse. They are to choose one who can perform the required duties expected of their sex, bring water for thirst, and make bread for hunger. The women are to obey their husbands, and the husbands are to be rough with their wives. This is the way pointed out by Solomon.

Tradition has instilled in the Indians a hostility toward any new form of life. They are unwilling to modify their age-old practices in order to succeed in the changing world. It is much simpler to accuse fate of prolonging their plight than to change their traditional beliefs. In their opinion, tradition is not to blame for their lack of progression because tradition is good and should be adhered to at all times. Their feelings concerning poverty, governmental corruption, and superstition are the same. These have no influence on their plight, but are the culprits. They believe that fate is at the root of their difficulties. The Indians feel that it is useless to try to change their ways because fate has predetermined their destinies and they cannot be changed.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### SUMMARY

In the preceding body of this thesis the sociological implications of fate in Alegría's novels is discussed. Fate as it is related to the characters in the novels is subdivided into three main categories: The Force of Nature, The Force of Society, and The Force of Inner-Thoughts.

The subdivision dealing with the force of Nature implies that the Indians of Peru adhere to the philosophy that their future is determined to a great extent by natural forces. The second category, the force of Society, suggests that the Indians attributed all of their misfortunes, as a result of their inter-relations with the larger element of Society, to fate. The third impression of fate is revealed in the subdivision dealing with the Force of Inner-Thoughts. The Indian's belief in fate stems from the fact that fatalistic attitudes are present in their own minds because of inherited ideas and lack of education. This section also divulges the causes behind the Indian's fatalistic beliefs in regard to poverty, corrupt government and law, superstition and adherence to tradition.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Fate seems to stifle the Indian's initiative a great deal, but the

potentiality of success is in the Indians if it can be brought to the surface. It is apparent that by temperament and tradition the Indians are creative. The illiterate peasants who have been brutalized by centuries of oppression produce music, songs, dances, and poetry. The Indians do have capabilities, but where they excel in the arts of craftsmanship, they fail in their efforts to achieve a more prosperous standard of living. Their failure is due to the tendency to accept the axiom that fate is responsible for their problems.

The Indians could become a self-sufficient and valuable segment of Peruvian society. In order to achieve this objective the Indians need to realize that their misfortunes are not the result of fate. They need to assert themselves. The manner in which this goal can be realized is by mass education, but in order to have mass education, the elite must allow a mutual self-help developmental program for the less fortunate in Peruvian society. This program should include a re-vamping of the entire governmental, economic, and societal systems in the country. In order to achieve these changes a democratic system of government is needed, but it is unlikely that this can be realized until the oligarchies relinquish their control of the political power. It is doubtful that the Indians alone can cause these changes to occur. Only when these necessary changes are made will the Indians be able to rise above their primitive belief in fate.

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## APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

The University of Tennessee  
Knoxville  
Romance Languages and Literatures

May 26, 1965

Carroll D. Beach  
Emporia, Kansas

Dear Mr. Beach:

The introduction to the edition of El mundo es ancho y ajero was written two decades ago and at that time we had trouble finding bibliography for Ciro Alegria. Material published in newspapers and magazines of Spanish America had to be left out of account.

I have not had occasion to follow Alegria since then, but it is my tentative understanding that he wrote little. Some one told me that he was back in Peru in politics. Unless you have done so already, you might write the Peruvian Embassy in Washington for his present address. If you get it, you could write him, he was cordial and helpful when we approached him during the making of our edition.

I am sorry I cannot help more.

Very Sincerely Yours,

Gerald E. Wade



## APPENDIX II

### EL MUNDO ES ANCHO Y AJENO

This is a story of the Indian Community of Rumi, a community located in the backland area of Peru. It is an account of the trials and tribulations the Indians of the community suffer in their attempt to maintain possession of their land. Their struggle is against the wealthy landowners of the region who want to add the land of the community to their holdings.

The principal spokesman for the community is Rosendo Maquí, the elderly mayor. Rosendo's adversary is Don Alvaro Arenabar y Roldón, one of the largest landowners in the area. The entire plot of the story centers around the villager's attempt to remain on their land and Don Alvaro's attempt to gain control of the community. The theme of the novel is consistent throughout in that from its inception the poor and uneducated Indians are pitted against the wealthy and aristocratic landowners.

The Indians are stilled in their endeavors to provide an education for their children. They are unable to obtain governmental assistance. These attempts of self-improvement fail because they do not have influence with the governmental officials, nor do they have wealth enough to purchase favors. But when it comes to relinquishing the land of the community they are willing to put forth a strong effort.

Rosendo receives word that Don Alvaro is going to take possession of the community by legal means. The community then agrees to hire a lawyer to defend them. They hire Bismarck Ruiz as their attorney. Ruiz prepares an impressive brief on behalf of the Indians, but it is to no avail. Don Alvaro's attorney, Iniques is aware of the weaknesses of Ruiz and he is able to corrupt him to the point that he becomes a liability to the community's defense. In addition to persuading Ruiz to inadequately defend the community, Don Alvaro sees to it that the judge before whom the trial is conducted is politically obligated to him. Don Alvaro also hires the services of the Magician, a peddler, who is able to gain the confidence of the Indians and then betray them to their enemies. In the course of the trial, the landowner obtains witnesses who corroborate his promise that the land of Rumi is actually supposed to include only the land that lies around Lake Yananahui, instead of the land which is now called Rumi. Don Alvaro's followers remove the boundary stones in order that his claim will seem valid. The Indians are defeated in the trial, because of the ineffectiveness of their lawyer and the unscrupulous actions of Don Alvaro.

Immediately following the verdict Don Alvaro comes to the community to obtain possession of the land. He feels that the villagers will remain in the community and be his slaves, but to his dismay, the villagers are complying with the court ruling and moving to the Lake Yananakui region. The villagers decide not to resist. Although Fiero Vásquez, a bandit and friend of the community wants the community to allow he and his men to violently resist the rancher, Rosendo Maquí, feels that passiveness is the solution. One of the villagers, Mardoqueo, cannot stand passively by and watch the community disappear. He runs to the top of the surrounding hill and hurls a rock which kills Iniquez, the lawyer. One of the bandits attempts to help Mardoqueo, but both are killed by the lawmen.

The people of the community are able to obtain another lawyer to appeal their case to the Supreme Court. He is Correa Zavala, a member of the Association for the Improvement of the Condition of the Indian. Correa Zavala is an extremely honest lawyer and has the interest of the community at heart. He prepares a brief for an appeal of the community's case and sends it to the Supreme Court, but the postman carrying the dispatch is held up by Don Alvaro's men and the appeal is taken. The robbery is blamed on the bandit Fiero Vásquez. The community's hopes are growing dim.

Many of the young people are leaving the new Rumi for better areas. They find, however, that the outside world is cruel. Such is the case with Augusto Maquí and his wife. They leave to go to the jungle. They find that life there is unbearable. They become so indebted to the plantation owner that they are unable to leave. Little by little however, the community begins to adjust to its new life.

Just as some of the pessimism of the first days after the transition is wearing off, a few of the community's cattle wander over into Don Alvaro's pasture. Rosendo attempts to convince the landowner that the cattle belongs to the community, but the rancher demands pay for the sheep and bulls if they are to be taken from his pasture. Seeing no conceivable means of obtaining the community's possessions, Rosendo attempts to steal the black bull belonging to the community, but he is caught and put in prison. In prison he rejoins his friend Jacinto Prieto. Jacinto is the individual who was going to testify for the community in the trial, but he was forced into fighting a man. Jacinto severely beat the man and Don Alvaro's lawyer filed charges of assault and battery and attempted murder against him. This is how Jacinto happens to be in prison.

The community consults with Correa Zavala and he agrees to act as Rosendo's attorney. Zavala fights bravely in an attempt to defend Rosendo. He proves that the black bull actually belongs to the

community. In order to keep Rosendo from being released they try him for sedition before a military court. Rosendo dies in prison.

Piero Vázquez is caught and put in prison, but he eventually escapes only to be killed later. His head is found in a briar patch. He becomes a legend among the Indians of this region.

The conclusion of the story deals with Benito Castro. Benito is the young man who was cared for by Rosendo. Benito had lived with the Mapú's since infancy. He had decided to leave the village many years ago to find a place for himself in the world. Now he is returning, expecting to find the community as it was when he left. Upon his arrival he discovers the many changes that have taken place, and he desires to make the community prosper again. The villagers elect him as councilman and later Mayor. Benito decides to drain the lake, regardless of the supposedly black lady which is supposed to destroy the area if the lake is drained. Benito, against the wishes of a few villagers, pursues his goal. He remakes the village into a more prosperous one. The villagers are thriving on their new land and happiness seems to dwell within them once again. Then the landowners again move against the villagers and destroy them. Benito Castro is killed and the community's hope for survival is extinguished.

## III. SERPIENTE DE ORO

This is a story of the cholos of the Marañon River Valley of Calcomar in Peru. It includes accounts of the cholos' fight against the River Marañon. The narrator of the story is Lucas Vileca, a cholo of the community. He tells of Don Osvaldo, the engineer, of Arturo and Lucindo, and of Roge and Arturo's experience, the fiesta and the blue puma.

The novel begins with the arrival of Don Osvaldo Martínez de Calderón. Don Osvaldo as the villagers call him is an engineer from Lima. His purpose in coming to Calcomar is to do extensive research on the potential value of this region to the country. The cholos welcome Don Osvaldo into their homes. He spends the first night with Don Matías Ramiro, a long-time resident of the community. During the ensuing discussion the villagers mention the powerfullness of the mighty Marañon. They explain how the Marañon discouraged men who attempted to cross it. The cholos tell tales of how nature is the predominant force in their lives, and because of the force of nature, how improbable it will be to make a study of the region. Don Osvaldo, who believes that all problems can be solved scientifically, pays them no heed. He insists that he will be able to conquer the backlands.

Don Osvaldo continues his study of the region. Before attempting to conquer the jungle and the mountains, he speaks with Don Juan, one of the more prominent landowners of the valley. Don Juan suggests that perhaps it would be wiser if Don Osvaldo panned gold rather than tamper with the realities of nature. Don Osvaldo, however, is very intent upon completing his historical survey and he so proceeds. It appears, for awhile, that the persistence of the young engineer is going to prevail over nature. The final results prove otherwise. One afternoon on his way back to Calcomar, Don Osvaldo is fatally bitten by a viper, the intimorón. He succumbs to the force of Nature.

Lucas Vileca tells of the meeting of Arturo, and Lucindo. Arturo is the oldest son of Don Matías. Arturo and his brother Roge attend the festival in the City of Bartán. During their stay there, Arturo meets Lucindo. He takes her to the dance. During the dance two troopers attempt to take Lucindo from Arturo. The troopers suggest that Arturo and Roge are not carrying their draft cards. When the cholos produce their cards, the troopers attempt to arrest them anyway. A fight ensues, and Arturo and Roge escape with Lucindo. They return to Calcomar, on a raft on the River Marañon. They encounter a great deal of trouble from the waters of the river but eventually the run-a-ways succeed in reaching the clan. Lucindo and Arturo are married and have a son, Adán. The troopers still look for the two cholos, but are unable to locate them. Each time an official of the

government inquires about the two cholos, the villagers say they have not seen them.

The narrator also tells the story of Arturo and Roge's attempt to conquer the Marañón. One day they went to Sartin to get supplies for the villagers. When they are ready to return, Arturo observes that the river is falling and will be dangerous to cross, but Roge thinks they can cross satisfactorily. They attempt to cross the river, but during the crossing the raft lodges on a rock in the river and they are stranded without food or water. Roge attempts to swim to the bank but he is engulfed in the river. Arturo remains alone on the raft. Eventually the river rises and allows the raft to float safely to Callamar. Arturo is unconscious upon arrival. When he regains his senses, he explains what has taken place. Florinda, Roge's woman receives the news badly. She does not even consider the companionship of another cholo for some time. Eventually, she becomes Lucas Filica's wife.

There is also the account of the fiesta, when the priest is run out of town, because it is discovered that the cholos are not getting fair treatment at confession. They have to pay an enormous fee for the priest's services and the priest is using the money to acquire women and wine.

Lucas also tells of the blue puma. Doña Mariana Chiguala, an older woman, with whom Lucas resided, reports that a puma is attacking her sheep. The villagers all agree to kill the animal. One night the puma is spotted and the person who sees it believes it is a blue puma. The word spreads that this puma is different from all others because it is blue. The villagers become afraid of the puma. They believe that it has supernatural powers. One night, however, Doña Mariana discovers the puma near her flock and she kills it. The old lady ridiculed the villagers for being afraid of the puma. It was not blue at all, but the same color as all pumas.

Another account that Lucas tells is that of the two men with uta, an illness characteristic of the Marañón Valley, but which takes its greatest toll among those who do not live there, but are there only temporarily. The two Utoses want passage to Huamachuco where they believe the doctor can cure them. The villagers agree to take them there, but on the way to the river one of the men dies, and the second utoso decides he will die anyway and it will be better if he dies close to home, so he decides not to attempt the trip to Huamachuco.

## LOS PERROS HAMBRIENTOS

The theme of this story revolves around the simultaneous interactions of dogs and humans. The principal characters, representing the cholos are: The Robles family consisting of señor Robles, his wife Juana, and their children, Timoteo, Vicenta, Artuca, Mateo, the Simón's son-in-law and his wife Martina, and the Celedóns who are outlaws. The allies of the cholos are the dogs, Zambo, Güeco, Wanka, and Sharpa. Don Cipriano represents the human adversary of the cholos. His dogs, Raffles and Chetín are his animal allies. Nature, in the form of a drought, is the adversary of both groups.

The novel opens with a brief description of the manner in which Simón obtains the dogs. Simon brings Wanka and Zambo from far off. Eventually he has many dogs. Some are coveys for which he provides shelter and they take up permanent residence at his home. Simón gives one of the dogs, Wanka, to his son-in-law Mateo. As Mateo is returning home with the newly acquired dog, he is stopped by officials of the government and he is asked to produce his draft card. He claims that it is at his house. The officials follow him home, but he cannot find his card. The guards enroll him in military service and Mateo is not heard from again. His wife Martina is left alone to care for their child. The child, dog and mother become great companions. Martina is able to provide for the child until the drought comes. At this point Martina dies from malnutrition. The child is taken care of by Simón.

Shortly after the conscription of Mateo, Artuca, the daughter of Simón, is in the pasture tending sheep with her faithful dogs, Wanka and Güeco. While she is tending her sheep, the two outlaws Julián and Blas Celedón arrive. They want her dog Güeco. Artuca attempts to prevent the outlaws from taking Güeco but they overpower her. Güeco is not satisfied at the beginning with his new masters, but after several beatings, the dog learns to respect and admire his masters. The acquisition of the dog proves to be beneficial to the outlaws. Güeco saves their lives a number of times. He assists them when they are confronted with the subperfect and his men. The subperfect, Don Foman, believes it will increase his prestige if he contributes to the capture of the Celedóns. He rides with the 2nd Lieutenant in pursuit of the outlaws. The outlaws make a stand among the Papaya trees. The Celedóns eventually are shot by the troopers. Güeco attacks the Lieutenant but the Lieutenant kills the dog.

The drought comes and changes the life of the people, and of the dogs. There is not any food available for man or dog. The dogs begin to kill the sheep which they have taken care of through the years. The dogs Wanka and Sharpa attempt to enter the maize field of Don Remulos an employee of Don Cipriano. Wanka returns home safely, but does not try

such a venture again. The dogs are not the only ones who are in desperate need of food. The majority of cholos are in need of provisions. As a last resort, the needy cholos turn to Don Cipriano for aid, but the landowner does not help them. He implies that he would feed them if his crops would produce. If his crops produced, he would need slave labor. The cholos are very persistent, in hopes that Don Cipriano will help them. But instead of helping them, he begins to shoot them. Some are wounded, but the others escape.

The conclusion of the story is a happy one in that the drought ends and the cholos are able to produce food again. Being able to reap what one sows is the most important aspect of life to the cholo.