

ARGENTINA AS SEEN THROUGH THE REALISTIC  
NOVELS OF MANUEL GÁLVEZ

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I hereby recommend that the thesis prepared  
under my supervision by POLLY BULKELEY  
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## FREEFACE

Because it is a generally conceived truth that the novel is the most important South American literary expression of the twentieth century, and because South America is a land of promise of the future, I am attempting to show through the novels of Manuel Gálvez, a representative South American and a true Argentinean, the development of the present Argentina as she meets the future.

It is also my belief that fiction for such a study is more valuable than fact. The novel alone is broad enough to encompass the multiple factors, even superficially, of such a development.

The realistic novel paints vivid pictures of the strife and struggle of a country in a huge social evolution, and does not fail to touch every phase of life and thought of the times which demand understanding for comprehension of the whole.

From such a wealth of material, I have chosen the works of Manuel Gálvez because he has been able to give a larger presentation in his realistic novels, through his broad scope and variety of subjects, settings and treatments, than other novelists in this field.

The purpose of such an examination should be the revelation of the knowledge of and insight into the Argentine nation; this, in turn, can be applied to the understanding of Argentina as the world progresses on its way toward universal understanding and peace.

To Dr. Rebecca Switzer for her inspiration and guidance in directing this thesis, and to Dr. A. W. Woolsey and to Dr. Dade Sparks for their most helpful suggestions, I wish to make grateful acknowledgement.

## CHAPTER I

### LIFE OF GÁLVEZ

One of the most notable and prolific novelists of Spanish America is Manuel Gálvez of Argentina. He was born in Paraná, capital of the province of Entre Ríos, July 18, 1882, a crucial place and time in the history of Argentina. His parents were moderately wealthy, and his family was one of the foremost of Paraná.

Gálvez received his primary education from the Jesuit school in Santa Fé and his secondary education from their college in Buenos Aires. The year 1898 found the sixteen-year-old Gálvez enrolled in the law school of the University of Buenos Aires, where he was a brilliant and versatile student. He showed a natural inclination to the study of psychology and sociology. For his thesis in this field, he made a study of the prostitutes of Buenos Aires (La trata de blanca). This study is the theme of his novel published several years later, Nacha Regules, 1920, which gained for him the "Primer Premio Municipal de Prosa."

On graduating from the law school, young Gálvez did not devote all his attention to law, as he had not yet decided upon his vocation. So, in this period, he studied seriously music, art, English, and French. He read widely in the literatures of Spain and France, particularly that of the golden age

in Spain and that of the new realists in France. Also during the years immediately following law school, he, in conjunction with a friend, founded in 1903 a monthly literary review called "Ideas". This became the proving ground for many young men who have since made a mark in Argentine letters and also testifies to the fact that the young writers were men of thought and action. Gálvez contributed some articles to the newspaper in Santa Fé, and did much writing for his own "Ideas". This literary organization lasted until 1905.

Commenting on this period in the life of Gálvez, J. R. Spell says:

At this period in his life, Gálvez took an active part in the Bohemian life of the struggling literati of Buenos Aires and reached the conclusion that Catholicism was an inefficient agency in the promotion of social justice. . . . Among the wide and varied influences which left their impression on his spiritual development were modernistic poetry, the plays of Ibsen, and the ideal views of Tolstoy.<sup>1</sup>

In 1905 the future novelist decided to broaden his horizon, as many of his age and class did, by making an extensive tour of Europe. There he continued his study of art and made literary contacts with many great writers, among whom were Valle-Inclán in Madrid and Rubén Darío in Paris. His trip took him to the Orient. Throughout his travels, Gálvez, by his discerning nature, observed carefully the

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<sup>1</sup>Jefferson Rhea Spell, Contemporary Spanish American Fiction (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944), p. 16.

character of the people in the various countries, putting to practical use his previous studies of psychology and sociology. The study of educational methods was another item on his list for careful observation; this was to prepare him for the position he was to fill on his return to Argentina. The whole journey served to give him a sense of objectivity in viewing his own country, that is to be noted later in his writings.

Returning to Buenos Aires in 1906, he was appointed "Inspector de Enseñanza Secundaria," a position he still holds. His interest in educational matters is more specifically in the personal element through which he might help social evils. The position also afforded him the opportunity to familiarize himself with the distant corners of his native Argentina. Both of these factors are manifested in La maestra normal, considered by some his finest work. At any rate, it gave him literary fame throughout the Spanish-speaking world.

From his first book of verse, El enigma interior (1907), and his second, El sendero de humildad, can be felt the beginnings of the change in Gálvez from a sentimental, introspective young man to a mature writer with a realistic point of view. This tendency developed even more strongly in his publications and became his best medium when he turned to the realistic novel.



In 1910 he married Delfina Bunge, also a writer of note. Together, they went to Europe, 1910-1911. Gálvez, on this trip, acted as the Argentine delegate to the Unemployment Council of Paris of 1910. From this period abroad and as a result of his travels through Spain comes El solar de la raza, which in 1914 took the Third National Literary Prize of Argentina.

Truly a student of his times, Gálvez continued his studies and writings of a varied nature, from European art to social life in the provincial cities of Buenos Aires:

Gálvez's interest, during these early years, in art, in the provincial cities, in the literature, and also in the sociological conditions of Argentina is amply reflected in a series of articles that appeared in the literary periodicals Nosotros (Buenos Aires) and L'Amérique Latine (Paris), some thirty two of which were revised and republished under the title of "La vida múltiple" (Arte y Literatura: 1910-1916). Outstanding among the twelve that treat of art is one of El Greco, for whom Gálvez has earlier conceived a profound admiration.<sup>1</sup>

In 1917, Gálvez again founded a publication. This time it was the "Cooperativa Editorial Buenos Aires" and dealt with nationalistic and labor matters:

En 1917 fundó la Cooperativa Editorial Buenos Aires, enorme labor de índole nacionalista.<sup>2</sup>

These publications, his travels, and his experience as a public administrator in the field of education proved invaluable training for one who set himself later to writing a virtual

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>Arturo Torres Rioseco, Grandes novelistas de la América Hispana (Berkley: University of California Press, 1943), Vol. II, p. 138.

mirror of Argentina.

Since 1917, then, Gálvez's chief occupation, other than his duties as inspector of secondary education, has been writing. Not only has he written a large number of realistic novels, but many non-fictional prose works and articles as well. Among these are criticisms of his own works; for many times Gálvez has been called upon to defend his writing:

Desde entonces (1917) toda su historia se podría limitar a la aparición de sus libros y a los comentarios por ellos suscitados. No creo equivocarme al afirmar que Gálvez ha sido el escritor más discutido entre los modernos de su patria.<sup>1</sup>

Gálvez is a man of a varied nature, of many moods, capable of understanding the real, the material, and the ideal. His works reflect his varied nature, and perhaps this in some measure explains why he has been attacked as socialistic, romantic, sentimental, harshly realistic, and naturalistic. Although he stoically maintains that what he writes is not his own opinion but that of his characters, he nevertheless uncovers much of himself in his varied outlook, moods, and interpretations. Vehemently, however, he denies being socialistic and Torres Rioseco affirms this in his critical work on Gálvez:

Gálvez es un burgués que juega golf y visita damas aristocráticas, y yo estoy seguro de que conoce los barrios, las fábricas, los frigoríficos, los centros obreros, sólo de pasadita.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 138.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

The man, Gálvez, who has weathered all these storms of controversy over his writings and spent the greater part of his life writing and publishing for the sake of giving the world his literary history of Argentina, is a tall, thin, wiry man about 64 years of age, living now in Buenos Aires. This personal description of him is given by Torres Rioseco, who has interviewed him in Buenos Aires:

Manuel Gálvez es alto, esbelto, nervioso, gran charlador. Como sufre de cierto defecto auditivo, habla constantemente en falsete, movida y pinto-resca. Es un gran ingenuo y un gran sensitivo; se diría un niño grande a quien hay que tener contento. Ríe con gusto, hombre sano al fin, pero puede sentirse por una frase, por una opinión. Muy amigo de sus amigos, puede también ser enemigo formidable. Se le ha tilado de ególatra y en verdad al hombre le preocupa demasiado el escritor, flaqueza que a la larga es benéfica. Vive como literato, pendiente de la crítica, atento al artículo, al comentario, entre libros y revistas, en el bullicio de Buenos Aires.<sup>1</sup>

Manuel Gálvez is a man of great learning and great culture, an educator who has done much to further a progressive and far-reaching educational system in Argentina. He was early a leader in recognizing Argentina's great needs as a young republic, and has played an important role in filling these needs through his own public service, and as a writer. His awareness of and sensitivity to the world in which he lives is evidenced in his large variety of works. His prolificness is in agreement with his nervous, quick, and hurried temperament. Nevertheless, he is one to espouse causes, to picture social value with weight, reason, and surety. Throughout his works he has a single purpose, a Christian purpose of

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 137.

helping society, befitting a sincere Catholic. Always optimistic, he does not fail to recognize the bad.

Such a man is Manuel Gálvez, and:

Into the writings . . . . went the preparation of thirty years of broad education, extensive travel, almost a decade of professional experience which had made him familiar with his country and its problems, a profound religious conviction, and an aroused interest in the life of the masses based on first-hand knowledge of their living conditions. In addition, he had tried his hand at poetry and essay and had studied intensively the technique of French and Spanish novelists. The results of all this preparatory training, of his observation, and his personal interests were to find a place in his novels.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Spell, op. cit., p. 21.

CHAPTER II  
LITERARY INFLUENCES ON THE WORKS OF  
MANUEL GÁLVEZ

A leading representative of the novelists of Argentina, Manuel Gálvez, gives in his work a virtual cross section of the whole of Argentine development. The development of Argentina is associated with and analogous to, in some cases, that of the other South American countries; Manuel Gálvez, then, is to be considered a representative writer of all South America. He is more than a man, more than a writer; he is an embodiment of a whole historical epoch of a great continent. As only such a novelist as Gálvez can do, he has given to the world of today and posterity a comprehension of his own world in full.

In the South American novel in general and in those of Manuel Gálvez, there are values that by universal comparison prove great literary merits as well as numerous other great values. Among these is the social function of the South American novel. Characteristically of the modern age, it has replaced the sermons and devotional books of the earlier periods:

Beyond question, the novel is the most important literary expression of the twentieth century South America; and modern Spanish American novelists rank for vigor, originality, and stylistic mastery alongside their most distinguished fellow craftsmen in

the modern world. Yet this novel is chiefly interesting not for its intrinsic merit high though that assuredly is, but as a reflection of the culture of an entire continent.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the earliest and most important influences on the South American novels are to be found in Europe. Although South America is a continent of many republics, each one has had a similar and common culture and consequent forms of literary expression. The coming of the modern age, the fruit of the earlier renaissance movement, flooded eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe. There came about from that movement over a period of time a series of modes of thought termed humanism, romanticism, naturalism, realism, and modernism that swept Europe and that was reflected somewhat in the thinking of the young colonials:

For Spanish American writers too had been aware of the successive movements to Romanticism, Realism, Modernism. But the 19th century was for Spanish American fiction a period of absorption and experimentation: it remained for the 20th to become one of worthy self-expression.<sup>2</sup>

The Spaniard brought to the New World his own culture; but, unlike the Englishman, the Spaniard did not share his culture with the indígenas, nor did he borrow from them. Although Spain's<sup>7</sup> influence was great, it was found that the traditional forms of her literature had to undergo radical changes

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<sup>1</sup>Torres Rioseco, The Epic of Latin American Literature (New York: Oxford University Press, 1944), p. 168.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

before being absorbed in the New World. Her influence was to be felt more through the naturally realistic temperament of those who came to the New World. This realism is a free, strongly individualistic, creative, and artistic will that can be found again and again in the literary values, as well as in the artistic expression of the South American novel. Spain, in her diversity of genius, never quite reached the heights on the white horse of Romanticism that her French neighbors did. She found it hard to follow the rules of the classicists and the neo-classicists. Some of the basic strains of Spanish literature that are found echoed in the novel of South America are to be seen in what Madariaga says of Spanish Literature:

Thus from the birth of our epics down to the present day the creative faculty of the nation evolves in a steady direction, according to the law of natural genius. It ignores or resists all intellectual dictation, and follows the instinct which prompts it to contemplate reality as it is and to interpret it freely and directly. This is the fact that gives to Spanish literature its independence, its originality, and its strong character.<sup>1</sup>

These Spanish qualities are to be seen in the novels of Manuel Gálvez.

Another characteristic of the Spanish influence on the Spanish American novel and prose literature in general was the costumbrista sketch, an essay on manners and customs, that reached its height in the "school of 1898". This movement was

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<sup>1</sup>Salvador de Madariaga, The Genius of Spain (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1923), p. 138.

picked up abroad and widely imitated there. Regionalism and Naturalism were strong elements of this school; writers found the barren land of Castile a favorite subject for their regional depiction. So the novels of Gálvez, who was greatly influenced by the Spanish school of 1898, contain endless accounts of the customs and localities throughout his native Argentina:

Gálvez, que conoce muy bien sus clásicos castellaneos, sabe olvidarse a tiempo de sus enseñanzas, cuando así lo quiere la modernidad de la expresión o el concepto de libertad que es propio de los hispanoamericanos.<sup>1</sup>

This asserts the Spanish temperament of Gálvez that is coupled with his individualistic expression of native Argentine tendencies. Torres Rioseco states that Manuel Gálvez is one of the few writers who follow the general characteristics or the stylistic forms of Spain:

Gálvez es uno de los pocos escritores que siguen a rasgos generales las formas estilísticas más comunes en España. Sus períodos son breves, no abusa de las conjunciones ni de los relativos, puntúa caprichosamente y si el argentinismo aparece, es más con una intención técnica que por desconocimiento del idioma.<sup>2</sup>

The Spanish influence, then, is even more direct on Manuel Gálvez than it is on the literature of South America as a whole. But even Gálvez is not to be considered a Spanish literary step-son; for the native American, or indígena, is also a strong influence. Indian legends, popular ballads, and later the revolutionary documents are blended with the

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<sup>1</sup>Torres Rioseco, Grandes novelistas de la América Hispana, pp.155-156.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 156.



European movements. With the coming of the revolutionary spirit was interwoven a literary reaction against Spain in the colonies. The United States of America with its freedom began to be envied by the Latin Americans and they began to shake off the Spanish yoke culturally and spiritually as well as politically, even though this accomplishment could not be complete for many decades:

American authors have continued to study the Spanish classics and fundamental culture, but with spiritual orientation. Language has been modified. Independence not solely political but also in expression was sought by Sarmiento and other authors of the great generation of proscritos (romanticists) in Argentina. And gradually a new language is formed. It is yet Spanish but more clear, with an appeal to new forms -- often French -- which differs from Spanish not only in nuances, not only in new terms, but in the construction of the phrase and in its very essence.<sup>1</sup>

Although the Spanish and native American influences are great, it is to the French, truly, that the Latin American novels including those of Manuel Gálvez owe a large debt. Here appear great similarities. With reference to the French influence on the Spanish novel:

Without renouncing any of the beauty of Spanish, it has borrowed from the French clearness and grace; thus it has acquired that essential quality of the spirit which Spain was unable to give, the quality so necessary to temper the tumultuous ardor of American measures.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis Wilgus, Modern Hispanic America (Washington, D. C.: The George Washington University Press, 1937), Vol. I, pp. 286-289.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 289.

France affected the New World culturally and politically in the realm of literature:

Francia era la libertad política, religiosa, financiera y hasta gramatical; Francia era la vida triunfante, sin prohibiciones ni cortapisas; Francia era el deseo confuso de avanzar, ganando terreno a la noche, hasta las cimas más altas que podía concebir el espíritu humano. La América del Sur se dió intelectualmente a Francia con la ingenuidad de una virgen, se convirtió en su discípulo respetuoso, la imitó hasta en sus errores y, desde lejos, modestamente, consciente de su pequeñez, ató su destino al de aquella nación portentosa que parecía reunir todas las excelencias y realizar todos los sueños.<sup>1</sup>

In literature, however, it was through the new realism that France influenced the South American writers, particularly Gálvez. The new realism was a new mode of thought which shifted its emphasis from the subjective to the objective in France in 1850. This group sought to place all elements of life in a proper relation, that is, the ugly should have an equal place with the beautiful. Sociological and psychological matters came into the foreground. There were many exponents of this supposedly new mode of thought in France, such as Émile Zola, Balzac, Flaubert, and Daudet:

. . . . with the early sixties . . . . showed itself . . . . an increased realism, a more faithful presentation of life, traceable to the influence of contemporary French novelists, particularly Balzac.<sup>2</sup>

Other countries of Europe and America quickly adopted the thought that was found at the same time and naturally in the

<sup>1</sup>Manuel Ugarte, "Prefacio," La joven literatura hispanoamericana (Paris: Librería Armand Colin, 1919), pp. XVII-XVIII.

<sup>2</sup>Torres Rioseco, Epic of Latin American Literature, p. 8.

Americas. Strong Realists, Gálvez to be counted among them, sprang up in every country.

There have been many proofs of Gálvez's close literary kinship with the French realists. Balzac's definition of realism, as expressed in the preface to the "Comédie humaine," was adopted by Manuel Gálvez. This had caused him to be referred to by literary critics as the Balzac of Argentina. Primarily, this association is in psychological analysis and objectivity, although their purposes are comparable also:

. . . . and like Balzac, he (Gálvez) sets himself a mammoth task: to put modern Argentina on paper showing its rapid growth, its greatness, its defects.<sup>1</sup>

Gálvez has also been compared with Émile Zola who sees man as a cog in a great social machine. Zola said of Realism:

The process verbal of experience (the new fiction) is a consequence of the scientific evolution of the century; it continues and completes physiology, which in turn rests on chemistry and physics; it substitutes for the study of man as an abstraction, of the metaphysical and chemical law, and determined by the influences of his surroundings; it is, in a word, the literature of our scientific age, as the classical and romantic literatures correspond to an age of logic and theology.<sup>2</sup>

Although Manuel Gálvez differs from Zola in that his study of human problems is more sentimental, the similarities are greater than the differences, which indicates that Gálvez and his contemporaries probably read the works of Zola

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 175.

<sup>2</sup>Philo W. Buck, An Anthology of World Literature (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1937), p. 736.

seriously. Much of his interpretation can be found as basic in the novels of Gálvez:

In his novels, Gálvez has used Argentine society as a laboratory, much as Zola had done with the society of Paris, eventually turning the novel from its channel of aesthetic purpose into the lake of sociological propaganda.<sup>1</sup>

Particularly in subject matter are the two similar:

For his novels, like Zola's, often partook of the character of exposes; for instance his important first book, La maestra normal (1914), vivisects the pettiness of provincial minds and the moral smallness of the educational profession.<sup>2</sup>

About 1900, there was evident among the realists in Latin America a new trend toward naturalism. Zola had led the way earlier saying that everything human is the result of the physiological organism, which in turn is determined by heredity and environment. To prove this, the naturalists treated heretofore socially taboo subjects and settings; feminine psychological studies were numerous. Such subjects with the influences of their physical and environmental background on them are favorite themes of Gálvez's. Nevertheless, he protests that he is not a naturalist:

Similarly, Gálvez, for all that he protests his independence from naturalism, has nevertheless strong parallels with Zola; true, his work is more romantic and emotional and his compassion for the unfortunate is closer to Dickens or Daudet, but in his concept of the novel, and his execution of this concept, Gálvez's work reminds one of the roman experimental.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Torres Riosco, The Epic of Latin America, p. 174.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

Nacha Regules, que Gálvez quiere ver in el extremo opuesto del naturalismo, tiene mucho de Nana en el tema, la manera de tratarlo hasta en el éxito enorme de librería que ambas obras significaron a sus autores, exceptuando, claro está, diferencias de ambiente y de carácter racial. Gálvez parece no atribuir mucha importancia a la herencia, pero en cierto sentido el observador y el experimentador de que habla Zola en su estudio sobre la novela, y obras como Historia de Arrabal no podrían explicarse sin los antecedentes de la escuela naturalista. Los trabajos del frigorífico, la fealdad del barrio de las Ramas, los burdeles, las escenas repugnantes, la brutalidad odiosa del chino, todo lo que ofende a la sensibilidad, al oído, al ojo, y el olfato, expresado en un estilo nervioso, cortado, brusco, vulgar a ratos, revela que este escritor no ha leído en vano al maestro de Le Ventre de Paris.<sup>1</sup>

Again Torres Rioseco points out the relation of Gálvez to Zola and the realistic novelists:

Gálvez es más romántico, más emocional que Zola pero en la manera de comprender el sentido y el propósito de la novela se parecen. Si hay elementos subjetivos y análisis en La maestra, también los hay en casi todas las novelas del francés. En El mal metafísico me parece a mí que los sufrimientos y muerte de Carlos Riga, poeta y abúlico, son causadas por la falta de ambiente literario, por la diferencia de clase social, por la incompreensión del gran público. Sin embargo, en esta obra hay un gran sentimiento de piedad por los fracasados más propios de Daudet o de Dickens que de Zola.<sup>2</sup>

Gálvez, in his dwelling on psychological analysis, approaches the work of Bourget. Yet on another occasion does Torres Rioseco mention the kinship of Gálvez with Balzac and Zola as a narrator who maintains interest amid a full program of action:

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<sup>1</sup>Torres Rioseco, Grandes novelistas de la América Hispana, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 141.

Pero es indudable que ese retrato verídico y profundo de la sociedad de París que se llama L'Education Sentimental estaba fijo en la mente mientras relataba la vida amarga de Carlos Riga. Un estudio de Mme. Bovary de las psicologías femeninas de Gálvez sería de especial interés a este respecto.<sup>1</sup>

Probably it is as much by nature, need, and time, as by contact and study that Gálvez and South American novelists are so greatly influenced by European realists. In Gálvez, as in Flaubert and Tolstoi, there is the purpose of human responsibility. After Dumas, and then the Spanish costumbristas, comes the emphasis on contemporary manners and customs. Seen from the broader viewpoint, Gálvez is a product of the modern age that the French and other Europeans termed realism. (Unless a very broadened realism is meant, there would be no inclusion of influences, such as Daudet's sentimentality.)

También se presiente el influjo de Daudet en La Sombra del convento -- novela con tendencia psicología en que se narran los amores, la falta de fé y la conversión de un joven cordobés.<sup>2</sup>

Admitting his close kinship with the Europeans from whom he borrowed and by whom he was influenced, it was the grafting process of the European with the native Latin American spirit that gives Gálvez the right to the title of "The Argentine Novelist". For the Argentine nation itself is a product of the same grafting process. So Manuel Gálvez find his roots in Europe as he develops the multiple branches

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 142.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 141.

of Argentine life.

In Argentina, long before the novel appeared, the realistic story of customs was popular. Even the early chronicles of the conquest had been stirringly realistic accounts, filled with vivid description. The essay, written through compulsory need, lent its touch to the approaching novel of Latin America. The language of the revolutionary patriot in his denunciations and pleas represents a native realism, as spontaneous and original as that of the French. American realism from its beginnings was more cheerful, more inclusive, and more natural than the European. Not to be minimized for their realism are the Indian tales and legends. The regional characters, such as the gaucho, and expressions of regionalistic feelings scarcely needed a European model for realism. The French realists had little to compare with the struggle of man against nature as in Eustacio Rivera's La Vorágine, 1924, when they said that realism was holding the ear close to nature's breast. The examples are without number. The struggle for nationalism -- in Argentina the struggle of provincialism against urbanism (Gálvez's La maestra normal), is true American realism.

A tracing of these native influences further dispels the accusation of Gálvez's being over-Europeanized, because as a reflection of his times, he was sensitive to all strains that could form a part of his symphonies on Argentina.

These strains are to be traced further in the poetic activity of the modernist school that began in the early eighties in Buenos Aires. Originating with Rubén Darío in his Azul, 1888, it was signally a cosmopolitan movement. The movement had a world-wide influence and affected South American writers greatly. Gálvez is known to have been intensely interested in the new literary group, although he clung to more traditional forms.

Latin America was a child prodigy in the school of realism. Her inheritance was rich, but she took the best from her teachers and employed her great natural talent and developed her own American realism. The grafting operations carried on by the South American writers are full of color and action, but their goal is always the same -- to produce a form in the true American spirit.

The incorporation of all the realistic tendencies can be termed the larger realism. These tendencies include the native, caused by physical elements; the borrowed, from discovery and exploration to subsequent social conditions; and the contemporary, resulting from changing modes of thought. Manuel Gálvez is a disciple of this -- the larger realism.

The larger realism occupies an extended field. The subjective element, far from being suppressed, is emphasized. This is because in real life it is also emphasized. Our real life consists not in passive perception or scientific analysis, but in appreciation.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Hilda Riles, "The Larger Realism," Poet Lore, XXIV, Sept., 1913, pp. 353-357.



It is with this larger realism that the South American writers as a whole are concerned:

Spanish American novels, or at least a large number of them, are of the realistic type. That is to say, their authors have tried to reproduce and interpret according to varying canons, the life that they found in the world about them. Thus, in the 19th century, Spanish American novelists described the internal struggles of the young republics, the formation of a stratified society, the growth of great cities, and the tragedy of individual lives drawn into the slum-life of poverty and degradation. In the 20th century, they have written with a widening perception of man in his struggle against primitive nature, of men working in mines, plantations, and in factories, of sensitive spirits unable to cope with modern life, of simple souls engaging in a revolution they cannot understand. In its treatment of such subjects the realistic novel becomes a precious record from which to study the life of the Spanish American continent.<sup>1</sup>

Gálvez takes his place as a leader among such modern South American writers as Carlos Reyles of Uruguay, 1868-1938, Blanco Fombona of Venezuela, 1874-1944, and Alberto Blest Gana of Chile, 1830-1920, all belonging to the larger realism group. With Carlos Reyles, Gálvez has much in common in the field of philosophy, and in treatment of social and political problems. As a historian, Gálvez measures up well with Alberto Blest Gana in his accounts of the Argentine war with Paraguay and Brazil.

In the expression of the larger realism, there is a relation between the novelists of South America and North America. Each has a comparable European background; each

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<sup>1</sup>Torres Rioseco, The Epic of Latin American Literature, p. 169.

has had a long struggle to develop a national literature. Even the recent trend which tends toward a breaking away from all plans, rules, or pattern of composition, which follows only the dictates of the conscience, and which is limited only in ability, points out similarities between the Americas.

A comparison of Gálvez and Sinclair Lewis shows extraordinary similarities beyond the fact that Main Street and La maestra normal have been universally read and criticized:

Ambos son escritores realistas, ambos han leído con mucho cuidado a Flaubert y a Zola, ambos critican con acritud a la sociedad en que viven, ambos tienen un concepto utilitario de la novela y ambos dan pequeña importancia a la parte estética de sus creaciones.<sup>1</sup>

There is further similarity between Gálvez and the early North American writers in their common pleas for their own countries to establish themselves, to develop their own cultures, their own literatures, their own nationalities. Both hold the utilitarian concept of the modern realistic novel.

So in Manuel Gálvez we see a literary leader among his own people, a leader among South American writers, a composite reflector of the foreign and native influences common to his country, a literary artist of universal merit. Gálvez, then, is a master product of his age and, being such, he has fulfilled his responsibility by producing a masterpiece -- a literary tapestry of Argentina.

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<sup>1</sup>Torres Rioseco, Grandes novelistas de la América Hispana, p. 156.

This study will view closely and broadly this tapestry as it endeavors to achieve its purpose -- a greater understanding and appreciation of Argentina and the Argentineans.

CHAPTER III  
CLASSIFICATION AND SCOPE  
OF GÁLVEZ'S WORKS

Manuel Gálvez states very clearly his aim and purpose as a novelist:

Mi oficio, como tal, consiste sólo en reflejar la vida. El novelista debe ser como un espejo ante el cual desfilan los hombres, las cosas y las doctrinas.<sup>1</sup>

Over and over again, he states that his only desire is to reflect life. And although he maintains that the people, things, and doctrines that come from his pen are not his creation, but only his presentation, certain elements of his writings, his style, moods, approaches, and viewpoints are as inevitable as they are imperative. Quite normally, he gives his own view of settings in time, place, and delineation. Many of his characters could be created or presented only by the artist -- Gálvez. Some of his historical characters, such as Hipólito Yrigoyen, are clearly as he visualized them; their presentation is his reflection. Again Gálvez puts himself into his work in his treatment of Buenos Aires and Argentina as a whole. His love for both is fundamental throughout.

His sympathy for the people who are victims of social evils, his respect for the Argentine forefathers, and his

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<sup>1</sup> Torres Rioseco, Novelistas contemporáneos de América (Santiago: Editorial Nacimiento, 1939), p. 257.

admiration for the early leaders cannot escape the reader. His patriotism is ever present as the basic purpose of his work. His attacks against materialism and evils of Argentina are made with the distinct purpose of bringing attention to them for correction. In maintaining his perspective, objectivity, and artistic sense, he does make an effort to conceal himself. In so doing he does not always prescribe the correction for the evil depicted, but often rests after mirroring it so that all may see. This proves his faith in people, in a divinity, and in the fundamental altruistic philosophy which is his as a person, and as a writer. The very fact that he has chosen realistic novels as his medium marks the man personally as well as literarily.

Gálvez has a social end in view in most of his works. His is a definite utilitarian concept of the novel. His themes, then, are usually of everyday life, his moods and styles correspondingly varied.

His tone in Solar de la raza, one of his earliest prose works, is that of a vehement young patriot who sees, quite broadly, a similarity of spirit between his young intellectual friends and the intellectuals of 1898 Spain:

Son los escritores, y especialmente los jóvenes, quienes realizan esta obra de evangelización. El pequeño grupo que formamos ejerce aquí una misión semejante a la que surgió después del desastre. España, por medio de Ganivet, Macías Picavea, Costa, Unamuno y algunos otros, se observó a sí misma y llegó a conocerse profundamente. También mi patria, por medio de sus jóvenes escritores, está observándose

a sí misma y yo creo que ya ha empezado a conocerse.<sup>1</sup>

In his essays, La Argentina en nuestros libros and Este pueblo necesita, his mood is analytical with a philosophical tone. Here he strives to see his country objectively, to view her ills, and prescribe theoretically for their remedy.

En Buenos Aires, el paseante con una sensibilidad cultivada no tiene donde poner los ojos y encontrar un placer estético . . . . Pero nada tan horrible como la edificación probada. Me apresuro a reconocer su notable mejoramiento en los últimos diez años.<sup>2</sup>

His mood changed markedly in his social novels. In Nacha Regules, Gálvez is tender and forgiving, showing his characters as playthings of fate. This mood holds in several other works, such as La historia de Arrabal, and La tragedia de un hombre fuerte. In this respect he defends himself through his utilitarianism in the novel, as he says:

Mostrar el mal y el delito para condenarlo, no es hacer obra inmoral sino moral.<sup>3</sup>

In Pampa y su pasión his tone is somewhat analytical as well as understanding, and so it is in La noche toca a su fin; while in Miércoles Santo there is a strong mystical mood prevailing.

As he moods serve his needs for realistic painting,

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, El solar de la raza (Buenos Aires: Editorial Tor, 1913), pp. 12-13.

<sup>2</sup>Gálvez, La Argentina en nuestros libros (Santiago, Chile: Editorial Ercilla, 1935), pp. 183-184.

<sup>3</sup>Gálvez, "Prologo," Nacha Regules (Buenos Aires: Editorial Tor, 1916), p. 11.

so does his style, which he varies equally with his mood. His early writings are somewhat lyrical, some even being written in verse (El enigma interior and El sendero de humildad.) Although, as he grew older, his style became more realistic in keeping with his subject matter, the lyric strain appears in several of his realistic works. The style of Miércoles santo is melodious and lyrical as is again the case in El mal metafísico. Torres Rioseco says:

En estos dos libros de Gálvez hay una grandilocuencia lírica, un continuo barajar de ideas y teorías y una sostenida descripción de hecho y de cosas.<sup>1</sup>

Particularly does Manuel Gálvez excel in a descriptive style. His descriptions of Buenos Aires are incomparable, as are those of many localities which he presents. Even in his descriptions his style varies; sometimes it is lyrical, at other times it is nervous, short, brusque, and expressive of much feeling and sentiment. Because many of his descriptions are minute and detailed, this accusation has been made:

El afán de la exactitud del detalle ocupa un lugar más importante que la concepción imaginativa.<sup>2</sup>

But it is in his concern for detailed description that much of his value as a writer lies, for his word pictures of Argentina are most valuable from a socialistic and historical point of view and overshadow the fact that, in some cases, his workmanship is superior to his inventive ability.

<sup>1</sup>Torres Rioseco, Grandes novelistas de la América Hispánica, p. 153.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 150.

In other instances, such as in the trilogy, his style is simple, direct, and narrative in spite of his love for emotional description. This Trilogía is a homogeneous group of Escenas de la guerra del Paraguay, which constitutes some of the most important of his literary works. It was the basis for his candidacy for the Nobel Prize in literature in 1928. The great French critic, André Levinson, called it an "Iliada Argentina". In regard to his historical novels, Gálvez states that he is not a historian, but a historical novelist. This gives him license to employ his varied styles and moods; although, as a whole, the style of his historical works is simple narrative. Also at times, as suggested by Levinson when he calls the Trilogía an iliad, there is an epic quality, with historical clearness and elegance.

Gálvez appeals to the dramatic, human interest in his use of the language of the common man, incorporating dialects, peculiarities of speech, foreign words, and languages. In Los caminos de la muerte, the first of the trilogy, there is much of the guaraní language:

Paraguaiǵ gent o-ú nañe a-ró . . . .  
 (The Paraguayans have come to fight us)  
 che rubicná;  
 (my patron, my chief)  
 Anchevará-varé;  
 (never in my life)  
 toba-ya;  
 (childhood friend)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, Los caminos de la muerte (Buenos Aires: Editorial Tor, 1928), pp. 49.51.



The jargon of the lower class in Buenos Aires is represented in the language of "El Chino" of Historia de Arrabal, who calls the bed a "Catrera" and refers to the street as the "giro" when sending Rosalinda out to earn money.<sup>1</sup> The Spaniard in Nacha Regules says:

Usté habló mal de mí, pegó usté es equivocad. Yo soy hombge honogable. Yo nunca he gobade un centav a pegsonne: Se pensad! Ahoga, lo que hace mi mujeg, eso no impogte a pegsonne. Es la vida pgivad. . . . .<sup>2</sup>

In his historical novels, Gálvez makes much use of subplots. These are often fictional treatments of prominent families and their humanistic intrigues, as they coincide in time, place, or relationship with his main historical thread. In Los caminos de la muerte, it is the love of Antonio of the wealthy Guevara family for Dorila, their marriage, and his death as Mitre's soldier secretary. In Humaitá, the subplot is the episode of Evaristo Sauce's assassination by a jealous rival for the love of Lucila, a Brazilian widow.<sup>3</sup> These subplots, however, do not color the historical validity of the accounts, because Gálvez is a true master of combining fact and fiction. The weaving of exact events, with human interest stories, the handling of real characters and their acts with fictional but historically accurate types is exceptional,

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, Historia de Arrabal (Buenos Aires: Editorial Tor, 1923), pp. 139-147.

<sup>2</sup>Gálvez, Nacha Regules, p. 210.

<sup>3</sup>Gálvez, Humaitá (Buenos Aires: Editorial Tor, 1927), p. 172.

especially in the Trilogía. The caudillo pictures of Rosas and of the small type caudillo, Toboada, are fine examples of this. Of his style as a historical novelist Torres Rioseco says:

Gálvez ha dado a la historia un interés dramático, y si no fuera por su minuciosa descripción esta trilogía podría figurar entre las mejores que se han escrito en nuestro idioma. Tiene intensidad, movimiento, caracteres de inaudita originalidad. Adolece sin embargo de fatigos a enumeración, de irregularidad en el plan, falta de trabazón y una imperdonable ligereza de estilo. Como en todos los libros de este escritor hay en la trilogía una gran cantidad de cualidades de verdadero novelista que se pierden entre una cantidad igual de defectos.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, Gálvez deserves much praise for recording, as a historical novelist, the early years of the Argentine republic. It is only with the variety of moods and styles that such a record could be possible, regardless of his defects as a literary artist. Gálvez intentionally forsakes artistry for his utilitarian purpose in certain instances. As in his historical works:

No le interesa la expresión poética ni tiene una manera estrictamente personal. Narra con sencillez, y si no fuera por su minuciosa enumeración, que le hace incurrir cierta pesadez y en innumerables repeticiones, diría dramáticas o épicas y no sería difícil encontrar en la trilogía de Las escenas de la guerra del Paraguay selecciones dignas de antología.<sup>2</sup>

As his style is modified, so is his manner of writing. In his early novels, La maestra normal, El mal metafísico,

<sup>1</sup> Torres Rioseco, Grandes novelistas de la América Hispana, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 155.

La sombra del convento, his writing was done by the slow and laborious process of note taking, making of outline and plans, and following them carefully. But, with his increased ability, he learned to conceive an entire work before its beginning. It is this ability that has made possible his prolificness. His later historical works and biographies, however, show much more care in treatment, necessarily demanding attention and care in presentation.

His production has been, on the whole, steady and uniformly good, especially when the vast amount of his work is considered. This includes verse, drama, stories, essays, biographies, and novels. The novels are of many different genres, social, historial, psychological, and philosophical.

As his scope is broad, Gálvez's period of writing is unusually long. He began writing early in life, his first verses appearing in 1907. His first volume of prose, El diario de Gabriel Quiroga, was published in 1910. La maestra normal, which established his literary fame, came out in 1914. His seventeen novels, two volumes of short stories, two dramatic works, three volumes of essays, two biographies, and countless articles, are spread over the entire period since 1907. His works not only include the everchanging times of his own life, but they reach back to historical periods of the nineteenth century: 1828-29 in El gaucho de "Los Cerrillos" and 1830-37 in El general Quiroga; then the period of the war

with Paraguay in 1865 dates the trilogy. The majority of Gálvez's best work, other than the historical novels, appeared during the time of World War I. Among these were: La maestra normal (1914), La sombra del convento (1917), and Nacha Regules (1914).

Unusually broad too, are the subjects and settings of his writings. As inspector of public education, Gálvez traveled over large areas of Argentina, thus becoming familiar with many of her vast rural sections from which he draws much subject material and atmosphere. With his own familiar Buenos Aires, his settings encompass the greater part of Argentina. Following his statement that he writes about things as they exist, his wide background renders his point of view particularly adaptable. Not only is this a fine mark of his ability as an author, but it enhances his value and broadens his scope. The setting of La maestra normal is the small provincial town of La Rioja, in La sombra del convento the setting is the old, conservative, university city of western Argentina, Córdoba. Several of the best novels from Gálvez's pen are centered about the city, notably Nacha Regules, Historia de Arrabal, and La tragedia de un hombre fuerte. Atmosphere predominates over human will in La sombra del convento, while, in La tragedia de un hombre fuerte, man is ruler of his destiny. Of the historical group, the locations are usually northwestern Argentina; the tropical Corrientes in Escenas de la guerra del Paraguay and the capital of Paraguay,

Asunción, in Humaitá. The typical provincial city with low roofs, Spanish rejas, the slow, tropical and lazy atmosphere dominate much of the action of the novel.

Gálvez usually plays with society and social problems rather than landscape as such, even though the effect of the scene is the basis and controlling element of his theme. Gálvez seems to feel that this diversity of viewpoint in handling his themes is compulsory in giving the multiple aspects of Argentine life.

As varied as his settings are his themes. The historical novels give Argentina in her early stages of development, her problems-- domestic, national, international as primary themes. His sociological novels include customs, atmosphere, social classes or levels, social types, and individual psychological problems caused by social influences. The conflict of realism and idealism is one of his favorite philosophical themes, though that of religion and atheism is seen frequently. His basic theme is love, however. It is spiritual love in El cántico espiritual, where as a climax the protagonist pushes away the woman he has loved because an idea for a sculptured piece suddenly absorbs him, proving the existence of spiritual love. Marital love is the theme of Cautiverio and Hombres en soledad, treated realistically; free love involves Nacha of Nacha Regules and Rosalinda of Historia de Arrabal. Morality is a common underlying theme of many of

the novels and receives full treatment in his essays.<sup>1</sup> Gálvez, a devout Catholic, attacks the lack of morals in modern women, and the lack of moral obligation of modern society in accepting the responsibility for the prostitution of Nacha and Rosalinda. He is one of the first American writers to follow French novelists in calling attention to realistic and socially taboo subjects. Here he vindicates himself in dealing with moral problems by repeating that the people, scenes, and situations are not his, pointing out that the evil is in society for allowing such conditions to exist. His is a humanitarian mission -- to mirror bad social conditions. This is the determining purpose in his choice of varied subject matter and themes.

This purpose is also seen in the selection of characters for presentation and their analysis or development. This is proved by the broad social class representatives. From the slums of Buenos Aires come Nacha, Rosalinda, and El Chino. In contrast to these are the leading families or historical leaders presented particularly in the trilogy families of Buenos Aires of the provinces, of the rural towns of Argentina. Marihelén of Cautiverio represents the modern woman of the superficial type, especially to be found in the aristocratically minded Mauricio Sandoval and Susanna de Olozoga of El cántico

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<sup>1</sup> Spell, op. cit., p. 63.

espiritual. Often his characters are caricatures of society, and to serve their purpose they keep the same character throughout, without deviating or relenting. Raselda, Solís, Doña Crispula, Riga, Macha Flores, Belderrain, El Chino, and Rosalinas are all one-sided persons incapable of change, despite shifting conditions. Macha could not leave her old way of life until the close of the novel; Solís is an unfortunate creature from the beginning to the end, even in death. Class distinction and bonds, together with economic and moral bonds, keep many of the characters static representatives of a vicious society:

sus protagonistas predilectos son enamorados del engueño y de la belleza, soñadores del armonioso país de la fantasía; en medio de las miserias de la vida, de los contratiempos antagonismos, obstáculos materiales, etc., llevan como una flor una reciasibles sus visiones. Triunfan al fin, o mueren, sin claudicar, siempre puros, sin contaminación de vulgaridad o de melancolía, al contacto de espíritus mezquinos.<sup>1</sup>

Characters of Gálvez, then, serve double duty, represent society's evils and the altruistic spirit of a beautiful faith and soul. The latter, the author would not forsake, in spite of his realism, because he could not, even though he would. His philosophy rests on the simple fact that spirituality is by far more important than any material evil or convenience; so thus are his characters. And it is

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<sup>1</sup>Torres Riosoco, Novelistas contemporáneos de América Hispánica, p. 265.

through spirituality that the world is improved, according to Gálvez.

As a whole, Gálvez prefers to delineate men characters; these are often weak men, controlled by the love of some woman, social conditions, frustrated hopes or ambitions, religion or atmosphere. Particularly evident in this reference is the character Carbajal in La tragedia de un hombre fuerte. Several are introverts, showing Gálvez's interest in psychological studies. His historical characterizations have received much praise. Outstanding rulers in the history of Argentina, such as, Rosas (1829-52), Urquiza (1852-62), Mitre (1862-68), Sarmiento (1868-74), to name only a few, are ably presented in their true light.

Especially noteworthy and of value are Gálvez's talents in the creation of atmosphere. Here he is an artist, not only with description, but with the use of atmosphere for cause and effect. He often creates an atmosphere, as La Rioja of La maestra normal, and then relates his characters to it. His philosophy that men act and react to geographical conditions and atmospheres is another similarity in the realism of Gálvez and Émile Zola although Gálvez did not stress this theory so much as the French novelists. Still the use of atmosphere was one of the earliest achievements. Of his second volume of verse he said:

I tried to reproduce the sensations that the Argentine landscape produced in me, and primarily to evoke the atmosphere of those provincial towns



where . . . there still exists the old national spirit, the feeling of the lands of one's fathers, the spiritual depth of the race, and that ingenious languid and romantic character peculiar to the old Argentine towns.<sup>1</sup>

His realism in the use of atmosphere is at times exceptionally intense:

En las descripciones de ciudades antiguas y modernas, iglesias, escuelas, paseos, calles y casas particulares, logra dar un cuadro fiel de la realidad, demasiado fiel a veces.<sup>2</sup>

It is not only the city that lends its atmosphere to Gálvez's creations, but the small provincial town and rural sections of northwestern Argentina as well. The novels notable for their setting in the city are Nacha Regules, Historia de Arrabal, El mal metafísico, La tragedia de un hombre fuerte, Cautiverio, Hombres en soledad, and El cántico espiritual. The novels set in rural districts or small towns are La maestra normal, La sombra del convento, La pampa y su pasión, and the historical works.

Conforming to the new modes of psychological thinking of the twentieth century novelist, Gálvez follows the prevailing trend by using atmosphere to develop his social characters. In this, his use of psychology is expert. The studies that are strongly psychological are El cántico espiritual, La noche toca a su fin, Miércoles Santo, Historia de Arrabal, La maestra normal. Psychological tendencies can

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<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, El sendero de Humildad (1909), not available in original, quoted in Spell, op. cit., p. 17.

<sup>2</sup>Torres Rioseco, Grandes novelistas de la América Hispánica, p. 153.

be seen in the majority of Gálvez's works.

Whatever his means, whatever his tendencies, whatever his weaknesses, as a whole Gálvez weaves fully, colorfully, and artistically his Argentine literary tapestry.

But whatever his shortcomings as an artist, his picture of modern South American life is truly a remarkable one. No phenomenon seems to escape the interest of this writer.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Torres Rioseco, Epic of Latin American Literature, p. 141.

CHAPTER IV  
ARGENTINA SEEN THROUGH THE HISTORICAL  
NOVELS OF MANUEL GÁLVEZ

Argentina owes much to her literary recorder, Manuel Gálvez, through his realistic handling of her history. A writer of proved outstanding ability, Gálvez figures among the internationally great and his works hold an unquestionable leadership in the realistic writings of Argentina. His style, his moods, his subjects, and his settings are broad and varied, and he has encompassed all phases of Argentine life for the past one hundred years. Argentina, then, through Manuel Gálvez takes her place in history and in the world of literature.

Gálvez as a product of his times in Argentina, with the other young men of his day, became socially conscious. They turned away from the romantic tendencies as they had sifted into the New World and sought to bare the facts and the causes of the conditions about them. Conforming to the norm of the early twentieth century, these young intellectuals, among whom was Manuel Gálvez, were characterized by the larger realism. The young men looked about them observing, weighing, comparing, and planning trends in Argentina and her future. Nor were they men of thought and not of action; rather they were voices of the present and formulators of the future.

Argentina through the eyes of one of her young judges (Gálvez) in the period about 1910 is analysed freely if harshly in El solar de la raza. He says:

Nuestra fuerte and bella patria Argentina vive en estos momentos una hora suprema: la hora en que sus mejores inteligencias y sus más sanos corazones reclaman la espiritualización de la conciencia nacional.<sup>1</sup>

These young men possessed a fine patriotic sense and sought to develop a sense of nationalism throughout their country. Conscious of Argentina's debt to the early leaders, Gálvez dedicated his first volume to the memory of Domingo Fausto Sarmiento (1811-1888) and Bartolomé Mitre (1821-1906), two great Argentineans who helped to make the struggling Plate region into the Argentine Republic. El diario de Gabriel Quiroga, or opinions on Argentine life, is an account written in the form of a diary supposedly by the colorful caudillo, Gabriel Quiroga. Gálvez fictionalizes this work considerably by using Quiroga as the instrument through which he, Gálvez, passes severe judgment upon the early days of the Republic of Argentina. It could be supposed that this is a mere literary trick of Gálvez's to express his own views. It is more logical, however, that Gálvez realized that his purpose called for more than his own opinions and he attempts to modify his views by visualizing the situation as seen through the eyes of Quiroga. Especially is this to be believed in the light of the author's assertions. So this aggregate of Argentine thinking, expressed through Gabriel Quiroga, is an

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<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, El solar de la raza, p. 11.

example of the breadth of treatment by Gálvez. Mr. Quiroga looks scrutinizingly and harshly at the child republic. His most ardent wish, which is in agreement with the author, is:

. . . . that his country should experience a spiritual rebirth and recover the life of the spirit that is lost with the coming of the materialistic epoch in which . . . . we now live, and from which, please God, we shall some day emerge. We have laid waste our powers getting and spending, increasing our wealth and hastening the progress of the country. The patriotism that Gálvez (Quiroga) wishes to revive is a feeling so deep, so irrational, that it can only 'exist really in peoples who have a soul of their own; peoples among whom the typical man is a genuine product of the soil, the race and the culture. Instead of such men, Argentina has a lot of weeds that grow on the surface of her life, and that must be cast into the fire and burned'.<sup>1</sup>

The plea for nationalism assumes huge proportions as Quiroga is made to express the needs of Argentina. Among these is the strong need for unification:

There is nothing like a war to unite a nation behind a common ideal. Perhaps a war with Brazil would be Argentina's salvation, he suggests. Argentina would be defeated, for Brazil has some of the qualities Argentina lacks and the defeat would be good for us.<sup>2</sup>

Another of the needs of Argentina is a national literature. Argentina underwent the same struggle that all the other Americas experienced in establishing herself in the field of

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, El diario de Gabriel Quiroga, p. 32, not available in the original, but quoted from W. Rex Crawford, A Century of Latin American Thought (Cambridge, Mass.: The Harvard University Press, 1944), p. 150.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 151.

Argentina has no literature, 'Most of the books which are published here are quite unrelated to the environment. With no leadership from those who should lead, Argentina is anti-intellectual'.<sup>1</sup>

This same plea is expressed by Gálvez himself in his La Argentina en nuestros libros when he says that the Argentines have not learned to distinguish between social function and artistic writing. The last plea of El diario del Gabriel Quiroga is that the people of Argentina remember that they are Latins, Spaniards, and finally Argentines.

The Argentina of 1907 goes through further analyzation in El solar de la raza. Here again is the plea and hope for a greater nationalism for Argentina. Gálvez compares Argentina with Spain, pointing out his country's great debt to the mother country and saying that many of her characteristics still predominate. Argentina's great materialism is one exception to the prevailing Spanish characteristics. Argentina is swarming with immigrants who are purely wealth-seeking and materialistically-minded. Gálvez believes she needs more of the Spanish concept of life. This is a Christian concept, while Argentina's prevailing belief is that from commerce and industry comes wealth. Gálvez defends Spain against the absurd legends of avarice, indolence, and cruelty that grew up in Argentina following the revolution. He says that the Spaniards are a kind, sincere, and most Christian people,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 152.

and he praises their Catholicism, believing intolerant Catholicism better than the unbelief then pervading Argentina.

También pretendo propagar afecto a España, de lo cual resultará el amor a nuestra raza, que tantos snobs posponen a la raza anglosajona; y el amor a nuestro idioma: el más bello, el más sonoro, el más rico y el más viril de los idiomas modernos. También pretendo que mis ciudadanos comprendan y amen la literatura española, y sobre todo el arte español: aquel arte maravilloso en cuyas cumbres de belleza anidan águilas de misticismo. Quiero, asimismo, que conozcamos la historia española, que es la más honda y vasta fuente de nobleza, de energía, de valor, de idealidad, que haya existido en el mundo. Y, por fin, quiero que mis ciudadanos, tan amigos de los viajes, recorran las comarcas de España, donde recogerán infinitas enseñanzas y hallarán para sus almas los más intensos y fecundos goces.<sup>1</sup>

Repeatedly he claims that Spain still has an intensely spiritual life that is profound and marvelous, and he deplores the fact that Argentineans through material progression find less important the spiritualization of the country.

Tenemos que predicar maniáticamente el amor a la patria, a nuestros grandes hombres; desentrañar el idealismo y la originalidad de nuestro pasado, y enseñar como estas cualidades de la patria, romántica y pobre pueden salvar, sin menoscabrarla en su grandeza material, a la actual patria viviente.<sup>2</sup>

This volume, El solar de la raza, which Gálvez wrote in 1913 after a long sojourn through Spain, is another attempt to see Argentina objectively. He states that the young intellectuals

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, El solar de la raza, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

of Argentina correspond to the group of 1898 in Spain after her national disaster. They analyze Argentina, her faults, and her hopes in the light of the national disaster of Argentina, materialism, to be conquered only by idealism and spirituality:

Hemos ya construído fuertes diques de energía y de riquezas: ahora nos falta introducir en el estanque enorme formado por aquellos diques el agua de vida que es la espiritualidad.<sup>1</sup>

Gálvez has further summarized the ills of his country in his essay, Este pueblo necesita (1934), giving not only the ills, but in this case their cures.<sup>2</sup> Other than the need for spiritualization and less materialization, there is the over-whelming need for education. He strongly advocates self-discipline as well as governmental reforms. The immorality and poor living conditions could, he says, be cleared by a combination of educational and governmental reform, together with a spiritual awakening. Attacking educational methods, he believes that what he refers to as a cultural crisis of the day is a result of the utilitarian character of education, which fails to place sufficient emphasis on the teaching of the humanities. Nothing lasts except the works of the imagination; nothing is

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<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, El solar de la raza, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>Spell, op. cit., p. 67.



more perishable than so-called "social science!":

Y puesto que no es el caso de dar libertad a los hermanos de América, demosles ideas e idealismo. Estos dones son tan valiosos como la libertad: más aún: son la libertad misma, pues tanto el individuo como la sociedad no son libres sino esclavos, cuando viven sin ideales.<sup>1</sup>

Education could eradicate class distinction and ease in a measure the age-old problem of Argentina's that was found in the dominating political conflict of the Buenos Aires man with the man of the province. If Argentina could achieve a spiritualization based on her common Spanish heritage and native talents, a nationalistic unity would result, El solar de la raza, reedited in 1936).<sup>2</sup> In the introduction, Gálvez says that his views of 1936 have necessarily been changed with the perspective of time. He says:

Mis opiniones, en diversos órdenes, no son ahora las de hace veinticinco años. . . . Tampoco es el mismo el fervor españolista, a lo menos en su parte combativa. . . . Todas las circunstancias nos llevan hoy a los hijos de esta tierra, a considerarnos antes latinos que españoles. Seguimos siendo también españoles, pero nuestra condición latina debe ocupar el primer término. Ella nos define y aún nos defiende contra los Estados Unidos.<sup>3</sup>

This same fact is true throughout this works: that is, if many could be rewritten, erroneous ideas or concepts could be

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, El solar de la raza, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., "Advertencia," p. 5.

corrected through perspective of time. Nevertheless, considering the whole of his works in the light of the future and its needs, his observations have proved to be amazingly accurate.

Indirectly, the period covered in the works of Gálvez, which is unusually long for any novelist, begins at the time of the political independence of the Plate region from Spain. Argentina had sought independence at a crucial time, perhaps prematurely, because the period following the Revolution, 1820-1880, was one of almost uninterrupted civil wars, schisms, and anarchy. Boundary disputes kept Argentina and her neighbors in a state of confusion during this period. The wars fought over the "Banda Oriental" are the basis for two of Gálvez's historical novels in which he goes back to the early period and thereby increases his time range as a novelist. These are El gaucho de Los Cerrillos (1931) and El General Quiroga (1932). Tradition, race, and geography brought about a clash of organic forces that assumed epic proportions. The provinces fought against the city, the coast against the sierra, the gauchos against the men of the seaboard, and various minor groups against other minor groups for control of the government. This lack of unity, geographical, social, national, and governmental, brought about most disrupting conditions. The conservatives, representing the city of Buenos Aires, Catholicism, class distinction, and the liberals, representing the practically independent provinces, favored a federalized government. The lack of unity

and opposing forces crystallized in the province versus city problem. Even Rosas, the "Federalist" tyrant who had been able to secure power through the Federalist Party, was unable to carry out his early purpose of national federation, even by conservative methods. The process of trying to adjust herself to a new form of republican government seemed a never-ending struggle in Argentina. Her inheritance from Spain, great as it was, did not include training or experience in self-government, and that form of legislation that Spain had provided her colonies was so ill-conceived as to make violation a necessity. Therefore, violation and disregard of authority, plus the lack of unity, and the fanatical independence of the immigrants characterize the early troublesome periods of the Argentine Republic.

The young nationals of Gálvez's time were keenly aware of their nation's troubled past and their place in molding it into their own future Argentina. Gálvez makes this past even more vivid in his famous trilogy, Los caminos de la muerte, Historia de Arrabal, and Jornadas de agonía, called collectively Escenas de la guerra del Paraguay. These are the novels that have won for Gálvez much of his fame as a historical novelist. Again, the author maintains his strict impartiality and objectivity in the writing of historical fiction, as he says in the advertencias of Los caminos de la muerte:

Este libro, primera novela de la trilogía Escenas de la guerras del Paraguay, ha sido escrito, lo mismo que las otras dos, con el más sincero y perfecto espíritu de imparcialidad. He conocido aquella contienda -- extraordinaria por los lugares en que se desarrolló, por los personajes que en ella actuaron y por el increíble heroísmo de los cuatro pueblos que combatieron -- como una guerra civil. He tratado con igual simpatía a las cuatro naciones: a la Argentina, al Uruguay, al Brasil y al Paraguay. Si el heroísmo increíble de los paraguayanos y de los "orientales" me ha dado material para muchas páginas de la trilogía; he narrado con la misma objetividad la grandiosa hazaña del paisaje por el Chaco, realizada por las propias brasileñas. No he procedido en ningún momento, con espíritu patriota. Y, al contrario, abundan en los tres libros escenas y momentos en los que los compatriotas no se ven bien parados.<sup>1</sup>

The history of the war with Paraguay in 1865 is the basis for the trilogy. This was a crucial period in Argentine history. Solano López, dictator of Paraguay and an aspiring Napoleon, had led his people almost hypnotically into a war with Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina. Primarily Argentine forces marched northward to drive out the soldiers of López. Here all the northern caudillos, after a struggle, decided to come together against the common enemy, though they did not completely bury the hatchet among themselves. Gálvez speaks of them in general:

Nuestro país está infuido de barbarie y los bárbaros por misteriosas afinidades son partidarios de López y enemigos de Buenos Aires, que por ellos representa su principal adversario: la cultura.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Manuel Gálvez, "Advertencia", Los caminos de la muerte (Buenos Aires: Editorial Tor, 1922), pp. 5-6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

In Los caminos de la muerte, Gálvez finds the causes of the war in a long-time jealousy on the part of the Paraguayans and the Argentineans, the fear of the militaristic López by the Argentineans, and the rift in Argentina herself; that is, the province-city problem. The beginning of the war is described:

Al norte del Empedrado . . . . Una patrulla paraguaya, veinte hombres que descansaban junto a un bañado, fué sorprendida por Taboada y su gente.<sup>1</sup>

Taboada was a typical caudillo who fought valiently two battles; one against López and one to unify the other caudillos. And it was such characters as the caudillo Taboada who led the troop and who underwent the difficulties of carrying on the war:

En el camino al puerto, Taboada fué enterándose . . . . El tiroteo continuaba; las puertas cerrábanse: gentes que huían le arrojaban noticias. Defendían la costa los marineros de la Capitanía y muchos particulares, mandados por el capitán del Gualequay y por un mayor del milicias. Los paraguayos habían tirado, antes del asalto a los barcos, sobre mujeres, niños y hombres sin armas que miraban la escuadrilla desde las barrancas, y habían herido a varias personas.<sup>2</sup>

Presenting the war situation, Gálvez goes deeply into the psychology of national groups -- the Paraguayans during the Paraguayan war, and the Brazilians and Argentineans at other times. He is impartial in his comments. The Paraguayans fought nobly, and are characterized by bravery, discipline, and patriotism while the Brazilians are culturally superior,

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, Los caminos de la muerte, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

according to the author. This superiority is explained by the long Portuguese rule of Dom Pedro, an educated European leader. An example of Argentine psychology during the Paraguayan War is found in Los caminos de la muerte. Most of those who understood the situation, or so they thought, at first believed the war a joke. This is expressed by the character Guevara who says:

En el peor de los casos será una guerra de quince años, ¿qué puede hacer un pueblo de indios esclavizados contra tres naciones libres?<sup>1</sup>

More of this attitude of the Argentines is given:

La guerra es indudible tate. Pero la ganaremos. En estos días, precisamente, me he enterado de la situación actual del Paraguay conversando con José Manuel Estrada, que ha estudiado a fondo ese país, para escribir sus libros sobre Los comuneros, que aparecerá pronto. En el Paraguay no existe la libertad. El tirano López dispone de la vida y de la gente, y un pueblo que carece de libertad está destinado a la derrota. El servilismo no engendra héroes.<sup>2</sup>

Speaking objectively of the people in the midst of the war, as the people were reading bulletins and gesticulating, he says, "La inquietud humanizaba los rostros de los desconocidos." In Munaité the people were tools in the hands of greater forces. Their personal desires, hopes, loves, and even highest ambitions were caught and controlled by political leaders throughout the area who ruled despotically

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 49.

like López or any of the numerous caudillos:

Antonio Cueva<sup>1</sup> . . . . . saltado, romántico,  
vela en la Patria otra novia con más derechos  
que Dorila.<sup>1</sup>

The war marriage between Antonio and Dorila exemplifies this fact as well as Gálvez's talent at combining individual psychology and social custom with the war psychology. Antonio leaves soon after the ceremony telling Dorila that his duty calls him:

Antonio componía versos a la Patria, que publicaba en El correo del domingo. Dorila leía las poesías de su novio con una mezcla de entusiasmo y de celos. No comprendía, mujer como era, que el amor a una cosa abstracta predomina sobre el amor a un ser humano.<sup>2</sup>

Life in Buenos Aires was controlled by a tense air caused by the people's grabbing greedily every bit of news from the fighting front. Gálvez excels in depicting the psychology of war-time living. Describing a dance at the beginning of the war:

Aquella noche, el ansia de noticias sobre la guerra, el deseo de comentarlas y la necesidad de aliviar la tensión nerviosa, llevó una excepcional concurrencia a la fiesta.<sup>3</sup>

The war is presented in all its phases. The horrors are made real through Gálvez's pen. His excellent description of historical fact and his weaving of fictitious material

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 57.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 61.

with it give the true realism of Argentina's past:

López había metido en la cárcel a quinientos ciudadanos y en las calles de la Asunción aparecían, colgados, cadáveres de individuos que no habían querido a la guerra o que no se presentaron oportunamente. Las madres argentinas, las novias, las hermanas, temblaban ante estos vandalismos, suponiendo que los prisioneros que hiciera López serían fatalmente degollados o lanceados.<sup>1</sup>

In the prosecution of the war, many small groups were invaluable. Among these groups were the "correntinos" of the city of Corrientes. Their reaction to their caudillo leader in the war was of great importance, as it was their choice to decide whether or not to fight for Argentina or for López:

Aquellos correntinos de sangre guaraní, capaces de apuñalar a un hombre por cualquiera nadería, eran dóciles y sumisos ante la mirada del caudillo.<sup>2</sup>

The use of propaganda even at this early period was immense. López was a master in his use of propaganda to deceive the Argentineans, particularly those of the north whose will was their own, or that of a minor caudillo:

Los partidarios de López convencían a los gauchos de que debieran sentirse hermanos de los paraguayanos, hablaban el mismo idioma y eran, unos y otros, hijos de los guaraníes.<sup>3</sup>

The basis for the second volume of the trilogy is the continuation of the war. Marching through the swamps and fighting the jungle, swamps, cholera, as well as López's

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 59.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 48.



soldiers, the Argentine soldiers carried the war into Paraguay. They were able to defeat the inspired and trained Paraguayan soldiers and to capture the Paraguayan fort, Humaitá. The name of the captured fort is the title of the work.

The last of the trilogy is Jornadas de agonía, in which the last part of the war of Paraguay is reported. Here is the capture of Asunción by the allies, and the pursuit of López, who is at last caught and executed by the Brazilian soldiers in 1870. This was not done, however, before he had punished his people unmercifully for not fighting or not carrying out his commands.

Accurate historical facts of this early trouble of Argentina's are the basis of the action in the trilogy. However, to it are added careful characterizations of the leaders of the period as well as fictional accounts of customs and scenes of everyday Argentina during the war period.

Gálvez varies and draws in varied manners his character choices, historical and sociological. Some of his chief protagonists are fictional while others are historical leaders; some are cruel and vengeful products of civil strife; others are psychological studies of atmosphere and environment. These are treated independently and collectively in his various works. In the trilogy, there is the excellent blending of great and inferior leaders, of soldiers and innkeepers; in fact, a virtual cross section of character types and individuals lies before the reader.

Of the Argentine leaders, Mitre receives full treatment. Mitre was the president of the Republic (1862-66) and was beloved by the people. Gálvez speaks of "La grandeza moral" of Mitre and analyzes his importance to Argentina at the time she needed him greatly:

En aquellos minutos, esto era Mitre para Buenos Aires; el hombre de la guerra, el salvador. El pueblo sentía, reconfortado, que los aliados nada harían sin su tenacidad firme y tranquila: que nuestros generales eran incapaces de una acción directiva y organizadora, sin la alta visión de Mitre; y que sólo él veía a lo lejos, con su profunda, su vasta mirada de águila. Él iba a librar al Río de la Plata de la pesadilla de un tirano entrometido; iba a salvar de la esclavitud a un pueblo hermano e infeliz, sufriendo, la deseada unidad moral de nuestra patria.<sup>1</sup>

In another instance Gálvez comments:

La política de Mitre significaba la paz, la unión de todos los argentinos.

Another of the many historical leaders portrayed is Urquiza, the caudillo,<sup>2</sup> leader of the Entre Ríos, who worked to create a unified Argentina during his presidency of the Republic, 1852-68. His position during the early war period is reflected:

Alabar a Urquiza en casa de los Guevaras, porteños y porteñistas inmutables, era herejía. En aquellos tiempos no existía un patriotismo nacional, sino un amor local a la pequeña patria, que era para ellos la provincia de Buenos Aires. Algunos lustros atrás, cada provincia formaba un estado independiente. La República Argentina, la patria grande, puede decirse que comenzaba a existir al iniciarse la guerra del Paraguay, es decir, cuando empezaban a olvidarse los rencores suscitados

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

por la batalla de Pavón. Urquiza había sido el mayor enemigo de Buenos Aires, a juicio de los porteños rabiosos. Había querido dominar a la provincia, quitarle su capital, vengarse de los porteños. No le perdonaba nadie en Buenos Aires que, el 20 de febrero de 1852, hubiese entrado al frente de los vencedores de Caseros, vistiendo poncho y llevando el cintillo colorado en el sombrero de copa alta. Interpretaba este acto, no como una manifestación de federalismo, sino como un gesto de desprecio, como un intento de humillar a Buenos Aires.<sup>1</sup>

Numerous political leaders figure in El gaucho de Los Cerrillos. Here is a composite interplay of characters real and imaginary. Although it is more fictionalized than the trilogy, El gaucho de Los Cerrillos deals, nevertheless, with Argentina's consuming problem of the early period until the 1860's when Buenos Aires was federalized as the capital city, separate from Buenos Aires, the province. But the condition, created by the split in factions before the 1860 settlement, paved the way for the rise to complete the power of the "Federalist", Juan Manuel Rosas, in 1827. "Los Cerrillos" is the name of Rosas's ranch where much of the action of the novel occurs.

Following the usual pattern of a despot's rise to power, Rosas rose from a confused situation, taking advantage of the feud between the Federalist and Conservative parties. His rise was further supported by the critical situation between Argentina and Brazil caused by Uruguay's problem of independence. Truly Rosas took advantage of his opportunity

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 22.

as idol of the Federalists:

¡No ves? ¡Juan Manuel es un gran hombre? Y si todavía no ha ocupado en la política el lugar que debiera, será porque aguarda el momento.<sup>1</sup>

It seemed that the Brazilian blockade of Buenos Aires during the war over the "Banda Oriental" proved the opportune moment:

Buenos Aires ansiaba la paz con el Brasil. Tres años la guerra había hecho bajar el valor de los billetes de Banco y encarecido el vino, el pan y todos los artículos de primera necesidad. Por causa del bloqueo de las navas brasileñas, las mercaderías extranjeras habían duplicado de precio. Algunos comerciantes quebraron. Y para colmo, los indios maloqueaban en las cercanías de la ciudad.<sup>2</sup>

Just as it appeared that Argentina would be conquered by the Brazilian blockade, the Argentineans turned toward Rosas.

Pedrezuela says to Hinojosa:

El país se hunde, Hinojosa, y sólo un hombre puede salvarlo. Ese hombre providencial y extraordinario es Juan Manuel.<sup>3</sup>

Gálvez carries his delineation of the character Rosas even to his private life at his hacienda. Here Tomasito, a typical provincial young man, comes boasting proudly, back to his people from his job as employee on the Rosas hacienda:

En la estancia no se permite andar con armas, como no se permite beber ni jugar por plata.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, El gaucho de Los Cerrillos (Buenos Aires: Librería y Editorial "La Facultad," J. Roldán y Cía, 1929), p. 77.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 96.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 101.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

Bernardino Rivadavia, is another outstanding historical figure, of El gaucho de los Cerrillos. A strong Unitarian, he was elected president of the "United Provinces of the River Plate" in 1826 and later did much to unite the provinces of Argentina. Mention is made also of Martín Rodríguez, the previous governor of Buenos Aires:

A Rivadavia, 'el señor Rivadavia' como se le decía, le respetaban ahora sus enemigos. Ministro del gobernador Martín Rodríguez, y presidente de la República, en seguida, había realizado una extraordinaria obra. Espíritu europeo y civilizador fué combatido, en nombre de la autonomía de 'los pueblos' por los caudillos anárquicos del interior.<sup>1</sup>

In the second historical novel of this series, El diario del General Quiroga, another historical figure, is well presented. This time the protagonist is the caudillo Quiroga, henchman of Rosas. The novel is a continuation of the brilliant account of Rosas's regime following chronologically, 1830-1837, that of El gaucho de los Cerrillos. Again the theme is the struggle between the Liberals and the Conservatives. Quiroga serves Rosas in the unification of the Federalists' power. His account is traced from his glorious entry into Buenos Aires in 1830 to his death at the hands of an assassin in 1835. Into the account of Quiroga's activities is woven panorama of the Argentine period. The methods of administering justice of the time are well illustrated by Rosas' having the "murderers" of Quiroga executed, two years

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

two years after the assassination, which in all probability, was the work of Rosas himself.<sup>1</sup>

Gálvez chose two historical leaders of Argentina as subjects of his only two biographical works. The first, published in 1933, is Vida de Fray Mamerto Esquiú: the second, published in 1939, is entitled Hipólito Yrigoyen. Fray Mamerto Esquiú, born in 1826, was a native of the Catamarca region in western Argentina. He came to be one of the most resolute leaders of the clergy of the Republic. One of his greatest deeds was his speech upholding the constitution brought out after the fall of Rosas.<sup>2</sup> Hipólito, born in 1852 and twice elected president of the country (1916-1928), is considered a man of mystery. The account of his life includes a panorama of Argentine politics and sociological conditions from the fall of Rosas to 1932. Even though Hipólito lived extremely simply, he was in contact with and influenced greatly all the forces of his day.

In a country of men without fixed principles, he lived according to a few principles. Here where we all change, he never changed. Here where almost all of us are materialists, he was an idealist and a mystic. In the midst of millions of individuals that are indifferent, he had faith and feeling. He renounced the pleasures of this life when all about him were only pleasure seekers, or those who desired to be so. He was the only Argentine that never spoke ill of anyone, that never looked toward Europe. The opposition between Yrigoyen and those about him was the same as that between an austere man from the country and a luxury-loving city dweller, the same as that between solitude of the country and the vanities of the city.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Spell, op. cit., p. 36.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 57-58.

<sup>3</sup>Manuel Gálvez, Hipólito Yrigoyen, not available in the original, but quoted from Spell, op. cit., p. 39.

Manuel Estrada (1842-94), Argentine journalist and political figure enters Los caminos de la muerte:

En estos grupos destacábase la figura de José Manuel Estrada, ya célebre en sus veintitrés años. Pequeña la cabeza, delgada la nariz, puntiaguda la barbilla; una gran onda decoraba la amplia frente, y el fino bigote, de discretas guías, era el único ornamento capilar de su rostro muy blanco y pálido. Sus labios estaban impregnados de espíritu; y tenía un mirar brillante, dominador. Cordial, festivo a ratos, tornébase al hablarse de la guerra, como el orador que era. Su voz clara, sonora, y su frase numerosa, levantaban un poco el vuelo, hasta linder con el discurso. Sus artículos de 'La Nación Argentina' eran los mejores de entonces.<sup>1</sup>

So it is throughout the historical works of Gálvez, the great men of Argentina's past are met as living persons, re-living for the reader their lives in their true situation and time.

To re-create the situation of the past Gálvez draws heavily from the customs and atmosphere of the particular period and place that he is remolding. This use of customs is in the mode of the nineteenth century novelist and again reflects the broad realism of Gálvez.

Many of the customs depicted in the trilogy and other historical works are particularly revealing.

In Los caminos de la muerte rich boys could escape the war by becoming a "personero" for five thousand pesos.<sup>2</sup> The sweetheart of General Quiroga (El General Quiroga) ran a gambling house in rural northern Argentina where the men

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, Los caminos de la muerte, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 63.

came to drink and amuse themselves. Through the eyes of Remedios, the sweetheart of Tomasita (El gaucho de Los Cerrillos) are seen such customs as Las fiestas patrias with a fireworks display and la recorrida de las tiendas, or paseos por la alameda. During the war period of 1828, no woman was allowed to (or dared to) go out on the street after dark and, "La voz del sereno contaba la hora y tiempo."<sup>1</sup> During the Paraguayan War, some of the Argentine companies disbanded when they learned that they were fighting López and not Brazilians as they thought. The resulting fight that took place at a ranch house dance between Brazilian and Argentine soldiers is described. In the worst of the fight, Dionisio yells:

¡Hermanos, todos hermanos! que siga la fiesta. Es absurdo pelearnos cuando todos, brasileiros, argentinos y orientales, hemos venido a morir por la libertad.<sup>2</sup>

While the men fought, the women are pictured thus:

Mujeres sentadas en el suelo, el pucho entre los labios carnosos, parloteando como cotorras, en patas y con alguna flor entre las renegridas trenzas, ofrecían a Taborda sus mercancías, tuteándole, como es costumbre en Corrientes: 'Che rubichá, comprame tabaco', o bien; 'Toma este chipa, Taborda'. El caudillo conocíalas a todas.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, El gaucho de Los Cerrillos, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>Gálvez, Los caminos de la muerte, p. 96.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 48.



A ranch dance during the course of the war is described:

Hasta diez parejas se mecían en las polcas, las mazurcas, los shottis. Saltó también el gato, y se arrastró nuestra zamba nortena.<sup>1</sup>

The guitar played a large part in the customs of the ranch people throughout the history of Argentina. Gálvez speaks again of the early years of the Republic.

En aquellos años la guitarra hallábase desprestigiada; cosa de campo, buena para gauchos. Pero Dorila, que aprendiendo a tocarla en su niñez, adoraba aquel instrumento, que le parecía tan íntimo, tan propicio para la confidencia.<sup>2</sup>

Extending long before the war with Paraguay was this clash of the Federalists and Unitarians. Gálvez reaches back into 1828-29 to re-create the customs of that time. Here his humanism is in full view as he portrays the feud between the families, the Hinojosas (Federalists) and the Montellanos (Unitarians). When the Conservatives got into power, the chief of police, a vindictive conservative, killed Rafael, a young Federal. Later, with the return of the Federalists, the Montellanos were in danger of their lives: Juliencito committed suicide and Remedios and her mother went to live with Federalist relatives. This feud between the families and parties is included in the trilogy, although more of it.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 95.

<sup>2</sup>Gálvez, Los caminos de la muerte, p. 52.

is to be seen in El gaucho de Los Cerrillos. Also in El gaucho de Los Cerrillos appears the historical problem of maintaining the frontier against the Indian. In this connection we note the human interest element in history that Gálvez uses so expertly. The wife of Juan Lanzas has been held captive by the Indians and later is rescued; then she slips away from her rescuers to go back to her Indian husband and children. Another panoramic view is a reflection of the anti-French feeling on the part of the pro-Rosas group because Rosas had had financial difficulties with France. The widespread disapproval and mistrust of the husband of the Lanza daughter because he was French again demonstrates this anti-French feeling. Another human interest reflection is seen in the love affair of Quiroga and Eldemira Mendoza. In developing this humanistic element, Gálvez displays fine probing technique, coupled with the power to weld these into fairly accurate historical accounts. In El gaucho de Los Cerrillos, an entire chapter describes women of well-to-do families. This series, El diario del General Quiroga and El gaucho de Los Cerrillos, is more fictionalized than the trilogy, but not to be less esteemed through its panoramic historical value.

For such a novelist as Gálvez, atmosphere is an all-pervading element. And Argentina provides much color for this in the development of the novels. The city offers a

brilliant contrast of atmosphere to the broad flat plains of the pampe or to the cold wilds of Patagonia. The geographical divisions from the Andes to the Río de la Plata have created human types, social divisions, and have influenced profoundly the development of the Argentine Republic. The lack of geographic unity has been one of her major national problems and has been notable in almost all of Gálvez's historical works.

The city of Buenos Aires has a living evolution before the eyes of the reader of Gálvez's historical works. Of the value of the descriptions of the city, Torres Rioseco says:

Para el lector moderno, acostumbrado a la vida tranquila de la ciudad y la monotonía de los deberes diarios, esta clase de novela significa un ruego de la realidad hacia las formas más violentas y peligrosas de la guerra.<sup>1</sup>

At the beginning of the war with Paraguay, (1829-30), Gálvez describes Buenos Aires:

Desde aquel 16 de abril, Buenos Aires vivió en la fiebre de ininterrumpidas semanas épicas. La gente devoraba diarios, sin atender al color político. En los lugares concurridos -- el Café de Catalanes, las librerías de Morta y de Lucien, los comercios situados en la recova vieja, los clubs del Progreso y del Plata, las tiendas de las calles del Perú y de la Victoria -- el único tema era la guerra.<sup>2</sup>

Gálvez continues his comments on Buenos Aires of 1865 stating

<sup>1</sup>Torres Rioseco, Novelistas contemporáneos de América, p. 263.

<sup>2</sup>Gálvez, Los caminos de la muerte, p. 35.

that one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants formed the approximate population of Buenos Aires thirteen years before the fall of Rosas. Women were not often seen in the streets much, and the whole city was overcast with war tension.

Y apenas anochecía, Buenos Aires, alumbrado por faroles de aceite, antecos y huidizos, era una triste ciudad muerta.<sup>1</sup>

But, by the end of the year, the city had begun to prosper:

La ciudad comenzaba a prosperar, material y espiritualmente. Aquel año de 1865 fué el del primer tranvía y el de La Revista de Buenos Aires y La Nación.<sup>2</sup>

Buenos Aires is pictured as gay and festive at the coming of Rosas in El General Quiroga.

The pampa and northwestern Argentina offer the permeating ruggedness that forms the setting for all the trilogy, and form the characters whom Gálvez treats psychologically, such as López, Rosas, and others. But the atmospheric element, although no more evident and influential in Gálvez's predominately sociological and psychological works, is nevertheless more clearly and easily exemplified by them.

There are references to historical matter throughout all of Gálvez's works. This is a part of his true nationalistic spirit and his true, innate sense of realism. The law of 1912 providing for secret ballot and compulsory voting of all adult males fits into the life of Hipólito Yrigoyen.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

The protagonist of La noche toca a su fin, considered a psychological or religious work, ridicules the Eucharistic Congress held in Buenos Aires in 1934. In Historia de Arrabal, a sociological work, Rosalinda's father is a veteran of the Paraguayan War.<sup>1</sup>

Although his close-up accounts and descriptions of everyday life are minute and careful, Gálvez never loses his objectivity in his historical works. He concludes in one instance that the early war with Paraguay served to build, unify, and strengthen Argentine nationally. His objectivity is demonstrated in the words of Dr. Carvajal, a figure of Los caminos de la muerte. The imminent and wise Dr. Carvajal had been an exiled writer during the Rosas tyranny. On the brink of war, Dr. Carvajal sums up the situation, perhaps as Gálvez himself would do.

Contemple usted el panorama histórico de nuestra patria. Revoluciones, guerras, montoneras. . . . Una tiranía de más de veinte años. Guerras contra el déspota de Palermo, guerras de unas provincias contra otras. Oee Rosas y ni así alcanzamos la paz. En dos partes se divide la Patria, y siguen las revoluciones. Nos desangra la lucha contra el indio. Nos despedazamos los unos a los otros. Ayer, unitarios y federales; después porteños y provincianos; más tarde, "pandilleros" y "chupandionos"; ahora "crudos" y "cocidos". El ejército, restos de batallones. El gobierno, sin dinero. Y esto peor; no tenemos patriotismo. Hay un patriotismo de Buenos Aires, como hay otro del Entre Ríos o de Santa Fé. En casi todas las provincias se odia a Buenos Aires, cuya influencia es tenida. Por vengarse, las provincias no nos ayudarán en esta guerra. Es doloroso, pero así será!<sup>2</sup>

In such passages as these, one sees Gálvez's love for his country. He studies with true regard her past troubles

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<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, Historia de Arrabal (Buenos Aires: Editorial Tor, 1937), p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>Gálvez, Los caminos de la muerte, p. 27.

and mistakes; yet he portrays them without bias or prejudice, and maintains faith and hope in a greater Argentina. As a sincere sociologist-historian, Gálvez is of profound value to Argentina, to the Americas and to the world at large.

CHAPTER V  
ARGENTINA SEEN THROUGH THE SOCIAL  
NOVELS OF GÁLVEZ

Much of the tapestry of Argentina is woven through those novels of Manuel Gálvez, possibly classified as social novels. In these the same artistry in handling characters, themes, problems, and scenes that was seen in the historical works will again be viewed in those of a more sociological nature. The novels of a more sociological nature are reflections of the modern age, 1910-1935, in Argentina.

Throughout his writings, Gálvez keeps his mirror-purpose ever in view. This purpose is especially fulfilled in the social studies that he makes. It has been said that Gálvez concerns himself primarily with certain social ills of his country and for this reason he denounces his own native land and people, as is evident in Hombres en soledad, La Argentina en nuestros libros, El solar de la raza, and other works.

The broad variety of problems with which he works extend through the racial, psychological, rural, revolutionary, political, religious, and spiritual aspects of life in Argentina. These problems are found in the city, on the plains, and in the minds and hearts of all Argentineans.

Among the political problems presented is the constant threat of Buenos Aires' domination of the whole of Argentina. This represents a national problem rather than one peculiar to the city. All ambitious men throughout all fields of thought and endeavor are drawn into the city from all over the country, as if attracted by a magnet. Buenos Aires is the focal point of everything Argentine. All influences come from or are led back to the city. Gálvez himself loves Buenos Aires, and his descriptions of her to be found in his novels are without comparison for beauty and understanding. Nevertheless, he attacks the domination of the city and its gathering of true native Argentine spirit into its cosmopolitan net. Novels, which have Buenos Aires for their setting, are El mal metafísico, Nacha Regules, Historia de Arrabal, and El cántico espiritual, although many other novels reflect the city in some way. These mentioned as being predominately of the city are all stories of impractical, idealistic people involved in a losing struggle against the city.<sup>1</sup>

Many social problems are handled from a historical viewpoint. Political problems are particularly evident in this respect. The struggle for good leaders to replace caudillos is one of the most prominent. There are also difficulties in establishing a democratic republic and the continual fight of the conservative and federalist elements, both political and social. Gálvez sees in the revolution itself a national problem. In Hombres en soledad, Block, an outstanding

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<sup>1</sup> Spell, op. cit., p. 31.



character says:

La revolución nos sacudirá a todos, nos purificará a todos! Hasta los vencidos renacerán puros y fuertes. El país revivirá. Valdrá la pena quedarse en Buenos Aires, asistir al espectáculo de la renovación y resurrección argentinas. Ya no necesitaremos emigrar a Europa. Ya no nos aburriremos, porque tendremos demasiado que hacer, que construir. Buenos Aires la horrenda será un lugar ideal. Lo embelleceremos. Todo puede hacerse con voluntad, con energía, con entusiasmo, con plata. Y nada de esto nos faltará. Se acabará el convencionalismo de nuestras vidas, y no fantoches. Tendremos almas. Formaremos un pueblo joven y unido y llegaremos pronto a la verdadera grandeza!<sup>1</sup>

The revolution is selfishly opposed by Claraval, who thinks the revolution for Block is something different from that for himself:

Pero él no es revolucionario por político sino por higiene espiritual.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, Claraval says of the revolution:

A mí la revolución me interesaría por dos motivos: el gobierno que venga, más accesible para mí que el actual, podrá darme una secretaria de legación. Segundo motivo: nuestra moneda ha comenzado a bajar, tal vez por causas del gobierno; y si la revolución mejorará nuestra situación económica y el peso sube de nuevo, habrá mayor posibilidad para mí de ir a Europa.<sup>3</sup>

The conclusion to be gained from the presentation of a revolution is that any revolution is an aggregate of fiery ideals and selfish interest. Block and Claraval represent these factors in the novel Hombres en soledad.

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, Hombres en soledad (Buenos Aires: Club del Libro, 1938), p. 91.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 125.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 92.

Generalities found in social problems such as the revolution are characteristic of Gálvez. In the same work, Claraval is made to say that all great revolutions come from Asia; the next will be from the United States of America; and that only political revolutions have come from Europe.<sup>1</sup>

Gálvez attacks the immigration problem in its influence on the city, in Argentina's lack of native or natural spirit, and in the actual social customs brought to Argentina by the various races. Mention is often made of Negro, mulatto, and Indian elements -- all contributing to the great social problems of Argentina:

¡Imaginense . . . . que cosa! El negro Barbarianos rodeado de arricanos, se presentó a votar.<sup>2</sup>

That the immigrants have strongly influenced, even making in some instances, the mode of Argentine thought is evident in El diario de Gabriel Guiroga.

To achieve the materialistic ambitions of 'arriving' the Argentineans have followed the teachings of Alberdi and Sarmiento, and have brought from the compagna of Italy hordes of peasants who have had tremendous influence in denationalizing us. Then we have imitated English and French customs; finally, there have come the Jews and the Russian anarchists.<sup>3</sup>

In El solar de la raza not only does Gálvez say that the immigrant is materialistic, materialistically influencing the Argentine government, but he traces some of the acts of native

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, El gaucho de Los Cerrillos, p. 63.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>3</sup>Gálvez, El diario de Gabriel Guiroga, p. 151.

Argentines to their foreign heritage, which is not always a positive thing:

Los ingleses ostentan una irritante crueldad moral, la que suele ser generalmente, más grave que la crueldad física.<sup>1</sup>

Neither is the Indian element that exists in nearly all the people of the interior necessarily a positive thing. The revolutions, the brutal acts committed during raids reveal the underlying streams of Indian or mulatto in the modern, civilized Argentine. Nevertheless, Gálvez cries out for a common Latin Brotherhood that he believes will come about in time.

Es 'el solar de la raza' que nacerá de la amalgama en fusión.<sup>2</sup>

Far greater as a national problem haunting the new Latin brotherhood is the European influence. Argentina has long been influenced through foreign thought. Claraval, of Hombres en soledad, states this direct influence on Argentine government.

Claraval recordó que todos los presidentes habían viajado por Europa antes de asumir el poder. En su mayoría, se les proclamó candidatos mientras se hallaban en el viejo mundo. No era sólo el prestigio de haber estado allí, lo que les valía, sino también la convicción general de que no había nada más útil para un futuro gobernante que ver, con sus propios ojos, no a través de los libros, como funcionaban las instituciones en los grandes pueblos.<sup>3</sup>

This negative influence is the dominating influence of Claraval:

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<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, El solar de la raza, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 69.

<sup>3</sup>Gálvez, Hombres en soledad, p. 130.

--¿Por qué en Buenos Aires faltaba tanto el carácter?  
 ¿Por qué era la tierra de todos, la tierra para todos?  
 ¿O por qué nuestro internacionalismo uniformaba las  
 cosas y suprimía de nuestra vida lo típico?<sup>1</sup>

Again Claraval, possibly reflecting the views of the author,  
 condemns his own land:

Este país es un pudridero. No hay aquí carácter, ni  
 energía, ni un pueblo escéptico, de gozadores de la  
 vida. Sólo nos interesa el chiste estúpido, el tango  
 sensual, los placeres de los sentidos, las carreras,  
 los copetines. ¡Un pudridero!<sup>2</sup>

Claraval, representing an existing element of Argentina,  
 scorns democracy:

Veía el país en manos de incapaces, y se indignaba.  
 En la política, en las letras, en la administración,  
 en la Universidad, en todas partes, las mejores posi-  
 ciones estaban en manos de mediocres. Y no sólo de  
 mediocres, sino de ignorantes, de inútiles, cuando no  
 de pilletes. ¿Tendría la culpa la Democracia, que  
 daba a todos el derecho de aspirar a todas las posi-  
 ciones? ¿O el auge creciente del 'guaranguismo'?  
 ¿O la inmigración, pues los hombres que actuaban ahora  
 eran, en su mayoría, hijos de los inmigrantes que  
 vinieron al país entre 1885 y 1905?<sup>3</sup>

His only hope is to find a refuge in Europe:

-- ¿En dónde encontrar un refugio contra la barbarie  
 invasora? No lo encontrábamos en nuestro entorno,  
 y entonces mirábamos hacia Europa, única salvación.  
 Buscábamos allí lo que no teníamos: belleza, espíritu.<sup>4</sup>

In the historical accounts, the Federals represented  
 the true Argentine spirit while the Unitarians represented  
 European culture.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 23-24

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 71.

The European influence is felt again and again throughout Argentine life, directly and indirectly, positively and negatively for the good of the Republic. Observation of this fact never escapes the reader of Gálvez's works. In the biography of Hipólito Yrigoyen, the influence of the German philosopher Krause is marked as it was from the German that Yrigoyen took his creed.<sup>1</sup> The European influence is further noted in the field of literature:

Un romanticismo tardío apartaba de aquella vida mediocre a los espíritus propensos. La sentimentalidad y revenida, todavía llevaba el llanto a los ojos de las almas tiernas. Las 'niñas' soñaban sobre las páginas de Oscar y Amanda y de Los amantes de Teruel. Y desde el frasco agitado de los folletines, irrumpía en los corazones el melodramático heroísmo de las novelas de Alejandro Dumas y de Fernández y Gonzáles.<sup>2</sup>

Gálvez saw through the many influences of the various countries a problem; that of Argentina's establishing her own cultural life.

Gálvez treats a large number of purely social problems of modern Argentina. One of these on which he dwells at length is the problem of prostitution in the city of Buenos Aires. Nacha Regules and Historia de Arrabal both have as their dominant themes this problem of the slum section of the city. Nacha Regules, the protagonist of the novel by that name, worked in a store where the wages paid her were far from sufficient for existence. After she had paid a breakage

<sup>1</sup>Spell, op. cit., p. 59.

<sup>2</sup>Gálvez, Los caminos de la muerte, p. 3.

fee and several other fees entailed in the job, there was practically no money for living purposes. Moreover, the kind of work was too hard for a girl and the hours were too long. Thus, through no fault of her own but that of society in not providing an adequate means of support for Nacha, she was forced to prostitution. Nacha speaks:

-- No sabe lo que he sufrido! -- repitió Nacha, -- Desde esa tarde me gano la vida trabajando. Pasé días de hambre y me miseria. Después entre en la tienda. Once horas por día; y treinta pesos de sueldo. Tengo un interés también. Pero hay muchas por cualquier cosa. En total gano sesenta pesos, más o menos. Y las once horas parada, sin poder descansar un minuto. A podemos usar las ascensores. Es una vida penosa, la mía.<sup>1</sup>

Nacha, for Gálvez, is a social type and a victim of society.

Nacha, de simple mujer, se había inmensificado en símbolo. En ella estaban todas las mujeres que padecían la misma pena, todas las víctimas del egoísmo humano, todas las abandonadas por la sociedad, todas las mujeres del lodo y de la miseria.<sup>2</sup>

Rosalinda of Historia de Arreabal is another of the same type of society's victims. She was placed in a "casa de constitución" from which she ran away. She was then driven to prostitution by her mentally deficient half-brother, El Chino, who held some kind of hypnotic power over her. For a time, Rosalinda worked in a meat-packing plant in Buenos Aires. Gálvez describes the miserable working conditions existing there and the suffering of the workers:

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, Nacha Regules, p. 230.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 234.

El trabajo de Rosalinda no era agradable: diez horas de preparar las pequeñas latas en las que una máquina motía la carne para ser conservada, y no tanto por la duración de la jornada y el trabajo en sí mismo, como por la atmósfera del local, el calor inaguantable, el humo, los vapores producidos por el cocimiento de la carne.<sup>1</sup>

Her living conditions outside the factory are pictured as the lowest possible:

El malevo se la llevó a vivir a una casucha miserable, compuesta de dos cuartos, próxima al siniestro Barrio de las Ranas. No era aquella una casa, sino una pocilga maloliente, que se inundaba con el agua de las lluvias y donde entraban y salían enormes ratas.<sup>2</sup>

Gálvez believes that the progress of women is one of the important creating or detracting factors of social conditions; so it is that he depicts the place of women in giving social problems. Early in his career, he attacks society, but later, he portrays the social problems caused by the wantonness of women during the period of World War I and in the modern age generally. He deplores their independence, their self-will, their lack of feeling and religion. In Cautiverio, Marihelén is examined as a faithless wife who leaves her husband to go home to her mother in order to enjoy her liberty. Here is a suggestion of the social problems created by the wealthy, idle woman. Marihelén cared for nothing but bridge parties and flirting. Betina, her sister, disliked Juan, the husband of Marihelén, because he did not believe in equal

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<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, Historia de Arrabal, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 71.

rights for women. The part women play in the creation of social problems is the theme of La tragedia de un hombre fuerte. The women here have become educated, independent, and have lost their reserve and their timidity. They dominate and intimidate their husbands. The custom of dress is interwoven into this social problem. Other customs closely shadow the social problems, such as women entering bars and restaurants unaccompanied. All society revolves about the modern woman; the theater is not art, but rather a show place for girls; novels and verses must pass through their hands and through homes:

Aparte de que la afición femenina a leer es reciente, la señorita, o la 'niña', como decimos aquí, es, como se sabe, el personaje más importante en nuestro vida social. Todo gira alrededor de ella.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast to the problems of materialism and immorality of the city of Buenos Aires there arise the problems of bigotry and static life of the province. In La maestra normal, one of Gálvez's best known novels, he illuminates the pettiness and intolerance of the typical provincial people of La Rioja, a small village in northwestern Argentina. Here is echoed the national problem of population distribution and resultant problems of transportation, communication, and education. In the work, the attack is made through the depiction of a normal school teacher who is the brunt of gossip each time she is seen in company with a fellow teacher,

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<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, La Argentina en nuestros libros, p. 20.



Solis. Gálvez's attack is specifically against the provincial thought and sense of values:

Gálvez finally attributes these propensities to the frightful monotony of provincial life, which had its influence even on the morality of the people, making them cowardly and envious.<sup>1</sup>

Problems coming out of universal education enter this work. Co-education and sex education were unthinkable to the "intellectual" group of the small, rural town, La Rioja. This group also attacked the normal schools, stating that the teachers lacked culture. Division of opinion in regard to educational methods and purposes augmented the greater problem of Argentina's, which was lack of unity in all respects. While educational problems do exist in Argentina, actually, she has been among the leaders of all South American countries in her efforts to establish a universal school system.

La sombra del convento presents the social problem of tradition versus modern liberalism in intellectual thought. The problem centers in the old University of Córdoba. José Alberto Flores, the young protagonist, returns from Europe to try to reawaken the University's thinking and instill modern ideals, but his struggle is lost.

The same power of analysis seen in developing his social problems is employed by Manuel Gálvez in the develop-

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<sup>1</sup>Spell, op. cit., p. 27.

ment of his characters. His keen insight into human nature is coupled with his broad perspective of social conditions and diversified settings. His characters harmonize with their social surroundings, often being products of these forces:

Gálvez usa un número extraordinario de argumentos y de razones para convencernos de que sus personajes están actuando de acuerdo con la realidad, para convencerse a sí mismo en primer lugar, y después al lector. De lo cual resulta que sus hombres y mujeres tienen inmediatamente un color novelesco y terminan por convertirse en caricaturas. La superabundancia es lo característico de un proceso elemental; es como si un pintor, para darnos su idea de un enano, lo pintara de tres pulgadas al lado de un árbol o de una casa de quince metros de altura, . . . La emoción del lector no se aplica a los caracteres, sino al creador de sus vidas y de sus destinos inexorables.<sup>1</sup>

Gálvez presents for analysis the play boy who has just come home from Europe, the gaucho out on the open pampa, the caudillo, the priest, the politician, the prostitute, the frivolous high-society woman, the spineless man, and scores of other less prominent characters, yet typical of society. His characters, both men and women, are usually weak as they face or are faced by social problems. However, Gálvez, different from the French realists, gives his characters religious or philosophical aspects that leave them less hopeless as social victims. Rosalinda prays in her misery, and Macha Regules is at last redeemed through true love.

The characters of Gálvez are, regarded generally, varied and well-developed representatives of society. Although

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<sup>1</sup>Torres Rioseco, Grandes novelistas de la América Hispana, p. 152.

they at times seem to dominate the situation, as a whole Gálvez conforms to the French realists insofar as he lets society completely control the character:

En Nacha Regules hay un momento en que el héroe, Monsalvat, se vuelve contra la sociedad, habla de odio y destrucción; pero descontando la salida del novelista que rebeldía es sólo una racha, no una convicción constante y permanente del personaje.<sup>1</sup>

Melchor of Hombres en soledad believes all his life belongs to society; so he asks if society is worth his life.<sup>2</sup> His more numerous men characters are controlled further by the love of some woman, frustrated hopes or ambitions, religious or atmospheric pressure. Carlos Riga of El mal metafísico and Victor Urgel of La tragedia de un hombre fuerte are two primary examples of this character type, although others are numerous. Fermin Contreras of La pampa y su pasión, Juan Larrandy of Cautiverio, and Claraval of Hombres en soledad all are social types and controlled by social forces. Fermin is a horse jockey who had not the courage to oppose his employer who gave too much attention to Fermin's beautiful wife. Juan Larrandy is an idealistic lawyer who yet is unable to control his wife's flirtatious conduct and is controlled by it until the climax. Claraval is a highly frustrated man torn by modern women, personal ambitions, and confused ideals. These characters are tools of social forces,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 145.

<sup>2</sup>Gálvez, Hombres en soledad, pp. 109-111.

and tools in the hands of Gálvez as he represents all sides and angles of life in Argentina. Throughout he conforms to his broad, realistic purpose.

Other men characters may be grouped as historical leaders and religious men. The historical personages, already mentioned in this study, are fully delineated in their own true character. The small group of religious protagonists include Father Solanas of Miércoles Santo, Father Rincón of La sombra del convento, the priest in Cautiverio; other less prominent religious figures abound. Many of the men characters are moved by religious thinking or are saved from their social difficulties through Christian faith. José Alberto Flores is a typical layman with a deep religious sense (La sombra del convento). Juan Larrandy of Cautiverio and Claudio Vidamor of La noche toca a su fin are controlled by their religious faith.

Among the characters who are products of atmosphere or geographical regions are the caudillos and gauchos that figure in the historical novels and novels of rural settings. Taboada is an example in Los caminos de la muerte of the fearless, independent, fighting gaucho-turned-politician called caudillo. A typical gaucho is Remedio of El gaucho de Los Cerrillos. He conforms in every respect to the typical gaucho of the Argentine plains found in this description by John White.

The gaucho was Spanish in his strong individualism, Moorish in his fatalism, and Indian in his close identification with the soil.

But the gaucho was a great deal more than merely a romantic figure. He was the real Argentine, as distinguished from the people of Buenos Aires. He was a nomad horseman who slept in the open, using his saddle as a pillow. Sitting alone night after night under the stars of the pampas and brooding about himself and those stars as his Moorish forefathers had done before him on the deserts of Africa and Arabia; he became something of a mystic and had the mystic's contracted features. By day he was not a herdsman or a breeder who counted his cattle or looked after their substance or improved their breed, but simply a wild, ignorant, lawless hunter of wild horses and cattle that roamed the pampas by the million. Yet in fifty years of his glory, just before he disappeared, he reached heights of great heroism and nobility that have few parallels in history.

The gaucho was strong and handsome, with an olive complexion tanned by sun and wind. He was of medium height and somewhat bent. Since he was virtually inseparable from his horse, his constant riding made him muscular and vigorous. He had black piercing eyes accustomed to seeking out distant landmarks on the horizon of the pampas. Although he looked and acted like a centaur when mounted, his living on horseback and galloping over those immeasurable distances prevented him from being a noble figure on foot, when he was slightly stoop-shouldered and bow-legged. But when he was on a horse, galloping like the wind in pursuit of a fleeting ostrich, his poncho flying straight out behind him and his right arm swinging the boleadors high above his head, he was an inspiring and exciting spectacle.<sup>1</sup>

Gálvez especially favors the social type character that crosses class and regional barriers to enable the reader to get a broader cross-sectional view of Argentina. Outstanding in this light is Solís of La maestra normal. Solís is a product of the city of Buenos Aires who is transplanted to the provincial town of La Rioja, a fact that enables his creator

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<sup>1</sup>John W. White, Argentina: The Life Story of a Nation (New York: The Viking Press, 1942), p. 67.

to give a comparison of the two settings. At the same time, Solís, being a newcomer to La Rioja, is able to circulate in all social groups. Typical petty office holders like Sofanor Molina; the fat, happy and garrulous landlady, Doña Crispula; the practical-joking French teacher without knowledge of his subject; and the pedagogical Albarenque, the normal school director -- these are only a few of the character panorama that the reader views through the wanderings of Solís.

Again Gálvez uses a character to portray the scales of society in Miércoles Santo. Father Solanas listens to the confessions of all kinds of people. Through the confessions, then we meet the social types in a theoretical or psychological manner.

The problems of European influence appear again in character portrayals. Father Arnold of Hombres en soledad is a representative of the character type that abounds in Argentina -- the European transplanted to Argentina:

Pero el abogado leía, a través de las palabras del sacerdote, el sufrimiento que para él significaba el haber cambiado su Francia espiritual por esta calamidad de Buenos Aires, rica de dineros, de diversiones y de placeres, pero paupérrima de alma.<sup>1</sup>

In the same work, Andrea had the aspiration to go to Europe and disrupted her whole domestic life in an effort to conform to the popular fad of using Europe for social conversation. The women characters likewise are social types or victims:

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<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, Hombres en soledad, p. 104.

Solís observó a Raselda. Tenía un tipo muy provinciano. De estatura mediana, más bien baja, no carecía de cierta elegancia natural. Era bien formada, repleta de carnes sin llegar a ser gruesa. Cuando caminaba, sus senos, redondos y blandos, mal sujetados por los amplios corsés que se usaban generalmente en los pueblos, se movían con movimiento bien perceptibles.<sup>1</sup>

A typical girl of the low class is observed by Monsalvat, the hero of Nacha Regules, in his search through the slum districts for Nacha:

Monsalvat, que veía una víctima en cada mujer de la vida, le rogó su historia. Imaginaba toda clase de ignominias de parte de los padres, del novio, de otra gente. La muchacha declaró que aquélla era la gran vida. Placeres, libertad, dinero. No trabajaba; los hombres le decían lindas palabras. Enorme sensualismo había en sus ojos y sus labios. Debía de ser una satirésa, una vampiresa. Amaba el placer por el placer.<sup>2</sup>

In spite of the words of the girl, Monsalvat, who strongly reflects the writer, thought her a victim of society:

Tal vez nadie la considerase víctima, y sin embargo lo era tanto como las otras. Víctima de herencias mortales, quizás de un alcoholismo que provenía de miserias materiales impuestas por la sociedad.<sup>3</sup>

In the same section and class of Buenos Aires, we see the keeper of the house where Nacha and other girls lived as another type realistically described:

La vieja, alta, toda huesos, se cubría con un batón muy abierto arriba, dejaba ver el comienzo de dos pechos flácidos, trágicos de fealdad. Para no mojararse habíase arremangado el vestido y veíansele las piernas hasta las rodillas. Tenía un vientre abultado,

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, La maestra normal, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup>Gálvez, Nacha Regules, p. 195.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 196.

puntiagudo. Completaba su figura una cabeza desgredada y una boca que reía nauseabundamente. No habia un diente en aquella boca que mostraba unas encias anfractuosas y lividas. Monsalvat preguntó por la duena de la casa. Era aquel harapo humano.<sup>1</sup>

Supporting the statement that many characters are no more than social types to be found in localities of Argentina is the fact that one character may figure in more than one novel, maintaining the same type. Nacha is seen again in El mal metafísico. Teresa Belderrain appears in La sombra del convento and in La tragedia de un hombre fuerte. The latter is a woman without personality who serves only as an instrument upon which the chords of her modern existence may be played.

All the women characters of the post World War I are molders of society rather than victims; yet they remain types. Albertina Contreras, in La pampa y su pasión, is socially superior to her husband, Fernán Contreras, the horse jockey. Because of this superiority, she seems justified in making up for her husband's inferiority by having an affair outside her home. Marihelén of El cautiverio is the selfish, petted, childless wife of a wealthy man. Her lack of culture and religious principles makes hers an empty, idle way of life. She is saved from retribution for her crimes through the love of her husband, a social type opposite from hers.

In his character portrayals Gálvez incorporates much psychology. As victims of society or of environment, it is

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 276.



often by psychological methods of analysis that Gálvez shows them to be victims. He realizes the importance of the modern thinking in the field of psychology and he is adept in the application of his own knowledge of recent findings. Nevertheless, Gálvez proclaims a social purpose, and his use of psychological methods in developing his characters is a means to his social end. Much psychological study is evident in the nineteenth century realists, but it is only one of their many phases in their efforts toward the broader realism. So is it with Gálvez and his use of psychological mediums in displaying his characters. Of the use of psychological analysis by Gálvez, Torres Rioseco says:

Cuando analiza (Gálvez) caracteres, obtiene la certeza del psicólogo, admirable de intuición, decidido en la busca, y nos los presenta revelados enteramente, . . . .<sup>1</sup>

Especially is this the case in La tragedia de un hombre fuerte, Gálvez's most psychological work. Victor Urgel is a confused man, unable to decide his own problems of love and politics because of his fears and general frustration. Inner conflicts are numerous. Many of these are geared primarily to the social element and are secondary to it.

Gálvez presents a psychological problem in the characters Nacha and Rosalinda in showing them to be social victims. Inwardly, they resolve to abandon prostitution, but psychologically as well as socially, they cannot. Rosalinda

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<sup>1</sup>Torres Rioseco, Grandes novelistas de la América Hispana, p. 133.

(La maestra normal) struggles against her love for Solís and yet yields. Claudio Vidamor (La noche toca a su fin) struggles with fears, doubts, and complexes before he is moved to confession, embracing the Christian faith. His inner conflict is given:

Me mordía una terca impaciencia por ver. Y al mismo tiempo, tenía. No sé lo que tenía: tal vez convertirme ahí no más, tal vez huir y alejarme para siempre del Cristo, perdiendo la única ocasión que se me presentaba de volverme un hombre decente y de calmar mi conciencia y tener paz en mi vida. Y como soy aprensivo, tenía que la emoción me matase.<sup>1</sup>

Claraval (Hombres en soledad) is presented psychologically.

He searches for freedom in politics, in escape to Europe, in various women, but is unable to find peace of mind.

Claraval, like Monsalvat of Nacha Regules, seeks to explain all through introspection. As he walked the streets of Buenos Aires, he would ask what forces had placed him there or had placed him in the inescapable situation; what had governed the people he saw in the streets to be as they were and behave as they did. Claraval passed long hours dreaming day dreams -- "obras a la vez de la naturaleza y del hombre."<sup>2</sup>

He kept his dreams of going to Europe secretly. Gálvez goes to the depth of the inner self:

Temía (Claraval) que su mujer, o quien los viese, los considerara como un juego pueril, absurdo y ridículo, o como una pasión anormal, aunque él estaba cierto de que todos los seres humanos escondemos puerilidades y anomalías que sólo dejamos salir de nuestro interior en momentos de soledad.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, La noche toca a su fin (Buenos Aires: Editorial Cabalet y Cía., 1935), p. 132.

<sup>2</sup>Gálvez, Hombres en soledad, p. 135.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 69.

The subjective element in Claraval again proves Gálvez's psychological insight:

Aparte de este placer 'material' de planear viajes, había para el otro Mayor, exclusivamente estético y espiritual, engendrado unas veces por sus proyectos y otras ajeno a ellos. Era el de soñar. Pasaba horas abstraído rigurosamente de la realidad porteña, recorriendo claustros medievales y salas de museos ilustres, contemplando arquitecturas prodigiosas y rincones de antigua belleza.<sup>1</sup>

Through Claraval, Gálvez shows a bit of the national psychology of the Argentines:

Acostumbrados a la soledad del espíritu, los Argentinos, tenemos el gusto en soledad.<sup>2</sup>

Monsalvat of Macha Regules is presented psychologically. He possesses an analytical mind and seeks to explain all he sees. Moreover, he is an extremely sensitive person because of his illegitimacy. In the course of his natural and conscious inclination to help society, he goes through many trials of a psychological nature. But helping society is the uppermost consideration of the author, although he reveals the psychological nature of his character:

La primera de todas; aquella transformación espiritual de Monsalvat, cuya intensidad y brusquedad -- fué obra de pocos meses -- afectó a sus nervios y en consecuencia a su organismo entero. Monsalvat vivía disgustado con sí mismo, reprochándose su inutilidad, su egoísmo de los años anteriores, hasta su incapacidad para transformar el mundo.<sup>3</sup>

The spiritual love of a man for his art is sensitively handled in El cántico espiritual.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 135.

<sup>3</sup>Gálvez, Macha Regules, p. 322.

The inner struggle here is between the artistic and the materialistic which, according to Gálvez, is one of the most common inner struggles of the Argentines and mankind in general. Mauricio Sandoval is an idealistic young student who abandons the study of law, for that of art. The climax is the triumph of this love of the artistic over the physical love of his beautiful friend, Susanna de Olozoga.

Psychology again enters the character development of Marihelén of Cautiverio. Gálvez here presents the study of an unfaithful wife. Marihelén sees her husband's downfall, and from one point of view thinks herself better than her husband. Although at times she is quite sincere in her faith and in her love for her husband, at others, this is not the case. She adapts her religion to her convenience and her love to her whimsical fancies:

Marihelén, como todos las personas románticas, débiles, y sin verdaderos principios, amaba cierta falsa bondad que, por consiguiente, es inmoral e injusta; y que niega el infierno incapaz de comprender que la no existencia de un castigo para el mal sería una injusticia de Dios hacia sí mismo y hacia los hombres virtuosos.<sup>1</sup>

The struggle that José Flores experiences in La sombra del convento is another example of Gálvez's psychological insight. This study, like others, seeks to propound the author's belief that mental conflicts can be solved by Christian faith. It is evident again in this fact that the psychological studies that Gálvez makes are no more than tools

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<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, Cautiverio (Buenos Aires: Editorial Tor, 1937), p. 155.

serving other purposes; here it is a religious and philosophical one, arising from a social situation. José Flores is a frustrated, though keen man of thought who desired to believe in God as his sweetheart and relatives did. To reconcile his broad experiences with the simple faith of the people in the conservative town of Córdoba proved to be for him an intense mental struggle. In this same novel, the opponent of Flores in the struggle of progressive and conservative elements is Ignacio Belderrain, law professor of the University of Córdoba. Belderrain, at the close of his life and the close of the novel, states his conservatism:

Me siento fuera de este tiempo. Han venido otras ideas, otros principios que me es imposible comprender. Estas ideas dominarán mi patria. Es la gran tristeza que me llevo a La tumba. La separación, la muerte son cosas irremediables, son la voluntad de Dios.<sup>1</sup>

The social significance of the psychological elements is evident.

The inner-self examination of Father Solanas of Miércoles Santo is a psychological study involving the supernatural and mystical. The supernatural visitations of the devil to Father Solanas causes great emotional and mental crises. Mental telepathy is evidenced during the confessions of the woman by whom the priest had once been tempted when he was young. Although he cannot see her and has not known of her life since the experience, he senses her identity. The supernatural element is at work again at the death of Father

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<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, La sombra del convento (Buenos Aires: Editorial Tor, 1917), p. 123.

Solanas. A dark man unknown to the priest, shadows him closely and devilishly; suddenly, the figure turns into a huge bat as Father Solanas falls lifeless before the altar. The novel is very impressionistic and far removed from outward reality. However, it strikes a new note in the broad realism of Gálvez's depictions; it is realistic in the creation of the intangible forces causing mental turbulences and crises.

Strongly psychological is Historia de Arrabal. Again the great city of Buenos Aires spreads its net that envelops the victims that Gálvez presents. Although this study has pointed out that Rosalinda is a social type and a victim of environment, nevertheless, psychological reactions link the factors involved. She fears everyone:

Rosalinda Corrales, Linda, como la llamaban, salía del Frigorífico sola. No era que no conociese a los demás empleados, sino que, desde hacía unas semanas, por motivos que no se explicaba, tal vez por el horror y la humillación de su vida, sentía una invencible timidez, una especie de miedo hacia las gentes y aún hacia las cosas.<sup>1</sup>

Rosalinda is completely controlled through the fear and hypnotic effect of her brother:

No sabía como ni por qué ese individuo la dominaba tan absolutamente. Ella le tenía a la vez odio, repugnancia y miedo, y, sin embargo, no hacía sino obedecerle ciegamente, pasivamente, incapaz de voluntad propia.<sup>2</sup>

Rosalinda's father has a dream that parallels the situation between Rosalinda and her brother, El Chino. Antenor, the father, tells of his dream.

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, Historia de Arrabal, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

Antenor habló de un perro negro que tenía dos carbones encendidos en los ojos, de lagartos que volaban, de que le había herido una bala de cañon peleando en Curupaitu, de una culebra que se le había enredado en el pezcuezo, y le ahogaba mientras montón de culebritas salían de la barriga de la culebra grande. Después volvía el perro negro, se comía a los lagartos y subía al catre.<sup>1</sup>

Later, Rosalinda loses her sense of right and wrong through the continual abuse of El Chino. Her memory and ability to think also leave her, causing a complete personality change. At last, when she hopes to escape by marrying her lover, El Chino overtakes her and through a dramatic exposition of hypnosis, causes Rosalinda to transfer her will to kill him to Daniel Forti, her lover. Even though this work shows Gálvez to be an expert in psychological treatment, his social purpose overshadows his character analysis. For he means to show only how conditions of environment and social pressure react upon typical individuals of society, creating or destroying. Argentine society is his laboratory.

Gálvez has been accused of being naturalistic on the basis of La maestra normal, Historia de Arrabal, and Nacha Regules. Several very ugly, sordid, animalistic, and earthy earmarks support this accusation. His description of the filth, theft, and murder that exist in the slums of Buenos Aires verge at times toward being over-realistic. The covacha where Rosalinda lived is described:

Era una extraña vivienda que ocupaba un terreno cuadrado sin un árbol ni una planta. . . .

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 66.

En la vivienda, como en casi todo el barrio, había un insoportable olor a pescado.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, Gálvez denies vehemently that his writings are naturalistic. To portray real conditions in an accurate manner is his only wish:

No sé por qué empeño se me considera como un continuador del naturalismo. Mi única novela naturalista -- y no lo es enteramente, pues contiene algo de subjetivo y no escasea en ella el análisis -- es La maestra normal.<sup>2</sup>

His critics do not agree, however. Torres Riosco says:

Gálvez parece no atribuir mucha importancia a la herencia (Emile Zola), pero en cierto sentido al observador y al experimentador de que habla Zola en su estudio sobre la novela, y obra como Historia de Arrabal no podrían explicarse sin los antecedentes de la escuela naturalista. Los trabajos del riguroso, la fealdad del barrio de Las Ranas, los burdeles, las sensibilidades, al oído, al ojo y al olfato, expresado en un estilo nervioso, cortado, brusco, vulgar a ratos, revela que este escritor no ha leído en vano al maestro de Le ventre de Paris.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps Historia de Arrabal and others would fall into the naturalistic class if Gálvez did not maintain his obvious pity and his all-pervading faith. For certain it is that Gálvez is a master of setting and atmosphere as he paints his social-type character in its natural background.

Gálvez makes of primary importance the handling of atmosphere in his novel technique. Jefferson Rhea Spell comments on the atmosphere of La maestra normal.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>2</sup>Gálvez, La tragedia de un hombre fuerte (Buenos Aires: Editorial Tor, 1938), p. 8.

<sup>3</sup>Torres Riosco, Grandes novelistas de la América Hispana, p. 143.



From the very first chapter the spirit of the place is sensed; the aridity, the irregularity, and the barrenness of the region in which the town (La Rioja) lies; the intense languor-producing atmosphere permeated with the odor of orange blossoms; the crumbling buildings and the neglected streets; the general appearance of lassitude on the part of the population itself and their remoteness from contemporary currents of thought.<sup>1</sup>

Not only does atmosphere support the social characters or enhance the intensity of a social problem it in itself acquaints the reader with Argentina locally and summarily. One feels that he has experienced the real places that Gálvez paints so vividly. The study of local atmosphere is of great importance to the purpose of this paper, and the novels of Gálvez offer a broad field.

The atmosphere of La sombra del convento is that of an old, cultured city of colonial days. In Córdoba life was slow, almost static, until the incoming twentieth century modernism. Forces of natural setting in Buenos Aires determine to a larger degree the psychology of the protagonist, in El mal metafísico. The pampa of La pampa y su pasión is the distinctive feature of the work. The pampa is the great plains region of Argentina lying between the Andes and the great rivers, the Paraná, and the Uruguay. A tapestry of Argentina, even one of a literary nature, would not be complete without the picturesque life on the pampa as Gálvez has it in La pampa y su pasión. As usual, the pampa is used

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<sup>1</sup>Spell, op. cit., p. 23.

sociologically as it creates a native love of horses with the accompanying evil of gambling at the races.

Buenos Aires is the setting for a large group of novels. The descriptions in themselves are works of art, and to be valued historically, sociologically, and artistically. A thorough examination and cross section of the material Gálvez uses for atmospherical purposes would reveal sufficient material for a virtual history of the capital city. The lights in which he shows it vary, like the city itself, from ugly to beautiful, from a beating commercial heart of Argentina to a cosmopolitan net snaring its victims. All these things are the city which Galvez describes movingly and realistically. The sordid description from Historia de Arrabal illustrates the poor sections of the city:

Dijérase que a ciertas horas, las más miserables de aquellas casuchas mosqueaban siniestramente. En las calles veíanse, junto a las veredas, canoes volcadas. Aquí y allí algún sauce, a veces entre una casa y otra, en la misma línea del frente, parecía llorar por la humedad constante de la tierra.<sup>1</sup>

The beautiful is found, realistically, among the descriptions of the ugly in Nacha Regules:

Septiembre! Primavera! Buenos Aires con sus calles arboladas, sus parques, sus plazas, los largos paseos que forman al río encantadora vereda, florecía mágicamente, se manchaba de verde, de todos los matices del verde. Se dijera que la mano del Infinito retocaba el gigantesco cuadro un poco descolorido que le entregara

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<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, Historia de Arrabal, p. 13.

el invierno, exacerbando el esmeralda de los parques ingleses: agotando en las copas de los paraísos y en el musgo el amarillo de Nápoles: arrancando violentamente de las fondas el manto suave y aterciopelado hecho de azules, de tierra de Siena y de tintas neutras, para vestirlas con un áureo traje que el amarillo aurora y el sepia y el cobalto hacían claro y vibrante: vaciando en los grandes parques todo el óxido de cromo de su paleta cósmica: rejuveneciendo a los sauces, en un genial abuso de esa gutagamba que nos trae el recuerdo de fantásticos reinos tropicales: y haciendo estremecer los mediodías en ensueños de oro. !Oh primavera de Buenos Aires! El oro llueve del cielo con musical ritmo y parece también surgir de los árboles y las plantas y las hierbas; envuelve humanos y enciende los ojos de las mujeres, en ansias de amar. !Oh primavera de Buenos Aires!<sup>1</sup>

Such descriptions could be written only by one who had known and loved the city, like Gálvez.

In Hombres en soledad, he makes a comparison between the country and the city, showing the materialistic air of the city:

Ni siquiera podemos tener contacto con otras almas. En el campo, usted está sentado, a la noche, acera de un paisano de la estancia, y, aunque no hable con él, usted siente que algo le une a ese hombre inculto, casi primitivo. Usted tiene largo tiempo para meditar. El misterio del campo, la poesía de lo infinito, mezclan su alma con la de ese hombre. Pero aquí en la ciudad, cuándo pesa eso? Aquí todo separa desde las distancias hasta los ruidos desde el ansia de dinero hasta la vanidad.<sup>2</sup>

Contrasts of the sections of the city are shown in Cautiverio, surrounding his social characters from different classes. Other novels of the city include La tragedia de un hombre fuerte, and El mal metafísico.

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, Nacha Regules, pp. 163-164.

<sup>2</sup>Gálvez, Hombres en soledad, p. 94.

The same minuteness of description and objectivity of perspective characterize his mode of handling the customs of Argentina. These, too, augment the social significance of the novels and at the same time furnish the reader with greater understanding of Argentina. In all the novels, whether historical, social, or psychological, we find innumerable and valuable descriptions of the customs of the people of Argentina. There are the customs of the province, of the city, and of the small village -- sometimes as binding forces or molding forces; sometimes as picturesque beauty or simple human interest. But always they fall into the slowly changing evolution of the people of Argentina as they progress on their way toward the present and future Argentine nation:

One of the first novels to exploit the manners and customs of the province was La maestra normal by Manuel Gálvez.<sup>1</sup>

Here the life of the old semi-colonial town of La Rioja reflects its social circles in the customs of the people. Groups of men gather every night at the cafés and drugstores; the homes of the aristocratic old maids unable to marry within their own social rank are vivisected; the Indians come into town to celebrate religious festivals with processions of native songs and dances; the rancherías on the outskirts of town are scenes of poverty and vice. Through the social type Raselda, Gálvez uncovers many of the environmental

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<sup>1</sup>Alfred Coester, The Literary History of Spanish America (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1923), p. 493.

customs of which she is victim. Horse-racing and guitar playing dominate the pampa in La pampa y su pasión where the intricacies of horse racing in the gaucho style, with all its tricks and betting, are revealed as customs. Styles of dress, architecture, and furnishings are especially notable:

Entre los escasos transeuntes, no se veían mujeres: la herencia española y morisca imponía el recatado encierro en el hogar. Sólo al atardecer oscuros ojos femeninos, emboscados detrás de las rejas, espiaban el paso del cortejante.<sup>1</sup>

The custom of the wealthy and their looking toward Europe for education, travel, and enlightenment is the theme of El cántico espiritual, the story of an Argentine art student in Paris. On the other hand, the novelist attacks the custom in his own land of poor education and its unilateral literary nature:

Este muchacho no tiene con qué comprar libros. Alcance de su bolsillo sólo están las ediciones fraudulentas y económicas, casi siempre incompletas y traidoramente traducidas. Nuestras bibliotecas publicas no invitan a ser frecuentadas, tanto por lo absurdo de sus horarios como por su mala organización. Y los profesores que ha tenido en el colegio no le han indicado buenos libros.<sup>2</sup>

Gálvez attacks also the churches and the choirs, not in an irreligious manner, but in keeping with his realistic observation for the improvement and greater spiritualization of the nation:

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, Los caminos de la muerte, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup>Gálvez, La Argentina en nuestros libros, p. 27.

Pasé frente a una iglesia. Muchas veces había lamentado la insignificancia de las iglesias porteñas, antiestéticas y faltas de sentimiento religioso; e inexpressivas, como los rostros de las gentes y el paisaje vulgar de la ciudad. Pero él no vio la mediocridad de la iglesia, porque iba pensando en la bella piedra hecha encajes -- de la catedral de Burgos.<sup>1</sup>

The customs of the clergy are given in La vida de Fray Mamerto de Esquiú. Here the clergy is a Spanish type. This meant the priests lived apart and were proud, haughty, dominating, and cruel.<sup>2</sup> La sombra del convento is large a book of colonial customs of the old city of Córdoba and its university:

La sombra del convento is almost a guide book to the customs and the places of historical or picturesque interest in Córdoba, surnamed, "The learned city", on account of its being the seat of the Jesuit university founded in 1613 with the consequent effect on the population.<sup>3</sup>

La maestra normal is another novel filled with the customs of the province. The mode of dress and the means of amusement as seen in the billiard hall of the inn are among the long file of customs pictured. At the saloon, the men sat around lazily drinking, killing flies, reading news from Buenos Aires, telling risqué stories, or making political speeches.

The realistic panorama of Argentina is seen as much through Gálvez's pictures of customs as of settings. The customs support well his purpose in mirroring life in

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, Hombres en soledad, p. 78.

<sup>2</sup>Spell, op. cit., p. 55.

<sup>3</sup>Coester, op. cit., p. 493.

Argentina, and also the purpose of this study, as truly as any other phase of the broad means of Gálvez. A real insight into Argentina, her people, and her thought can be gained through the close study of her customs as presented by the realistic author, Gálvez.

As mentioned beforehand, the basic difference between the creations of Gálvez and those of harsh realists and naturalists, whom he patterned in many ways, lies, possibly, in his Catholicism, his high moral principles, his spiritual faith, his optimism, his democratic concepts, and his spiritual idealism. If he deviates at all from his wish to depict things as they are and as realistically as possible, it is in this light. Gálvez says of himself:

Hay en mí una gran piedad por todos los que sufren, y esto ha originado algunas páginas rebeldes en mis libros. Pero no he sido, desde que escribo novelas al menos, ni soy socialista ni nada. En cuanto a la religión, (he sido católico siempre) se ve en varios de mis libros. No hay en mis novelas ninguna intención moralizadora, aunque algunos creen lo contrario. Tampoco he pretendido reformar la humanidad. En Nacha hay un sentimiento de rebeldía ante la injusticia social, pero no alcanza a constituir una tesis. No soy tampoco un pacifista a ultranza, aunque de mis "Escenas de la Guerra del Paraguay" se desprenda una enseñanza pacifista.<sup>1</sup>

However, religion plays an important role in almost all the novels of Gálvez, and, if it is not pure Catholicism exemplified, it is a pervasive spirituality or idealism that

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<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, La tragedia de un hombre fuerte, p. 6.

borders his tapestry of Argentine.

Although Gálvez attacks the lack of spirituality and religious conviction of the Argentines in El solar de la raza, Argentines are predominately Catholic:

The Catholic Church is one of the most efficient organization in all South America; it is heavily subsidized by nearly all the South American governments, including the Argentine, and its ramifications extend into the tiniest villages and remotest towns.<sup>1</sup>

Gálvez reflects this not only through his own viewpoint and pervasive optimism but also in direct treatment. Cautiverio presents the triumph of the Catholic principles of Juan Larrandy over the immoral conduct of his wife, Marihelén.

Ella no tenía a quien confiar sus tristezas, Juan tenía por confidente, por amigo, a Dios, y El le consolaba de las miserias de esta vida. Ella sufría en la desesperación. Juan sufría resignadamente, hasta con placer, pensando en que, cuanto más padeciese ahora, menos tiempo de purgatorio habría para él.<sup>2</sup>

Marihelén is a type even in religious matters. She represents the modern, confused woman, who fits her religious needs to her caprices:

Cuando salía de una confesión, iba contenta pero sintiendo instintivamente en algún oscuro escondrijo de su alma como un dejo de saudade de sus placeres impuras. . . . Era un diletante de la fe.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>John W. White, op. cit., p. 266.

<sup>2</sup>Gálvez, Cautiverio, p. 188.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 109.



In Juan Larrandy the opposite type is described:

. . . . para quien aún en los momentos más materiales del amor había mucho de espiritual.<sup>1</sup>

This work exemplifies one of the common themes of Gálvez, which is to base the causes of social problems and social victims on the lack of religious faith. Argentines singly and collectively are at fault as Gálvez depicts them. Lack of religious principles could be termed a social problem of Argentina, according to Gálvez. He attacks strongly the "modern" disregard of morals. While Mariholén seems incapable of being faithful, Juan without her could not be without stain. Juan refers to a temptation during a period of separation as "su caída".<sup>2</sup> Questions of morality enter the novels, Nacha Regules, Historia de Arrebal, Homores en soledad, La maestra normal, La janta en su pasión, to a very great extent, and other works reflect the consciousness of Gálvez to such questions.

Gálvez attacks Freud with surprising vehemence for an objective writer. Juan Larrandy of Cautiverio is made to say:

Por favor, no me hable de Freud. . . . Freud me parece un corruptor de la humanidad. Para él lo mejor que produce el hombre, el arte, la ciencia, la vida religiosa, no son sino sublimaciones del lis bajo de los instintos. ¡Pensar que aún el amor maternal o paternal y aún la lis pura amistad los atribuye el mismo sucio origen! No existe nada noble para ese

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 114.

<sup>2</sup>Gálvez, Cautiverio, p. 108.

hombre. La humanidad, a través de sus libros, resulta una inmundicia. . . . La vida de cualquier santo es un destructor argumento contra Freud. . . . El cristiano sabe, y lo sabemos todos, que, por muchas malas inclinaciones que tenga, puede salvarse, con la ayuda de Dios, educando la voluntad, sometién dose a una rígida disciplina.<sup>1</sup>

The social significance of religion and questions of morality are only phases of the religious depiction that Gálvez gives of Argentina and Argentineans. Balancing these is the intense spiritual devotion that characterizes Father Solanas (Miércoles Santo). There exists among many Argentines the spirituality that Gálvez himself exemplifies and which he writes of so inspiringly in several instances, particularly in Miércoles Santo. In this work, spiritualization and mysticism reflect the powers beyond reasoning which Gálvez believes to be elements of faith. He touches heights of spiritual glory through Father Solanas that are seldom found in any literary work.

On the other hand, spiritual conflicts of Christians and non-Christians is a common theme in the novels of Gálvez. Argentina, through varied influences and lack of unity, has experienced much spiritual confusion. Foreign missionaries and immigrants of varied creeds have given rise to a large challenge for the predominate Catholicism of Argentina. Although Gálvez portrays the religious faith of a city in La sombra del convento, the same work goes deep into the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 161.

spiritual difficulties of José Alberto Flores in embracing the Christian faith of his beloved Teresa. José has liberal ideas that possibly agree with those of the author:

Volviendo a lo que hablábamos primero, le declararé que a mi juicio no hay cosa tan triste, tan negramente triste, como el no creer en nada. Y no hablo de creencias católicas. Seamos teósofos, protestantes, espiritistas, simples deístas, pero creemos en la Divinidad, en el alma, en el más allá. A estos espiritualistas yo los miro como hermanos y los quiero. Yo católico, tengo, por ejemplo, con el teósofo, un gran fondo común: la creencia en la Divinidad, en la otra vida y en el alma: es decir, que nos une lo fundamental. Por esto no comprendo que la Iglesia condene con tanta energía a esos hombres nuestros con los que tenemos tantas cosas afines. Mis enemigos, nuestros enemigos, son los materialistas: los que niegan a Dios: los que han convertido el alma humana en un simple conjunto de funciones, resultado del movimiento de las moléculas, o manifestación de la fuerza o de la energía material: los necios para quienes en el universo no hay ya misterios ni enigmas. ¡No hay misterios, cuando todo es puro misterio, un maravilloso misterio!<sup>1</sup>

The priest, Father Rincón, answers José, when he questions why the Catholic Church does not appear to be the same in all the countries through which he has traveled, with an explanation of the universality of the Church:

En nuestra iglesia cabe mucho más de lo que imaginan los que no la conocen. Hay mucha libertad, pero nuestros enemigos, y aún infinidad de católicos, lo ignoran. Ahí tiene usted la evolución. Nos están jorobando con esta doctrina, como si con ella fuesen reventar a la Iglesia.<sup>2</sup>

Claudio in La noche toca a su fin fills the entire volume by writing his confessions one night after a dramatic

<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, La sombra del convento, pp. 170-171.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 150.

conversion and baptism. Gálvez is able to render the very reverberations of feeling as Claudio struggles with his soul following the speeches of the Eucharistic Congress of 1934 in Buenos Aires.

In the historical novels, Gálvez does not fail to present religious points. His biography of Yrigoyen established him as one who upheld the Catholic teachings in law, even though he was not a practicing Catholic. For instance, Yrigoyen opposed a divorce law in 1928, and Gálvez says he was a sincere man, believing in God and the life to come. Death is mentioned in the trilogy:

Y la idea de la muerte era un pedál de dolor que reunía y amalgamaba todos los pensamientos aún los más triunfales y gloriosos.<sup>1</sup>

Even though Gálvez does consistently uphold the Christian principles, he does not desert realism even in depicting death. Carlos Riga (El mal metafísico) dies after a drunken orgy, showing the retribution of sin, while, on the other hand, Father Solanas (Miércoles Santo) falls to the floor through the contact of spiritual forces.

So forming one-half of the great Argentine tapestry are the social novels of Gálvez. Woven in and out are the details of huge social problems and the delineations of poignant social characters. These are trimmed with realistic settings that emphasis their color, size, and importance to the

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<sup>1</sup>Gálvez, Los caminos de la muerte, p. 42.

whole tapestry. At last bordering the great piece, including its historical and sociological parts, is the satisfying spiritual faith of Gálvez.

Throughout, spirituality above materiality, is a basic plea that Gálvez makes to his fellow Argentineans. True love over and over again redeems a social victim or solves a social problem. Perhaps the philosophy of Gálvez can be seen in the words of Monsalvat in Nacha Regules:

-- No, Nacha. Sacrificarnos por los demás es un deber. Es la única razón de vivir. Si todos lo hiciéramos así la vida sería una gran belleza. Es un deber de conciencia, porque siempre debemos poner nuestra vida de acuerdo con nuestras opiniones y nuestros ideales. Es un deber hacia aquellos quienes les hemos quitado su parte de felicidad.<sup>1</sup>

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Certainly Manuel Gálvez has manifested this philosophy of sacrificing ourselves for others as he has applied his talent, his ability to analyse Argentine life about him, and to transfer its essence into his writings. He has been dominated completely by the desire to benefit his country. No other writer has pictured Argentina in so many aspects and with such deep understanding and love. He has studied her in early stages, in the midst of her battle for a republic, and now he perceived her future on the horizon of the present. Gálvez has performed a great service that has

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<sup>1</sup>Spell, op. cit., p. 63.

not brought him material reward, but it has gained for him the appreciation of his fellow Argentines, and esteem the world over. In introducing great social problems and in exploring for readers the great unexplored regions of Argentina, he has led his fellow writers. Now his place in the literature of the world is permanent. His work alone is sufficient to refute the accusation that there is no Argentine literature. But while Gálvez hopes to help create a strong literary personality for Argentina, yet he hopes also for a common continental voice. Spell says that Gálvez is "not only a good novelist, but a patriotic citizen."<sup>1</sup>

We, as readers and world citizens, appreciate the infinite merit of such a writer as Manuel Gálvez and the tapestry of Argentina that he has woven for us. This is not only a work of art in itself but an expression of American realism that must form its part of the great world of reality. And we realize,

That literary Americanism is an artistic precursor of a political unity. If this unity is impossible in political affairs . . . . let us labor to impart a common orientation to what is worth more and is more durable than the political; the harmonic, coherent, cultural vibrations of peoples. . . . .<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Spell, op. cit., p. 63.

<sup>2</sup>Issac Goldbert, Studies in Spanish American Literature (New York: Brentano's, 1920), p. 100.

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