

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

LONELINESS, CREATION AND COMMUNICATION
IN CARLOS ROJAS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF ARTS
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH

BY

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DUBLIN

SEPTEMBER 1976

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The following works of Carlos Rojas, referred to in this dissertation, will be abbreviated in the footnotes as follows:

- De barro y esperanza. DBYE
Barcelona: Colección Gigante, 1957
- El futuro ha comenzado. EFHC
Barcelona: Ed. Ahr. 1958
- Las llaves del infierno. LLDI
Barcelona: Ed. Picazo. 1972
- La ternura del hombre invisible. LTHI
Barcelona: Plaza y Janes. 1972
- Adolfo Hitler está en mi casa. AHMC
Barcelona: Ed. Rondas. 1965
- Diálogos para otra España. DPOE
Barcelona: Ed. Ariel. 1966
- Auto de fe. ADF
Madrid: Ed. Guadarrama, 1968
- Aquelarre. AQ
Barcelona: Ed. Nauta. 1970
- Luis III el minotauro L III M
Madrid: Ed. Cuent Atras, 1970
- Por qué perdimos la guerra. PPG
Barcelona. Ed. Nauta. 1970
- Diez figuras ante la guerra civil DFAG
Barcelona: Ed. Nauta. 1973
- Azaña. AZ
Barcelona: Ed. Planeta. 1973

INTRODUCTION

Carlos Rojas is the creator of highly imaginative, intricately wrought and richly written novels. Their thematic structure could include a range of subjects from dream and reality to history and religion, and be woven with a personalised style which is unmistakable. But the themes underlying most of his work are those elemental problems of man: loneliness and alienation, self-examination, communication and creation. It is through an examination of these themes as explored by Rojas in his fiction and other writings, that the source of his artistic inspiration and style may be discovered. I intend in the following three chapters to reveal how a sense of loneliness and alienation contributes greatly to his creative urge, and how this feeling of aloneness, together with the allied themes of self-examination and communication, has a basic influence on the way in which he writes. The two novels I will refer to mainly are La ternura del hombre invisible and Adolfo Hitler está en mi casa.

In the first chapter I will discuss the question of character identification and communication. Within these novels, the characters come to realise that communication with others must be preceded by confrontation with the self. Rojas is as convinced of this truth as his characters. For in this way communication can be seen as a creative force; for man in his relations with himself and other men, for the writer with his public.

The concept of creative force will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter Two. Here, through structural and stylistic analysis of the symbolic pattern of fertility, I hope to show that fertility symbols and images are carefully and consistently used to

consolidate the hope in creation as the solution to a lonely and barren existence. They are, in effect, an essential part of the structure of the novels.

In Chapter Three I propose to examine his non-fiction in the light of his fictional writings, and to relate the meaning of life with the means of living. For Rojas, communication is an important meaning of life in a world where man lives with himself and with other people. In his non-fiction, he relates the problems of communication which he explores in his novels, to the means of living, which is the manner in which man lives out his life. He emphasises the necessity of an understanding communication as a prerequisite to the harmonious co-existence of mankind. He discusses this not only in the universal brotherhood of man context, but with particular reference to isolationist states of mind in communities of his native country.

CHAPTER ONE

The main thesis of a path from loneliness through communication to creativity, as an artistic inspirational source, can be viewed on a more general plane and in much of Rojas's work that I have not subjected to a detailed critique. Take for instance the question of character identification. An important tenet for this theory is that Rojas has created an almost archetypal character and that within the structure of his novels can be seen a strong identification with this figure. Almost all the principal characters are of a solitary, fragmented and introspective disposition. In several novels appears an artistic creator like himself. A considerable proportion of the novels are written in the first person, which presupposes that the protagonist is expressing himself through writing. ¹ That this is much more than a literary device is evident when we learn that several of his characters are in fact writers in different spheres. The invisible man in La ternura del hombre invisible is a novelist, the main character in Adolfo Hitler está en mi casa is a scriptwriter, Carló's II in Auto de fe is writing a play, Azaña in the novel of the same name is a diarist. Other artistic creators are the painter in Las llaves del infierno and the art copyists in Aquelarre. Equally important, this identification is a two-way process, for the characters also identify themselves with Rojas. Their creator is as alive for them as they for him. For Azaña the writer "...mis escritos, verbosos, confusos y desordenados son perfectamente reales."² For Azaña the character in a book, the author is "...mi hermano

1 DHE, EFHC, LTHI, AHMC, ADF, AQ, AZ.

2 AZ, p.122.

y mi verdugo. Por hermano, comparte conmigo la existencia revivida. Por verdugo, centra su libro en mi agonía."¹ At the end of Auto de fe the characters and the author are brought together with the reflection that:

"Antes, mucho antes, deberá o deberemos iniciar la fábula, como la vida, por la resurrección que es siempre el comienzo de todas las cosas. Escribirá o escribiremos entonces:..."² For 'el cachetero' in Aquelarre the author/creator is a dreamer: "Otro, sin embargo, soñaba el can y el caballo como Goya los soñó antes de estamparlos en el estucado cabe las Parcas. Todos, éramos en usted como usted era en nosotros."³ The same preoccupation with the dreamer is seen in Auto de Fe along with traits which show the influence of Jorge Luis Borges. In particular, the influence of Las ruinas circulares which ends with the dreamer's realization that he too is being dreamed.⁴ However Rojas is more concerned with the creative role of the dreamer rather than the concept of an infinite series of dreamers. The idea of the dreamer creating a son and a beating heart in Las ruinas circulares is taken up by Rojas and fused with the literary creation of the scriptwriter in Adolfo Hitler está en mi casa.

It is in this novel, and in La Ternura del hombre invisible that the problems of loneliness, alienation, self-examination, communication and creation are most fully explored. Published within a few years of each other,⁵ they are very closely

1 Ibid., p. 136

2 ADF, p 469

3 AQ, p 149

4 Jorge Luis Borges, Obras Completas. Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores Ficciones 1956 Vol II

5 LTHI, in 1963 and AHMC in 1965

related, and in them the identification of Rojas with the characters is most evident. The two main protagonists are both writers, and like Rojas, the invisible man is also a university teacher. Both novels are structured on a combination of the principal characters' writings and those of their author. In La ternura del hombre invisible this combination is the invisible man's manuscript and the sections entitled 'Al Margen', with the notes, written by the receiver of the manuscript, the editor/author, who can be equated with Rojas himself. The identification of Rojas with these characters cannot be doubted when we consider that the invisible man has himself written a novel called "La ternura del hombre invisible." Of two of the interpretations which the invisible man gives of his novel, the editor/author says: "Pero coinciden, casi exactamente, con dos ideas, jamás escritas ni contadas a nadie, maduradas en mi espíritu durante meses."¹ He refers to the invisible man as 'mi homónimo'² and as the combination of the writings of these two characters forms the novel which Rojas calls La ternura del hombre invisible, we must conclude that Rojas, too, shares this special relationship.

In Adolfo Hitler está en mi casa there is a combination of the script on Carlos II of Spain running parallel with Rojas's account of the scriptwriter's thoughts and experiences at the time of writing. Here again, the emphasis on the author/character relationship is underlined. The scriptwriter lives inwardly with his alter ego whom he formally

1 LTHI, p 66

2 Ibid, pp 19, 23, 42 and passim.

addresses as 'Usted' and whom he believes to be the real creator of his works: "Usted escribe, yo padezco."¹ The scriptwriter identifies himself with the author (or authors) of "La ternura del hombre invisible": "El autor de la obra llevaba nuestro nombre y apellidos, es decir, los suyos.... es idéntico a nosotros en rostro, cuerpo y ademanes."²

Because the script which he has written from "La ternura del hombre invisible" is an exact copy of the novel, he is in fact the author: "Bastóle copiar letra por letra, coma per coma, la obra de nuestro homónimo."³ Both characters, the invisible man and the scriptwriter, are lonely beings with an overriding problem of communication and a preoccupation with creation. The name of Carlos Rojas does not appear within either novel and the two authors within the novels are also nameless. Engaged in self-examination they have not yet come to know themselves and attain a sense of identity.⁴ Both must continue to write; the invisible man writes the account of his own experience which he sends to the editor/author, the scriptwriter takes up his work again at the end of the novel and Rojas too, continues to write:

1 AHMC, p 22

2 Ibid, p 17

3 Ibid, p 17

4 Similarly, the artist in las llaves del infierno, also in quest of self-discovery, is nameless. Two other nameless main characters, with a crisis of identity, are "el bufón" in Auto de fe and "el cachetero" in Aquelarre.

Quizá con el tiempo, (mucho tiempo) centenes de miles de años, durante los cuales pasarían generaciones de peces y hombres, llegaríamos a inventar incluso nuestros nombres.¹

In La ternura del hombre invisible the action springs from the loss of the invisible man's passport which Rojas uses in a symbolic manner to show his alienation from those around him. A similar method is used by Franz Kafka in Metamorphosis where a man wakes up transformed into a giant insect.² Where Kafka chooses to remain on the level of a breakdown in relations between Gregor Samsa and his family, Rojas uses the alienation of the invisible man from his family to force him into a questioning of his own identity. He finds that he cannot relate to others while he is unaware of his own identity, and as a result, there is in Adolfo Hitler está en mi casa a more concentrated exploration of the scriptwriter's effort to come to terms with himself.

Even before the loss of his passport the invisible man is depicted as a strange and solitary being, although the silent periods spent in his room with his tortoise are not charged with the fear and confusion of his later experience. While he presents these periods as almost therapeutic sessions of peace, and claims to be a sociable person, he is clearly incapable of a satisfactory relationship with another. The only person whom he held in any affection during his infancy was his grandfather, now dead.³ As a child, unable to cope

1 LTHI, p 185

2 Franz Kafka, Metamorphosis and other stories. Middlesex: Penguin Books. 1961.

3 LTHI, p 73

with the affection of his puppy, he coldly abandoned him outside the door.¹ He recalls the failure of communication with his mother in the empty, tea-drinking rituals and senseless conversations.² Even his early relationship with his wife was in the shadow of her cousin, standing between them in the doorway.³ From their earliest encounters the farcical element of his slipping money to her under the pillow intrudes,⁴ and later they make love 'sin motivo alguno.'⁵ He is disturbed by the presence of his wife: Acostumbrado a vivir solo durante tantos años (mas per pereza que per independencia) la presencia de mi esposa me cohibia, como antes me enojaban las visitas de mi madre.⁶

With the loss of his passport these unsatisfactory relationships take on a new intensity. There is a complete breakdown in communication as his family refuses to recognise him. His wife denies that he is her husband, his father denies that he is his son. "Mi madre" he says, "me trataba como a un desconocido."⁷ The occurrence at the keyhole at one of tea-drinking sessions would seem to have embodied his relationship with mother. Separated by the door, they stare at each other through the keyhole and he sees the pupil of her eye..."inmensa, borrosa, fría, llena de luces oscuras sobre un fondo blanco como un huevo."⁸

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- 1 Ibid., p 104
 - 2 Ibid., p 105
 - 3 Ibid., p 116
 - 4 LTHI, p 114
 - 5 Ibid., p 233
 - 6 Ibid., p 171
 - 7 Ibid., p 142
 - 8 Ibid., p 106

This type of eye-contact recurs frequently throughout Rojas's novels. Sometimes the description of the eye is purely biological, suggesting that the gazer is blind to the other's vision of himself, or to his own identity. At other times he is aware of himself in the eye of the other, as when Pombal in Luis III, el minotauro sees in the eyes of the minotaur..." su propia imagen, diminuta, despersonalizada, como reflejada en el espejo de su conciencia."¹ In the context of identity and communication, it is not surprising that the eye, constant reminder of how others see us, or that others see us in a different way than ourselves, should be an object of such fascination for Rojas. Both for Rojas as a self questioning man and for Rojas as a writer, aware of the particular communication of an author with his readers. One problem of relationships with others lies in the fact that the identity of the character can change with every eye that sees him, and that others have an impression of him which he can never hope to know fully. The varied alter egos of the characters in Rojas's novels are often as complex as their varied identities within the eyes of others. Eye-contact is usually strong and intense, generally the emphasis is on being stared at as the characters are confused about their own identity.²

1 L III M, p 22

2 e.g. "... te mira como si fuese a crucificarte"

AHMC, p 90. "Su mirar me mordió las pupilas ..." ADF p. 27

When the invisible man's wife tries to talk to him she looks at him with a disconcerting intensity and he feels alienated from her:

Ella ignoraba (o creía ignorar) que nadie podía contar nada a nadie en este mundo. Estábamos solos incluso dentro de nosotros mismos, separados por estepas infinitas de los demás.¹ Because he has not yet come to know himself he is unable to relate to his wife. A demonstration of this aspect of identity and communication is contained in a phrase of Lázaro in Auto de fe: "Nadie se atrevía a verse en mis ojos."² Because Lázaro is a man returned from the dead, which is an unknown entity for other people, they are incapable of communicating with him.

The invisible man's confusion of identity also embraces his non-recognition of others. The problem of coming to an understanding with the false inspector who alternately admits and denies that he is double, is developed in the episode of the masks. The two people whom the invisible man believed to be policemen turn into his two friends and then revert back again. The difficulty of communication is intensified when his doubt as to the identity of others is coupled with their rejection of himself. He becomes frustrated at the incomprehensible orders given by the inspector; he is to be allowed go free, on the other hand, he is not to be allowed go free.

1 LTHI, p 172

2 ADF, p 279

Threatening to call the police-station he is informed that he would only be considered a madman. The two policemen in their turn are also frustrated:

— No comprende — se dijeron.

— No quiere comprender.

— Lo creíamos tan razonable...

— Tan juicioso...

— Nos equivocamos.

— Probablemente.

When the invisible man is asked to accept his passport and the mask of himself he realises that he cannot do so. When the inspector had asked him to sign his novel soon after the loss of the passport he was unable to write his name because he realised that he did not really know who he was. Now he refuses because an acceptance would mean becoming the person that the others want him to be, that is, the person he was when he was ignorant of the necessity to know himself. With the loss of his passport he was brought face to face with the loneliness and alienation of his existence. His whole being became fragmented into many parts; his former self, his alter ego in the mirror, himself in the eyes of others, his lobster familiar, fragments which merged and separated leaving him confused and questioning. He is now a person aware of his own being, a thinking, self-questioning man. Out of his experience is born the manuscript which he sends to the editor/author. This is a communication with himself in terms of the latter being an author who calls him 'mi homónimo,' and a communication with the same man in his

function as a reader. "Puedo ser yo, puede ser él" reflects the editor/author "Quien traza estas líneas, pudo ser él, puede ser yo, quien compuso las restantes." ¹ And: "Escribí el libro al leerlo: soy su autor, me creé creándolo..."² Thus out of the loneliness of Rojas, and his questioning of his own existence grows the creation of fiction which is a communication with himself and with the reader.

As I have shown, the scriptwriter in Adolfo Hitler está en mi casa is linked to the author, or authors of "La ternura del hombre invisible." He is also similar to the director: "Era (y es) nuestra viva imagen;.." But into these relationships intrudes a sense of alienation from the other for he continues: pero sin parecerse en absoluto al autor de La ternura del hombre invisible. A quien se asemeja el director (para mi asombro y supongo para el suyo) es a Carlos III, último rey de las Austrias.³ The author of "La ternura del hombre invisible" is: "...copia exacta de esta faz que no responda a su realidad ni a la mía."⁴ As the invisible man recognises both a familiar and an alien in the different parts of himself, so too is the scriptwriter conscious of: "... usted y yo, yo y usted. Distintos, pero confundidos en el cuerpo de este hombre que es ambos, aunque no se parezca a ninguno de los dos."⁵ This split is reflected in the character created

1 LTHI, p 235

2 Ibid., p 235

3 AHMC, p 17

4 AHMC, p 17

5 Ibid., p 26

by the scriptwriter, Carlos II, who says: "No soy yo, aunque a veces nos sentimos tan juntos que lleque a confundirnos."¹

The identification of the scriptwriter with his creation takes place through a number of different channels which merge together. The director, being similar to the scriptwriter and also to Carlos II, is one link in this process. In a letter from María the scriptwriter learns that she has borne him a son.² Her description of the child shows similarities to the actual historical features of Carlos II of Spain. He suffers from the debility and congenital imbecility and the jutting chin which became a feature of the Hapsburg family. She also writes that she has dreamed of the scriptwriter as a king playing cards with his dwarfs. Later, the scriptwriter dreams of his son reflected in the mirror in the guise of a king.³

Thus the son is identified with himself and with his alter ego in the mirror. So Carlos II, in the person of his son, becomes not only his literary creation but his very flesh and blood. To this fusion of personalities is added that of the director in a new aspect, because he has given his name to the scriptwriter's son and because the son in the dream: "Era la viva imagen del director."⁴ Through the figure of the child who presides over the plaza of life and death⁵ the significance

1 Ibid., p 54

2 Ibid., p 89

3 Ibid., p 105

4 Ibid., p 105

5 c.f. Chapter Two p. 20

of these relationships begins to be revealed. The child is strongly linked with the director, and it is after the scriptwriter has received the news of the birth of his son that the two come together.

The director embraces the child and whispers to him, then: "El hombre y el niño se sientan en la acera, los pies en el arroyo."¹ This scene recurs soon afterwards and is developed in an inset into the script of Carlos II, where the latter, in place of the scriptwriter is the observer: Un hombre y un niño están sentados en el arcón, bajo la ventana.... Ambos se parecen a mí, cual un par de retratos de tiempos diversos.....Pasarían por mi imagen, aunque el hombre (prodigio) tenga facciones de rapas, y el niño, rasgos de adulto, mal crecido.....De perfil, son casi idénticos, como mi cara en dos monedas.²

The two begin to clap their hands together in time to the beating of Carlos II's heart, who feels that: "Si ahora cesaran su aplauso moriría al punto, parado el corazón. Mi suerte está en sus manos....."³ The two reappear together several times, finally at the same time as the apparition of the beating heart of Carlos II in the scriptwriter's ashtray. This scene is followed by the scriptwriter's destruction of the script of Carlos II, the torn pages of which he throws through the window into the plaza. Now as the novel draws to a close the child and the director appear in a triad of

1 AHMC, p 94

2 Ibid., p 96

3 Ibid., p 96

death and resurrection. The child picks up the torn pages of the script and fits them together again. This is followed by the drowning of the director and his resurrection in the scriptwriter's room. Again the latter's script is presented as his flesh and blood creation: "¿Cómo está el guión?" asks the director, and the reply is another question: "¿Cómo está mi hijo?"¹ He is told that his son has died. But the son, in the form of the script, is to be resuscitated by the director. The director then, is the creative inspiration of the scriptwriter. He and the child clap their hands together to keep alive his creation, Carlos II. Because it is 'Usted' who has been credited with the actual writing of the script and who is the father of the son/king,² this alter ego must also be equated with the creative urge in the scriptwriter. The director urges 'Usted' to take up his work again and dictates the first line to him: "Adolfo Hitler está en mi casa"³ This strange title has a double significance. Firstly, "Adolfo Hitler" is the director, that is, the dictator within the mind (mi casa) of the writer who forces him to write, an irresistible creative urge. Secondly, "Adolfo Hitler" is an alien or monster, but like "Usted" is a part of the writer, living within him. Thus one can come to the same conclusion reached in connection with La Ternura del hombre invisible. Out of the loneliness and alienation of the scriptwriter, and his awareness of himself and attempt at communication with "Usted," emerges the new creation.

1 Ibid., p 153

2 Ibid., p 105

3 Ibid., p 162

While the scriptwriter tries to communicate with "Usted," his failure to do so produces an anguish which makes him exclaim: Cada una inaceptable para el otro, y ambos limitándonos y enfrentándonos como enemigos. El infierno es nuestro ser en el prójimo, y nuestra incapacidad de sentirnos nosotros mismos, por creernos otros.¹

But the desire to reach a state of concord persists for he wonders the next moment:

A veces me pregunto, sin embargo, si no habrá un acuerdo secreto entre los dos, un pacto inconfesable²

Here is the necessity for self-examination and communication which Rojas explores in his writings. The director urges "Usted" to re-create his work saying: "No hacerlo sin embargo sería suicidarnos."³ A vital and particular form of communication for an author is his writings. Not to write, is, for him, to kill the creative inspiration and the communication with himself and others. On a broad scale, Rojas has a common destiny with mankind, his familiars in their humanity and his aliens in their varied beings. There are no cut-and-dried answers for the characters in Rojas's novels because what is important is that they are aware of the necessity of self-examination and communication. The necessity of questioning. "¿Quién soy?" they are asking themselves as the sisters of Lázaro ask their brother in

Auto de fe:

1 AHMC, p 43

2 Ibid., p 43

3 Ibid., p 159

- ¿Quién eres?

... ..

- ¿De dónde vienes?

... ..

- ¿Quién te trajo?

... ..

- ¿Qué haces?

... ..

- ¿Quién somos?

... ..

- ¿Dónde estás?

... ..

- ¿Por qué volviste?

... ..

- ¿Qué quieres?

... ..

And finally: "Dinos, ¿duermes o vives?"¹

For Rojas, the sleeping man is one who merely exists, in a non-thinking torpor; the living man is one who is engaged in constant self-questioning and re-evaluation of himself and through this is relating positively to other people.

1 ADF, p 11

CHAPTER TWO

Conscious of the lonely condition of man, Rojas invests his novels with the fertility symbols of the myths of his forefathers in the hope of renewal and life. In the two novels in question, the characters all operate in a creative context, and these fertility symbols and images are appealed to as a prayer to fill the loneliness of the lives of the main characters, and to strengthen the developing creative instinct and inspiration. Many of these images are woven around woman; in these and other novels she is the central human figure of fertility, and in this role she plays an important part in the lives of the characters. In las llaves del infierno, the painter, a lonely and alienated person, disturbed by the failure of his artistic creations, becomes obsessed with the idea of the son he has conceived in his Indian model, Chenchá. When his son and Chenchá die as the result of an attempted abortion, he transfers this obsession to her own son, Manuelito.¹ In Auto de fe where one of the principal themes is the pressure on Carlos II to beget a son, the women are focused on in a positive creative context. Two of the women in Aquelarre, Gisela and Sabina, are made love to by Aquel - Cuyo - Nombre - No - Debe - Decirse in order to inspire the art-copyist, Focas y Ciro. Thus they are part of the creative principle behind the birth of his painting and that of the characters Antonio and Julito who are born of the sexual union. The loneliness of the minotaur in Luis III el minotauro is alleviated to some extent by his single

1 LLDI, pp 158,9

encounter with a blind woman, who later bears him a son. And the son borne by María in Adolfo Hitler está in mi casa is an important link between the scriptwriter and his literary creation. We know little of María from her short letter to the scriptwriter, but clearly the only reason for her existence in the novel is that she is the one who gives birth to the scriptwriter's son. Even from these brief examples it can be seen that the women in these novels possess an answer to the problems of loneliness and barrenness and that the notion of physical fertility is often fused with that of artistic fertility.

Many of the fertility symbols in La ternura del hombre invisible are centered around the wife of the invisible man. He describes in detail three of their early encounters and the amount of fertility symbols present is significant. The most basic of these symbols is that of water. It is recognised in the myths of almost every culture as the source of all life; for the ancient Egyptians the world emerged from the waters of Nun, in Christianity, the baptism with water is a sign of new spiritual life. Even present day scientific interpretations claim that the world evolved from a large swamp. Closely allied to the symbol of water is that of rain, vital to the growth and survival of life. Describing his first meeting with his future wife at the zoo,¹ the invisible man recalls that it had rained that morning, and it is raining when he later leaves her room. He also mentions water falling from a fountain, and a lake, which, as we are informed in a footnote, could not have been

¹ LTHI, p 74

seen from his position in the zoo. Himself and his future wife spend their time there wandering around the aquarium, again an atmosphere of water and reminiscent of the foetus in the waters of the womb. He returns in his mind to his childhood, to the image of father and son in the same building and now sees the corridors and fish multiplied in the laberinthine aquarium. Other fertility symbols are present; a dove crossing a stream, an early moon, a doe and the fish already referred to.¹ As early then as this first meeting, the woman is seen in her role of joint creator, in her promise of companionship and fertility she represents an answer to loneliness and barrenness. And the invisible man even goes so far as to observe an invisible extent of water to emphasise the event. These images combine to presage the imminent coupling of the invisible man and his wife in the most basic act of creation, which occurs when they make love together at the second meeting.² Here, however, the fertility images are less optimistic; the sky and the air seem to presage fertile rain, but it could be infertile snow, the stairs to her room no longer smell of seaweed and mushrooms as on the first meeting, but like the sepulchures of the desert. When he is leaving, the invisible man encounters her cousin standing in the doorway of the building, thus spiritually

1 For an explanation of the function of these symbols in European Myth, c.f. Marija Gimbutas, *The Gods and Goddesses of Old Europe, 7000-3500 B.C.* London: Thames and Hudson, 1974 (Henceforth GGOE) pp 112, 146-8, 91, 171-4, 107-11.

2 LTHI, p 111

blocking the possibility of full union and satisfaction with his future wife. That the invisible man senses the threat of the cousin is evident in his reaction to the latter's first absence from his post in the doorway: "Y luego, una tarde, de pronto, ocurrió todo; es decir; no sucedió nada. Simplemente: él no estaba allí."¹ He rushes upstairs like a madman and asks the girl to marry him. Here the prayer to fertility is renewed as the event occurs in springtime and the air smells of the salt sea and damp fields. But the threat of the cousin persists in his mind after their marriage as is evinced in the following scene where it is not her husband, but her cousin, who is presented as the true partner of the wife of the invisible man. Between herself and her cousin, a relationship of mutual love and understanding is suggested while the invisible man stands excluded and isolated. He is at a film on a showery day, when a huge wave on the screen freezes and conjures up the naked figures of his wife and her cousin. A river now runs to accompany this bringing together of two beings so suited to companionship and creation: Sus gestos y ademanes eran el ritual de una danza salvaje que remedaba la vida, la muerte y la verdad. El torrente oculto rugía ahora muy próximo. La noche entera era su eco, su inmensa caracola. Venía del hontanar de los tiempos y corría implacable hacia el fondo de la nada.²

The river, then, appears at this moment to accompany the dance of life and death, a suggestion that here lies the answer to alienation and loneliness, here in the waters of life and

1 LTHI, p 117

2 Ibid., p 174

resurrection. At first the river merely murmurs in the distance but when the wife and cousin meet and touch, it becomes a roar of water close by. Finally the scene is ushered out by the wave moving again, the wave which has stopped even time in the cinema to bring into being this vision of life. The occurrence throws the invisible man into thoughts and questionings about himself: the world of the wave, he ponders, could have been the ever-repeating world of mirrors or that of imprisoned shadows struggling to be born again. He is left asking himself who his is, denied by his parents and his wife, alone in a labyrinth of deserted streets.¹

Closely associated with water and fertility in European myth is the figure of the bird. It is incorporated in the Bird and Snake Goddess who rules over water and rain, and who has been depicted staring from the very centre of the world where flows a mythical water stream.² The bird and water appear in the photograph of the invisible man's wife, which he keeps on a table in his study.³ This shows her in front of a waveless sea, and the shapes of the clouds above her are those of dead birds, witness to the infertility of their relationship, in a physical and a spiritual sense. His wife dreams that she is a golden bridge over the sea,⁴ for as a woman, she has within her the power of creation. But the inference of the wave vision in the cinema is that this power can come to full fruition only

1 LTHI, p 175

2 GGOE, p 112

3 LTHI, p 13

4 Ibid., p 25

with her cousin, and not with her husband, for whom she is barren and cold. Rojas also turns to the image of the doe to express the fertility theme. The doe appears in European myth as the double of the Goddess of Regeneration; the mother of the universe can be a doe-elk or reindeer doe.¹ The invisible man mentions the doe licking sugar from his wife's hand at the first meeting,² where she held the potential of an answer to his loneliness and to his literary infertility, when his writings consisted only of a repetition of the same phrase, over and over again.³ Later he finds that she has dreamt herself as a doe, a dream which recurs on the first night of his return without his passport.⁴ But the omen of the doe at the zoo has now been nulled; it lies in a wood covered in snow, a frigid and infertile setting. There is a certain ambiguity attached to the question of the fertility of the invisible man's wife. The threat of her cousin and her husband's own feeling of alienation from her imply a negation of her creative powers with regard to the invisible man. However, the prayer to fertility is finally answered when she gives birth, in a metaphysical sense, to the lobster of death.⁵

The delight of the invisible man at the birth of this enigmatic creature can be accounted for by turning to the episode of the "nagual" which takes place in las llaves del infierno. Here, an Indian expresses horror at the killing of

1 GGOE, p 171

2 LTHI, p 79

3 Ibid., p 109, 112

4 Ibid., p 25, 37, 209

a bat, believing it to be a "nagual." The painter explains what this means: "Evoca la muerte y su misterio, porque "nagual" es la bestia depositaria del alma de un hombre. Si el "nagual" muere el hombre cuyo espíritu guardaba morirá también."¹ As the bat is the "nagual" for the Indian, so the lobster is the "nagual" for the invisible man. It carries within it the element of death, and is an ugly and monstrous beast, like the "naguales" referred to in Las llaves del infierno; a bat and a lizard. The lobster of death is linked also to the "nagual" through another fertility symbol, that of the Teotihuacán goddess of water. A statue of this goddess presides over a collection of figurines belonging to his wife, and these are in the form of monstrous beings; dragons, centaurs, etc.² That Rojas is consciously using the theme of fertility is further evinced in a footnote where he says: Recuérdese que en otra pesadilla la mujer del autor creíase una corza, víctima propiciatoria favorita en los sacrificios de los griegos. La corza daría vida, paradójicamente, a la langosta de la muerte.³

In the same way, because the son which she bears is a monster,⁴ and because her collection of figurines are in the form of monsters, the presiding of the Teotihuacán goddess of water over these figurines, may be seen as an influence on the birth of the lobster of death. In keeping with this theme of fertility, it is only after his wife has borne the lobster of death in a dream, where her husband says to her: "...he aquí a tu hijo"⁵ that the invisible man can go out and make contact

1 LEDI, p 156

2 LTHI, pp 57, 103

3 Ibid, p 209

4 Ibid., p 183; "Sé que parí una especie de monstruo ..."

5 Ibid., p 184

with it. His pleasure at the manifestation of the lobster of death lies in the fact that it has just been born, so it alive and vital. Being the keeper of his soul, this means that his soul is alive and vital also, and by extension, so too is his power to create, to "escribir algo con el corazón."¹

To this manifestation of the keeper of his soul he says: "Me gustaría alguna vez vivir la eternidad entera en su compañía..."²

Here it is evident that fertility symbols play an important part in his novel, and that for the invisible man, writing books "que nunca quise leer,"³ and living in an atmosphere of loneliness and alienation, the question of fertility is the essence of the relationship between himself and his wife.

Water as a symbol of life, or life through death appears elsewhere in the novel. When the false inspector advises the invisible man to throw himself off the bridge into the river, it is being offered as the only solution to his dilemma about the lost passport.⁴ The omniscient inspector gives him instructions which make the act take on a ritualistic air. From the way he is to walk, to the counting up to the number three on the bridge, and even including the rite of smoking a cigarette. The waters are presented as holding some solution through death to the problems of the invisible man; "...este poco de esperanza que en la muerte llenará el vacío de la eternidad..."⁵ But the invisible man refuses this answer, the river does not exist, he is not prepared to undergo a

1 LTHI, pp 107, 108
2 Ibid, p 185
3 Ibid., p. 109
4 Ibid., p 135
5 Ibid, p 136

straightforward suicide. However, in Adolfo Hitler está en mi casa, there is a successful regeneration of the director through death in the life-giving waters. Here again, the manner of his death in the waters is presented in a ritualistic fashion. At the beginning of the novel the director throws his shoes into the sea: Tomólos por el empeine con la mano abierta, cobró impulso en tres zarandeos y, sin levantarse siquiera, los lanzó persiguiéndose a gran distancia. Cayeron en el espumaje y hundiéronse en seguida.¹

Near the end of the novel the scriptwriter discovers the shoes on the beach, placed there in a strange and mysterious manner; they are arranged exactly together and have been recently polished. Immediately afterwards he finds the drowned body of the director.² The ritualistic manner in which the event is described, as with the preceding one in *La ternura del hombre invisible*, shows an awareness on Rojas's part of the supernatural symbolism of water. The waters have indeed given life through death to the director, for he later appears alive in the scriptwriters room. And this aspect of fertility applies also to the scriptwriters literary fertility, because the resurrection of the director is the resurrection of the script, as I have shown in Chapter One. The symbol of rain is insisted on very strongly in Adolfo Hitler está on mi casa, to the extent that the main atmospheric background of the last two-thirds of the novel seems to be one of rain. That is to say, as the events, the confusion and the self-questioning of the scriptwriter all develop, and the script on Carlos II

1 AHMC, p 25

2 Ibid., p 139

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progresses, the atmosphere of rain is contributing in a structural way to the novel as a whole, linking contemporary events with those of 1700. For example, Chapter Four opens with the heading "22 de Septiembre de 1963." followed by the words: "Llueve. Llovizna. Amaneció ya."¹ and is linked with the next section of the script on Carlos II headed "25 de Septiembre de 1700" and followed by the words: "Llueve. ¿Será de noche aún o amaneció ya?"² As well as being linked in this specific way they are linked also by the prevailing atmosphere of rain and the comments on its absence,³ showing how the lonely king Carlos II shares the same preoccupation with the fertility giving rain as his creator the scriptwriter.

The aspect of fertility inherent in most mythical traditions, life through death or sacrifice, is used by Rojas in connection with images other than that of water. The idea behind a sacrifice is that the offering should contain the principle of life, and it is offered to sustain and renew vitality. An animal which appears in Adolfo Hitler está en mi casa with strong fertility associations is the bull. This symbol in the form of Dionysus the bull-god is a pre Indo-European god of great antiquity, a god born directly from water. Closely connected with phalli in the temples, sculptures and festivals of Greece he was: "a bull-god, god of annual renewal, imbued with all the urgency of nature. Brimming with virility he was the god most favoured by women."⁴ In the figure of the bull we encounter the concept of sacrifice as a means to re-creation; in one myth

1 AHMG, p 67

2 Ibid., p 73

3 Ibid., pp 20, 77, 79, 85 and passim.

4 GGOE, p 227

the Great Goddess emerges from the dead bull in the shape of a bee or a butterfly.¹ The bull in Adolfo Hitler está en mi casa is linked mainly with Carlos II, who identifies himself with this life-giving figure: "Ayer ... me creía un toro muerto."² That the image of the dead bull is a sacrificial one is suggested in the more detailed description which follows, of the bull in Carreño's workshop. Here the young Carlos II regards the death of the bull not as cold and final but as a death with sacrificial connotations, for the blood is still flowing and is given emphasis in the description: La chicha muerta olía dulce. La sangre caía gota a gota por el ano partido ... chipi, chape, chape, chipe ... uno ahora y después otra ...³

The bull image re-appears to gather around it images of life and creation. In a dream of Carlos II, the breast of his mother becomes a horn, which, when blown on by the dwarf Luisillo, emits a sound which "transformábase en gritos de placer y rugir de muchedumbres en los torcs."⁴ Carlos II again dreams himself transformed into a dead bull; he is on a golden throne - indicating his need as a king to engender heirs.⁵ But the engendering of an heir equally obsesses the personal life of Carlos II, as this would ease some of the pressures which contribute to terrorise him, pressures of bewitchment and exorcisms, which are explored by Rojas in Auto de fe. The world of this bull-dream now becomes a world impregnated with water. Although the identification with the bull indicates the dual nature of man; "mi desesperación de buey y de hombre,"⁶ it may also be viewed in the context of sacrifice and fertility.

1 GGOE, p 91

2 AHMC, p 29

3 Ibid., p 30

4 Ibid., p 33

5 Ibid., p 33

6 Ibid., p 34

For it is as a dead bull submerged in the waters of life that Carlos II is unequivocal about his intention to live: "Yo en cambio no moriría jamás."¹ Taking into account his obsessive desire to procreate, this statement can be interpreted as his intention to live forever through his descendants. The bull enters for a moment into the contemporary plane of the novel when the scriptwriter, whose own obsession is with literary fertility, hears the roaring of a bull "en el fondo de la negrura,"² perhaps as an echo of the bull of Carlos II. The next manifestation of the bull takes the form of an apparition.³ Alive, handsome and with human eyes, it is an almost religious annunciation of life, and it passes through the window leaving it intact. The bull drips with the creative symbol of water and its roar shrinks Carlos II's private parts, for he is impotent and the potential of his genitals must pass to the figure of the bull, as his hope of regeneration is through a fertility god or symbol.⁴ The last appearance of the bull is towards the end of the novel, again in a sacrificial guise.⁵ After the death of the director, the bull is discovered by the scriptwriter in the autopsy room, lying on the table as a dead man would, with fresh red blood and the letters C.J. 1700 in evidence. In this way the bull is clearly identified with

1 Ibid., p 34

2 AHMC, p 60:

3 Ibid., p 75

4 Similarly, in Auto de fe, it is only through "el bufón," as a projection of Carlos II, that he is able to complete the sexual act.

5 AHMC, p 150

the director and the resurrection of the script, and so plays its role in the literary fertility of the scriptwriter.

Running through the whole of Adolfo Hitler está en mi casa is the motif of the plaza. It gives a structural unity to the work and reflects the themes of fertility and barrenness with the symbols of life and death. A description of the plaza is first given in Chapter One¹ and this description takes on the aura of opposing life and death in the light of subsequent repetitions and modifications of the objects described and the events which occur around them. A threat of death is contained in the dust on the ground, in the three nests, which, although they hold the promise of new life are "quizá vacíos," and in the date 1700, reminder of a dead era and the barren life of Carlos II. The bells ring out over the plaza marking the passing of time. Against these is set the symbol of the fountain, and the bicycle, which heralds the appearance of the child. Later, other images of death are observed in the plaza; the scaffold scene with Carlos II and the funeral cortege.² But images of life appear also, in the figure of the rejuvenated baron³ and the old woman who feeds the birds, which action is represented in the novel as the sowing of seed: "...empieza a extraer algo invisible de su interior (del bolso) que siembra el volteo con rítmicos ademanes."⁴ The central figure in the plaza of

1 Ibid., p 13, repeated, and modified pp 27, 43, 50 and passim

2 Ibid., pp 69, 94

3 Ibid., p 45

4 AHMC, pp 28, 44, (Italics mine)

of life and death is that of the child. On his first appearance in the plaza, the writing of his actions in italics, his ritualistic circling of the plaza on his bicycle and the silence which reigns lend the scene a mysterious propitiatory atmosphere.¹ His presence is reiterated throughout the novel, either alone, or in the company of the director. This creative image of the child triumphs over those of death and barrenness in the plaza, when he resurrects the script on Carlos II, as I have described in Chapter One.

Dwarfs in European mythology are the guardians of sleep and are renowned as artificers, craftsmen, and inventors.² We may draw a comparison between the role of the dwarf in Adolfo Hitler está en mi casa and that of the child. From a general viewpoint he is at once a child and a man on account of his size. In the novel, Rojas describes him with emphasis on this aspect, deceptive as it is, and fuses in him the three bases of creation; the man, the woman and the child: Sobre un trípode, cruzadas las piernas, un flautín en las manos, un enanillo que quizá sea un niño, o un rapaz idéntico a un adulto liliputiense. De perfil sin embargo, pasaría también por mocita disfrazada de crío, o inclusive por pigmea imitando una niña vestida de chaval. Cabe aún verlo como un hombre bajísimo, remedando a una muchacha que a su vez hiciese el papel de garzón. Podría ser incluso un actorzuelo, intérprete de sí mismo o de otra artista infantil quien fuese en escena la pollita caracterizada de enano desempeñando la parte de un mocosito flautista.³

1 Ibid., p 47

2 c.f. J.E. Cirlot. A dictionary of symbols. London:Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962

3 AHMC, pp 52, 82

A child encountered by the invisible man is described in similar terms: "Quizá no fuese tampoco un niño, sino un enano de rasgos infantiles."¹ As the creative image of the child, mounted on a bicycle, presides over the patio of life and death, so the dwarf, mounted on a tripod, presides over the card-room where the old woman, the director and the baron are involved in a game. The dwarf playing the flute, which can be considered as a phallic symbol, is later specifically linked with the child, as we are told: "El niño toca un flautín."² The fact that Carlos II's constant companions are a monkey and two dwarfs, one of either sex, emphasizes the creative aspect of the dwarf. The monkey, apart from being an obvious reflection of the human form is used by Rojas in Auto de fe as a powerful sexual symbol. Luisillo, the dwarf of Carlos II, plays on a flute in the workshop of Carreno, and in a corner of the palace during Carlos II's own birth,³ just as the dwarf plays it while presiding over the card-game. Sacrificial offerings of the ancient Romans were accompanied by the playing of a flute,⁴ and the final image of the dwarf is a sacrificial one. Luisillo is dreamed by Carlos II suckling the breast of the latter's mother. He plucks off the breast which has become a horn and blows on it to bring forth a series of images from the sound, among them rain and bulls, thus

1 LTHI, pp 113, 117

2 AHMC, p 130

3 Ibid., pp 13, 77.

4 cf. R.M. Ogilvie, The Romans and their gods in the age of Augustus pp 48, 51. London: Chatto and Windus. 1969

intimating the underwater dream of Carlos II which follows.¹
In the dream of the baron, the pigmy flautist is a dwarfess.²
So the dwarfs of the card-room are linked with those of
Carlos II; the pigmy flautist is Luisillo and the dwarfess
of the baron, described "como si estuviera posando para un
pinter"³ is clearly Luisillo's companion, who sat for Carréno.⁴
The final image of the dwarf is in a positively creative role;
naked and roasted she lies in the fountain, and seems both like
a foetus and a doll. She is now the sacrificial victim,
being cut up and eaten by the card players.⁵ A toast is offered
and thus in the manner of a Holy Communion in the rites of
the Catholic Church, she becomes the hope and symbol of new
life as Christ did through his sacrifice.⁶

Other fertility symbols appear in the two novels in
question coming across as a presence or prayer repeated through
the works, such as the moon, the fish and the bird. The latter
is connected in both novels with that of the butterfly.⁷ The
invisible man incorporates the sound of factory sirens into
his novel, a sound which terminated the lecture of the editor/
author who believes the novel to have been inspired by the
occasion of his lecture.⁸ During the first conversation with

1 AHMC, pp 31, 33. The child blows in the same way on an
empty snail-shell p 124

2 Ibid., p 83

3 Ibid., p 83

4 Ibid., pp 9

5 Ibid., p 84

6 It is interesting to note that the figure of the male dwarf has
now given way to that of the female; the woman as the central
figure of fertility is again reverted to.

7 For the symbolism of the butterfly cf. GGOE, pp 181-190

8 LTHI, p 64

his wife after the loss of his passport, he associates the swallow¹ and the butterfly with the event of his inspiration saying: "La mariposa, el vencejo y la sirena formaban parte de un pasado, repetido ahora con nítida precisión."² Carlos II recalls two pets which he owned, a bird and a butterfly. We learn that a lap-dog, which he also had as a pet, he gave away, but the two pets with fertility associations were taken from him without his consent; the bird was eaten by a cat and the yellow butterfly was lost or stolen.³ The sheer number of fertility symbols and images in these works indicate an awareness on Rojas's part of their mysterious powers and their function in ancient myth. The fact that they appear, as I have shown, in definite creative contexts, makes it clear that Rojas uses them consciously as a means of alleviating the loneliness of his characters who appeal to them to bring forth their creative inspiration. The preoccupations of the protagonists with creation and new life are the preoccupations of the author. For Rojas, the worlds which he creates through his writing people the isolation of his own being, and the fertility symbols which he calls up are to enable him to reach the full potential of his creativity as an author, and are a means of enriching his writings.

1 One of the manifestations of the fertile Bird Goddess takes the form of a swallow. GGOE. p 147

2 LTHI, p 26

3 AHMC, pp 76, 7

CHAPTER THREE

Having established the force behind the creative impulse of Carlos Rojas, and traced his characters' awareness of self-examination and communication, it is necessary to see how Rojas relates this aspect of the meaning of life to the means of living. In Diálogos para otra España he advocates an equilibrium between the two: "Vale el vivir," he says, "no el propósito de la vida."¹ The themes dealt with in his novels are those of the nature and meaning of life. So that his thoughts do not remain isolated within the pages of a novel, or within the mind of the author, they should have some relevance to the realities of living. The extreme of this situation can be seen in the person of Don Quijote, who, having decided that the novels of chivalry contain the true meaning of life, goes out and lives his own life according to the precepts therein. For Rojas it is not necessary to become Carlos II or a nameless scriptwriter, but to relate the basic problems explored in the novels to the way in which man lives out his life. His themes are not mere outpourings of a personal sense of loneliness and alienation, the self-indulgence which is only "el eco de mi propia voz."² The sense of existential anguish in modern man is a common theme for the modern novelist, but Rojas goes further than reiterating this theme in his novels. These are, in effect, the artistic expression of a personal philosophy of the fraternity of man. To appreciate this fully his fiction must be considered in relation to his non-fiction. Art, reason and morality, says Ortega in El tema de nuestro tiempo "han de servir a la vida."³

1 DPOE, pp 16, 17

2 AHMC, p 159

3 José Ortega y Gasset, Obras Completas,
Madrid: Ediciones Castilla, 5th ed., 1962 Vol III p 178

This is not to say that the novels of Rojas are no more than extensions of ideas expressed in his non-fiction. In the novels, he explores with depth and feeling, a man's confrontation with himself and others. There is no answer in his novels to the proposition of "know thyself" exhorted in his non-fiction. If this were so he would need only to write one novel in which a man, having searched for and found himself, goes out and embraces mankind in a spirit of fraternity. But Rojas shows all the fear and torture which accompanies this self-searching and raises a multiple of questions on the problems of existence, leaving always a lingering doubt in the minds of the characters. And this lingering doubt is left also in the mind of the reader. He is, in his own words "más develador de preguntas que pontífice de respuestas."¹ He poses questions in a manner which incites the reader to ponder on them himself and relate them to his own existence. Rojas refuses to preach messages in his novels, what he claims is a presentation by the author to be re-created by the reader.² The personal tone of his novels is linked with his awareness of the common destiny of man as expressed in his non-fictional writings. The introspectiveness of the one bears fruit in the philosophy of fraternity and communication expressed in the other.

1 DPOE, p 5

2 In a lecture given at University College Dublin, Dec. 17th 1974

There may be several reasons for adopting this attitude of fraternity. An inability to solve one's own problems leading to a focusing of one's energy on others. A solution to the absurdity of life through giving oneself a role in life and a justification of existence in this human communion. Or a basic animal instinct drawing one towards those of one's own kind combined with a feeling of obligation to live in harmony with them. Characters created by Rojas in one novel intermingle with those of another. For instance, Carlos II appears in Adolfo Hitler está en mi casa, Auto de Fe, and Aquelarre. Many of the characters within the novel overlap each other, like the director and the scriptwriter in Adolfo Hitler está en mi casa, the invisible man and the editor/author in La ternura del hombre invisible, "el hechizado" and "el fusilado" in Aquelarre, Azaña and his double the pharmacist in Azaña. This overlapping is most evident in Auto de Fe, especially in the inter-relation of the three principal characters, Lázaro, "el bufón" and Carlos II. "El bufón" stands in the middle, connected both with Lázaro and with Carlos II. While this situation can produce a confusion of identity for the characters concerned, it can also afford a solace to their loneliness and insecurity. Although Carlos II has a terrible fear of being nobody he can also feel like "el bufón" and Lázaro: "Y yo soy otro."¹ The fear of being isolated in time is an aspect of Carlos II's fear of being isolated in eternity. His obsession is to engender a son to perpetuate both the Spanish throne and himself.

1 ADF, pp 416, 7, 8, and passim

Through "el bufón" he is linked with the past, with Lázaro, a person like himself who had life thrust upon him against his will. And it is only in the person of "el bufón," converted into Carlos II, that he can complete the sexual act with the queen and thus hope to engender a son to immortalize himself in the future. In order to be "somebody" the characters need to feel that they are not completely isolated, but an essential part in the process of mankind.

Destined to live with himself and with other people, man should make the effort, first to know himself and then to communicate with others in a spirit of understanding. Unamuno, in Cómo se hace una novela says: En cuanto un pensamiento nuestro queda fijado por la escritura, expresado, cristalizado, queda ya muerto Muerto de que otros pueden tomar vida. Por que él que lee una novela puede vivirla, revivirla..... puede re-crearlo.¹

Thus, Rojas communicates with the reader, opening out his own thoughts for him to interpret. As the invisible man explains to the inspector, his novel has many interpretations. And the editor/author, at the end of the novel, realises the role of the reader:

"Escribí el libro al leerlo...."² On the supposition that the invisible man has written it for him to read he continues further on: "La obra entonces, una vez escrita, sería letra muerta para él"³ Rojas is creating himself as he writes, "me creé creándolo,"⁴ through the process of self-examination, and the written word "letra muerta" is communicated to the reader, to write the book on reading it, that is, to create

1 Miguel de Unamuno, Obras Completas, Madrid: Escelicer, 1966.

2 LTHI, p 235

Vol. VIII, pp 710, 11.

3 Ibid., p 237: 4 Ibid., p 235

his own interpretation and thoughts.

While Camus sees the absurd in the eternal efforts of man to understand an inexplicable world, Rojas sees the necessity of self-questioning in order to maintain a human dignity in the face of the absurdity of our being born only to die. First man must "...reconocer el monstruo en el hombre y el hombre en el monstruo pues ambos nos habitan a la vez en las simas de la sangre"¹ This recognition of non-perfection is a prerequisite to having respect for oneself as a man. Even if it brings with it tortuous wonder and fear it is preferable to the degradation which occurs when man, "ni ange, ni bête," becomes pure unthinking beast. In the following passage from Adolfo Hitler está en mi casa, Rojas expresses a sad contempt for those who go unthinkingly through life:

... Fornicando, mintiendo, riendo, intrigando, robando, orando, comiendo, bebiendo, orinando, durmiendo, soñando, despertando, rascándose, despiojándose...²

"El bufón" in Auto de Fe wishes to believe that he is only "un niño inocente."³ "El cachetero" in Aquelarre is conscious of the monster in himself:

"Ningún crimen me era ajeno, apercebido a cometerlos todos sin causa ni disculpa."⁴ but he transfers the responsibility to the "Soñador" who is dreaming him: "No somos libres de mudarle la pesadilla; pero sí inocentes de las culpas que nos sueña."⁵ To recognise the monster in oneself is a step

1 PPLG, preface

2 AHMC, p 117

3 ADF, pp 95, 366, 404 and passim

4 AQ, p 189

5 Ibid., p 190

towards the understanding of oneself and others who are also "ni ange, ni bête," but only if this recognition is accompanied by a sense of responsibility for one's actions. "Saberse bestias" Rojas tells us in Diálogos para otra España "y esforzarse en no serlo es cobrar conciencia de la condición humana."¹

As I have shown, the various alter egos of Rojas's characters are alien to but also an intimate part of themselves. Throughout the two novels which I have examined, the characters are recognizing and constantly trying to communicate with them. As man must be aware of the differences in himself, so he must take into account the differences in others. Rojas quotes Antonio Machado in Diálogos para otra España saying: "El hombre es por esencia diverso....come bien decía Machado."² But, in his own words, we are all "hermanos encadenados por la carne y la sangre de la humana condición."³ In the short essay by Jorge Luis Borges entitled "Borges y yo"⁴ the author distinguishes between Borges the man and Borges the writer. He feels himself estranged from the Borges of published works, not because he has become completely an unrecognizable figure but because the time has come for the other Borges to be objectified. The two are distinct yet they depend mutually upon each other: "Yo vivo, yo me dejo vivir, para que

1 DPOE, p 13

2 Ibid., p 12

3 PPLG, preface

4 Jorge Luis Borges. Obras Completas. Buenos Aires: Emecé Editores El Hacedor 1960, Vol III

Borges pueda tramar su literatura, y esa literatura me justifica."

This sensation of estrangement from oneself is surely an experience of most people. A person may recollect himself as he was several years ago, or as a child, and be unable to reconcile that figure with himself as he is now. He may recall an incident of the recent past and see himself as a different person in that situation. Caught in a moment, a finger of his, or a timbre in his voice seems strange and alienated from himself. And yet that strange person of every second past and present contributes to forming the person he is now. In Adolfo Hitler está en mi casa Rojas explores an aspect of this phenomenon in terms of the man and the writer, and the relationship between the two. As Borges the man lives and the other writes so the scriptwriter says: "Usted escribe, yo padezco..."¹ He is conscious of their affinity and so is constantly attempting to communicate with this alter ego. The two estranged beings come together in the last line of Borges's essay when he says "No sé cual de los dos escribe esta página." So too, do the invisible man and the editor/author when the latter says: "Puedo ser yo, puede ser él, quien traza estas líneas..."² In fact, the invisible man has gone through his experience so that the editor/author can "write the book on reading it," and the novel which Rojas has written depends on the mutual interaction of these two protagonists.

1 AHMC, p 22

2 LTHI, p 235

Many of the characters in his novels are presented in relation to another who is similar to, yet different from themselves. The twins in Auto de Fe and those in Aquelarre are striking examples of the problem of harmonizing this similarity and difference. Obviously closely linked together by virtue of their being twins, the two young girls in Auto de Fe also share the same actions and desires. Nobody can tell them apart, both have sexual intercourse with "el bufón," both want a son from him. Their names are almost, (but only almost) the same; Juana María and Mari Juana. One of them however is unable to come to terms with the difference between them, and cannot accept that it is the other, and not she, who will bear "el bufón" a son. When the son is born dead she laments: "¡Con el deseo te maté y maldije el niño en el vientre! Tuyo no lo quise si mío no era...."¹ The twins in Aquelarre have a common bond in their dumbness. Because they are boy and girl, again, only one of them can bear a child. When his sister is impregnated by the moon, the boy attempts to stab the reflection of the moon in the water. In this case, as in that of Auto de Fe, it is a blind feeling of alienation from their twin which produces a murderous frenzy in each. In the case of the twin sisters, the cause is a jealousy of the other's childbearing capacities, in that of the twin boy and girl, it is a jealousy of the moon which has come between them. In the same category we may consider also the half-brothers Antonio Escuin and Julito Santiago of Aquelarre. Although they are of the same blood, being sons

¹ ADF, p 357

of "Aquel - Cuyo - Nombre - No - Debe - Decirse," they are turned against each other in the Spanish civil war, choosing to fight on opposing sides. Yet even after the confrontation in la Diagonal they come together and silently embrace. They are so alike that they are solely capable of killing and being killed by each other. Their quarrels become frequent and the gypsy girl, "la Ajusticiada" comes between them. The final outcome is a tragic one for they meet their death at the other's hands. An analogy may be drawn between the tragedy of the brothers and that of civil war. There is no victory of one brother over the other; likewise, in a civil war situation, there is a mutual defeat when countrymen take up arms against each other. As in the interminable chess game between Capablanca and Bonaparte in La ternura del hombre invisible: "Su encuentro sería el ataque de fuerzas eternamente equilibradas, anulándose sin destruirse."¹ This concept may be extended to all war between men, where the antagonists are brothers in their humanity as in civil war they share the common destiny of their country. The repercussions of war continue long after the fighting has ended, the seeds of hatred and discontent lie dormant, perhaps over hundreds of years, ready to ripen into another confrontation. In this way the opposing sides are annulling each other without destroying each other and there is no real victory for the winners. All men share the same basic desires, hopes and fears of human nature, but if they cannot relate to the differences in each other in a spirit of understanding, then the result is eternal conflict.

1 LTHI, p 68

The invisible man and the scriptwriter are people in the process of coming to terms with the differences in themselves. "Uster" is an alien to the scriptwriter but they share a common destiny, for their co-existence is a bond conceived "allá en el vientre de nuestra madre."¹ The problem of present day Spain is that of a people with a common destiny but unable to reconcile their differences. It is the evil of "particularismo" which Ortega defines as follows in España Invertebrada: La esencia del particularismo es que cada grupo deja de sentirse a sí mismo como parte y en consecuencia deja de compartir los sentimientos de los demás.² Rojas sees the necessity of recognizing the differences in belief of others and of approaching them with an open mind. He deplores "la intolerancia española hacia el prójimo."³ The invisible man and his family are unable to communicate because each is blindly convinced of his own truth, yet the fact is that the invisible man is the same and different at the one time. As the inspector rejects the several interpretations which the invisible man puts on his novel, so the situation in Spain is similar to this, in that: tiene casi tantas interpretaciones como lectores y cada uno parece convencido de la verdad de su versión y la falsedad de las restantes."⁴ When this attitude is coupled with a stance of intolerance and destruction of the other interpretations of beliefs it produces the situation which Rojas condemns in Diálogos para otra España because it reveals:

1 AHMC, p 15

2 J. Ortega y Gasset, España Invertebrada, Madrid: Espasa - Calpe, S.A. 1967, 2nd Ed., p 59

3 PPLG, preface

4 LTHI, p 66

.... la incapacidad de convivir (o "co-existir" si así lo prefieren) con otros distintos, síntoma grave de una honda y oscura desconfianza en las razones que justifiquen la propia presencia en esta tierra.¹

For Rojas, the first step towards an understanding co-existence with others is an examination of one's own being: Cambiar los demás y desconocerse a sí mismo es hurtar la responsabilidad ante la común historia, sin advertirlo siquiera. Haremos del mundo cuanto hagamos de nosotros. En otras palabras nuestra acción sobre el prójimo será índice y efecto de la verdadera comprensión de nuestros motivos y por ende de nuestros propios.²

What Rojas is advocating is not a "cerrado individualismo"³ but a searching of oneself and then an opening out to relate with others, which he explains in the preface to Por qué perdimos la guerra:

Machado es el poeta de soledades, Ortega es el filósofo de esta soledad ensimismada de donde el creador, puesto a prueba en las entrañas del propio espíritu, regresa con sus hallazgos intransferibles. Tal introspección por los declives del ánimo es lo contrario del desapego egoísta. Quien descienda de verás al interior de sí propio encontrará allí su prójimo o hallará al escenario con el compartido, es decir; el mundo.⁴

In the tale of Luis III, el minotauro Rojas presents us with the selfish introspection of the minotaur. He has built a

1 DPOE, p 8

2 PPLG, preface

3 DPOE, p 14

4 PPLG, preface

labyrinth of mirrors, but cannot find in this, that solution to his loneliness for which he had hoped. To communicate there must be an opening out, but the labyrinth of mirrors represents a further closing in on the self because the images therein are exact reflections of the minotaur. Rojas has said that he intended this tale to be a type of parody of Borges's "La casa de Asterión."¹ In Borges's story, Asterión, who lives in the labyrinthine house, believes himself to be unique and is uninterested in communication. A lonely creature, like Rojas's minotaur, his favourite game is to pretend that someone has come to visit him. But this person is only another Asterión. Communication implies at least two entities; for Asterión there is no communication, for in his world beneath the sun, everything is Asterión. Thus in the mirrored labyrinth of Luis III there can be no communication because the reflections are replicas of the minotaur himself in every detail: "En los espejos vivía un pueblo de minotauros, todos idénticos a mí, todos mis esclavos."² His only pleasure in these reflections is the certainty that they must obey every order he shouts at them.³ Because the minotaur is concerned only with himself, his hope of an answer to his loneliness in the mirrored labyrinth fails: "Pero al cerrar los ojos...entonces volvía a sentirme solo, desesperado, perdido."⁴

¹ cf. Horacio Valcarcel's introduction to Luis III, el minotauro. Madrid: Ediciones Cuent Atras. 1970. p 9 & Jorge Luis Borges. Obras Completas, Buenos Aires. Emecé Editores. El Aleph, 1957

² L III M, p 43

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³ There is a parallel here with the South American dictator of El asesino de César who abuses his power to force others to conform to his own desires.

⁴ L III M, p 43

The world of Rojas's novels, while labyrinthine in its complexity, does not share the barren introspectiveness of the world of the minotaur. He is an author concerned not only with his own existence but with that of others. If he experiences a personal problem of loneliness he is able to relate this to the loneliness of all men in a world where "nadie puede nacer, vivir, morir por otro."¹ His interest in prominent figures of power and importance, figures in the public eye, shows his consideration of them not just as "The King" or "The President," but as people particularly vulnerable to loneliness, and as human beings with their own human problems to which he is sensitive. People like Carlos II of Spain, used as a tool by people in a series of non-communicative relationships with him, and prey to a terrifying bewilderment. And like Azaña, former president of a republic, alone now in the dying glimmer of his life and ideals. His concern with the personalities of others evinces itself also in Diez figuras ante la guerra where he wishes to present people faced with the drama of the civil war and with themselves. The attainment of understanding is a two-way process: "Conocerlos es concernos. Reconocernos así es empezar a vivir. Escéptico o no este autor, no tiene otro propósito su libro."² To know something one must question it. Not to ask questions is to be blind and intolerant. Not to communicate is to be barren and isolated. Don Quijote was a man who made of the world what he made of himself, and Rojas points out that he had to talk with Sancho. And that Christ, during his

1 LTHI, p 121

2 DFAG, Preface

meditations in the desert, held conversation even with the devil.¹ Through the self-examination and the questions posed in his novels, Rojas communicates with himself and with the reader. Having descended into the depths of himself he emerges to open out in his novels and other writings the path to a common understanding between men. He may be seen in one way as a solitary god filling up the loneliness of his existence with the creation of a world of fiction. His gesture is not confident and defiant but rather tentative and expectant. He may create a world of fiction for the same reason that the minotaur creates a world of mirrors: "Construí el laberinto porque estaba solo"² but his concept of a personal loneliness embraces a collective sense of the loneliness and alienation of man. Within the ebb and flow of isolation and integration in Rojas's work, I think it is possible to feel a strong current moving away from the "espantosa soledad de hombres"³ towards a more positive view of the human condition.

1 DPOE, p 18

2 L III M, p. 42

3 Ibid., p. 21

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