Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe

Literature and History: Rethinking Representations of the Regimes of Juan Manuel de Rosas and Juan Domingo Perón

Rachel Morgan

Submitted to Swansea University in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Swansea University

2020

ABSTRACT

For many decades, Argentina's former populist President Juan Domingo de Perón has been frequently compared with the infamous nineteenth-century Federalist dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas. The official liberal historical perspective postulates that the Perón government was the 'second tyranny', the first being the notorious Rosas regime, but this assertion is problematic. Despite the evident parallels to be drawn, both men's zealous supporters and archenemies use the similarities to reinforce their own political agendas. This thesis explores the plausible comparisons between Argentina's most polemical political leaders, focusing on the literary representations of both figures in a series of nineteenth and twentieth-century fictional and historical works. Studying Rosas and Perón is even more significant in view of the striking similarities between their wives, who were instrumental in elevating their husbands to long-term political supremacy. Both women assumed unofficial roles in their spouses' administrations and one, namely Eva Perón, is arguably Argentina's most celebrated political icon. The parallels between both men and women have – strangely – never undergone literary treatment. This study provides the first comprehensive analysis of the four most controversial political figures who have influenced much of the historiography of Argentina.

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Summary:

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis could not have been written without the continuing support of my Ph.D. Supervisor and colleagues at Swansea University, and my family and friends; therefore, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to those who have helped me in both the research and writing processes of this project.

I would first like to thank my Ph.D. Supervisor, Dr Lloyd Hughes Davies, who has inspired me with his wealth of knowledge, and whose expertise, encouragement and patience has added a great deal to this thesis. His constructive criticism and guidance throughout my B.A. and Ph.D. have contributed significantly to my academic success, for which I am extremely grateful.

My deepest thanks to my sponsors, the James Pantefedwyn Foundation, Swansea University, the British Federation of Women Graduates, Rhondda Cynon Taff Council, and Neath Port Talbot Council, for funding my Ph.D. tuition fees and maintenance costs over the past three years.

A heartfelt thanks to my parents, Theresa and Andrew, whose loving support, encouragement and constant interest in this project has motivated me from beginning to end. Lastly, I thank my friends; particularly those at the COAH Postgraduate Research Office, whose moral support and advice has been of paramount importance throughout this project.

INTRODUCTION

This study

This thesis offers the first comprehensive comparative study of the literary representations of the nineteenth-century Argentine dictator, Juan Manuel de Rosas, and the twentieth-century populist leader, Juan Domingo Perón, focusing principally on the literary projections of both political leaders in the contemporary Argentine novel. Perón has been briefly compared to Rosas in the historical realm, but an in-depth literary study of both political figures is yet to be produced.

Existing historical scholarship (Blanksten, 1952; Lynch, 1991; Rein, 1998) compares Perón to Rosas because of their strong affiliations with the marginalised Argentine working classes, but little attention has been given to the other similarities between both their governments, which validate this plausible comparison. The only account which attempts and arguably fails to shed light on the link between Rosas and his wife Encarnación Ezcurra and Juan and Eva Perón is Fleur Cowles's anecdotal and partial *Bloody Precedent* (1952). Cowles, who met Juan and Eva Perón, argues that the couple were fully conscious of the popularity of Rosas and Encarnación and purposefully modelled their political personas on their precursors. However, Cowles focuses primarily on tarnishing the Peróns' reputation, and fails to present a persuasive comparative account of the Rosas and Perón governments as implied by her title. She uses a somewhat subjective tone, which is heavily influenced by her personal contempt for the Peróns, so undermining the plausibility of her critique. She ignores their contribution towards poverty alleviation among the masses. Given the dearth of comparative literature, the integrity of the argument that the Perón administration was a partial reincarnation of the Rosas regime has been a primary subject of dispute. Rein notes that the Liberating Revolution, which overthrew Perón, nicknamed his regime 'the second tyranny' – the first having been the Rosas regime.[1]

[1] Mónica Esti Rein, *Politics and Education in Argentina 1946-1962* trans. Martha Grenzeback (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), p.75.

However, the comparison can be deemed a two-edged sword: Perón was often compared to Rosas by elitist writers such as Jorge Luis Borges to tarnish his reputation given that Rosas was renowned for his brutality, but the controversial Revisionist movement, initiated in the 1930s, compared Rosas with Perón in order to depict Rosas in a positive light and glorify both leaders' affinity with the proletariat. Although Perón was arguably aware of Rosas's success, he was careful – at least up until the fall of his regime – not to glorify Rosas. There are certain clear and objective parallels between Rosas and Perón. This thesis argues that both were sustained in government by their relationships with the masses, their reliance on their wives, Encarnación Ezcurra and Eva Perón, and by policies designed to manipulate public support through fear.

Both Rosas and Perón have inspired a whole new literary genre which is largely fictional with each account implementing a specific New Historical methodical approach, meaning that the line between truth and reality is often indistinguishable. While Perón has been the subject of notable literary treatment, particularly by Tomás Eloy Martínez (1934-2010), the fictional works in which Rosas is depicted have been largely unheeded. This study critically examines and compares the short stories of Juana Manuela Gorriti (1818-92), who wrote extensively on Rosas and his daughter, Manuela, focusing on three specific works (*La quena*, 1845; *El guante negro*, and *La hiza del mashorquero*), taken from her account, *Sueños y realidades* (1865), which shed light on the devastating impact of the Rosas dictatorship on national families and the plight of women in particular.[2] It is worth noting that Gorriti was an exiled anti-Rosas writer who was the first woman to contribute to the male-dominated literary resistance to Rosas, led by Domingo Faustino Sarmiento. Whereas Gorriti's short stories imply that Manuela suffered greatly under her father's oppression, they also argue that because of Manuela's relationship with Rosas, she is seen as a projection of the dictator and is thus inadvertently implicated in his regime. I also examine the works of José Mármol,

[2] 'National families' mean Argentine families in this context. The phrase is used by Magalí Armillas Tiseyra throughout 'Beyond Metaphor: Juana Manuela Gorriti and Discourses of the Nation under Juan Manuel de Rosas' in *Latin American Literary Review* Vol. 41, No. 82, July-December 2013, pp26-46.

specifically *Amalia* (1851) and his essay on Manuela Rosas entitled *Manuela Rosas: Rasgos Biográficos* (1851). Mármol's accounts show overwhelming sympathy for Manuela, his main argument being that she was 'la primera víctima de la tirania de su padre'.[3] He claims that had Manuela been raised among civilised Unitarians, instead of in a toxic Federalist environment, then she would have become a formidable woman and reached her potential. He is fascinated by Manuela's beauty, particularly her alleged 'porcelain' skin, which is inaccurately portrayed in Pridiliano Pueyrredón's painting – arguably an imaginative masterpiece as it is a fictional depiction of her (given that in real life, she had a darker complexion and bore more of a resemblance to Afro-Argentines). To analyse literary representations of Rosas's brutality, I draw on Esteban Echeverría's *El matadero* (1871) which likens the *Mazorca*'s callous treatment of its victims to that of animals being slaughtered. I discuss how the imaginative reconstruction of history perpetuated by Rosas's critics, Gorriti and Mármol, have undoubtedly influenced the overall treatment of him in the literary realm. However, there is one account, namely *La princesa federal* by María Rosa Lojo, which is based on the scant historical evidence relating to Rosas and Manuela's relationship, suggesting that Manuela was not a victim of oppression but an empowered and independent woman who was in control of her life. However, similar to Mármol and Gorriti, even Lojo's work flaunts imaginative interference, characteristic of the New Historical trend whereby writers present their versions of history and treat subjects from the past. Given the dearth of evidence regarding Manuela's sentiments towards her father, Lojo has no choice but to offer a fictionalised version of her life in which she expresses a great admiration for her father, but does so without excusing his crimes when interviewed by the imaginary psychologist, Dr Victorica. I then turn to Perón, concentrating on the fictional works of Tomás Eloy Martínez (*La novela de Perón*, 1985; *Las memorias del General*, 1996; and *Las vidas del General*, 1996), all of which imaginatively reconstruct the life of Perón.

Martínez uses his imaginative resources extensively, to the extent that his works are comparable to New Historical accounts: he incorporates evidence into his works but manipulates what has been accepted as the official historical perpective to

[3] José Mármol, *Amalia* (Barcelona: Linkgua Ediciones: 2010), p.475.

create his own truth. Similar to New Historicists, he believes that the 'truth' – which, in any case, cannot be known definitively – often exerts a 'fascistic' influence, limiting scope for other interpretations of history. The other fictionalised works, one of which briefly discusses Martínez, are all produced by Italian authors Nino Tóla, Peppino Canneddu, and Raffaele Ballore. All accounts argue to different extents that Juan Perón was in fact an Italian peasant named Giovanni Piras, who emigrated to Argentina in search of a better life. Similar to New Historical accounts, the Italian authors' works are heavily fictionalised, but can be easily mistaken for accurate historical accounts, as some (Ballore's account specifically) do incorporate historical evidence, which in fact, is just manipulated to give way to other possibilities. The multiple versions of Perón's family origins, some of which place them in Sardinia, permits these authors to reconstruct creatively his cultural roots and background. They recreate his life based on documentary records with Ballore incorporating plausible evidence such as immigration records from Italy to Argentina to establish a new 'truth'. Tóla perpetuated the myth that Juan Perón was Giovanni Piras and in his 1950/1 articles, he goes to the fictional extremes of even describing the ongoing internal feud between Piras and his family which prompted his move to Argentina. Both Rosas and Perón lend themselves to imaginative reconstruction, which also is a key characteristic of the New Historicist movement: Rosas because of his brutality and allegedly incestuous relationship with Manuela which is used as literary ammunition in the works of Sarmiento, Gorriti and Mármol, and Perón because of his disregard for the truth which gave rise to his inconsistent and imaginative accounts of his life story, paving the way for multiple versions of his past. Although the works of Mármol, Gorriti and Martínez cannot be categorised exclusively as New Historical works, as the authors existed in the same time period as their subjects and the term was coined after these works were produced, their principles can be paralleled with those of New Historicists as they favour biased, imaginative and politically-motivated approaches and are often sceptical of 'official' truths.

The New Historical Movement

New Historicism, which is a form of literary theory, is based on the view that 'literature should be studied, designed and understood within the discourse of both

the chronicle of the author and the history of the critic'.[4] Established and developed in America in the 1980s through the work of Stephen Greenblatt, this theory gained widespread attention in the literary and historical domains throughout the 1990s.[5] The term 'New Historicism' was coined by Greenblatt when he collected a wide range of essays and then, out of desperation to complete the introduction, wrote that the essays represented something he identified as New Historicism.[6] Greenblatt's study of literary criticism and the philosophy of Michel Foucault proposes that New Historicism 'declares not only that a work of literature is influenced by its author's 'time and circumstances, but that the critic's reaction to that piece of work is also influenced by his environment, notion, and preconception'.[7] According to Greenblatt, New Historicism views literary works as a product of its time, place, and circumstances rather than an informative but restrained product, that is to say that they are always politically and socially implicated in their historical context – a bold divergence from the traditional approach to historical and biographical literature. In fact, these particular characteristics render New Historicism analogous to Marxist critique given that both critical theories analyse the conflict between social classes, i.e. the bourgeois (the dominant) and proletariat (the oppressed) and use cultural studies, to promote a 'return to history'. They share a strong interest in the ideological viewpoints that produce literature. The only notable difference is that New Historicists refer to cultural history and anthropology. Drawing on the New Historicist critique of Old Historicism, Jacob Burckhardt states that one of the doctrines pertaining to the latter movement classifies history as progressive with 'respect to human happiness, freedom, and knowledge',[8] whereas Hayden White highlights the New Historicist paradigm postulating that history is in fact 'goal-less: historiographers attribute goals to it as part of their own cultural agenda'.[9] The core beliefs of New Historicism are succinctly summarised by Lois Tyson: (1) 'history is

[4] X Merlin & Helen Unis Backiavathy, 'New Historicism Applied to *To Kill A Mockingbird'*, *Language in India*, Vol. 17, (11), (November 2017), p.183.
[5] David Mikics, *A New Handbook of Literary Terms*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007)
[6] Stephen Greenblatt, *Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture: Volume 57* (Routledge, 2007), p.197.
[7] X. Merlin, p.183.
[8] Jacob Burckhardt, *The civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*. Trans by S. G. C. Middlemore (New York: Harper, 1958), p.279.
[9] Hayden White, *Metahistory: the historical imagination in nineteenth-century Europe* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1973), pp.435-411.

a matter of interpretation, not facts. Thus, all historical accounts are narratives;' (2) '[h]istory is neither linear nor progressive;' (3) '[p]ower is never wholly confined to a single person or a single level of society. Rather, power circulates in a culture through exchanges of material goods, exchanges of human beings, and, most important, exchanges of ideas through the various discourses a culture produces;' (4) '[t]here is no monolithic (single, unified, universal) spirit of an age, and there is no adequate totalizing explanation of history;' (5) '[p]ersonal identity – like historical events, texts, and artefacts – is shaped by and shapes the culture in which it emerges…our individual identity consists of the narratives we tell ourselves about ourselves;' and (6) 'historical analysis is unavoidably subjective'.[10] New Historicism is arguably very much a reaction to the tendency of modern criticism in the sense that one of its goals is to deconstruct any previous established truths and instead 'concentrate on the language of isolated texts and ignore the worldly circumstances – the societies and times – that produced them'.[11] Montrose points out that New Historicists investigate the historicity of texts and the textuality of history, defining his terms in his essay *Professing the Renaissance: The Poetics and Politics of Culture*:

> By the historicity of texts, I mean to suggest the cultural specificity, the social embedment, of all modes of writing – also the texts in which we study them. By the textuality of history, I mean to suggest firstly, that we can have no access to a full and authentic past, a lived material existence, unmediated by the surviving textual traces of the society in question – traces whose survival we cannot assume to be merely contingent but must rather presume to be at least partially consequent upon complex and subtle social processes of preservation and effacement; and secondly, that those textual traces are themselves subject to subsequent textual mediations when they are construed as the "documents" upon which historians ground their own texts, called "histories".[12]

The implication of Montrose's definition is that interpreting history as textual reconstruction inexorably leads to the erasure of the distinction between fiction and factuality. The past is always the historian's construction and consequently exercises

[10] Lois Tyson, *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide* (New York: Routledge, 2006), p.290
[11] *Ibid*., p.184.
[12] Louis Montrose, "Professing the Renaissance: The Poetics and Politics of Culture", in *The New Historicism*, ed. Harold A. Veeser (New York: Routledge, 1989), pp.15-36, (20).

no authoritative materiality. Thus, we cannot access the past without its textualized versions. The argument that we can only know the past in its textual traces has instigated an array of theoretical dialogues among New Historicists. For example, F.R. Ankersmit claims that 'it is true that [history] always manifests itself to us in the form of text'.[13] Bann puts forward a similar argument that 'no one can deny that historiography is a form of writing'.[14] In *The Empire Unpossess'd: An Essay on Gibbon's Decline and Fall*, Lionel Gossman's thesis is the same when he argues that there are 'there are no firm boundaries separating literary from other forms of writing'.[15] In a later account, *Between History and Literature,* Gossman discusses the relations between history and fiction by drawing from the past historical tradition which saw no distinction between the two, as he states: 'the actual development of each...reveals both great similarities and some significant tensions. Since each is realized in and through narrative...'.[16] New Historicists reject any established truths, and deem the traditional approach to investigation authoritarian because facts limit the scope for other credible/possible interpretations of people's lives and events: 'New Historical writers criticise any type of authority but especially that of historiographical discourse which, through, citations, references and notes sets itself up as knowledge of the other'.[17] They dismantle any notion of an 'authoritarian' absolute truth, even if based on evidence such as historical documentation, and instead focus on giving way to the less common perceptions of history. For Michel de Certeau, writing itself is an instrument of authority as he refers to 'economies of writing (recordings, transcriptions etc.) which organise and divide social space and institute forms of hierarchy'.[18]An example of de Certeau's assertion is Juan Perón's biographer Joseph Page who reinforced such hierarchies in his biographical account *Juan Perón: A Biography*. Page adopts an authoritative and impersonal tone given

[13] Frank R. Ankersmit, "Statements, Texts and Pictures" in Frank R. Ankersmit and Hans Keller (eds), *A New Philosophy of History* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995), pp.212-40 (213).
[14] Stephen Bann, *The Inventions of History: Essays on the Representation of the Past* (Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 1990), p.36.
[15] Lionel Gossman, *The Empire Unpossess'd: An Essay on Gibbon's Decline and Fall* (New York: Cambridge, 1981), p. xiii.
[16] Lionel Gossman, *Between History and Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), p.233.
[17] Lloyd Hughes Davies, *Projections of Peronism in Argentine Biography, Autobiography, and Fiction* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007), p.9.
[18] See Jeremy Ahearne, *Michel de Certeau: Interpretation and its Other* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), p.52-3.

his principal aim of wanting to control his subject, and unlike Martínez, who acknowledges his personal input, he ignores his contribution and only wants to present the established facts. Martínez, criticises such economies of writing and challenges their claim to authority. For New Historicists, the truth is unreachable and fundamentally beyond human comprehension: they readily acknowledge that their writing is informed largely by their personal and temporal circumstances. They claim that the truth cannot even be represented, and given their heavy reliance on language – which itself falls victim to misrepresentation – or, as Brook Thomas communicates 'only a trace of what it seeks to represent', the distinction between truth and falsehood is entirely destabilised.[19]

There is considerable overlap between New Historical and postmodernist practice: self-scrutiny; emphasis on textuality;[20] the deconstruction of established concepts and fixed oppositions; the rejection of ahistorical essentialisms and myths of authenticity; the promotion of the marginal[21] and the hybrid[22] and the consequent weakening of centre-periphery models.[23] It is notable that New Historicism, when characterised in these terms, follows the postmodernist framework. In a general sense, postmodernism is characterized, according to Laura García Moreno, by 'a cognitive shift which emphasizes the end of philosophical foundationalism and consequently epistemological uncertainty'.[24] While postmodernity in a Latin American context has formed the basis of various studies (Beverly, 1995; Cólas, 1994, García Moreno, 1995), the movement has been anything but free of its critics. Nelly Richard argues that the appropriation of the European philosophy of

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[19] Brook Thomas, *The New Historicism and Other Old-Fashioned Topics* (Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 250.

[20] Terry Eagleton highlights that New Historical principles are not original with reference to David Hume's *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739), which discusses the multiple copies by which any historical fact is transmitted: 'Before the knowledge of the fact could come to the first historian, it must be convey'd thro' many mouths, and after it is committed to writing, each new copy is a new object, of which the connextion with the foregoing is known only by experience and observation'. Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), p.68.

[21] Terry Eagleton argues that postmodernism in its most militant form 'has lent a voice to the humiliated and reviled, and in doing do has threatened to shake the imperious self-identity of the system to its core. *The Illusions of Postmodernism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996). P.24.

[22] Nelly Richards, 'Postmodernism and the Periphery' in Thomas Docherty (ed.). '*Postmodernism: a Reader*' (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993), pp.463-469.

[23] Davies, p.13.

[24] Laura García Moreno, 'Situating Knowledges: Latin American Readings of Postmodernism' *Diacritics: a Review of Contemporary Criticism*' Vol.25, No.1, (Spring 1995), pp.63-64.

postmodernism to analyse Latin America serves only to further marginalise the region:

> [p]ostmodernism defends itself against the destabilizing threats of the 'other' by integrating it back into a framework, which absorbs all differences and contradictions. The centre […] still operates as a centre: filing away any divergences into a system of codes whose meanings, both semantically and territorially, it continues to administer by exclusive right.[25]

According to Richard, postmodernism in Latin America is yet another manifestation of homogenisation as it nullifies both diversity and the marginal by incorporating sexual, cultural, geographical and racial differences into 'a new economy of sameness – thereby neutralizing the other.'[26] Although it incorporates the marginal and hybrid, Richard argues that this is only another flawed characteristic of the movement: 'the downside to postmodernism from a Latin American angle, is its ability to co-opt the margins and include diversity – political, racial, cultural, and sexual'.[27] Octavio Paz shares Richard's view, affirming that 'el posmodernismo es un otro *grand récit* importado que no encaja bien con Latinoamérica, y que ahí deberían crearse formas propias'.[28] Other Latin Americanists such as Santiago Colás, Raymond L. Williams, Laura García Moreno, George Yúdice and Donald Shaw advise against the unguarded use of postmodernism.[29] Furthermore, Santiago Cólas cautions against the ambiguous assimilations, which exclude 'specific social and political conditions out of which that (Latin American) culture has emerged'.[30] Drawing upon how, similar to postmodernism, New Historicism prioritises and gives rise to the marginal voices, Gloria Da Cunha maintains that there are in fact two types of fictional narratives about the past: historical, or those texts that affirm the official or accepted version of history, and intrahistorical, those which challenge the

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[25] Nelly Richard, 'Postmodernism and Periphery, in *Theory in Contemporary Art since 1985*, eds. ZoyaKocur and Simon Leung (Malden, MA: Blackwell publishing, 2005), p.357

[26] *Ibid*., p.358.

[27] *Ibid*.

[28] Octavio Paz, 'El romanticismo en la poesía contemporánea' *Vuelta*, Vol. 11, No.127, (1987), pp.26-27.

[29] See Raymond Leslie Williams, *The Postmodern Novel in Latin America: Politics, Culture, and the Crisis of Truth* (New York: St. Martin's, 1995).

[30] Santiago Cólas, *Postmodernity in Latin America: The Argentine Paradigm* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), p.xi.

official version of history.[31] She implies that writers belonging to socially marginalised groups – often stemming from issues relating to gender, ethnicity, or class – are more likely to interrogate the dominant perspective as a response to oppression, thus consistently producing the intrahistoric type of narrative.[32] Da Cunha's claim that socially marginalised writers conform to the latter fictional narrative rings true in the Argentine context, first in relation to the infamous nineteenth-century Federalist dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas, and second, Juan Perón, who is widely considered to be the reincarnation of Rosas, according to writers belonging to the Argentine elite or *oligarquía*. For example, the exiled nineteenth-century Unitarian writers – the key word being exiled – of the literary resistance against Rosas, use imaginative reconstruction in their works by choosing to reinvent the truth to push their political agendas and advance their cause, which is to vilify Rosas. They prioritise the imaginative over the historically accurate to perpetuate their own own myths as a form of literary revenge due their temporary marginalisation while in exile – banished by the dictator himself. Gorriti was the first woman figure to contribute to the male-dominated literary resistance against Rosas. Her choice of imaginative recreation rather than 'factual' narration reflects her contempt for Rosas's alleged maltreatment of women during his regime. After all, her two most relevant fictional works, *El guante negro* and *La hija del mashorquero: leyenda histórica*, were produced after the atrocious execution of the twenty-year-old pregnant Federalist aristocrat, Camila O'Gorman – a tragedy which could have contributed significantly to her contempt for him. Similarly, Martínez was also exiled during Argentina's notorious military dictatorship from 1976-83, but his use of imaginative resources and abandonment of the traditional approach to historical investigation does not stem from this experience. Martínez was initially a journalist who travelled to Madrid to interview Perón. However, as the General's apparent influence on Martínez grew stronger, the author's aim was now to use Perón's inconsistency to his advantage, forming the basis of his novel, which flaunts New Historical characteristics, such as imaginative recreation and blurring the lines

[31] Gloria Da Cunha, *La narrativa histórica de escritoras latinoamericanas* (Buenos Aires: Corregidor, 2004), p.25.
[32] Frans Weiser, 'Present-ing the Past: The Historicized Turn in Horacio Castellanos Moya's *Senselessness*', *Otherness: Essays and Studies*, Vol. 2, (1), August 2011, p.6.

between fact and fiction. One of the best definitions of the (New) Historical novel is that offered by Alexis Márquez Rodríguez:

> Lo que le da carácter histórico a una novela es la presencia de personajes y episodios históricos, tratados de un modo tal que sufran un proceso de ficcionamiento. Y no que relata hechos de un tiempo que ya era pasado para el autor.[33]

This particular definition, arguably the most accurate, permits us to categorise Martínez's novels namely *La novela de Perón* as New Historical works. There are many shared characteristics of postmodernism and New Historicism, but Latin American history does not easily lend itself to the postmodernist convention, being as Williams argues, 'resolutely historical and inescapably political'.[34] George Yudice asks '*Puede hablarse de postmodernidad en América Latina*?' as he expresses his reservations about whether or not the 'transfer of European paradigms pertaining to modernity, not to mention the debated postmodern crisis or "overcoming" of modernity' is relevant within a Latin American context.[35] New Historical and postmodern practices are comparable because of their inconsistent interpretations of the past. Thomas notes that the authority of New Historicism – which puts into question our knowledge of the past – relies solely on its belief that knowledge of the past matters for the present.[36] Postmodernism shares the same contradictory nature, as Calinescu asserts: 'it is self-sceptical yet curious, unbelievable yet searching, benevolent yet ironic'.[37] However, postmodernism is not as committed as New Historicism, 'putting inverted commas around what is being said', as postulated by Linda Hutcheon, who coined the term 'historiographic metafiction'. Hutcheon created this phrase in response to the assault of literary theory upon the conventions of traditional modernism, considering this form of literature to 'situate itself within

[33] Alexis Márquez Rodríguez, 'Raíces de la novela histórica', *Cuadernos Americanos*, Vol. 28, (1991), p.40.
[34] Raymond Leslie Williams, *The Postmodern Novel in Latin America: Politics, Culture, and the Crisis of Truth* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), p.117.
[35] See Laura García Moreno (p.68) and George Yudice, 'Puede Hablarse de postmodernidad en América Latina? *Studies in Twentieth-Century Literature*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1990, pp.105-28.
[36] Thomas, p.194.
[37] Matei Calinescu, *Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Postmodernism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987), p.278.

historical discourse without surrendering its autonomy as fiction'.[38] It is notable that Historiographical Metafiction, like New Historicism, does not take a single all-encompassing form, as Louis Montrose argues that 'attempts to lump the heterogeneous critical approaches to literary history under a single rubric such as "New Historicism"'[39] have 'threatened to undermine any attempt to distinguish a new historicism from an old one'.[40] Hutcheon also reiterates the importance of distinguishing between the polarised opinions deeming 'postmodernism a complete break with modernism or a logical continuation of its practices'.[41] However, it is perhaps Montrose who best articulates the critics' shared concerns: although he acknowledges that New Historicism has gained academic currency, he argues that 'it remains unclear whether or not this latest "ism", with its appeal to our commodifying cult of the "new", will have been more than another passing intellectual fancy'.[42] New Historicism has been deemed a form of Cultural criticism associated with scholarly practice, but the latter draws mainly on political theories, as it is much more politically oriented than New Historicism. However, both critical theories deem culture and history to be processes, not products: they are lived experiences, not fixed definitions. New Historians postulate that history is always interpreted and then written: it is always textual and a form of narrative and cannot be considered a transparent process, but a practice intertwined with the historian's interpretive subjectivity. New Historicists define discourse as 'a social language created by particular cultural conditions at a particular time and place, and it expresses a particular way of understanding human experience'.[43] One of the core principles of the New Historical critical theory is that 'all events *are shaped by and shape* the culture in which they emerge'.[44] Weiser remarks that the '"new" historical novel has been claimed as a literary practice by artists themselves engaging with the growing

[38] Linda Hutcheon, 'Historiographic metafiction: parody and the intertextuality of history' in Patrick O'Donnell and Robert Con Davis, eds. *Intertextuality and Contemporary American Fiction* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1989) pp.3-32 (4).
[39] Weiser, p.7.
[40] Louis Montrose, "Professing the Renaissance: The poetics and politics of culture", in Veeser, *The New Historicism*, p.18.
[41] Hutcheon, (1989, p.6).
[42] Montrose, p.18.
[43] Tyson, p.285.
[44] *Ibid*., p.284.

awareness of the textuality of history'.[45] Shortly after Montrose's article discussing New Historical orientations, came the publication of Seymour Menton's *Latin America's New Historical Novel* (1993). Menton's account 'traces a new type of historical fiction that subordinates mimetic representation of events, in other words celebrating its own fictionality, while consciously distorting accepted history through omission and an eschewal of linear time'.[46] Menton claims these works 'are additionally metafictional and intertextual, which is to say both self-referential as well as referential of other literary texts and historical fictions, demonstrating an awareness of their own existence as (fictional) texts'.[47] For Menton, the New Historical Novel is reserved for those works whose action takes place completely (in some cases, predominantly) in the past – arbitrarily defined here as a past not directly experienced by the author.[48] In defining the New Historical novel, Menton encounters a common problem experienced by Montrose and Hutcheon: how to define historical fiction? He acknowledges that this is no easy task since the parameters have been continually disputed, focusing principally on the problem of strict temporal faithfulness: not all narratives are situated in the past, thus:

> more difficult to exclude from the historical category are those novels in which the narrator(s) or characters are anchored in the present or in the recent past, but whose principal theme is the re-creation of the life and times of a clearly distant historical character.[49]

Da Cunha urges us to 'avoid the binary association of old and new historical fiction and instead refers to the distinction between the nineteenth-century "birth" and twentieth-century "rebirth" of the historical novel when cataloguing the undervalued texts of female writers in Latin America.'[50] Both da Cunha and Menton recognise the 'self-reflexive role of metafiction in this shift, with Cunha convinced that her terminology brings into play the originality of contemporary fictions' literary traits to

[45] Weiser, p.7.
[46] *Ibid*.
[47] *Ibid*.
[48] *Ibid*., p.16.
[49] Weiser, p17.
[50] *Ibid*., p.8.

include the reader'.[51] As aforementioned, Martínez is not a New Historicist by Menton's standards, but *La novela* can be considered metafictive given that: 1) self-reflexivity is present throughout his account, 2) attention is directed to his composition of the novel, 3) he discusses the process of constructing his novel, 4) he makes himself a known character in the book by incorporating himself into Perón's life story (Chp. 16), and 4) he reflects on the challenges he encountered and his uncertaintly about what he has written. Menton was among the first of critics to postulate that this literary trait in Latin America was yet another manifestation of historical fiction, it was Ainsa (1996)[52] who first used the word 'new', thus divorcing New Historicism from Hutcheon's historiographic metafiction. However, the conspicuous similarities between the two movements over the last 30 years cannot go unnoticed.[53] In contrast, Hutcheon attempts to tone down these parallels, maintaining that there are important distinctions to be made between the two movements. She defines historiographic metafiction as a universal phenomenon as opposed to studying this style of prose narrative solely within the Latin American context.[54] Futhermore, she does not want to impose any restrictions on the relationship between fictional writers and historical events, allowing writers more literary freedom. She claims that what is most precarious is not the context of what is told, but rather who is telling it, affirming that the past did exist, but it can only be conveyed to us through texts, emphasising its relationship to literarature.[55] Hutcheon and Montrose share the same sentiments concerning textuality of history: both critics highlight the misconception that, when examining New Historical accounts, the most important component to investigate is the connection between the fictional writer and the past, when it is in fact the link between the *reader* and the past. The reader's preception and understanding of history from what they have read and how they can distigush reality from fictional reconstruction should be at the heart of the debate .[56] Drawing on these two opinions, it is worth mentioning that we should not be focussing solely on the discrepancy between old and new or past and present, but rather, as Steven

[51] *Ibid*.
[52] See Fernando Aínsa, *La nueva novela histórica latinoamericana* (México: Plural, 1996).
[53] *Ibid*.
[54] Weiser, p.8.
[55] Hutcheon, (1989), p.10.
[56] Weiser, p.9.

Connor puts it, the disctintion between '*historical* and *historicised* fiction, between fiction about history and fiction about its own historically relative construction of history'.[57] Although Connor is talking specifically about English fiction, Weiser points out that his observation is 'applicable to the self-awareness evident in multiple national and regional literatures'.[58] This is particularly relevant to a Latin American context, specifically the work of Tomás Eloy Martínez, who acknowledges that he has fictionalised history and warns readers not to assume that his account is entirely factual.

New Historical approaches to Rosas and Perón in the Literary Realm

While Rosas and Perón have been the subject of extensive debate in the historical sphere – Rosas for his notorious dictatorship and unhealthy relations with his daughter, and Perón for his revolutionary social accomplishments achieved through what may be deemed authoritarian policies; – it is the literary realm, which has kept them alive in Argentine memory. Both figures have undergone considerable literary treatment in a series of fictional works because they render themselves fitting subjects of imaginative reconstruction. Rosas's dubious relationship with his daughter and his unparalleled brutality, alongside Peron's impenetrable life story and inability to be truthful have struck a chord with Argentine writers and found something akin to celebrity status in the literary sphere. Rosas and Peron have lent themselves to historical and imaginative recreation, which is a characteristic of the broader literary movement of New Historicism. This has been the predominant literary approach implemented by writers in all of their fictional depictions of both political icons, be they positive or negative. Unitarian writers such as Juana Manuela Gorriti and José Mármol were fervent archenemies of Rosas and contributed significantly to the *antirosista* literary resistance, led by Domingo Faustino Sarmiento. In their fictional works, they use they use fiction over fact to push their own political agendas which ultimately aim to demonise Rosas. Mármol concentrates on vilifying him for his allegedly improper relations with his daughter and curtailing her social life, while Gorriti exposes his elimination of political opponents and moreover, his destruction of national families. Both authors' fictional works

[57] Steven Connor, *The English Novel in History: 1950-1995* (London: Routledge, 1996), p.143
[58] Weiser, p.9.

effectively denigrate Rosas, but Mármol in particular uses an imaginative approach akin to the New Historical notably in *Manuela Rosas: Rasgos Biográficos*, in order to mythologise her as 'la primera víctima de la tiranía de su padre'.[59] He postulates that the sole purpose of her existence was to serve her father and that living under his rule in a toxic, uncivilised Federalist environment, prevented her from becoming the sophisticated and educated woman she could be. However, there is no evidence to validate Mármol's accusation. What is conspicuous is Mármol's fictionalisation of Manuela's appearance, the inspiration being Prudiliano Pueyrredón's 1851 painting of *la princesa*. Pueyrredón's painting depicts Manuela as a woman with porcelain white skin – part of a desirable physiognomy for aristocratic Unitarian women. Marmól never met Manuela in person but would have been educated enough to realise that this representation was inaccurate given the rumours then in circulation that Manuela had *trigueño* skin, as though she belonged to the African race. Nonetheless, he chose to mythologise her appearance to fit the criteria for his version of her story, Pueyrredón's painting acting as the ideal foundation upon which he could reconstruct her appearance and life in his literary works. Furthermore, in his critically acclaimed '*Amalia*', recognized as the first Argentine novel, he fictionalises Manuela as representative of the Argentine nation by characterising her as trapped and immobile, serving as an allegory for Argentina's destruction amidst the internal political conflict and the impossibility of national reconciliation. Similarly, Gorriti's short fictions, namely *El guante negro* and *La hija del mashorquero: leyenda histórica*, portray Manuela as a benevolent and compassionate person, but both tales end in tragedy, representing the unyielding plight of the Rosas dictatorship. Gorriti's representation of Manuela in *El guante negro* is mostly positive: she is presented as a woman who longs to be with her Federalist hero, Wenceslao, who inconveniently falls in love with the Unitarian aristocrat, Isabel. We feel sympathy for Gorriti's heartbroken Manuela as she is deceived by Wenceslao, and unintentionally reveals to her father that one of his men is pursuing a Unitarian, ultimately facilitating her lover's death. The second tale, *La hiza del mashorquero: leyenda histórica*, illustrates Manuela (Clemencia) as a woman wanting to do good and compensate for her father's (Roque Alma Negra) mercilessness by making reparations to his Unitarian and Federalist victims alike, but ultimately, being

[59] José Mármol, *Amalia* (Barcelona: Linkgua Ediciones: 2010), p.475.

Roque's daughter, she is inadvertently strengthening his regime by assisting him in conducting daily tasks. Both writers' fictional depiction of Manuela is heavily distorted by their utter contempt for Rosas, which has influenced their mythologisation of Manuela as a victim, when available evidence implies that this was simply not the case, as Manuela never denounced her father's actions. As is discussed in Chapter 5, Mármol and Gorriti incorporate a biased and mysoginistic approach to portraying Manuela, resorting to ideological reconstruction and mythologisation, a common trope which is conspicuous in all the works of the Unitarian writers. By contrast, María Rosa Lojo's historical fiction *La Princesa Federal* is less prejudiced and misogynistic in its approach to telling Manuela's story. Lojo portrays the princess as an independent and resilient woman who remained by her father's side out of personal choice, not because she was oppressed. Lojo sheds light on the fact that there is no evidence of Manuela denouncing her father, but rather of her speaking fondly of him. In this sense, Lojo enlightens the one-sided debate by maintaining that Manuela should not be considered a damsel in distress. However, is she not conjuring up an alternative myth to that of Mármol and Gorriti? After all, the absolute truth, according to postmodernists and New Historicists, does not exist: what *does* exist is official documentation, which New Historicists can manipulate to create their own truths, to the point that what was deemed fact is now questionable. New Historical writers' promote truths that are often created using a degree of evidence, but are largely conjured up from their imaginative resources. They challenge the traditional investigative approach aimed at discovering what is fact or myth, and advocate the idea that the truth is always unfathomable: one might as well reconstruct what has been considered historical fact, be it solely for creative purposes or the advancement of political agendas, as is done in the case of Mármol and Gorriti. Whereas traditional investigative approaches rely solely on evidence such as historical documentation to determine the absolute truth, 'New Historical writers like postmodern auto-biographers are sceptical about whether the truth about what really happened in the past can ever be purely and objectively known', hence their imaginative turn.[60] Whereas the traditional belief is that evidence equals facts, and facts equal the truth, New Historicists perplexingly postulate that there is a distinction to be made between the 'truth' and the 'fact',

[60] Davies., p.9.

choosing the former over the latter. However, the truth, which they argue, is only *their* truth since each New Historical truth is different, given that inconsistency is a principal characteristic of this movement.

One of the reasons why New Historicists use imaginative recreation as a means of telling someone's story is because they collectively maintain that the absolute truth is a rather oppressive concept, limiting other possible valid interpretations of people's lives and events. This is precisely the view of Tomás Eloy Martínez, who by Seymour Menton's standards, cannot be considered a New Historicist, but nonetheless believes that absolute truths are morally wrong: 'For him the Truth is fascistic and must be abandoned, but a kind of truth, a 'limping' truth – according to New Historicists – should be retained'.[61] One of the reasons why Martínez is not a New Historicist by Seymour Menton's standards is because Menton adopts a prescriptive approach by which a New Historical writer wouldn't treat a contemporary figure such as Perón, in other words, the time period of the subject should not coincide with that of his writer, but Martínez's account does precisely this, hence why he may not be categorised as a New Historical writer. Martínez states he does not want to recreate the truth but to challenge it, after all, it is *La novela de Perón*, not *La historia de Perón*. However, Raffaele Ballore, who is also fixated on uncovering the Perón story has mistakenly interpreted Martínez's fictional accounts to be historical, as he says that his accounts are 'the most reliable', thus exemplifying how Martínez has redefined what it means to be a historian and contaminated other writers' views of Perón, while discrediting traditional scholarly approaches to investigation and discovering the truth. Upon analysing Ballore's account, we gain an understanding of how much Martínez has influenced his views on López-Rega. Peronitis is the term we may use to describe Martínez's state when writing his novels, as he gradually becomes incapable of telling the truth and even incorporates himself into the Perón story. Juan Perón has received mass attention in the New Historical realm thanks to his companion and renowned biographer Martínez 'whose academic knowledge of Peronism, his interviews conducted with Perón in Madrid prior to the latter's return to Argentina in 1973 and his creative reinvention of Peronism give him a unique position in Peronist scholarship'.[62]

[61] *Ibid.,* p.10.
[62] *Ibid.,* p.5.

Perón's distaste for revealing the truth about his life has plagued the minds of scholars around the world, but that of Martínez in particular, who has produced a series of novelas on Perón, all of which are reconstructions of his life since he better lends himself to the fictional genre. In *La novela de Perón* (1985) *Las vidas del General* (1996) and *Las memorias del General* (1996), Martínez incorporates the use of official documents from Perón's past, thus giving his account an element of credibility. However, on the whole, this evidence is used not to support arguments, but as the basis of Martínez's heavily fictionalised version of Perón's life, which he reinvents with his imaginative resources. Martínez is deemed the author who 'most conspicuously flaunts the textualism in his work showing thereby that there can be no direct appeal to the unmediated 'facts' of history'.[63] Given that Martínez had the advantage of interviewing Perón and developing a close relationship with him, it is remarkable that he concluded that Perón's life story would serve as a better fictional work than biographical account. According to Martínez and Joseph Page, no one will ever have the final say on the Perón story as certain historical documentation is unavailable, and 'El General' would never accede to complete honesty. Thus, Martínez seeks to make use of the existing resources as a foundation on which to construct his creative masterpieces. In *La novela*, we see that Martínez shares 'New Historical tentativeness, its open acknowledgment of its own "situatedness", its preference for discontinuity and disruption to unity and closure'.[64] It seems as if Perón conformed to this paradigm himself given that he is an 'exemplar of anti-autobiography, with no interest in restoring the "real" Perón, but rather eschewing mimesis of any kind in favour of a textual freedom configured as an openly aggressive effort to dominate history'.[65] Martínez pays no heed to what is widely accepted as the truth, and instead perpetuates alternative interpretations of Perón's life events and relationships. Despite Martínez's abandonment of a more intellectual approach to his investigation into Peron's life, that is employing a more traditional evidence-based approach, we *can* comprehend just why he chose to use the New Historical approach. A key feature of the New Historical genre is its treatment of the vibrant political icons of twentieth-century Latin America, but few can compete with

[63] *Ibid*.
[64] *Ibid.,* p.10.
[65] *Ibid.,* p.77.

the unparalleled literary appeal of Juan Perón given that 'his enigmatic personal life, his psychological instability, and complex, sometimes contradictory political instincts, seem on occasion to belong more to the realms of fiction than to history'.[66] Martínez informs readers that his account is not historically accurate, claiming that after spending years interviewing Perón, he was no longer conscious of what was fact and what was fiction. Perón's mystifying propensity to be deceitful about his past had a profound effect on Martínez, who seemingly became enthralled to the concept of biographical freedom, to the extent that that he re-imagined his own life: Martínez goes as far as to incorporate himself into the Perón story, notably in Chapter 16, when he encounters Perón at Notre Dame Cathedral. Before Martínez became popular in the literary sphere, the Italian journalist Nino Tóla wrote what was arguably the first heavily fictionalised account of Perón, arguing that he was in fact, a man named Giovanni Piras, who had emigrated from the small town of Mamóida to Argentina in 1910 in search of a better life, and who later reinvented his identity to become Argentina's three times President. Tóla uses a certain degree of existing factual material, which states that Peron was of Sardinian descent due to his paternal heritage, but completely mythologises the rest of the articles' contents by stating that he had family in Mamaóida, whom he abandoned. His version of Perón's Sardinian heritage explained in two newspaper articles went on to influence later accounts by Peppino Canneddu and the most recent by Raffaele Ballore, who shares a common admiration of Mártinez's work. Each author has arguably deconstructed any established evidence-based historical truths regarding Perón's life, to ensure the originality of their own accounts– an approach visibly used in the Italian authors' versions to give rise to the new myth or, in their view, a new 'truth' that Peron was Sardinian. The aforementioned writers prioritise 'truth' over facts, but how can a fact not be a truth? It seems that this particular movement encourages its audience to believe whatever myth coincides best with their preferred versions of events. That New Historicists claim the absolute truth is unattainable and consequently choose to present their own versions of history is precisely why the movement has attracted mass criticism from traditional historians and biographers. Its advocacy of historical reconstruction and subsequent false assertions can be deemed somewhat ignorant and anti-intellectual. However, this particular postmodernist approach, employed

[66] *Ibid.,* p.13.

principally in the Latin American literary realm remains a subject of fascination. For Martínez, 'historical truth is multifaceted and elusive and cannot be controlled or circumscribed'.[67] Given his previous post as a journalist, it would seem uncharacteristic for Martínez to take a somewhat controversial stance on the concept of truth. Although Martínez cannot be classified as a New Historicist by Seymour Menton's standards, it is arguable that he believes in the same principle: what has been established as an official historical perspective, must be challenged. It is ironic that Martínez abandons the notion of historical truth, but then tries to create his own, even if he does warn the reader that his account (*La novela*) is not to be classified as historical fact, but simply an imaginative interpretation of Perón's life story. Martínez' interview with Perón in Madrid in the 1960s was to have formed the basis of an historical account, but when Martínez reviewed his notes subsequently, he found that Perón's version of events were contradictory and could not be shaped into a coherent narrative. This led to Martínez changing tactics and using this material not as the basis of an historical account as originally intended, but rather as the inspiration for a freewheeling fiction: as he observes in the text, the interview led to his discovery that Perón was not just a politician, but a rather accomplished novelist as well. Weiser states that in *La novela*, Martínez incorporates written and recorded documents in order to demonstrate how the past has been falsified by the Argentine government,[68] but in his quest to disprove one truth, he juggles several alternative truths refusing to grant monopoly or privilege to any single one. By doing this, he is essentially challenging 'official' versions of events that, in his view, have been manipulated and can offer at best only partial truths.

While highlighting the significance of New Historicism, there are some potential 'weaknesses' of the movement that should be discussed. If New Historicism's core principals are taken to their logical extremes, this could result in relativism, where we can be certain of nothing and our moral compass is undermined. Similar to postmodernists, New Historicists argue that presenting alternative interpretations of events and people's lives is empowering and liberating to their often-marginalised subjects, as theorised by Da Cunha. However, their

[67] *Ibid.*, p.10.
[68] Weiser, p.2.

efforts to divert from official historical standpoints and challenge traditional historical accounts may be seen as an effort to recreate history in line with their own moral and beliefs. Their emphasis on the partiality of human perspectives, on general human fallibility, on the transience of mind sets, on the 'situatedness' associated with historical periods, on the elusive slipperiness of language, all conspire to undermine the possibility of arriving at the 'truth'. It is important to note that New Historicism does not call into question or deny the existence of events, such as the Holocaust, for the sake of polemical edge or because they believe that historical accounts should be questioned in principle. New Historicists offer different responses to important epistemological questions and encourage readers to think about the way in which they acquire knowledge about the past. They subvert the organisational structures of knowledge by asking *how* history has been interpreted. The movement is more interested in the different interpretations of events and what the interpretations reveal to us about the interpreters.[69]

Structure

This thesis as a whole seeks to analyse critically the literary projections of Rosas and Perón in the contemporary Argentine novel, while also examining the credibility of the Rosas-Perón comparison, noted briefly, but not discussed in depth – in many historical accounts. **Chapter One** offers a detailed historical introduction to Rosas: the first part focuses on his upbringing and childhood, paying particular attention to his relationship with his mother, fascination with the nomadic Indians of the Pampas, to whose elimination he later contributed through his participation in *La Campaña del desierto* (1833-34) and the circumstances leading to his marriage to Encarnación Ezcurra. The second section concentrates on his two terms in government, and the unprecedented brutality inflicted on both Unitarians and Federalists alike by his paramilitary death squad, the *Mazorca*. The third section discusses how Rosas's legacy had been kept alive in Argentine memory through Juan Perón and Carlos Saúl Menem Akil, both of whom were proud to be associated with *El dictador*. **Chapter Two** focuses on the representation of Rosas and women as the Argentine Nation alongside the important themes of race and gender in José

[69] Tyson, p.278.

Mármol's critically acclaimed *Amalia* (1851) and Esteban Echeverría's *El matadero* (1871). It looks at the way in which Mármol's protagonist, Amalia, becomes a metaphor for the Argentine nation, and how the weight of a possible national reconciliation rests solely on her shoulders. Mármol's Amalia is based on the factual figure of Manuela Rosas, with whom he was infatuated and for whom he expressed great admiration and sympathy. He portrays her as a Unitarian who falls in love with a Federalist hero, Daniel, but whose hopes of elopement with her lover are destroyed by Argentina's civil war, exacerbated by Rosas's insatiable thirst for violence. However, drawing upon the key issue of racial and gender discrimination – arguably perpetuated by white Unitarians influenced by the European enlightenment – this chapter maintains that Rosas essentially helped both men and women of ethnic minorities, such as *mestizos* and Afro-Argentines, to regain their place in the social hierarchy: he employed specifically black women – who worshipped Manuela – in his spy network to detect and report suspicious activity amongst people who pledged allegiance to him. **Chapter Three** presents a significantly more original approach in the sense that it offers the first comprehensive study of the important comparisons between Encarnación Ezcurra and Eva Perón, noting specifically their paramount importance in the success of their spouses' administrations, as well as discussing how both female figures used their theatrical talents and powers of manipulation to marry their husbands and honour a common cause: to snatch power from the aristocracy and alleviate the impoverished masses. I compare the notable accounts of the lesser-known Jose Ingenieros, the nineteenth-century poet, and Jorge Luis Borges as the former condemns Encarnación and the latter discredits Eva as an uneducated woman, both embodying stereotypically male characteristics and thus defying traditional standards of femininity. I argue that it is likely that given Perón's public declaration of his admiration for Rosas, Eva would have had some knowledge of Encarnación Ezcurra which could have acted as a foundation for her political persona. I also highlight the likelihood that given both leaders' dependence on their wives to garner political support among the proletariat, they would not have achieved such unparalleled political supremacy. After all, it was Encarnación and Eva who were able to connect with the impoverished, particularly Eva, who established an unbreakable bond with the *descamisados*. **Chapter Four** evaluates Rosas's crimes against women and debates whether he was responsible for the moral corruption of Argentine womanhood, as strongly implied by Sarmiento and Mármol and partly by

Gorriti. This chapter draws attention to Rosas's most noteworthy crime in 1848: the execution of the then pregnant twenty-year old Federalist aristocrat Camila O'Gorman and her Jesuit Priest lover Uladislao Gutiérrez – a national tragedy which caused public outrage among Unitarians and Federalists alike and thus brought the country to a standstill. This tarnished Rosas's reputation, even in the eyes of his own supporters and prompted his fall from power which finally materialised in 1852. Manuela, a close friend of Camila, sent a letter to her father pleading with him to release Camila from prison to spare the life of the unborn child, but this was ignored by Rosas. I explain that this is precisely why it is difficult for the 1930s revisionists to romanticise Rosas in literature, hence why they focus on the much more saint-like figure of Manuela. **Chapter Five** analyses Rosas's relationship with Manuela in a series of fictional works by Gorriti and Mármol. It compares Mármol and Gorriti's rather ignorant and misogynistic representation of Manuela with María Rosa Lojo's more empowering depiction in *La Princesa Federal*, which has not been subjected to any literary criticism since its release in 2000. Unitarian writers implement a biased and politically-motivated approach in their works, which is not the same, but very similar to the New Historical style: their portrayal of events is likely different to what actually happened while their writing style is more distinctive and accessible than the traditional historical style. Furthermore, drawing on Da Cunha's definition, they treat an allegedly oppressed subject who is a of a different socio-economic class – two principal characteristics of New Historicism. They depict Manuela as a submissive figure who needs rescuing from her father, but conversely, Lojo maintains that she was an allegedly oppressed subject – depict Manuela as a submissive figure who needs rescuing from her father, but conversely, Lojo maintains that she was an independent and strong-minded woman who controlled the strings of her own world. In doing this, Lojo has made Manuela more comparable to her mother Encarnación and also Eva Perón, who both embodied this sort of resilience and worthy of political commendation in their own right. Lojo is the first writer to refer to historically accurate information such as written correspondence, and in doing so, dispels the myth that Manuela was a victim. However, while there is no evidence to validate the claim that Rosas pursued incestuous relations with Manuela, it is a well-known fact that he engaged in an improper relationship with María Eugenia Castro, a fifteen-year-old maid – gifted to Rosas by her father – with whom he had 5 illegitimate children. This is comparable to Juan Perón's polemical relationship with the sixteen-

year-old college student, Nélida 'Nelly' Haydée Rivas, sparking public uproar and a rapid decline in support among two of Perón's most important allies: the military and the Catholic Church. Lastly, **Chapter Six** offers essential historical background on Perón considering possible reasons for his reputation as a dictator, his government being labelled the second tyranny following the Rosas regime. I discuss his affiliation with European Fascism, drawing on his admiration for Benito Mussolini, which gave rise to the accusation that he was fascist and anti-Semitic, as well as his revolutionary social accomplishments achieved through authoritarian policies, comparable to those of Rosas. I highlight the previously undiscussed *Control del Estado* (discussed by Blanksten) known as *El Control*, which was used more in the Peronist administration than any other in order to detain political enemies such as university students. I argue that *El Control* is the Peronist equivalent of Rosas's infamous *Mazorca*: both political leaders maintained their unparalleled support through evoking fear and practicing torture on the Argentine public. The second part analyses how writers such as the celebrated Tomás Eloy Martínez and the lesser-known Italian authors Nino Tóla, Peppino Canneddu and Raffaele Ballore, who have received little critical attention, have used Perón's aversion for the truth and tendency to recreate his story to their advantage, allowing them to push their own agendas and promote their own truths. I draw on how these authors' use of New Historical principals such as imaginative reconstruction has presented a completely distorted view of Perón, to the point where fantasy and reality are indistinguishable. I also clarify why each writer imaginatively reconstructs Perón's story: for Martínez, it is because the truth is authoritarian and limits scope for other interpretations of people and events, whereas the Italian writers' aim is to establish, to different degrees, Perón's Sardinian heritage. I compare these writers' imaginative reconstructions with Joseph Page's more traditional approach to investigation, but explain how, even a historical account such as that of Page, turns into just another interpretation of Perón's life.

CHAPTER ONE

Juan Manuel de Rosas: An Introduction to Argentina's Most Polemical Political Figure

Governor Juan Manuel de Rosas, also known as 'el Restaurador de las Leyes', is certainly one of the most polemical and infamous political figures in Argentine history.[1] Whilst in power (1829-1832, 1835-1852), he gained a reputation as an indestructible political leader with a notorious and insatiable thirst for violence. It is arguable that Rosas's murderous authoritarian regime influenced many of Argentina's political, cultural and academic institutions as he remains even today the subject of both fierce criticism and zealous praise. This chapter aims to offer an analysis of why Rosas is considered the most notorious Argentine dictator with particular reference to his relentless reign of terror whilst in power. It discusses his rise to power after the fall of his predecessor, Facundo Quiroga, and how he used violence, the main subject of Unitarian fictional works, to manipulate public support for his second term in government. While providing an insight into the Rosas tyranny, I identify the principal literary works, namely José Mármol's *Amalia* (1851), Estaban Echverría's *El matadero* (1871), and Juana Manuela Gorriti's *Sueños y realidades* (1865), which most effectively demonise Rosas and emphasise the shattering effect of his brutality on the Argentine nation. As Benítez-Rojo points out, the Argentinian novel emerged outside of Argentina as a consequence of the political exile imposed by Rosas on the educated younger generation.[2]

Juan Manuel José Domingo Ortiz de Rosas was born in 1793 in the province of Buenos Aires to León Ortiz de Rosas, a wealthy upper-class ranch owner (estanciero) and Doña Agustina Lopéz de Orsonio, the latter being the first major

[1] 'In his second term in government (1835-1852), Juan Manuel de Rosas was known as 'The Restorer of the Laws'.

[2] Antonio Benítez-Rojo, 'The Nineteenth-Century Spanish American Novel', in *The Cambridge History of Latin American Literature ed. By González-Echevarría and Enrique Pupo-Walker* 'Discovery to Modernism' (Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp.446.

influence on Rosas's life.[3] According to Lynch, young Juan Manuel enjoyed the wealth and privilege that his father's social standing gave him: 'Juan Manuel Rosas was born to property and privilege in a new land and an old society. The family and the frontier were the first influences, which formed him. His heritage was colonial'.[4] Rosas's forebears, on both sides of the family, were *estancieros*: the young Rosas was encouraged to acquire an *estancia* and above all, to spare no effort in protecting his land. Even though Rosas followed the family tradition of managing his own *estancia* on the *pampas* – with notable success since his own soon became the wealthiest in Buenos Aires province – unlike his ancestors, 'he refused to participate in any war for Argentina's independence'.[5] This was due to his neutral political affiliation for it was not until 1826 that he pledged allegiance to the Federalist Party, fighting for Argentina's independence. The Federalists believed in a loose alliance of largely autonomous provinces and an organic Argentineness founded on gauchos and *caudillismo*. Their opponents, the *Unitarios*, advocated a strong central government and a nation based on the white European model. Throughout his childhood, Juan Manuel developed the necessary skills required to run his own *estancia*: he spent his days helping his father by working on the family ranch and in doing so, perfected those agricultural skills which would serve him well in later life. On the debit side, he neglected his schooling and formal education: 'Rosas spent more of his youth on the estancia than in school, learning the ways of the plains and the life and language of the Indians'.[6] There may have even been a drop of Indian blood in Rosas's veins but it did not show: 'Rosas had blond hair and blue eyes accompanied by clear-cut Spanish features.[7] He possessed a keen interest in Indian culture and devoted himself to learning about the Indian way of life. However, in 1833 he waged a bloody war against the Indian population known as *La Campaña del Desierto*, which led to his

[3] A phrase used primarily in Latin America to describe land elites who owned large estates called *estancias*.
[4] John Lynch, *Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas, 1829-1852* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p.9.
[5] Argentina's fertile plains, which were home to people of a lower social standing.
[6] Lynch, p.12.
[7] John Armstrong Crow, *The Epic of Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p.581.

second political victory.[8] His passion for defending the country was visible from an early age for when he was just thirteen years old: 'he took up a limited role in military service in resisting the British invasion of the *Rio de la Plata* [9] in 1806'.[10] He developed an admiration for the feudal establishment; he was fascinated by the primitive class system and enjoyed his power over the *gauchos*. He even chose to learn and speak the language of the nomadic Indians: 'Juan Manuel had his greatest affection for the language of the *pampas*. It was characteristic of him, since he always loved the florid, to prefer the dictionary of the *pampas*, which was said to have been like a Bible'.[11] It is therefore a notable irony that, in later life, when still infatuated with Indian culture, Rosas should lead *La Campaña del Desierto* which saw the brutal murder of thousands of Indian inhabitants of the *pampas* and Rosas being awarded the title of *El Conquistador del Desierto*.

Maternal Influence

From an early age, the young Juan Manuel was subject to severe punishment – even for minor peccadilloes. It was not his father, but in fact his mother, Doña Agustina, who disciplined Juan Manuel to such an extent, that she could be held accountable for kindling her son's early obsession with violence, which he exercised without restraint when in power. The suffocating influence of maternal authority is not unusual in the Hispanic family hierarchy given that mothers are deemed the transmitters of order in the household and therefore, instrumental in cultural reproduction. Women in the Hispanic world such as Doña Agustina often subscribed to this cultural paradigm also manifested later in the notable figure of Rosas's wife Doña Encarnación who would play a pivotal role in securing and maintaining her husband's political power. The concept of women as an unbreakable force in Latin

[8] 'The Desert Campaign' lasted for almost two years starting in 1833 and ending in late 1834. This war saw the brutal murder of the indigenous peoples of the plains and was pursued by different governments between 1878 and 1885, known as 'La Conquista del Desierto'.
[9] Name of the region surrounding the mouth of the *Rio de la Plata*, located between Buenos Aires province and Uruguay (formerly known as the *Banda Oriental*), which runs northwards of Bolivia, Paraguay and Brazil.
[10] Brian Loveman, & Thomas. M. Davies. Jr., *The Politics of Antipolitics: The Military in Latin America* (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press), p.29.
[11] Crow, p.582.

American folklore is called *marianismo*, which champions the veneration for feminine virtues such as purity and strength (Stevens, 1973). The concept is derived from the worship of the Virgin Mary in the Roman Catholic Church and meant that all women are 'perceived as possessing qualities such as semi divinity, moral superiority and spiritual strength'.[12] The religious worship of holy figures was projected on to public figures, the most outward manifestation of the Virgin Mary being Eva Perón. Her compassionate attitude towards the marginalised echelons of society makes her the embodiment of *Marianismo* as the aforementioned characteristics 'endow women with self-abnegation, humility and the willingness to sacrifice themselves for their children and tolerate the imperfections of their husbands, to whom they remain submissive'.[13] The concept of the benevolence and self-sacrificing female is juxtaposed with the opposing patriarchal paradigm of *machismo,* a cultural phenomenon which has dictated the behaviour of the Latin American male for centuries and is also thought of 'as the clearest evidence of the oppression and powerlessness of women in Latin America'.[14] In Rosas's era, *gauchismo* was the dominant force and it can be argued that it was used as a framework on which men such as the Caudillos modelled themselves. Even though *marianismo* is considered the gendered counterpart of *machismo*, Jane Jaquette argues that without *machismo*, women such as Rosas's mother would not have been able to assert their authority in the household:

> Women retain respect as wives and mothers in part from their ability to maintain their virginal image and *Machismo* is the mechanism by which this is accomplished. Without *Machismo* the wife could not employ the emotional leverage on her husband and sons which is a result of her moral superiority.[15]

This relates to Rosas's mother being such a dominant influence; her children never question her authority for she was seen to be morally superior. A key component which contributed enormously to the construction of the *gaucho* archetype,

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[12] Vicki L. Ruíz and Virginia Sánchez Korrol, *Latinas in the United States, set: A Historical Encyclopedia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), p.423.
[13] *Ibid*.
[14] Ann M. Pescatello, *Female and Male in Latin America* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1973), p.5.
[15] Jane S. Jaquette, "Literary Archetypes and Female Role Alternatives" in Ann M. Pescatello '*Female and Male in Latin America*', p.24.

machismo is a movement which encourages men to emphasise their masculinity and masculine qualities such as being self-reliant and physically tough. The environment in which Rosas was raised, combined with his mother's harsh punishments, made him even more inclined to adopt the *machista* aspects of the *gaucho* character. The chief characteristics in this cult of *machismo* are 'exaggerated aggressiveness and intransigence in male-to-male interpersonal relationships'.[16] However, even though these predispositions are attributed to *machismo*, they are also associated with the movement of *marianismo* and thus Doña Agustina's character; she made known to everyone her belligerence and unforgiving nature but even more conspicuous was the fact that she sought to control every aspect of her son's life.

As well as prohibiting him from going to school, she also attempted to prevent him from marrying his future wife, Doña Encarnación Excurra y Arguibel: 'His mother held nothing against this particular girl, or so she claimed; it was simply her inability to give him up to any girl'.[17] This demonstrates Rosas's mother's selfish and dominant nature and odd obsession with the idea of keeping her son for herself. She could not countenance the thought of Rosas obeying another woman and devoting his life to her: 'She wept in despair, blaming her tears and tirades on her son's extreme youth; yet it was the idea of his getting married at all that sent her into tantrums'.[18] Juan Manuel had a fiery relationship with his mother and clearly inherited her irrepressible temper.

The Rise of Rosas

Even though Rosas's family was fundamental in building his reputation,[19] Bos notes that he needed to expand his horizons: 'Rosas's family helped him

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[16] Stevens, Evelyn. P., "Marianismo: The Other Face of Machismo" in Ann M. Pescatello, '*Female and Male in Latin America*' (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1973), p.90.
[17] *Ibid*., p.28.
[18] *Ibid*.
[19] Rosas benefited greatly from his family's wealth and powerful social standing and whilst in his youth, he was commended for his '*gaucho*-esque skills and resourcefulness, which inevitably attracted the support of his peers'. The Anchorena family were the largest landowners in Buenos Aires during this period and were conveniently Rosas's cousins 'who served as loyal members of his network during his tenure'. Rosas's brothers, Gervasio and Prudencio, 'also played key roles as valuable landowners. See Andrés M. Carretero, 'Contribución al conocimiento a la propiedad rural Buenos Aires para 1830' *Boletín del Instituto de Historía Argentina 2*, (13), Jan. 1970, pp.273-292 and John Lynch 'Caudillos in Spanish America' (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), p.93.

strengthen his base [...] but the blood of the covenant is thicker than the water of the womb, and Rosas needed to create a network that reached beyond his familial ties'.[20] During the early stages of his political career, after initially joining the federalist party in 1826, Rosas had gained a heroic reputation and acquired prestige for his military service fighting in the Argentine Unitarian-Federalist Civil War in 1828. This led to him being appointed head of the military in the government of Manuel Dorrego (in office 1827-28). During his execution of his senior role 'Rosas divided society into those who commanded and those who obeyed. Order obsessed him and the virtue which he most admired in a people was subordination'.[21] This is a policy which Rosas incorporated into the running of his own government. He became known as 'El Restaurador de las Leyes' and assumed absolute power in 1835 after his victorious war of extermination against the indigenous peoples of the pampas. Rosas's advantageous political standing within the federalist government facilitated his transition from *estanciero* to powerful *caudillo*. When Rosas obtained control,[22] he made it his priority to alleviate rural poverty following the recent war.[23] Rosas rewarded his loyal federalists with more territory but their placement at the frontier was not random but rather designed to afford some protection to the estancieros.[24] Rosas implemented his policy of land redistribution[25] as an efficient means of maintaining his political support and, in this endeavour, he was successful. Rosas was inaugurated amidst the wildest enthusiasm; he was the people's saviour. The citizens of Buenos Aires, grateful for being rescued from utter lawlessness and destruction, decided to strike a medal commemorating the event.[26] The phenomenon of *Caudillismo* in Argentina saw the resurgence of a traditional economy and social

[20] Tyler. W. Bos, *The Age of the Caudillos: Power Structures, Masculinity and Neglect in the Argentine National Period* (unpublished senior honours thesis, Western Michigan University, 2015), p.30.
[21] Lynch, *Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas,* p.155.
[22] It is worth noting that Rosas did not govern Argentina. As Lynch points out: 'The thirteen provinces govern themselves independently, though they were grouped in one general Confederation of the United Provinces of the Río de la Plata. Rosas accepted this and preferred inter-provincial relations to be governed by informal power rather than a written Constitution', 'From Independence to National Organisation' in Argentina Since Independence, ed. Leslie Bethel, (Cambridge University Press: 1993), pp.1-46 (p.30).
[23] Cárcano, Miguel, *Evolución histórica del régimen de la tierra pública 1810-1916* (Buenos Aires, 1972), pp.56-57.
[24] Lynch, *Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas*, p.51.
[25] Although the policy of land redistribution suggests greater equality, it was already the well-healed estancieros who benefitted the most.
[26] Crow, p.582.

hierarchies which proved to be an obstacle, impeding Argentina's progress in becoming a liberal, European and 'civilised' nation.[27] While Rosas's policy of land distribution benefited the *estancieros* in maintaining their property and workforce, it also attracted criticism. His most notable political enemy Domingo Faustino Sarmiento denounced the social consequences of Rosas's agrarian regime arguing that it led to more poverty: 'The people perish of hunger in a country dedicated to the breeding of cattle. Today, an arroba of meat costs six *duros*[28] in the market; bread costs more than in Europe'.[29] The affluent *estancieros* benefited from Rosas's policies at the expense of the masses, especially the *gauchos*. The *gauchos* were tamed and controlled by the *estancieros* who now robbed them of their freedom: 'the *estancerios* curtailed the nomadic tendency of the *gauchos*; requiring them to carry identity cards and certificates of employment or face forced military conscription and hard labour'.[30] This corrupt and discriminatory legal system meant that the *gaucho* nomads were denied their freedoms and worst of all, a fair salary for their hard labour. Rosas, of course, perpetuated this unjust practice by partaking in the economic subjugation of his *peonaje*.[31] Instructions for the management of his *estancias* given to their respected overseers prohibited *peons*[32] from raising their own livestock or hunting wild game.[33]

Resilient Rosas

Despite Rosas's alleged mendaciousness in cheating his supporters out of their rights, the masses remained oblivious and continued to worship him. This allowed Rosas to build on his untarnished reputation among the federalists and even before he was elected as 'el Gobernador de Buenos Aires', he had already made a

[27] A socio-political term with based on the traditional figure of the *caudillo.*

[28] A *duro* was the currency of Spanish America at the time and equivalent to the *peso*, which is used in Spain.

[29] Domingo, F. Sarmiento, *El Nacional*, 1856 (first cited in Lynch, *Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas*).

[30] John Lynch, *The Spanish American Revolutions, 1808-1826* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1986), p.83.

[31] A term which describes a group of labourers who were employed by *estancerio s*and had little control over their working conditions.

[32] A *peón* is a person subject to *peonaje* (any form of unfree or wage labour).

[33] See Tulio Halperín Donghi, 'La expansión ganadera en la campaña de Buenos Aires (1810-1852)', *Instituto de Desarrollo Económico y Social*, Vol. 3, (5), April-September 1963, p.94. This is cited in Lynch, *Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas,* p.53, but the original Spanish is unavailable.

name for himself as a triumphant caudillo and ex-army general in the Argentine political sphere. In order to become Governor, Rosas instigated a social revolution when he stormed to power in 1829 as 'el Restaurador de las leyes', representing the marginalised masses and gauchos of the *pampas*. [34] It was during this period that he and the gauchos inflicted a wave of terror on the enlightened classes. With the help of his wife, Rosas managed successfully to maintain a vast political following consisting of the 'white *gaucho* savages' of the pampas. When Rosas implemented his policies regarding punishment for wrongdoings, irrespective of how petty the crime, he attracted international attention. Whilst in Buenos Aires, Darwin observed and interviewed Rosas, of whom he remarked: '[He] is a man of extraordinary character...and has the most predominant influence in the country which it seems probable he will use to its prosperity and advancement'.[35] Darwin was accurate in his prediction in that Rosas would use his tactical competency to garner political support among the 'illiterate' suburban masses.

Apart from Rosas's imitation of the gaucho icon of masculinity as a means to amplify his support system, his charismatic persona was also pivotal in mobilizing the masses. Donna Guy reiterates the notion that such bonds are enough to entice illiterate audiences and that the followers of such leaders are often fanatical:

> Often the followers in this charismatic process are defined as irrational, overly emotional, or ignorant. This places all the responsibility in the hands of the powerful person, rather than asking how the less powerful could help shape, and even profit from, the development of an attractive and caring personality in a leader.' [36]

The impoverished factions of Argentine society, referred to as the masses but more fondly known by Rosas as *los desamparados,* meaning 'the destitute', 'abandoned' or 'helpless', were captivated by Encarnación's speeches: her charismatic oratorical skills served to strengthen emotional and personal bonds that would be instrumental

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[34] Lynch, '*Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas*', p.2.

[35] Charles Darwin, *Journal of Researches into the Natural History and Geology of the Countries visited during the voyage of the H.M.S Beagle Round the World* [1834]. 9th ed. (London: J. Murray, 1890), 113-114. Retrieved from: https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/68332#page/1/mode/1up [accessed on 14/02/17].

[36] Donna Guy, *Creating Charismatic Bonds in Argentina* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2016), p.2.

in Rosas's success. Furthermore, one can relate Rosas's physical attributes to the often-handsome appearance of charismatic figures. As noted by Donna Guy, Rosas did not resemble the appearance of the indigenous population of the pampas since he was pale skinned, and blue eyed and had golden blond hair. This attractive combination could have also contributed to Rosas's triumphant rule, just as his successor, the twentieth-century President, Juan Perón was said to have secured popular approval partly because of his pleasing demeanour. One can argue that *los desamparados* were seduced not only by Rosas but by his wife's oratorical skills. Encarnación was perceived to have a cold nature but it can be noted that she used her theatrical skills to lure the masses, leading these 'mindless' people to believe that she cared. Whether or not Encarnación was sincere in her attempt to solidify bonds with the masses, it is certain that they worshipped her, just as future generations would worship Eva Perón, calling her 'Madrecita de los desamparados',[37] which is a Catholic honour attributed to the Virgin Mary. Galdón's analysis of the term 'desamparado' refers specifically to the masses who felt no sense of identity: 'The "desamparado" is a person who feels unprotected and alone. So he lives, as a being who is a "desamparado", unprotected and helpless'.[38] It can be argued that both Juan and Encarnación de Rosas and Juan and Eva Perón appointed themselves as the saviours of the people, referring to their followers by using terms of endearment with religious connotations, thus giving them a sense of importance and belonging. Phrases such as 'desamparado' and 'descamisado' were seen as rallying calls for solidarity. Shumway states: 'Rosas presaged the rule of another populist presidency: that of Juan Domingo and Eva Perón, who in this century dressed like aristocrats while affirming solidarity with the poor'.[39]

From 1833-1834, in an attempt to advance his plans to unlock vast tracts of land and expand what was then Indian Territory, Rosas orchestrated *La Campaña del Desierto* during the administration of the then Governor Juan Ramón Balcarce (in office 1832-1833) who was later succeeded by Juan José Viamonte. Rosas initiated

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[37] Cecilia, M.T López-Badano, *La novela histórica latinoamericana entre dos siglos: Santa Evita, cadáver, exquisito de paseo por el canon* (Madrid: CSIC, 2010), p.180.

[38] Patricia Paloma Galdón, 'María Zambrano: a woman, a republican and a philosopher in exile', *Journal of Education, Culture and Society*. Vol. 2, (University of Wroclaw, 2013), p.64. Retrieved from: http://nowadays.home.pl/JECS/data/documents/JECS=202=282013=29=2059-70.pdf.

[39] Nicholas Shumway, '*The Invention of Argentina*', (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California, 1991), p.119.

this brutal attack on the Indians with the aid of his vicious federalist militants and his army consisting predominantly of mixed-race military-trained gaucho savages. As Rosas departed to fight in battle to win yet more land, he entrusted the running of his government to Encarnación, who was in charge of issuing orders to the infamous *rosista* vigilante police force, the *mazorca*: 'Rosas permaneció distanciado del gobierno de Buenos Aires, mientras en Buenos Aires los federales apostólicos hostilizaban a Balcarcebajo la eficaz dirección de su esposa Doña Encarnación Ezcurra'.[40]

Rosas's most outspoken political opponent, who would later become president, was the Argentine activist, writer, and intellectual, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento who, for speaking out against the federalists' barbaric propensities, was exiled to Chile in 1829. Whilst in exile, he wrote what is now one of the most celebrated pieces of literature in the Spanish-speaking world. His damning criticism of the barbaric gaucho 'savages' and notorious caudillos, such as Facundo Quiroga and Juan Manuel de Rosas, not only denounces federalism as a whole but by the end, implies that 'Rosas has become a dangerous national incarnation of Barbarism',[41] a point that is reiterated in Ricardo Salvatore's account: 'Central to the predicament of the *émigrés* was this notion that *rosismo*[42] had established "barbarism" (the crowd, blacks, poor women and rural peons) at the core of public life, displacing the urban gentry from their rightful position of leadership'.[43]

Rosas's close relationship with the church from an early stage in his career was imperative; the church was one of the main catalysts in initiating Rosas's political supremacy and it was instrumental in his propaganda campaign, particularly in terms of arousing fear in the general public as they believed that 'the words of Juan Manuel are the same as the words of God'.[44] One can argue that both Juan Manuel de Rosas and Juan Perón incorporated Catholicism into their own ideologies to further strengthen their bonds with the people and use religion to promote their

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[40] Ramón, F. Vial, *Manuelita Rosas: aspectos interesantes de su vida* (Buenos Aires: Lombardi, 1969), p.56.
[41] Philip Swanson, *Latin American Fiction: A Short Introduction* (Malden: Blackwell, 2005), p.6.
[42] The political Federalist ideology and movement based on the policies of Juan Manuel de Rosas.
[43] Ricardo D. Salvatore, *Wandering Paysanos: State Order and Subaltern Experience in Buenos Aires during the Rosas Era* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), p.243.
[44] Lynch, *Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas*, p.55.

agenda, a common totalitarian practice also exercised by dictators such as Benito Mussolini and Francisco Franco. It was in 1835 that Rosas was declared constitutional dictator in a plebiscite in Buenos Aires; the manner in which he was elected is reminiscent of that of Napoleon as Loveman notes: 'Napoleon's plebiscitary machinations and those of Rosas, orchestrated a house-by-house, verbal "yes-no" vote on their exercise of "extraordinary powers" in the early nineteenth century demonstrate the importance of proper acknowledgement of popular sovereignty and the political creed that replaced monarchy'.[45] The manner in which Rosas was elected may appear to be democratic as 'verbal votes given to an official who went house-to-house gave Rosas a 9,716-4 victory', thus demonstrating the great popular support for his assumption of the 'sum of total public authority'.[46] However, the fact that he was elected by a plebiscite clearly implies that people did not know for what they were voting; the charismatic and pro-independence Rosas appealed to the illiterate masses and won their vote as he vowed to help them reclaim their place in the Argentine social hierarchy. As noted, Rosas used Catholicism as a means of manipulating public opinion among the impoverished as religious rhetoric gives people a sense of being protected and guarded. Shumway points to his carefully cultivated political persona 'that was at once imperial, populist, and paternalistic. Rosas could ride and talk like a gaucho, but he also knew how to affect the airs of royalty'.[47] After assuming absolute power, Rosas demanded that the church replace pictures of Jesus Christ with pictures of himself, as though he was now established as the new God: 'The portrait of Rosas was carried in procession from church to church, at each of which it was received by priests with a show of devotion normally reserved for more sacred objects'.[48]

Rosas and Revenge

[45] Brian Loveman, "When You Wish Upon the Stars": Why the Generals (and Admirals) Say Yes to Latin American 'Transitions' to Civilian Government' in *The Origins of Liberty: Political and Economic Liberalization in the Modern World* eds. Paul W. Drake and Matthew Daniel McCubbins (Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1998), p.130.
[46] Brian Loveman *The Constitution of Tyranny: Regimes of Exception in Spanish America* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993), p.279.
[47] Shumway, pp.118-19.
[48] Lynch, *Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas*, p.183.

The name 'Restorer of the Laws' came into play when Rosas's fixation with restoring law and order gave birth to the creation of the notorious Federalist paramilitary police force, the *mazorca*. The principal responsibility of the *mazorca* was to detect and denounce any Unitarians that posed a threat to the progress of a civilised Argentina. The name *mazorca* is said to have derived from 'la espiga de *maíz* (*mazorca*) queriendo *simbolizar unidad*',[49] or from the word: *mashorca* which derives from *másahorca* meaning 'more killing through hanging', a literal reference to the countless executions that took place during Rosas' reign.[50] Rosas used his *mazorca* to torture and kill his enemies and also disobedient fellow federalists. Lynch also notes a more unpleasant but poignant significance of the allegorical name *mazorca* which derives its name from 'the inward stalk of the maize, when deprived of its grain, and used by members as an instrument of torture of which your lordship may have some idea when calling to mind the agonising death inflicted upon Edward II'[51], who was skewered with a red hot poker'.[52] According to Lynch, he provides us with a further insight into the fanaticism of the federalists when presented with the opportunity to mock enemies. At patriotic feasts, federalists would jump to their feet and cry out against a Unitarian 'here is a toasted maize; let us put it where he deserves it'.[53] This refers to the act of inserting the instrument of torture into the enemy:

> Esta sociedad, que comúnmente se llama de la Mazorca, tiene por objeto el introducir por el flanco de la retaguardia del enemigo unitario, el sabroso fruto de que ha tomado nombre, así es que toda aquella gente que recela este fracaso, ha dado en usar el pantalón muy ajustado, disfrazando con el nombre de moda una prevención muy puesta en orden y razón.[54]

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[49] Fernando Operé, *Civilización y barbarie en la literatura argentina del siglo XIX. El tirano Rosas* (Madrid: Conorg, 1987), p.108.
[50] William H. Katra, *The Argentine Generation of 1837: Echeverría, Alberdi, Sarmiento, Mitre* (New Jersey: Farleigh Dickson University Press, 1996), p.64.
[51] O'Brien, J.T. to Aberdeen, Jan. 1845, PRO, FO 6/110, first cited in Lynch, *Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas*, p.215.
[52] Christopher Marlow, *The Jew of Malta*, (Ontario: Broadview Press, 2012), p.12.
[53] Lynch, *Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas,* p.215.
[54] Juan María Guitiérrez, *Historía*, Vol. 30, (9), 1963, p.149.

There were no limits to the *mazorca*'s viciousness, Rosas's supreme political position allowed him to form this merciless death squad whose violence was unparalleled: 'la innovación del rosismo fue la vinculación de este tipo de personajes con una política de violencia política aplicada directamente contra los opositores, un paso a una violencia irrestricta cuando el gobernador lo permitía'.[55] However, when Misía Dolores, the mother of the romanticised Federalist heroine María del Carmen laments the early death of Encarnación, a key figure in Rosas's government,[56] she argues that it was Encarnación who was responsible for instructing the para-military squad: 'Fué ella quien instigó el odio y los alzamientos del populacho, la dirigente de la Sociedad Popular Restaurador y la Mazorca que inspiraba los crímenes de la plebe'.[57] The *mazorqueros* were not, however, part of the *rosista* élite, but were recruited from the lower echelons of society.[58] Lynch captures the crimes of the *mazorca* in describing what would have been their daily routine: 'They conducted house-to-house searches, destroying everything blue and intimidating the owners; they acted upon police reports such as "he has not given any service to the Federation and dresses like a Unitarian"; they arrested; they tortured; and they killed'.[59] Given that the killings were often irrational and there was no evidence for any real crime committed on the suspect's part, one can argue that Rosas's thirst for violence filtered down into his para-military squad; Rosas encouraged and glorified violence, he offered awards to the *mazorca* as an incentive to practice violence across the province. The *mazorca* allowed Rosas to exercise and satisfy his thirst for brutal punishment on a massive scale, rendering him the incarnation of Sarmiento's barbarism:

> En 1840 Rosas estableció su cuartel general en el pueblo de Santos Lugares, en la provincia de Buenos Aires. El cuartel sirvió también de prisión en donde se encarcelaba a presos políticos y se llevaban a cabo ejecuciones sumarias. El recuerdo del lugar va asociado a

[55] Gabriel di Meglio, *¡Mueran los salvajes unitarios! La mazorca y la política en tiempos de Rosas* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2012), p.200.
[56] Maria del Carmen, a close friend of Manuelita, was condemned by Rosas for her clandestine relationship with the Unitarian rebel poet, Daniel Castañeda.
[57] Lauren Rea, *Argentine Serialised Radio Drama in the Infamous Decade, 1930-1943: Transmitting Nationhood* (Oxon: Routledge, 2013), p.39.
[58] Members of the *mazorca.*
[59] Lynch, *Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas*, p.215.

> las memorias borrosas de tortura, sangre y muerte. No menos siniestros fueron el cuartel de serenos y el cuartel de los restauradores, sedes del cuerpo de serenos y de la Mazorca.[60]

During his rule, Rosas not only tormented and killed his enemies; he also oppressed his own followers who were oblivious to his tyrannical nature. The most notable outward manifestations of loyalty to the Rosas regime were mandatory such as the wearing of the *divisa federal* (federalist insignia), popularly known as the *divisa punzó* (scarlet insignia) on which Rosas' portrait sometimes appeared. José Antonio Wilde's 1881 account draws on how the divisa punzó had to be worn close to the heart as a sign of love for Rosas: 'Hágales usted entender igualmente que los hombres deben llevar la divisa de color punzó al lado izquierdo sobre el corazón'.[61] Furthermore, Rea maintains that 'red was the official colour of the regime and sky blue *(celeste)* was identified with the Unitarians. Women were expected to wear red ribbons in their hair and the colour red dictated the fashion at the time'.[62]

Before and during Rosas's time, Argentineans killed by using three methods which consisted of shooting, lancing, and 'throat-cutting', the last being the most popular procedure as it was 'the most favoured punishment and valued technique'.[63] The knife was seen to be a stereotypical gaucho weapon, and to master the art of throat cutting was the skill that men needed to establish their gaucho identity. Hudson recalls: 'The people of the plains had developed an amazing ferocity; they loved to kill a man not with a bullet, but in a manner to make them know and feel that they were really and truly killing'.[64] But of this savage practice, Lynch argues that 'what may be attributed to a cultural flaw in a primitive creature of the pampas becomes an abuse of power in the hands of the state'.[65] Rosas employed this common practice within the gaucho community and used it as the primary killing technique that defined gaucho men. Even though this traditional execution method was prevalent throughout the pampas and the city of Buenos Aires, critics have associated throat-cutting predominantly with Rosas given that he made it a

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[60] Operé, p.85.
[61] José Antonio Wilde, *Buenos Aires setenta años atrás* (Buenos Aires: C Casavalle, 1881), p.273.
[62] Rea (2013), p.40.
[63] *Ibid*., p.99.
[64] William, H. Hudson, *Far Away and Long Ago* (London: Eland, 2005), p.107.
[65] Lynch, *Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas*, p.214.

'trademark' component within his regime, carrying it further than others: 'Execution by cutting the throat with a knife instead of by shooting, is the result of the butcher's instinct which Rosas has exploited to give executions a more gaucho-like form and more pleasure to the assassins'.[66]

Lynch remarks: 'according to Beruti, Federal troops played bowls with Unitarian heads or took them back to Buenos Aires to present to Rosas'.[67] Colonel Anthony King, who is said to have seen one of these heads in Rosas's home heightens our understanding of the barbaric way of life and also makes an interesting observation about Rosas's daughter and arguably favourite child, Manuela, more fondly known as Manuelita:

> It was rumoured that Manuelita watched throat-cutting and played with decapitated heads. And it was reported that Oribe sent her from Tucumán the salted ears of a Unitarian officer named Borda which she kept in a glass case and showed visitors.[68]

Mármol admired Manuela Rosas and evokes sympathy for her in his works, labelling her 'la primera víctima de la tiranía de su padre'.[69] He postulates that had she received a Unitarian upbringing and education, instead of being raised in a toxic Federalist environment, she would have become a formidable woman instead of being 'oppressed' under her father. As discussed in Chapters, 2, 4, and 5, Mármol, alongside his fellow Unitarian writer, Juana Manuela Gorriti, shed light on the terror inflicted on the country by Rosas with Gorriti highlighting how the dictator's brutality was responsible for the destruction of national families. Both writers use Manuela to depict the tragedy associated with her father's regime: Mármol's Amalia is representative of both Manuela and the wounded Argentine nation, which suffer greatly under Rosas. While Mármol absolves Manuela of any contribution to Rosas's government given that she too is subjected to terror, Gorriti portrays Manuela as a benevolent, self-sacrificing character who makes reparations to her father's victims,

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[66] *Ibid*.

[67] *Ibid*

[68] Anthony J. King, *Twenty-Four Years in the Argentine Republic* (London: Maggs, 1846), p.380. Cited also in English in Lynch, *Argetnine Dictator*, p.215. Spanish quotation from online PDF is now unavailable [accessed on 03/12/2016].

[69] José Mármol, *Amalia* (Barcelona: Linkgua Ediciones: 2010), p.475.

but emphasises that because she is Rosas's daughter, she inevitably contributes to his tyranny and thus, the suffering of others. She is a shadow of her father and cannot be disassociated with his atrocities.

Mármol describes the Mazorca's terror tactics as forcing their way into people's homes in groups of eight to ten and destroying furniture, breaking glass and smashing ornaments: 'la entrada de la mazorca a una casa representaba una combinación infernal de ruido, de brutalidad, de crimen' and from here, people were arrested and assassinated in the streets: '[…] y todo esto en medio de un ruido y una grita infernal'.[70] The daily terror was undoubtedly a contributing factor to Rosas's resilient and unwavering rule over Argentina throughout the 1830s. However, the tyrant did not benefit from as much success in the next decade as his power began its rapid decline. Despite holding off two of the most powerful nations, Britain and France, in the Anglo-French blockade of the River Plate basin in 1845, Rosas's failure to liberalise his regime saw a period of profound discontent throughout the nation, among Unitarians and Federalists alike. One of the most poignant reasons for Argentina's civil unrest was the fact that Rosas failed to liberalise his oppressive regime and even when he permitted the exiled writers and politicians to return to Argentina, he made sure that they lived in constant fear which further alienated the population. Yet the tragedy that brought the nation to a standstill was the remorseless killing of the then pregnant twenty-year old *federalista* Camila O'Gorman and her Priest lover Father Uladislao Gutiérrez. Even after the senseless murder of these two young and innocent civilians, Rosas did not seek to make amends with his compatriots but instead, distanced himself from Buenos Aires, isolating himself in his country house in Palermo and 'declined to meet with his ministers and relied solely on his secretaries',[71] and in turn, Manuelita, became the only link between her father and the outside world'.[72] Paradoxically, it was now Rosas who lived in fear of his supporters who were growing increasingly hostile to their once former idol. The fatal decline of Rosas's supremacy was more apparent than ever when he lost the trust and support of one of his most loyal Lieutenants Justo José de Urquiza – a

[70] *Ibid*., p.319.
[71] Lynch, *Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas*, p.297.
[72] *Ibid*., 177.

caudillo in *Entre Ríos* – who rebelled against his former superior.[73] Once Rosas acquired knowledge of Urquiza's desire to fight for the constitutional government and become head of state, he was quick to retaliate and initiated the Platine War. Brazil was the first country to unite with Urquiza as it vowed to facilitate his rise to power by supplying weapons and financial and military aid. Rosas was defeated by Urquiza at the Battle of Caseros in 1852 and soon after, fled to Buenos Aires where he boarded a ship to his exile in Southampton, living there until his death in 1877.

Rehabilitating Rosas

Rosas's exile saw the rapid emergence of Pro-Rosas organisations, such as the Pro-Repatriation of Rosas Committee in 1930 and the Instituto Juan Manuel de Rosas in 1938, which campaigned to repatriate a man who was so vehemently loathed by the liberals. The aforementioned societies finally 'realised their ultimate goal of retrieving Rosas's remains from Southampton and burying them in the Recoleta Cemetery next to his wife in 1989'.[74] Even though the *rosista* groups contributed significantly to Rosas's return, they could not have succeeded without the establishment and growth of the neo-fascist and alleged anti-Semitic revisionist school of historiography in the 1920s and 30s. The Historical Revisionists glorified Rosas in their literature by emphasising his role as defender of national sovereignty and thus, greatly facilitated the repatriation of their hero. The man responsible for initiating the repatriation of Rosas was Peronist President Carlos Menem, who led the 1989 government after he succeeded Raúl Alfonsín. Even though Alfonsín used Rosas's portrait on stamps and currency as a symbol of patriotism, promoting national unity, he did not take action in resuming the repatriation of Rosas. According to Daniel Larriqueta, who occupied various senior positions in government, Alfonsín 'no tenía una posición rígida sobre este tema (la repatriación)', but it was still considered to be a polemical issue given

[73] A central province of Argentina, located in the *Mesopostania* region which boarders Buenos Aires, Corrientes, Santa Fe and Uruguay.

[74] Jeffrey M. Shumway 'The Repatriation of Juan Manuel de Rosas' in *Death, Dismemberment and Memory: Body Politics in Latin America*, ed. Lyman Johnson (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2004), pp.105-140.

that 'todavía había muchos sectores liberales que venían considerando que Rosas estaba bien en Inglaterra y que no había que provocar un hecho político alrededor del cadáver de Rosas. Poreso [la repatriación no avanzó'].[75] Once in power, Menem's principal aim was to achieve national reconciliation and to end the dichotomies that once plagued the country.[76] By repatriating Rosas, Menem sought to 'alterar la memoria colectiva de la historia argentina y redefinir el árbol genealógico cultural y político de la nación. Eso incluiría a los archienemigos del pasado como Rosas, Mitre y Sarmiento'.[77] When Menem assumed office, he emulated Perón's infatuation with Rosas as he 'capitalised on the populist tradition of Peronism and effectively employed symbols from the Rosas era'.[78] He championed the return of Rosas and even his physical appearance manifested his loyalty to him: 'lució largas patillas que evocaban imágenes de los caudillos de La Rioja, como Facundo Quiroga y el Chacho Peñaloza, los confiables aliados de Juan Manuel de Rosas.[79] His inaugural parade 'también incluyó a muchos gauchos montados a caballo'.[80] In a sense, Menem volunteered himself as Argentina's political saviour who would save the country from the claws of death; during his electoral campaign and inauguration speech, he vowed to close the political gaps that plagued and divided the nation. His message culminated in his inaugural speech as he declared: 'Una voz que hoy se alza como una oración, como un ruego, como un grito conmovedor: Argentina, levántate y anda. Argentina, levántate y anda. Argentina, levántate y anda'.[81]

Before Menem, Perón had claimed an affinity with Rosas, as he and his wife Eva allegedly modelled themselves on the dictator and his wife Encarnación. When Perón rose to political prominence in the late 1940s, the Historical Revisionists seized the opportunity to address the obvious comparisons between the two figures

[75] Daniel Larriqueta interview with Jeffrey M. Shumway (2009), as quoted in Shumway, *La Repatriación de Juan Manuel de Rosas*, p.13.
[76] Shumway, 'The Repatriation of Rosas', *Death Dismemberment and Memory*, p.106.
[77] Jeffrey M. Shumway, "A veces saber olvidar es también tener memoría": la repatriación de Juan Manuel de Rosas, el menemismo y las heridas de la memoria argentina', *Programa Interuniversitario de Historia Política*, p.3. Retrieved from http://historiapolitica.com/datos/biblioteca/muerte%20y%20politica_shumway.pdf.
[78] *Ibid*.
[79] *Ibid*., p.14.
[80] *Ibid*.
[81] C.S Menem, Presidential message of Carlos Saúl Menem to the Honourable Legislative Assembly, July 8th, 1989, Buenos Aires, Secretary of Press and Diffusion Presidency of the Argentine Republic.

and thus, reintegrate Rosas into public memory. Given their opposition to 'official' history, the primary objective of the historical revisionists is to challenge and denounce any negative and vitriolic anti-Rosas literature and to reinforce the idea that Rosas was the resilient nationalist and populist leader that the nation desperately needed: 'Revisionists often intended for their evidence to lend support to the very conservative, authoritarian political order. Beginning in the 1950s, comparisons between Rosas and Perón further politicized the nation's historical writing'.[82] The 1920s and 1930s saw a resurgence of pro-Rosas literature but it was in the 1950s, when Juan Perón was elected President, that the revisionists seized the opportunity to revive Rosas's memory; they often compared Perón to Rosas, and in doing so, hoped to portray the dictator in a positive light. The Rosas-Perón comparison is a two-edged sword in the sense that it has a dual purpose. The anti-Peronists use this comparison as a slur against Perón, with an implicit emphasise on the brutality of the Rosas regime whereas the *rosistas* use it to restore Rosas to his former glory by equating his rule with the relatively benign regime of Perón. It is clear that, as in the case of all dictators throughout history, 'Rosas had his apologists who polemically condoned his methods, stressed his patriotism and praised him as a great administrator and public servant'.[83] The Argentine sociologist and pro-Rosas historian, Ernesto Quesada, disturbingly remarked that 'Rosas laid the foundation upon which the Argentine nation was subsequently built'.[84] According to Kirkpatrick, an anonymous apologist praised Rosas's stance in the Anglo-French Intervention in the 1840s: 'Rosas had successfully maintained a truly American policy of resistance to European interference and had battled attempts of two great powers to dictate to him, rendering him the triumphant champion of Argentine independence'.[85] Perón was an ardent admirer of Rosas and it was in the 1960s that he made known his support for the Pro-Repatriation of Rosas Committee; even in exile, Perón retained powerful contacts within Argentina. When Perón was elected to power for the second time in 1952, he appointed Manuel de Anchorena as the Argentine Ambassador to the U.K. and instructed him to negotiate with the British

[82] Jill Hedges, *Argentina: A Modern History* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), p.5.
[83] Dusenberry, p.495.
[84] Robertson, p.125.
[85] Frederick A. Kirkpatrick, *A History of the Argentine Republic* (Cambridge, England, 1931), p.167.

government to repatriate the dictator's body. In 1974, Rosas was set to return to his motherland as The National Congress of Argentina passed a resolution to repatriate Rosas's remains and the British authorities approved Argentina's request.[86] However, before any further action could be taken, Perón passed away in 1974 and his wife María Estela "Isabel" Martínez de Perón was overthrown by a military coup called the *Proceso de Reorganización Nacional*. In 1989, Carlos Menem oversaw the repatriation of Rosas when his remains were transported to France, placed in a new coffin and flown to Argentina.[87] Rosas's rehabilitation is now virtually complete. As Aguinas remarks: 'A partir de la década del 50 crece la corriente histórica que reivindica a Rosas hasta alcanzar en nuestros días un relativo consenso que impide criticarlo porque, sobre todo, ha defendido la soberanía nacional. Por esa actitud corresponde perdonarle los defectos' which he goes on to identify as being 'aferrado a la tradición, el quietismo, la intolerancia, el aislamiento, la fuerza personal, el autoritarismo'.[88]

Literary Perspectives

Rosas's barbaric violence against enemies and supporters alike is most effectively depicted in Esteban Echverría's *El matadero* (1871)[89] and José Mármol's *Amalia* (1851). Echeverría established himself as a principal critic of Rosas during the dictator's second term in government: he wrote the poem, *La cautiva* (1837), which put into question the alleged success of *La Campaña del Desierto* (1833) led by Facundo Quiroga and others. However, it was *El matadero* which elevated Echeverría to fame. As discussed in detail in Chapter Two, both *El matadero* and *Amalia* shed light on the brutality of the infamous *mazorca* whose terror plagued Buenos Aires for two decades. *El matadero* is set on the outskirts of Buenos Aires during Lent, which is the mourning period for Rosas's wife, Encarnación. The story depicts the capital as hotbed for authoritarianism, and political violence with the population slowly decaying due to a scarcity of food. Rosas authorises Matasiete, the only name mentioned in the story, to provide food by slaughtering animals – much to

[86] Shumway, 'Repatriation of Juan Manuel de Rosas' in *Death, Dismemberment and Memory*, p.115.
[87] *Ibid*., pp.119-120.
[88] Marcos Aguinas, *Un País de novela: viaje hacia la mentalidad de los argentinos* (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2003), pp.90; 94.
[89] Although not published until 1871, Echeverría wrote *El matadero* in the same year as his exile in 1839, according to his close companion, Juan María Gutiérrez.

the dismay of the Catholic Church – and in order to feed the starving civilians. The work describes a scene in which bullocks being slaughtered for meat, with the animal eventually escaping and facilitating a series of dramatic events (the accidental beheading of a child, an Englishman falling from his horse). Echeverría's principal aim is to ridicule and demonise the barbarous Federalists and depict Rosas's Argentina as 'a bloodbath, a quagmire of blood, guts and excrement'[90]. The witness to the violence is the narrator whose aim is to 'convince the reader that the killing of animals is equivalent to that of a Unitarian, and that both were examples of cruelty and violence'.[91] The *mazorca* were known for their animalistic treatment of their opponents, using a series of torture instruments, such as the toasted maize on their victims. The work can be deemed counter-productive in the sense that it only exacerbates political tensions by emphasising the Federalists' barbarity, instead of promoting a united Argentina. By contrast, *Amalia* is considered an important work given that it aims to encourage national reconciliation through political harmony. However, Mármol's contempt for Rosas and his racial prejudices towards ethnic minorities means that national unity is impossible. Drawing on Mármol's goal of exposing Rosas's cruelty, *Amalia* effectively demonstrates 'how the human consciousness, much like a city or even a country, could become a terrifying prison'.[92] Mármol's masterpiece highlights the extent of Rosas's violence by describing how the *mashorqueros* invaded Unitarian homes in Buenos Aires to kill Rosas's enemies. The novel examines the problem of dictatorships as consisting of one structure, and thus the problem of the state 'manifested through the will of some monstrous personage violating the ordinary individual's privacy, both of home and of consciousnesses.[93] We are also presented with a scene in which the Unitarian, Eduardo, is surrounded by *mashorqueros* – an allegory for the fact that Rosas is omnipresent like God – and almost dies before being saved by the Federalist hero Daniel Bello who is arguably an extension of Rosas himself.

[90] Catherine Davies, Claire Brewster, and Hillary Owen, *South American Independence: Gender, Politics, Text* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006), p.87.
[91] *Ibid.*
[92] Gerald Martin, *Journeys Through the Labyrinth: Latin American Fiction in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Verso, 1989), pp.109, 151.
[93] *Ibid*., p.266.

CHAPTER TWO

Allegory, Ambiguity, and Unity in José Mármol's *Amalia*

The Argentine journalist and writer José Mármol (1817-71) offers one of the most effective literary exposures of the Rosas regime in his novel, *Amalia* (1851). Written during Mármol's exile in Montevideo (1846-52), it is set in 1840 during the French blockade and covers the months leading up to Lavalle's anticipated but failed invasion and subsequent withdrawal in September of that year. *Amalia* is considered to be one of the most prominent anti-Rosas texts as it depicts the dictator as a force of evil and emphasises the plight of the people living under his rule: 'with *Amalia,* Mármol consciously attempts to initiate a canon of representation of the Rosas era as 'la tiranía' as he directs his novels at a future public'.[1] *Amalia* was considered 'the novel of triumphant liberalism[2] and is celebrated to such an extent that it is considered to be the *first* Argentine novel that seeks to unite a divided country. This chapter will analyse how *Amalia* is considered a more progressive novel, in comparison with other works such as Esteban Echeverría's divisive *El matadero* (1871), in that it seeks to encourage national reconciliation between the Unitarians and Federalists and end a tumultuous political conflict, which Mármol implies is exacerbated by Rosas. I analyse the way in which *Amalia* aims to promote unity by addressing Mármol's positive and compassionate representation of Manuela Rosas and the gaucho, who suffer under Rosas. However, I also discuss the problematic depictions of race and how particularly *El matadero* disempowers and dehumanises Federalist women, and in doing so shed light on the wider issue of the Unitarians' racist and misogynistic attitudes, which is detrimental to national harmony.

José Mármol: Politician, Writer, Journalist, Poet.

José Mármol was a renowned Argentine politician, writer, journalist and poet of the nineteenth century who became a fierce opponent of Juan Manuel de Rosas. Born into an affluent family in Buenos Aires on the 2nd December 1818, Mármol enjoyed a privileged upbringing and a scholarly education that would shape his

[1] Rea, p.29.

[2] sommer, Amalia: Valor at Heart and Home in *Foundational Fictions: The National Romances of Latin America* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), p.111.

political views and literary works as a leading Argentine intellectual later in life. He enrolled in the Faculty of Law at the University of Buenos Aires in 1836 but failed to complete his studies largely owing to the unfavourable political situation: the University of Buenos Aires was considered by *rosistas* to be a hotbed for conspiracy against the federalist tyrant. In 1839, Mármol was found to have newspapers in his possession printed in Montevideo by the already-exiled Argentine intellectuals named the *proscriptos.*[3] Subsequently, he was briefly incarcerated on 1st April of that year and it is said that he began to write *Amalia* during his imprisonment. Upon his release, he joined his fellow liberals in Montevideo and established himself as a prominent anti-Rosas author who launched staunch attacks on the dictator. Among Mármol's first works were the two undistinguished theatre plays *El poeta* and *El cruzador* that were later presented in Montevideo and performed in 1847 and 1851: they were interpreted as dramatizations of his own unhappiness in exile.[4] However, it was in 1843, on the anniversary of Argentine independence, that Mármol composed his celebrated poem, *A Rosas*, and earned his status as a leading lyrical narrator of social romanticism in the nineteenth century. With Montevideo under siege by Rosas's forces, Mármol left for Rio de Janeiro with other exiled writers but after an unsuccessful trip to Valparaíso, the writer returned to Montevideo in 1846 and continued his scathing denunciation of the Rosas regime. He continued to speak out against the federalist press and published instalments of *Amalia* in 1851 before returning to Buenos Aires after Rosas's fall from power in 1852. Mármol spent the rest of his life focusing his energies on politics; he abandoned his literary profession, as though with Rosas gone, there was nothing to write about: 'The novel's project, so the reading goes, was to depose Rosas. Once that was done, so was Mármol's politics'.[5] Instead, he served various political and diplomatic roles within government before obtaining a post as Director of the Public Library of Buenos Aires in 1858 which he held until his death on 9th August 1871[6] – a post which 'came

[3] Patrizad Tamara Dejbord, *Cristina Peri-Rossi: escritor de exilio* (Characas: Galerna, 1998), p.27
[4] Willis Knapp-Jones, *Behind Spanish American Footlights* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1966), p.92.
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] Ines Dunstan, 'The Maid as a Political Spy in Argentine and historiography: The Rosas-Perón nexus (1846-1954)', *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, Vol. 3, (1), October 2013, p.4.

largely from the success of patriotic verses he hurled against Rosas'.[7] Mármol's post in government was largely owing to the success of his intelligent fiction in which he relied on 'allegory and symbolism to convince readers of the need to out Rosas and usher in a new era of highly-principled democracy'.[8]

Amalia

Mármol wrote *Amalia* after being banished from Argentina during the Rosas tyranny which explains why the theme of exile is at the heart of the novel. Civantos notes that 'the novel, in addition to having been written in exile in Montevideo in 1851, is riddled with exile as both a fear and a hope'.[9] Mármol's sentimentalist novel encapsulates and enacts the political struggle between the Unitarians and Federalists and emphasises how women and romance played a crucial role in exposing the ideological conflict. Even though there are numerous anti-Rosas texts, it can be argued that *Amalia* is perhaps the most important given its constant repetition of the word 'exile' but in rather contradictory ways. The novel starts with a group of Unitarians, including Eduardo Belgrano, attempting to escape to Montevideo. Eduardo expresses contrasting views on exile, represented through his character.

> 'es necesario dar el paso que damos [...] Sin embargo [...] hay alguien, en este mundo de Dios que cree lo contrario de nosotros [...] Es decir que piensa que nuestro deber de argentinos es permanecer en Buenos Aires [...] que menos número de hombres moriremos en las calles el día de una revolución, que en los campos de batalla, en cuatro o seis meses, sin la menor probabilidad de triunfo...' [10]

Mármol is referring here to the broader context in the Federalist attack on Eduardo: he is injured before being rescued by his loyal companion and masqueraded Unitarian Daniel Bello. Daniel's moral valour lies at the heart of the novel as he switches between characters and masters the art of pretending to be a Federalist. He does this not only to ensure the freedom of his widowed cousin, Amalia, and

[7] Knapp-Jones, p.92.
[8] David William Foster, *Handbook of Latin American Literature*, (Oxon: Routledge, 2015), p.5.
[9] Cristina Civantos, 'Exile inside (and) out: Woman, Nation and the Exiled Intellectual in José Mármol's *Amalia, Latin American Literary Review*, Vol. 30, (59), Jan-June 2002, p.56.
[10] José Mármol, *Amalia* (Barcelona: Linkgua Ediciones: 2010), p.5.

Eduardo – soon to become her lover –but also 'to further his own cause – ending the Rosas regime'.[11] Daniel Bello is depicted as the ultimate hero in this novel for it is he who leads the resistance against Rosas under his masqueraded identity: 'Hardly an orthodox Unitarian and certainly not a sincere Federalist, Daniel is an unstable mix, a lamb in a wolf's clothing, the gentleman who does not hesitate to show Federalist bravado'.[12] Daniel successfully plays the stereotypical *federalista*; he embodies all the qualities of *machismo* in the *gaucho* character. He is physically strong, skilled with the lasso and throat cutting and manipulative in his pursuit of avoiding his persecution. Eduardo's battle with the *mazorqueros* exemplifies the brutal killings that took place on the streets of Buenos Aires under the Rosas tyranny:

> sin embargo, no había terminádose en su pensamiento, cuando los asesinos estaban ya sobre él, tres de ellos con sables de caballería y el otro armado de un cuchillo de matadero […] Los tres de sable lo acometen con rabia, lo estrechan y dirigen todos los golpes a su cabeza.[13]

As aforementioned, knifing was traditionally a *gauchesque* method of execution, which was inflicted upon Unitarians and Federalists by the ubiquitous and inescapable *mazorca.* Daniel's heroism is emphasised when he comes to his companion's aid and rescues him, fleeing with him to his house where Amalia lives. He makes him feel welcome and introduces him to his future love: 'Esta es mi *casa*, comandante; y esta señora es mi *prima*'.[14] Daniel is already idolised following his impressive performance in the civil street battle in which he displays his *machismo* and his skills with *gaucho* weapons. His selflessness is emphasised by the fact that not only has he saved Eduardo, but he is also willing to risk his own life, as well as Amalia's, by taking Eduardo to their peripheral safe haven whilst he knows that Eduardo will be hunted down as the only survivor of the attack. As a most-wanted enemy of the *mazorca*, Eduardo must now change his political affiliation and avoid roaming around the city if he wants to survive. Later on in the novel, Daniel reveals

[11] Cirvantos, p.56 Daniel might embody the ambiguity of such figures as Sarmiento and Borges, both of whom were severe critics of Barbarism and its representatives, but who, nonetheless, retained a secret admiration for the customs and lifestyle associated with barbarism (*coraje*, the skills of the rastreador etc.).
[12] Sommer, p.90.
[13] Mármol, p.23.
[14] *Ibid*., p.298

his weapon with which he expertly slew Eduardo's attackers. Daniel calls it a *casse-tête* (headache) but in this sense, has a more sinister connotation: 'it translates in Spanish as *rompecabezas*, literally a head breaker but also a puzzle and perhaps a pun on its threat of permanent disaggregation'.[15] Sommer notes that 'the detail is important because this neologism evidently associates Daniel with the Francophile opposition to Rosas.'[16] Before and during the Rosas era, Argentine freethinkers became remarkably proficient at applying revolutionary ideas sparked by the French Revolution of 1789 and incorporated newly-coined French phrases into their own written and spoken language. Argentine intellectuals chose to model themselves on French romantics and used them as a source for intellectual inspiration. But perhaps a more poignant event that gave rise to the use of the French language and encouraged liberalism among the Argentine aristocracy was the response to the punitive French blockade of Buenos Aires (whilst Rosas continued to traffic with England to the point of stifling home industry)[17] and 'to her promises of support for the resistance'.[18] The most outward manifestations of Daniel's Francophilia emerge when he takes a trip to Montevideo – home to the exiled intellectuals and a subsequent hotbed for anti-Rosas literature. The *casse-tête* – an instrument with a wicker (*mimbre*) handle connecting two ropes tipped by iron balls and covered by a fine net of soft leather – turns out to be uncannily familiar.[19] The visual image of the instrument produces humour which is apparent when Amalia is curious about the tool and Daniel finally exposes what resembles artificial genitals (*miembro*). The instrument's sexual connotations arouse Amalia's curiosity and she presses him for clarification:

- ¿Qué arma es esa, Daniel, que usas tú y con la que has hecho a veces tanto daño?
- Y tanto bien, podrías agregar, prima mía.
- Cierto, cierto perdona; pero respóndeme; mira que he tenido esta curiosidad muchas veces.
- Espera, déjame terminar este dulce.

[15] Sommer, p.85.
[16] *Ibid*.
[17] Rosas's criticised his cattleman's economy which was concerned with selling meat, hides, and some grain and transforming the country into an outlet for England's manufacture.
[18] Sommer, p.85.
[19] *Ibid*.

- No te dejo ir esta noche sin que me digas lo que quiero.
- Casi estoy por ocultártelo entonces.
- Cargoso![20]

The joke 'which is so characteristic of Mármol's flair for dialogue but perhaps lost on generations of required readers'[21] is first introduced when Daniel tries to persuade Eduardo to replace his 'civilised' Unitarian sword with a more 'barbaric' but convenient weapon, more likely to be seen in the savage hands of a *gaucho* federalist. The *gauchos* used traditional weapons such as lassos, *bolas* or, *boleadoras*, as they were commonly called, which was a capturing device, invented by native South Americans and still used by *gauchos* for hunting animals – they treated the Unitarians as prey. The tool consisted of a 'triple rope tipped by three metal balls, fastened to one extremity of the rope of hide, the other extremity of which is attached to a saddle-girth'.[22] Further evidence of the popularity of the bolas is given by Darwin's use of the weapon on his visit to Buenos Aires in 1832: 'the young Charles Darwin experimented with the bolas while on horseback and managed to catch his own horse – to the amusement of the *gauchos*'.[23] Sommer notes that the mechanical construction of the bolas weapon is a metaphor for Daniel's masculinity: 'Structurally, Daniel's weapon displaces power from the rigid centre'.[24] Sommer also comments on the metaphorical meaning of the bolas and emphasises Daniel's superior masculinity as opposed to Eduardo's tenderness: 'Daniel's discreet masculinity, borne close to the heart in his breast pocket (and turning upside down Freud's quip about the heart being at the genitals) is more potent than Eduardo's sword, much as the ensnaring bolas are'.[25] The weapon's allegorical meanings are ambiguous to be sure which 'may even leave the reader incredulous to the transgression of the French signifier, *casse-tête,* pointing to a barbarous signified'.[26]

Mármol's novel exposes the plight of the Argentine liberals under the Rosas dictatorship; free thinkers such as Mármol and Alberdi, were prominent figures in the

[20] Mármol, p.633.
[21] Sommer, p.86.
[22] *Ibid*.
[23] Richard Dawkins, *Climbing Mount Improbable* (London: Penguin, 1997), p.230.
[24] Sommer, p.86.
[25] *Ibid*.
[26] *Ibid*.

generation of 1837 who had all been exiled to Montevideo. The exiles were united by their collective disdain for the Rosas tyranny and expressed their opposition by means of literary resistance. These staunch opponents of Rosas all shared the common goal of 'ridding the Argentine provinces of Rosas and the *caudillo* system in general and worked more broadly to delineate which problems hindered the Argentine provinces'[27] and in doing so, 'they produced some of Argentina's most durable guiding fictions'.[28] The works of the banished liberals were instrumental in exposing and challenging the Rosas dictatorship; they drew attention to Rosas's unforgivable cruelty, the terror that beleaguered the country and sought to amend their broken nation. The binary opposition between civilization and barbarism was an obstacle that prolonged Argentina's political recovery and further divided Unitarians and Federalists. Mármol's text is one of the few progressive works that was produced amidst the political chaos and rather than reinforce the divisions between the discursive categories of civilization and barbarism, he seeks to unite the two and thus demonstrate that it is possible to coexist in society. The revolutionaries – who were a part of the literary salon at Marcos Sastre's bookstore – galvanised around Estebán Echeverría who had returned from Paris in 1830. It was at the bookstore that Echeverría presented his *Dogma Socialista* – a selective compilation of French utopian socialism, which became the group's ideological platform. But this exclusive club soon came to an abrupt end when Rosas proscribed it in 1838: 'Rosas's toleration of the opposition ended when he banned the publication of womens' journals such as Juan Baustista Alberdi's *La Moda*'.[29] This was because the magazine was correctly suspected of fronting for what Rosistas perceived to be unmanly Europeanized fops; it was a coy screen in both senses of hiding and showing, a womanly voice as the men's public organ'.[30]

[27] Civantos, p.61.
[28] Nicholas Shumway, *The Invention of Argentina*, p.112.
[29] Sommer, p.88.
[30] *Ibid*.

Daniel Bello: Partial Representation of Rosas

Daniel is portrayed as the hero of the novel, but Sommer draws attention to his personal dispositions which are analogous to those of Rosas. Daniel demonstrates his heroic calibre as he continually risks his life to protect his friends and to build the resistance among masqueraded federalists in the same predicament as himself but 'he is never so foolish as to risk it for some feudal and inflexible notion of honour and masculinity'.[31] Daniel takes great care with what he says, does and whom he trusts but Amalia, on the other hand, is not as cautious or smart in her actions, disclosing to the *mazorca* that she is a Unitarian and proud of it. Even though Daniel exemplifies the difficulties faced by enlightened intellectuals as they were forced to flee their home countries, he paradoxically bears striking resemblances to the dictator himself. Although Daniel is dominant because he is arguably the most resourceful when it comes to resolving problems that he, Eduardo and Amalia have to face, he seems to incorporate aspects of Rosas's character: 'This strategically promiscuous double-crosser is as wilful as Rosas'[32] in the sense that he is calculating in his approach to getting what he wants. We see from the beginning that Daniel desires power over his companions "¿Me permites que dé al tuyo todas las instrucciones que yo considere necesarias?'[33] Frustrated by Eduardo's objections to him taking control, Daniel explains in a patronizing and belittling manner: "Tú tienes más talento que yo, Eduardo, pero hay ciertas cosas en que yo valgo cien veces más que tu",[34] as he is referring to his tactful nature and *gauchesque* fighting skills. Daniel's arrogance and disparaging remarks are not the only personal traits that tarnish his reputation in the novel. We learn that Daniel will resort to blackmailing his servants in order to further his own cause which emphasises that even a hero's tactics can be morally dubious. Daniel rather cruelly threatens his ever-loyal servant Fermín by promising that any carelessness on his part will guarantee him a place in the army which of course, for a servant *gaucho*, means death. Instead of thinking badly of his master, he reiterates his willingness to die to protect him; Fermín blurts out in a paroxysm of fidelity to Daniel: "Yo no sirvo. Primero me hago matar que dejar a usted".[35] Fermín's self-

[31] *Ibid*., p.92.
[32] *Ibid*.
[33] Mármol, *Amalia*, p.100.
[34] *Ibid*.
[35] *Ibid*., p.110.

sacrificing attitude is reminiscent of the loyalty of the *gauchos* to Rosas. Daniel does not stop his scheming after this scene with Fermín. He proceeds to blackmail a Unitarian black woman, Doña Marcelina – who was the Madame of a local whorehouse – into letting him use her brothel to host clandestine meetings: 'No exijo de usted sino discreción y silencio; la menor imprudencia, sin costarme a mí un cabello, le costaría a usted la cabeza".[36] Yet, she echoes Fermín's response, demonstrating her fearless devotion to him and the unitarian cause: "Mi vida está en manos de usted hace mucho tiempo, señor don Daniel; pero aunque así no fuera yo me haría matar por el último de los unitarios".[37] Daniel Bello's immoral treatment of his black inferiors recalls the obligatory and degrading servitude of the black population under Rosas on the frontier, as Sommer notes: 'this is precisely the kind of response that Rosas elicits from his own henchmen' as they all pledge allegiance to him and are willing to sacrifice their lives for him: 'Me he de hacer matar por Su Excelencia".[38] The dictator reinstated the law making it legal for Africans – who had been transported into the labour-scarce Rio de la Plata – to be sold as slaves. However, 'despite the legal shackles, the twenty years of the Rosas administration transformed the Afro-Argentines into a potent instrument for federalism and populism'.[39] Rosas managed to sustain the loyalty of his black servants by praising their efforts and underlining the importance of their contributions to the federalist cause: 'Rosas himself procured black support through flattery, propaganda and genuine concessions. Naming his suburban mansion after the black Saint Benito de Palermo, for instance, proved of considerable symbolic value'.[40] Even though Rosas was manipulative in his relations with the black populace of Buenos Aires, he managed to maintain their loyalty by rewarding and honouring their efforts in battle. Manuela was perhaps also misleading in her close relationships with members of the black community as she 'provided another – and, in the view of the Unitarians, scandalous and offensive – link with the Afro-Argentines. Particularly unpalatable in

[36] *Ibid*., p.201.
[37] *Ibid*.
[38] *Ibid*., p.299.
[39] Kevin Kelly, 'Rosas and the Restoration of Order' in Mark. D. Szuchman & Jonathan Charles Brown, (eds.) *Revolution and Restoration: The Rearrangement of Power in Argentina, 1777-1860*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), p.221.
[40] *Ibid*., p.223.

the eyes of the libertarians was her habit of attending the dances of the African nations whilst swinging in the arms of black men'.[41] Sarmiento's *Facundo* implies strongly that the black maids informed Rosas of Unitarian allegiances among the families for whom they worked: 'los negros ganados así para el Gobierno ponían en manos de Rosas un celoso espionaje en el seno de cada familia por los sirvientes y esclavos'.[42] Although this suggests that black slaves were employed in domestic service regardless of sex, Sarmiento makes reference to how black women allegedly influenced the government, particularly through Manuelita who was said to be entrusted with enhancing relations with the black community.[43] But the efforts of Rosas's wife must not be ignored; Encarnación was a fierce devotee of her husband's cause and given her leadership skills and her role as the agent and purveyor of *rosismo*, she earned the title 'Heroina de la Federación'. She played an instrumental role in garnering support amongst black women: 'calling in black women to receive her favour and sending them out as clients, she transformed her patio into a club for the populace'.[44] Daniel Bello imitates the way in which Rosas forces the loyalty of black people (slave or free) by demonstrating his manipulative, authoritative and tactical traits in his approach to protecting himself. However, there is one key difference, as Sommer remarks: 'cunning Daniel is the very image of Rosas, described by many as monstrously sly, but an image inverted'.[45] Whereas Daniel adopts multiple personae to cover all fronts at home and in the world (in order to save people's lives and maintain his Federalist identity), Rosas cleverly stays undercover in his most public appearances. The same can be said of Perón in this respect as it was mostly Eva who was present at public engagements, solidifying ties with the masses. At the political battle front, Mármol underlines Rosas's careful maintenance of a permanent disguise at the battle front:

- ¿Dónde dormía Rosas? En el cuartel general tenía su cama, pero allí no dormía.
- En la alta noche se le veía llegar al campamento, y el héroe popular hacía tender su recado cerca de sus leales defensores.

[41] *Ibid*., p.222.
[42] Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, *Facundo* (Buenos Aires: Tor, [1845] 1957), p.277.
[43] Dunstan, p.2.
[44] John Lynch, *Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas* (Oxon: Clarendon Press, 1981), pp.111-112.
[45] Sommer, p.93.

> Allí se lo veía echarse; pero media hora después ya no estaba allí. ¿Dónde estaba? Con el poncho y la gorra de su asistente, tenido en cualquier otra parte, donde nadie lo hallase ni lo conociese.[46]

By conflating Rosas and Daniel's personas, or the hero's portrait and its negative, Mármol 'confuses allies as much as enemies, as if they were figures for a Lacanian phallus that continually plays hide and seek with our desire to know it'.[47] The main phallic function in this sense serves as a supreme symbol of masculine power and is used to measure political prominence and social worth. The incessant thirst for power which is omnipresent in both Rosas and Daniel captures the essence of Lacan's reconstruction of Freud's Ideal Ego and Ego Ideal. The Ideal Ego represents the 'image of perfection which the Imaginary ego of the consciousness derives from its mirror relation to a reflected other'. However, it is the weaker of the two concepts; the Ego Ideal which is 'motivated by the cultural and social pressure and personal critical judgement,[48] is always triumphant over the Ideal Ego of imaginary narcissism'.[49] Rosas represents the Ideal Ego which corresponds to the definition of 'what he himself was' whilst Daniel – given that he is constantly seeking power – embodies the latter (Ego Ideal) which is defined as 'what he himself would like to be'.[50] By comparing the novel's hero to Rosas, Mármol is exploring actual power by contemplating its hypothetical mirror; Daniel is not only the fictional reflection of the dictator but he projects the level of power that Rosas has in reality: 'The Ideal Ego is understood as a narcissistic ideal of omnipotence' and this encompasses Rosas's ultimate aim of gaining absolute power.[51] Daniel is portrayed as the Ego Ideal given that his immeasurable power in this fiction symbolises Rosas's unparalleled political supremacy which he soon loses after his fall. The fact that the Ego Ideal is always victorious over the Ideal Ego is an allegory for the fact that the Unitarians – with whom Daniel sympathises as he saves Eduardo – seize power after

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[46] Mármol, p.669.
[47] Sommer, p.93.
[48] Sylvie Gambaudo, *Kristeva, Psychoanalysis and Culture: Subjectivity in Crisis* (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007), p.158.
[49] Robert Samuels, *Between Philosophy and Psychoanalysis: Lacan's Reconstruction of Freud* (New York: Routledge, 1993), pp.71-72.
[50] Slavoj Žižek, *Jaques Lacan: Critical Evaluations in Cultural Theory, Volume 1* (London: Routledge, 2003), p.14.
[51] Jean Laplanche & Jean-Bertrand Pontalis, *The language of Psychoanalysis* (London: Karnac, 1988), p.202.

the collapse of the Rosas government. A prime example of Daniel's authoritarianism is when his former teacher, Don Cándido, seeks protection from his former pupil – because even apolitical subjects were not protected from the *mazorca*. It is at this point that Daniel identifies an opportunity. Rather than console Cándido and grant him his wish, he chooses to use the effect of the official terror to scaremonger the elderly man into spying for the conspiracy. This emphasises Daniel's corrupt misuse of his power; intimidated at the thought of facing fatal repercussions, Don Cándido reluctantly yields to Daniel's coercion. The masqueraded Federalist thinks that tormenting his now vulnerable companion is mildly entertaining: 'Daniel se reía, y empezó a doblar y multiplicar los dobleces en el papel que le dio don Cándido'.[52] Puzzled by Daniel's underlying motives, Don Cándido 'estaba mirando y devanándose los sesos por comprender la ocupación de su discípulo'.[53] Daniel's manipulation of Don Cándido calls to mind Rosas's interview with the British ambassador, Enrique Mandeville, during which the minister was unable to comprehend Rosas's objectives:

> […] soltando palabra por palabra, en una verdadera perplejidad de ánimo, no pudiendo explicarse el objeto que se proponía Rosas con descubrir él mismo los peligros que le amenazaban, cosa que en la astucia del dictador no podía menos que tener alguna segunda intención muy importante.[54]

Rosas is as calculating as ever when conducting his interview with Mandeville; he deploys the manipulative technique of reiterating Mandeville's political responsibilities and allegiance to him to ensure that he gets what he wants: 'Yo creo que la obligación de usted es informar fielmente y con datos verdaderos al gobierno de Su Majestad, sobre la situación en que quedan los negocios del Rio de la Plata a la salida del paquete para Europa. ¿No es así?'[55] to which a trembling Mandeville responds: 'Exactamente Excelentísimo Señor'. Despite the fact that Rosas confuses his guest, Señor Mandeville does not become frustrated by his inability to penetrate the dictator's underlying intentions. In fact, he is rather excited when he finally understands what Rosas wants, namely support against the resistance: 'el ministro se

[52] Mármol, p.267.
[53] *Ibid.*
[54] *Ibid.,* p.162.
[55] *Ibid.,* p.159.

felicita con una sonrisa la más insinuativa y cortesana, pero al mismo tiempo con una expresión de una verdad sentida'.[56] Rosas succeeds in his quest to obtain Mandeville's support with the aid of his political intelligence and powers of persuasion. He convinces the minster that the negotiation would serve the best interests of the British and Argentine governments. So confident is Rosas in his ability to reach an agreement that he gives the minister a chance to make a decision for himself whilst knowing all too well that his previous comments have had their desired effect: 'Haga usted lo que quiera. Lo único que yo deseo es que se escriba la verdad'.[57] Similar to Daniel, Rosas always ensures that he is in control of a situation and refrains from begging Mandeville to grant him his wish. Instead, he gives the impression that he does not care and subtly persuades Mandeville to negotiate 'con cierto aire de indiferencia, a través del cual el Señor Mandeville, si hubiese estado con menos entusiasmo en ese momento, habría descubierto que la escena del disimulo comenzaba'.[58] Sommer remarks: 'here is an Argentine out-scheming and outtalking the Englishman, whose people exercised a virtual commercial monopoly in Argentine politics and who probably taught Rosas something about the relationship between shrewdness and power'.[59] Daniel and Rosas both achieve results to further their divergent causes and this is precisely why Daniel is the real hero of the novel. It is paradoxical that Daniel deploys Rosas's own methods to defeat him: '[Daniel] manages to occupy the distance between the antagonistic signs, the distance that Rosas's terror needed in order to construct itself as a campaign against the Other'.[60] Unlike the conciliatory youths of 1837, Mármol's fictional hero fulfils the role as leader of the opposition and succeeds in cancelling the polar opposition.

Daniel's relationship with his beloved Florencia – who is not just his lover but his double – is redolent of the relationship between Rosas and Encarnación; their marriage was more like a political partnership and at times, it was Encarnación who was the dominant force in the marriage. Daniel's shrewdness that might

[56] *Ibid.,* p.169.
[57] Mármol, p.166.
[58] *Ibid*.
[59] Sommer, p.94.
[60] *Ibid*.

characteristically be ascribed to women is a quality that Sarmiento 'disparagingly attributed to Rosas'.[61] But unlike Rosas, Mármol, feminises Daniel's character: 'our puzzle of a hero shifts more than party lines; everything about him seems doubled or contradictory; including his gender'.[62] Mármol feminises Daniel's body: 'la blancura de sus lindas manos […] porque eran en efecto manos que podrían dar enviada a una coqueta.[63]

Mármol's Women

Women in Mármol's novel are admirable heroes and thus by likening Daniel's hands to the tenderness of a woman's, his character is further exalted in the reader's eyes. The empowerment of women is an important theme in Mármol's piece. He gives women a heroic status in his novel and thus protests the moral corruption of Argentine womanhood for which, he argues, Rosas can be held accountable. Lacan's concept of the phallic function as power can be related to Amalia in the sense that she has no phallus, meaning no power, and therefore constantly desires it. In Lacanian terms, Rosas was responsible for the 'castration' of women in that he obliterated their political and social power. As Unitarians would argue, Rosas's profound ignorance and hatred of women meant that they were treated as sub-humans and if they were fortunate enough to be admired by the dictator, it was due to the fact that they pledged allegiance to him and spied on his political enemies. Rosas favoured the proletariat 'bestial' black maids who adapted so efficiently to male-orientated environments that they were considered male. We can use Lacan's controversial statement '*la femme n'existe pas*' as a foundational theory to symbolise the suppression of women during the Rosas dictatorship.[64] Male chauvinism was rife in Argentine society – in both Unitarian and Federalist environments – amidst the political crisis. If Federalist women were to be favoured and respected by Rosas, they yielded to masculine influence and lost their feminine identity, because defeminisation meant obtaining more power. However, they *did* obtain power under Rosas. Although Rosas can be viewed as only using women for

[61] *Ibid*., p.95.
[62] *Ibid*.
[63] Mármol, p.127.
[64] Jacques Lacan, "The Signification of the phallus", *Ecrits: A Selection* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977), p.285.

political again, the mysonginistic and counter-progressive attitudes towards women in Unitarian society cannot be unheeded (as discussed in chapter 4). *Amalia* emphasises the fact that due to women's alleged lack of authority throughout the Rosas tyranny, the females in the novel strive to emulate the actions of the men and in doing so, prove that they are equally noble and brave. For example, Florencia and Amalia follow suit when they witness Daniel and Eduardo risking their lives for the Unitarian cause and thus emphasise their desire for the power that they are illegitimately denied. The women's unwavering resilience in fiction and actuality demonstrates that they are just as heroic as men: 'if women are admirable in this novel, and they are, it is because they are independent and courageous as men should be'.[65] Amalia is free to protect Eduardo from the *mazorca* as she proclaims that she is independent and leads a solitary life. She even goes as far as to insult the police chief, Mariño, by confronting them with a generalized role reversal: 'En Buenos Aires sólo los hombres temen; pero las señoras sabemos defender una dignidad que ellos han olvidado'.[66] Mariño knows that she is masquerading as a Federalist after María Josefa exposes her association with Eduardo. Still infuriated by Eduardo's escape and Amalia's arrogance, General Mariño shouts '¡Ah, yo me vengaré, perra unitaria!'[67] Amalia's refusal to cooperate with the *mazorquero* highlights both her contribution to the resistance against Rosas and her dignity: she is willing to risk her life for the Unitarian cause, thus supporting Mármol's claim that, in some cases, women at the time were morally superior to men:

> Sin disputa, sin duda histórica, la mujer porteña había desplegado durante esos fatales tiempos del terror, un valor moral, una firmeza y dignidad decarácter, y, puede decirse, una altanería y una audacia tal, que los hombres estaban muy lejos de ostentar. [68]

Sommer goes as far as to say that femininity was so conspicuous in both sexes that its sole connection with women may no longer be valid: 'by the time the young men are disdained for acquiring "effeminate habits", the adjective may no longer point to women but precisely away from them'.[69] By portraying women as heroines in

[65] Sommer, 95.
[66] *Ibid.*, p.493.
[67] Mármol, p.383.
[68] *Ibid.*, p.534.
[69] Sommer, p.95.

Amalia, Mármol emphasises the importance of the women's role in the Rosas resistance which is contrary to the work of his counterpart, Estebán Echeverría: 'En cuanto a Amalia, la presencia de numerosas mujeres en la novela la permite evaluar al tenor de los juicios de Mármol sobre la función de la mujer en sociedad y su rol en la política.'[70] In *El matadero*, which is widely anthologized, Echeverría portrays the barbaric nature of the federalists by describing the rape of their emasculated Unitarian victims. However, the absence of a female character cannot go unnoticed: by excluding female protagonists from his work he 'fails to integrate women into the making of a new nation'.[71] The only women mentioned in *El matadero* are the 'negras achuradoras'[72] who are depicted as barbaric due to the fact that they actively participate in the dismemberment of cattle. Echeverría deploys animalistic imagery to emphasise their uncivilised savagery; he describes them as 'caranchos de presa y harpías'[73] who compete with seagulls and dogs in their search for *achuras.*The female protagonists in *El matadero* contribute to the violent atmosphere and are portrayed as being aesthetically displeasing according to a racially prejudiced Echeverría (*negra*, *africana*, *mulata*) – characteristics reminiscent of Encarnación Ezcurra. Echverría blurs gender distinctions in his piece, and emphasises that the slaughterhouse is not a domestic space: 'por lo tanto no hay lugar por la femineidad idealizada allí'.[74] The women are equally as bestial as their Federalist male counterparts as the patronising and sarcastic narrator associates them with low life, animals, and 'other sub human forms of existence to the extent that the narrator purposefully elides the differences between the women's (deformed) bodies and the body parts (innards) of the dismembered animals they are handling'.[75] Echeverría also homogenises the women and does not specify their familial or societal roles, as Coromina remarks: 'No hay esposas, no hay madres en este texto […] Hay sólo una masa informe e ignorante (hombres y mujeres) que mantiene en el poder a

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[70] Irene S. Coromina, 'La mujer en los escritos antirosas de Echeverría, Sarmiento y Mármol', *Hispania*, Vol. 89, (1), March 2006, p.15.

[71] Teresa Cajiao Salas. & Margarita Vargas (eds.), Women Writing Women*: An anthology of Spanish - American Theatre of the 1980s* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), p.4.

[72] Esteban Echeverría, *Obras completas de Esteban Echeverría. Complicación y biografía por Juan María Gutiérrez*, 2nd ed., (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Antonio Zamora, 1972), p.310.

[73] *Ibid*., pp.310-311.

[74] Coromina, p.15.

[75] Catherine Davies, Claire Brewster, & Hillary Owen, *South American Independence: Gender, Politics, and Text* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2006) p.92.

Rosas'.[76]As well as reminding us that this type of ignorance was instrumental in Rosas's long governance, Coromina also emphasises Echeverría's racist undertones which emerge in his work in his use of degrading terms to describe the race and the traits of the black populace: 'Las negras se situan claramente al margen del ideal.'[77] Echeverría pays service to the resistance as his work exposes the dictator's devastating influence over the illiterate elements in society but he paradoxically betrays his anti-women and anti-black sentiments, which were also evident among other Unitarians. Echeverría's animalisation of his barbaric political archenemies is evident when he describes how they behave like the wild beasts they kill due to a shortage of meat: '[…] la fuerza y la violencia bestial. Esas son vuestras armas, infames. El lobo, el tigre, la pantera, también son fuertes como vosotros. Deberíais andar como ellas, en cuatro patas'.[78] The uncontrollable violence among the rumbustious crowds at the slaughterhouse is demonstrated when, after one of their cattle escapes the enclosure, they chase the untamed animal through the city and massacre it. Then they realise they have in fact killed an un-gelded bull which is of no use to them as the meat is tough. This episode is overseen by 'el Juez', who represents Rosas: 'el Juez del matadero, personaje importante, caudillo de los carniceros, que ejerce la suma del poder en aquella pequeña república por la delegación del Restaurador'.[79] The torment of the bull and the young Unitarian is significant given that both of their bodies are subjected to the savage nature of the proletariat. The degrading behaviour of the masses is made possible by the language in which the opposition is described. Echeverría closes *El matadero* 'with a reflection on the regime's political abuse of language, in which any person who is not explicitly aligned with the regime is designated a *salvaje unitario* and subject to violence'.[80] For example, Echverría writes that Rosas's supporters called every enemy savage Unitarian and in doing so: 'conforme a la jerga inventada por el Restaurador, patrón de la cofradía, a todo él que no era degollador, carnicero, ni salvaje, ni ladrón; a todo hombre bien puesto, a todo patriota amigo de las luces y de

[76] Coromina, p.15.
[77] *Ibid*.
[78] Esteban Echeverría, *Obras completas de Esteban Echeverría*, p.323.
[79] *Ibid*., p.322.
[80] Catherine Davies et al. *South American Independence: Gender, Politics, and Text*, p.92

la libertad'.[81] Echeverría draws polarising distinctions between the Unitarians and Federalists: the young Unitarian (who is mounting his horse denoting status and hierarchy) is described as being clean, elegantly dressed, courageous, and of 'gallarda y buen apuesta persona',[82] whereas the Matasiete who is a 'degollador de unitarios'[83] and epitome of Federalist masculinity is depicted as being typically blood-spattered and dirty. Echeverría labels the *unitario* 'la víctima' as he is tied up like the bull and taken to be tortured.[84] The Federalists describe him as effeminate and mock the way he sits on his horse like a gringo, with the aid of a saddle, rather than bareback like the gauchos. He is dehumanised as he is compared to an ox set upon by tigers which implies castration.

Drawing on the absence of political heroines in liberal literature, *Amalia* is much more explicit when highlighting the link between women and the socio-political conflict among *rosistas* and *antirosistas*. Mármol gives women a voice, which Batticuore argues was silenced in the Rosas regime: 'una gran parte de la actividad femenina en Amalia se concentra en las vistas que las mujeres se hacen unas a otras, así como en las cartas que escriben y deduce que las vistas y las cartas – hablar y escribir – tienen una función política'.[85] The women in the novel protect the men by transforming their homes into a safe haven for them: 'Cuando Amalia protege a Eduardo escondiéndolo en su casa, está determinando el rumbo de ciertos acontecimientos políticos futuros lo mismo sucede con doña Marcelina, la dueña del prostíbulo donde se reúnen los conspiradores enemigos de Rosas'.[86] What is significant is that the spaces which they provide as a hiding place for *antirosistas* become the catalysts in the planning of future political events. Amalia's home is the refuge the conspirators plan to use in order to escape the regime: 'Las mujeres abren su espacio privado para que los hombres hagan un uso político de ese espacio'.[87] In the novel, the men flee the *mazorca* and seek refuge in the houses of women – which

[81] Echeverría, *Obras Completas*, p.324.
[82] *Ibid*., p.321.
[83] *Ibid*., p.318.
[84] *Ibid*., p.321.
[85] Graciela Batticuore, "Cartas de mujer. Cuadros de una escena borrada (lectores y autores durante el rosismo)". *Letras y divisas. Ensayos sobre literatura y rosismo.* Comp. Cristina Iglesia. (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 1998), p.43.
[86] Coromina, p.18.
[87] *Ibid*.

is symbolic of the fact that Rosas reversed the societal power structure: it was women who owned properties which acted as safe havens for men feeling the mazorca. Daniel Bello claims that the 'ideología burguesa', which promoted white immigration, has now left the city of Buenos Aires 'en poder de las mujeres de los cobardes y de los mazorqueros'.[88] We learn of the decline of the male population in the city, most of which had been defeated or exiled by Rosas. A little girl says to her mother: "no mamá, los hombres están en la guardia de Luján, donde está mi hermano. Aquí no hemos quedado sino las mujeres y los tigres.[89] These expressions – which appear to be exaggerated– nevertheless have a real basis. The Swedish traveller Skogman reiterates the notion that Rosas was inevitably responsible for the absence of men in Buenos Aires:

> Prolongadas guerras, las numerosas ejecuciones y los asesinatos cometidos por orden de Rosas, han hecho mermar notablemente la población masculina, de la cual otra proporción no menos importante, y sobre todo de hombres jóvenes ha buscado su seguridad huyendo o emigrando al extranjero […] En la ciudad, la gran cantidad de mujeres jóvenes en relación en la de hombres de edad equivalente se evidenciaba inmediato.[90]

The scene of the conversation between Señora N. and Amalia calls to mind the exceptional role played by women in the absence of men in the political sphere. The elderly woman explains to Amalia that '[s]i nos presentamos a sus fiestas [de los federales] es por nuestros hijos, o por nuestros maridos'.[91] The women uphold important morals and values; they are symbols of resilience and humility amidst an unsettling environment: 'La mujer mantiene viva la presencia unitaria en medio de un clima hostil; es así como la actividad puramente social de la mujer reviste una nueva importancia política'.[92] There is an obvious reversal of stereotypical gender roles in the novel; the women become the heroes who rescue the helpless men and shield them from harm. However, despite the fact that women occupy masculine roles, Mármol does not forget to emphasise their desire to fulfil their traditional

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[88] Mármol, p.320.
[89] *Ibid*., 666.
[90] C. Skogman, *Viaje de la fragata sueca "Eugenia" (1851-1853) Brasil-Uruguay-Argentina-Chile-Perú*. Trans. Kjell Henrichsen (Buenos Aires: Solar, 1942), p.67.
[91] Mármol, 312.
[92] Coromina, p.18.

feminine instincts, which are to marry and reproduce: 'Amalia y su amiga Florencia, cuando no están ocupadas en defender a los hombres que aman, se dedican a soñar con su futuro de mujer casada.'[93] Mármol's empowerment of white women in the novel is visible in the sense that he not only emphasises their courageousness and determination to resist Rosas but he draws our attention to their ability to fulfil both feminine and masculine roles: 'En definitiva, Mármol admite la participación limitada de la mujer en la actividad política, aunque no en detrimento del matrimonio y la maternidad'.[94]

Mármol and Race

By contrast to the theme of this gender equality in *Amalia*, where women enjoy the same power as men, racial distinctions, on the other hand, seem ineradicable: 'The Generation of '37 was the first post-independence Argentinean intellectual cohort; its members had an interest in constructing Argentina as a white nation of European culture, and they used their fictions to write this nation into being'.[95] One of the fundamental policy disagreements between Rosas and his rivals was regarding the issue of mass white immigration from Europe. Rosas categorically objected to white immigration to Argentina because of course, in his view, immigration would see the demise of indigenous *gaucho* culture. His opponents, on the contrary, were convinced that immigration was Argentina's most urgent need given that they wanted to make progress towards establishing a civilised Argentina. The liberal's model for a civilised Argentina would see the capital 'inhabited by white upper-class European émigrés but paradoxically, when they assumed power after Rosas's demise, they were bemused upon witnessing a wave of illiterate immigrants populate the capital'.[96] Much to Rosas's dismay, the wave of new settlers would instigate the unjust treatment of native Argentines: 'the country's racially inferior stock of Spaniards and Indians needed to be improved by white Anglo-Saxon immigration'.[97] Racial discrimination was rife within the anti-Rosas community; the

[93] *Ibid*
[94] *Ibid*
[95] Dunstan, p.1.
[96] Sommer, p.96.
[97] *Ibid*.

tribal prejudices were perpetuated by the upper classes and so-called enlightened liberals such as Alberdi, Gutiérrez, and Sarmiento 'whose biological determinism was somewhat accentuated by his faith in mass education and modern institutions in general'.[98] The morally culpable attitude of the Generation of '37 was not unusual considering their intellectual calibre; it is a fact that renowned and respected philosophers such as Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel condoned and encouraged racial discrimination in the nineteenth century. In *Lectures of the Philosophy of World History* Hegel postulates that the indigenous peoples in Argentina hindered its national progression as he refers to the natives in Mexico and South America as 'unenlightened children who are known for their mildness and passivity, their humility and obsequious submissiveness […] but they are obviously unintelligent individuals with little capacity for education. Their inferiority in all respects, even in stature, can be seen in every particular'.[99] It is evident that the Argentine intellectuals were inspired by the renowned but intolerant theories of Hegel and other philosophers such as Immanuel Kant, as their work is prejudiced against both women and ethnic minorities. For example, Kant's misogynistic theory states that 'women and all non-white peoples were limited to a sphere of sensory experience and therefore they share a propensity for immorality'.[100] The racist and misogynistic theories of European philosophers were instrumental in helping to shape the principals of the Generation of the '37, also known as the *Asociación de Mayo*. Argentine Unitarians looked for the most fertile and belligerent ideas among the theories of their so-called liberal European idols and used them in their literary rebellion as a means of explaining the reasons for Argentina's turbulent political climate at the time. In terms of reforming the education system, Unitarians wanted to discard the influence of contemporary Spanish literature by 'substituting texts of French and Italian thinkers'.[101] Members of the liberal cohort such as Juan María Gutiérrez and Domingo Faustino Sarmiento both shared the view that Spanish culture was non-reformist; in his speech, Gutiérrez proclaimed 'pues, la ciencia y la

[98] *Ibid*.
[99] Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, (Cambridge: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 1975), p.164.
[100] Patricia Lapolla Swier, *Hybrid Nations: Gender Troping and the Emergence of Bigendered subjects in Latin American Narrative* (Cranbury: Rosemont, 2009), p.28.
[101] Juan Carlos Mercado, *Building a Nation: the Case of Echeverría*, (Maryland: University Press of America, 1996), p.55.

literatura española, debemos nosotros divorciarnos completamente con [sic] ellas, y emanciparnos a este respecto de las tradiciones'.[102] Similarly, Sarmiento shared his concerns over the inferiority of Spanish culture in the sense that it produced the *gaucho* – an emblem of barbarism – and insisted that 'la Argentina estaría mejor si hubiera sido colonizada por los ingleses, puesto que en donde estos se habían instalado hubo el progreso'.[103] Sarmiento's disparaging attitudes towards the nomadic inhabitants of the pampas improved slightly when in 1855, he claimed to understand the need for social cohesion as Pigna reveals that '[Sarmiento] comprende la necesidad del cooperativismo y pasa un revolunionario proyecto de colonización que favorecería tanto al inmigrante como al gaucho'.[104] When in Chivilcoy, he saw the gaucho farming on his own land, Sarmiento declared: 'he aquí el gaucho argentino de ayer, con casa en que vivir, con un pedazo de tierra para hacerle producir alimentos para su familia'.[105] However, it is ironic that when run by the Unitarian government, the *Sociedad Rural Argentina* destroyed once more the dream of the gauchos and the proletariat by banishing them to the most remote parts of the country. Sarmiento attempted to excuse the ill treatment of the gauchos, that had taken place under his government and reinstate e the gaucho was an ever-important national emblem of Argentina by stating that 'veremos mañana la canción de siempre, el payar de la guitarra a la sombra del ombú de la Pampa y a la puerta del rancho de paja', but, as Pigna states: 'desgraciadamente, allí concluye su proyecto para reivindicar las injusticias pasadas'.[106]

Even though *Amalia* encourages the equal treatment between men and women, Mármol fails to embrace his opportunity to dismiss racial prejudices as 'his fiction is exclusionary of black people on the whole but is particularly hostile to black women'.[107] In this sense, the Unitarians' contempt for black women is juxtaposed with Rosas's admiration for them given that 'he hired the first black

[102] Juan Maria Gutiérrez, "Fisonomía del saber español: cuál debe ser entre nosotros", in *El Salón Literario*, ed. F. Weinberg (Buenos Aires, Hachette), pp.135-149 (p.145).
[103] Sarmiento, *Facundo*, p.22.
[104] Felipe Pigna, *Los mitos de la historia argentina 2*. 18 ed. (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2000) p.280
[105] *Ibid*.
[106] Sarmiento, *Facundo*, p.281.
[107] Dunstan, p.2.

female chief of spies named Tía Joaquina who first appeared in the late nineteenth century novel *La Mazorca*'.[108] Mármol uses Florencia Dupasquier to propagate the ideal of a 'civilised' Argentine citizen, who is in this case, white and half French. He portrays the white populace as being the superior race, which is even evident in Daniel's ethnicity: 'among even reformed Unitarians, such as Daniel represented, the half-Spanish, half-Indian *gaucho* produced a practically visceral revulsion that extended by association to Federalists in general'.[109] Daniel's slave, Fermín, is a *gaucho* but he is also clearly identified as a white man. There is no mention of Indians in the novel, which is set entirely inside the capital: Argentines had eradicated the 'inferior' Indians from Buenos Aires in the same way as the Americans did the Indians,'that is, largely by extermination campaigns for territorial expansion, like the one Rosas led in 1833 to prop up his waning popularity'.[110] It is therefore ironic that the Unitarian liberals vehemently decried Rosas's scaremongering tactics used to establish his command but yet proceeded to do exactly the same when it came to initiating the ethnic purification of Buenos Aires. The Unitarian efforts to wipe out the black population were largely undone when they reclaimed their social status in the Rosas government. In an attempt to gain respect from the upper classes, Afro-Argentines rebranded themselves as *trigueño.* By adopting a new racial classification, they sought to eradicate racial discrimination in society and achieve equality. The phrase *trigueño* –which literally means wheat-coloured – derives from the Spanish word *trigo* meaning wheat and came into being shortly after Argentine independence in 1810. Given that the term was attributed to light-skinned blacks and dark-skinned whites, 'it helped categorise social mobility, meaning that black citizens gained some sort of equality'.[111] The term was enthusiastically used by Afro-Argentines in order to leave behind or dissociate themselves from their African ancestry; for the black people who occupied positions of high importance, the name was used in an attempt to gain respect from their fair-skinned counterparts. A prime example of this is Estanislao Maldones, a black

[108] *Ibid*., p.14.
[109] Sommer, p.96
[110] Sommer, p.96.
[111] Erika Denise Edwards, 'An African Tree Produce White Flowers: the Disappearance of the Black Community in Buenos Aires, Argentina, 1850-1890', *McNair Scholars Journal*, Vol. 6, (Issue 1), article 8, 2002, p.52.

colonel who served under Rosas. After fourteen years of military service 'he was considered a *trigueño* as was his son'.[112]

It can be argued that the generation of '37 kindled the racial chauvinisms of the future generation of 1880; members of the liberal *oligarquía* waged war against the non-white citizens: 'These men oversaw the murder and subjugation of Indian tribes in the so-called Desert Campaigns of 1878-1885, led by Julio Argentino Roca'.[113] Despite the generation of '37 agreeing with the partial abolition of slavery, this intellectual cohort was in no sense egalitarian as 'they did not consider black people their equals and felt discomfort at the practical changes that resulted from the gradual liberation of slaves'.[114] In 1881, Quesada emphasises that 'los esclavos no odiaban a sus amos y la esclavitud en esta parte de la América española no fue cruel para los pobres negros. He writes with disgust about the mass meeting organised by the black communities and scheduled to take place at the Plaza de Mayo: 'cantares verdaderamente bárbaros, parecían aullidos de animales que a él le producía una impresión repugnante'. But the slaves filled him with pride when they proudly marched with the Independence troops and 'morían vivando la libertad de esta tierra'. Black citizens were useful when they were fighting for white ideals and interests but when they attempted to build their own identity, there were barbarians. The piece ends with the final statement that local black people were accepted by whites because 'no es posible averiguar la ley en virtud de la cual los negros esclavos en Buenos Aires eran superiores fisiológicamente hablando a aquellos salvajes del Africa que andan casi desnudos'. Quesada describes the physical repulsiveness of his black counterparts; according to him, 'se les modificaba el cráneo, la forma del rostro y la complexión del cuerpo y cuando vestían bien con las ropas de sus amo eran casi humanos'.[115] Argentine society whitened the 'inferior' race, as Andrew notes: 'The Afro-Argentines had advanced so far, that many of them were now fit to acquire the culture and refinements hitherto monopolised by the white race'.[116] It is accurate to

[112] George Reid Andrews, *The Afro-Argentines of Buenos Aires, 1800-1900*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1980) p.101.
[113] Dunstan, p.4.
[114] *Ibid*., p.1.
[115] Vicente Quesada, *Memorias de un viejo*, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Ciudad Argentina, 1998) [1883], p.24.
[116] Andrews, p.102.

state that in the hands of the liberals, the Afro-Argentines, especially the enslaved, had undergone a cultural cleansing in which everything they knew was beaten out of them, paving the way for 'white' supremacy.

Whereas the now not-so-liberal scholars of '37 and '80 sought to maintain black slavery, Rosas wanted to free them from their shackles as 'he gained the respect of the black community and abolished the slave traffic in 1839, which he himself had reinstituted in 1831'.[117] Regardless of whether Rosas's actions were motivated more by political self-interest than by genuine concern for black welfare, the fact remains that the Afro-Argentine community perceived him as its liberator.[118] Rosas also made occasional donations to African mutual aid societies to help alleviate poverty amongst the black community and more importantly, before campaigning for the abolition of slavery, in 1836 he appealed the law that demanded the 'automatic requirement of free black men fifteen years and older to the army, where they were destined to die as they were placed on the front line'.[119] Furthermore, the bans on the traditional African candombe dances, which were imposed in the 1820s, were lifted by Rosas and in 1838; the nations were even invited to hold and all-day dance in the central plaza to celebrate Independence Day.[120] Although Rosas was greatly aided by his wife and daughter, he did most of the wooing of the Afro-Argentines himself. As previously mentioned, he tactically named his countryside mansion after the black Saint Benito of Palermo who was the patron of one of the city's black brotherhoods. Furthermore, *rosista* propagandists were instructed by the dictator to produce poems and literature in Afro-Argentine dialect which was to be distributed amongst the black populace. An occasionally published newspaper called *La Negrita* was a prime example of Rosas's manipulation of his supporters. The persona of the title was Juana Peña who declared in the first issue:

Yo, me llamo Juana Peña

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[117] *Ibid*.

[118] Ricardo Salvatore, "Integral Outsiders: Afro Argentines in the era of Juan Manuel de Rosas and Beyond" in *Beyond Slavery: The Multilayered Legacy of Africans in Latin American and the Caribbean*. Ed. Darién J. Davis (Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007), p.65.

[119] Edwards, p.52.

[120] See Andrews, p.98.

Y tengo por vanidad
–Que todos sepan que soy–
Negrita muy Federal.
Negrita que manda fuerza
Y no negrita pintora
Porque no soy de las que andan
Con pluma voladora.
Negrita que en los Tambores
Ocupar el primer lugar.
Y que todos me abren cancha
Cuando salgo a bailar.
Pero ya que me han chiflado
Por meterme a gacetera
He de hacer ver que, aunque negra,
Soy patriota verdadera. [121]

Although Rosas was seen as the liberator of the marginalised races, it can be argued that he was no more a promoter of the Agro-Argentine population than previous governments. For example, he did reinstitute the slave trade in 1831, allowing the inhumane treatment of black people. It is apparent that he abandoned his black supporters when they were of no benefit to him. In 1833, the headquarters of the Cámbunda nation were confiscated and sold in order to pay debts contracted by the whole of society. Rosas did not compensate the nation with any financial aid. Moreover, with regards to educational opportunities for black people, Rosas did not improve their level of schooling but rather, he was responsible for the decrease in the population; his unrelenting recruitment of black men to his army and the *Mazorca*, meant that the mortality rate within the black community was as high as it had always been. Taking into account Rosas's opportunistic nature, his support for the black masses seems mendacious. Given the unimproved death toll, tensions arose between Rosas and his-not-so keen supporters; some Afro-Argentines, particularly those placed within the city's society, sided with Rosas's political adversaries. A prime example of the black opposition to Rosas is when Colonel José María Morales, the country's highest-ranking black officer, began his military career fighting for the Unitarian cause at the Siege of Montevideo. Doña Encarnación Ezcurra played an

[121] *La Negrita*, July 21st, 1833, quoted in in J.L Lanuza, *Cancionero del tiempo de Rosas* (Buenos Aires: Emecé, 1941), pp.23-24.

essential role in organising the black workers in Rosas's favour: 'He llamado a los *paisanos* les he hablado, lo mismo a los presidentes de todas las naciones negras.'[122]According to Andrews, Dona Encarnación warned her husband that certain black military generals were planning to assassinate him. The suspected instigator of one of the attempted assassinations was the mulatto named Carranza who was a fervent Unitarian. Another was Felix Barbuena, who was allegedly the leader of the anti-Rosas revolt in 1839, in the south of the province. Even though the suburban Afro-Argentines supported Rosas to the very end, some fell into the trap of believing the Unitarian's unfavourable claims about the governor. The liberals undoubtedly wanted to sabotage support for Rosas amongst the black community. In 1839, the aristocratic Unitarian Petrona Acosta de Sinclair informed her husband – who was in exile – of her successful efforts to destabilise support for the Governor within the black nations, claiming 'emos conseguidos con los negros ponerlos mal con el [Rosas.] tengo la labandera Presidenta de los negros i no perdemos tiempo de aconsejarlas hasta que tome odio del que ya saben'.[123] She proceeds to tell of how their illiterate and uneducated nature has made them highly susceptible to believing her lies: 'Les contamos tantas cosas y eyos an creido.'[124] The Unitarians pointed out to the black people that their dances were not in fact celebrated, but mocked by Rosas. Petrona made it clear to the black President that the way in which Rosas had made the black villagers dance in the plaza to make fun of them was shameful and humiliating and that they were very angry: 'le dige a la negra presidenta que es una berguenza que los icieron bailar en la plaza para a ser les burla y estan mui enojados', as she concluded that 'aunque las matan, dicen que no han de bailar mas…'.[125] Petrona's assumption that the Afro-Argentines would reject Rosas proved to be largely inaccurate given that their support for Rosas remained firm until the very end: they religiously wore the red insignia and volunteered to serve in the Federalist army. Despite the Unitarians attempt to persuade the black community that they were being used and ill-treated by the dictator; they still dedicated their

[122] Bernardo Kordon, "La raza negra en el Río de La Plata", *Todo Es Historia*, 3, (1969), Supplement 7, p.19. Cited in George Andrews, p.97.
[123] Petrona Acosta de Sinclair to Enrique Sinclair, May 27, 1839, AGN, 10 24-5-3B.
[124] *Ibid*.
[125] *Ibid*.

candombe dances to him. The songs were written by Rosas propagandists and they honoured him by singing:

Ya vites en el candombe
cómo glitan los molenos:
"Viva nuestlo Padle Losas,
El Gobelnadol más Güeno".[126]

It is noted that 'por las calles desfilaban bandas de músicos negros después de casa victoria federal.[127] Testament to the black community's dedication to the Rosas government is that 'en al menos una ocasion, cuarenta y dos sociedades africanas se reunieron para hacer una contribucion especial al tesoro provincial, cuando se necesito dinero extra para gastos militares.[128] An interesting point to note is that newspapers such as *La Negrita* not only sought to glorify Rosas and rally support for him, but also to demonise black military generals who challenged the dictator.[129] A prominent example is highlighted by the periodical *El Avisador*, which roused the Afro-Argentines against Felix de Alzaga, commander of the black militia and political figure who made clear his anti-Rosas stance. As the 1830s wore on, Alzaga became increasingly hostile towards Rosas and the federalists and in retaliation, *El Avisador* warned the black community: 'él cuenta con los NEGROS porque los capitanea…pero los negros lo abandonarán, lo dejarán solo, y cuando llegue el caso le dirán, TRAIDOR, muere como tu *padre*'.[130] The reference to Alzaga's father is to Martín de Alzaga who was brutally executed in 1812 after his counterrevolutionary conspiracy was discovered and exploited by a domestic slave, rendering him a disreputable figure amongst Rosas' supporters: 'La PATRIA nos ha hecho LIBRES, y tu padre qui so conservarnos en la SERVIDUMBRE.[131] As we have learnt, domestic espionage was another way in which Afro-Argentines demonstrated their

[126] José Luis Lanuza, *Morenada*, (Buenos Aires, 1967) p. 120. For other pro-Rosas candombe lyrics, see Ricardo Rodriguez Molas, "Negros libres rioplatenses", Buenos Aires: Revista de Humanidades, Vol.1 (Sept. 1961), pp.107-8.
[127] José María Ramos Mejía, *Rosas y su tiempo*, 3 vols. (Buenos Aires, 1907), 2:276-77.
[128] La Gaceta Mercantil, June 25, 1842, p. 2. Quoted and Cited in George Andrews, p.98.
[129] Noted in Ramos Mejia*, Rosas y su tiempo*, 1: pp.286-88 and Vivian Trías, *Juan Manuel de Rosas* (Buenos Aires, 1969), p.72.
[130] *El Avisador* (Buenos Aires), undated. The best collection of black-dialect, pro Rosas propaganda is Soler Cafias, *Negros, gauchos y compadres,* which contains twenty pages of this material. Quoted and cited in George Andrews, p.98.
[131] *Ibid*.

support for Rosas. The enslaved were required to report on the conspiracies of their Unitarian masters to Rosas and his secret police, with inevitably catastrophic results for the families involved. The Afro-Argentines became inextricably associated with Rosas and in 1878, an editorial in the black press attacked the white ignorance of Afro-Argentine history, 'expresando particular irritacion ante la difundida creencia de que el unico rol de la gente de color en la historia argentina habia sido el de soldados y espias de Rosas'.[132] The blistering ignorance of the Unitarians combined with their utter contempt for Rosas saw the transformation of the black people into symbols of barbarism and savagery.

When Mármol further highlights racial discriminations among the liberals in *Amalia*, the humility of the Unitarians that was once visible to us suddenly disappears. In reality, Unitarians rejected the traditionalism of their Spanish colonial past for the modernity of Europe. A Unitarian Argentina was orientated toward the progressive European countries such as France and Great Britain, a point which Andrews reinforces: 'The Unitarians professed a strong and unwavering faith in the innate superiority of the European republics as manifested in their industrialization, economic expansion, a historical development in which enlightened monarchies were succeeded by republicanism'.[133] The general opinion of the Unitarians was that white Anglo-Saxons dominated Western civilisation not only because their skin colour was deemed more aesthetically pleasing but also because they supposedly had superior intellect: 'Alberdi observed that as descendants of Spaniards, Argentines' capacity for diligence and rationality was limited, whereas Anglo-Saxons were naturally hard working and efficient. It was therefore the liberals' goal to attract as many Anglo-Saxon immigrants as possible'.[134] It was this attitude that served as the catalyst for the ethnic cleansing of the black Argentinian population when Sarmiento came to power. The xenophobic nature of nineteenth century European intellectuals greatly influenced the *Asociación de Mayo* in the sense that liberals such as Sarmiento Alberdi and Ingenieros, all adhered to the teachings of Social Darwinism as they postulated that a whiter Argentina was the most effective solution to achieving a

[132] "Los cabellos de la aurora", *La Juventud*, 30 de octubre de 1878, p.1. Also cited in George Andrews, p.100.
[133] *Ibid*.p.102.
[134] Edwards., p.103.

more civilised nation. Although the aforementioned liberal cohort shared the same deplorable racist attitudes, they each held differing views with regards to how white people could assert their supremacy in society. For example, Sarmiento believed that white and black people should not mix and instead develop separately whereas Alberdi insisted that all races should interact because 'los genes blancos superiores siempre resultarían dominantes sobre los de las razas inferiores'.[135] Even more extreme in his views was the ardent Social Darwinist, José Ingenieros. He firmly believed that 'la historia no es un registro de Ia lucha de clases ni de Ia lucha institucional sino antes bien de Ia lucha racial.'.[136] Daniel Schávelzon states: 'Los afro-argentinos no se evaporaron por un sortilegio de magia, lo que pasó fue responsabilidad de una sociedad liberal que logró lo que realmente quería: construir una nación blanca, la más blanca de América'.[137] In 1901, Ingenieros reiterated this notion with absolute precision: 'la superioridad de la raza blanca es un hecho aceptado hasta por los que niegan la existencia de la lucha de razas', and in 1904, he went as far as to claim that: 'todo lo que se haga por las razas inferiores es anticientífico. A lo sumo, se los podría proteger para que se extingan agradablemente'.[138] Without a doubt, Ingenieros was delicately asking for the implementation of extermination camps in Argentina. When the Europeanization of Argentina materialised, the liberals put their faith in Italian immigration and racial mixing in an attempt to cure the country's malaise. Upon welcoming a wave of mass immigration, racial mixing did occur but when it did not proceed as quickly as the elite had hoped, they sped up the process with the use of the statistical devices, i.e. the transferral of Afro-Argentines from the pardo-moreno racial category to the white via the intermediate status of *trigueño*.[139] The Unitarians were successful in their morally lamentable pursuit as Afro-Argentines gradually became invisible in Buenos Aires. They only formed '1 percent of the capital's population by 1900, and thus were only a miniscule fraction of the country's population'.[140]

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[135] Juan Bautista Alberdi, *Bases y puntos de partida para la organización de la República Argentina*, (Buenos Aires, 1952), p.33.
[136] José Ingenieros, *Sociología argentina*, (Madrid, 1913), pp.41-42. Also cited in Andrews, p.105.
[137] Daniel Schávelzon, 'Arquitectura para la esclavitud en Buenos Aires: una historia silenciada', Instituto de Arte Americano e Investigaciones Estéticas, No. 130, (2002), p.8. Retrieved from: http://www.iaa.fadu.uba.ar/publicaciones/critica/0130.pdf [accessed on 11/01/2018].
[138] José Ingenieros, *Sociología argentina*, p.7.
[139] See Andrews, chapter 5, p.64 and chapter 8, p.109.
[140] Andrews, p.109.

The fate of the black population was very different from that of the Indian. When Argentina came to the aid of her sisters in the wars of Independence, African slaves were forced into army conscription and sent to fight at the frontier. The most telling result of the élite's reconquest of power after Rosas's fall in 1852 (and after it had adopted Alberdi's proposal for enlightened federalism through European immigration rather than mass education) was that blacks seemed to have disappeared entirely.[141] During this genocide of the black population 'el gobierno aparentemente decidió cerrar los ojos ante las diferencias raciales y eliminar la categoría que correspondía a los negros en el censo nacional'.[142] This recalls Florenica's deliberate blindness in *Amalia*, when she chooses not to acknowledge the black women in María Josefa's house. The black servants in Federalist and Unitarian households alike were indispensable to Rosas; he was constantly alert to the enthusiastic support and seamless spy network of the black workers and servants of the city. The first thing that Daniel requires of Amalia when she agrees to help protect Eduardo is to dismiss her black servants for they cannot be trusted, as a black working woman spies upon and denounces Amalia and Eduardo.[143] Daniel's pervasive knowledge makes him aware of who can and cannot be trusted and his 'colour-fast social text leaves some room for attractive shades when the colours bleed and cross over; that is, when black is whitened'.[144] Sommer emphasises the fact that, in the lower classes, only the mulattoes were to be trusted, because of the tendency which every mixed race has to elevate and ennoble itself.[145] Daniel's character is rather unpredictable though he is consistent in his teachings on treachery which puzzles Eduardo. His erratic predisposition is representative of the era in which there was a resurgence of Romantic appreciation of nature. This notion 'denied the classical grid of knowledge on which so many misfired Rividavian schemes had hung'[146] and Daniel's statement is worth mentioning:

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[141] Ingenieros, *Sociología argentina*, p.124.

[142] See Elvira B. de Meyer, "El nacimiento de la novela: José Mármol", *Historia de la literatura argentina* /1 (Centro Editor de América Latina, 1967) p.225. Quotation is that of Sommer, *Foundational Fictions*, p.97, and p.134 in Spanish version.

[143] Sommer, p.97.

[144] *Ibid*.

[145] Mármol, *Amalia*, p.99.

[146] Sommer, p.97.

> No hay nada, mi querido Eduardo, que se explique con más facilidad que mí carácter, porque él no es otra cosa que una expresión cándida de las leyes eternas de la Naturaleza. Todo, en el orden físico como en el orden moral, es inconstante, transitorio y fugitivo; los contrastes forman lo bello y armónico en todo cuanto ha salido de la mano de Dios;…[147]

Mármol highlights the mutual respect shown between political counterparts in his novel. Eduardo objects to the anarchic personalism that keeps the exiles in Montevideo absurdly vying for supremacy inside the cafés: Sommer argues that 'arrogant Unitarians could learn something about association and coalition from virtuous Federalists'.[148] There is no dearth of the honourable federalists in Mármol's novel; Mármol thanks a federalist whom he befriended whilst he was imprisoned in a footnote in the novel. He also depicts Manuelita Rosas as a kind and generous federalist and in doing so, helps to promote her status as an almost mythical figure of 'eternally feminine kindnesses' which is reminiscent of the trajectory of Eva Perón, culminating in her aura of sainthood a century later. Daniel dismisses gossip that Amalia hears at the Federalist ball that tarnishes the Federalists' reputation: 'No, no, Amalia; son invenciones de las unitarias, cuya imaginación está irritada. No tienen otras armas que el ridículo, y se valen de ello a las mil maravillas. La señora de Rolón es de lo mejor que hay en el círculo federal; su corazón siempre tiene sensibilidad para todos'.[149] Whereas Rosas seeks to tear national unity apart, Daniel Bello represents the union of political contraries; it is certainly a marriage of convenience but more of a delicate bond of respect between a Unitarian and Federalist as Daniel recalls the kind-hearted nature of an elderly Federalist woman and in doing so represents a model for national cohesion among all Argentineans. Daniel is also the agent in the sense that he is responsible for the blossoming love between Amalia and Eduardo. Daniel's matchmaking alludes to Sarmiento's belief that marriage would provide social stability and a unified Argentina. It was not violence and segregation but marriage – which Sarmiento defended – that was the answer to Argentina's problems. This was what would make the Romantics succeed

[147] Mármol, *Amalia*, p.330.
[148] Sommer, p.98.
[149] Mármol, *Amalia*, p.371.

where their classical elders did not. Amalia's love affair with Eduardo signifies 'a national rapprochement between centre and periphery or at least between modern history and Arcadian pastoral'.[150] Tucumán is where Eduardo's forbidden relationship with Amalia will flourish which is significant given that Tucumán was the first city to renounce Rosas – following his institutionalisation of terror – as Mármol reminds us that on 'El 7 de abril de 1840, la provincia de Tucumán se pronunció públicamente contra Rosas; lo desconocía en su carácter de gobernador de Buenos Aires y le retiraba la delegación de las relaciones exteriores.'.[151] It seems as though Mármol attempts to parallel the gender-coded[152] cities of Buenos Aires and Tucumán as he dedicates the second part of the book to Amalia, beginning with a description of 'that tropical womblike interior paradise'[153] just as he had begun the first part with Eduardo's Buenos Aires. His attempts to relate the two cities could serve as a metaphor which represents the seductive hegemony of the loving capital over its ministering province, a stark contrast to the dictatorial isolation that weakened both sides of civilization.

By contrast, Rosas did not to use political seductions to enhance his cause. Those who could not be integrated into a federalist society were simply eradicated. As his empire rapidly expanded as he gained increasing support, 'he became ever deafer to the pleadings and requests of his own followers, so deaf that he refused to hear his closest allies intercede for the ill-fated Camila O'Gorman.'[154] The twenty-year old belonged to a devoutly federalist family who resided in the capital and was a good friend of Manuelita. Her lover, Uladislao Gutiérrez, was the nephew of the governor of Tucumán. Rosas attempted to suppress the embarrassment of mercilessly murdering one of his own but such a scandal could not be hidden. Montevideo's émigré newspaper, the *Comercio del Plata*, mocked the morality of liberal federalists. Rosas did not relent; the lovers were gunned down by a firing squad despite the fact that Camila was eight months pregnant. This brutal execution that brought the country to a standstill was not denounced by Rosas's most intimate and

[150] Sommer, p.99.
[151] Mármol, *Amalia*, pp.43-45.
[152] Gender coded in the sense that the male and female protagonists (Amalia and Eduardo are from different cities (Tucumán and Buenos Aires).
[153] Sommer, p.99.
[154] *Ibid*., p.100.

loyal associates until his fall. Mármol wrote *Amalia* three years after the atrocity and having sensed his readers' yearning to embrace a forbidden love affair, he nourished their fantasies whilst opening sentimental wounds that still festered.[155] Mármol recreates Camila's story to an extent in the sense that he built the novel around the doomed love of a young couple which only ends in tragedy but 'if Mármol was rewriting Camila's story as a hegemonic allegory, his romance would reroute the lovers to make her hail from the voluptuous interior and him from the heady capital'.[156] The love of Amalia and Eduardo occupies the plot's centre ground and 'it is precisely at the centre, somewhat decentred thanks to Daniel (and perhaps Rosas, who was clever enough to be a provincial from the central province), that they could have hoped to make their love last'.[157] Mármol brings home the tragedy that plagued both Unitarians and federalists alike during Rosas's totalitarian regime; he incorporates the theme of life and death into the novel when – only an hour after this marriage – Eduardo is killed by the *mazorca* which is – absurdly –in part the fault of his own spouse. It is Amalia who lets slip that she is Unitarian and proud of her political affiliation, a fatal error that leads to her husband's death. Apart from Amalia, the character who exposes the illegitimate relationship and sends the *mazorca* to Amalia's house is Doña María Josefa Encarnación's corrupt sister, for it is she who ferrets out Amalia and Eduardo's romance. Even though the inescapable *mazorca* were actively hunting down Eduardo, the tragedy is not inevitable since Eduardo could have been saved by Daniel's Federalist father. Readers past and present would have been utterly devastated by Eduardo's murder which thwarted his much-anticipated marriage to Amalia. Even more heart-breaking is the loss of Daniel, the model for future Argentines and a definitive hero, whose death also symbolises the end of the possible reconciliation between the Unitarians and the Federalists. The end of the novel does not dwell on Daniel's death but concentrates on the legitimacy of federalism and patriarchal authority: '¡Y al mismo tiempo el joven caía sin voz y sin fuerzas en los abrazos de su padre, que con una sola palabra (Restaurador) había suspendido el puñal, que esa misma palabra levantara para tanta

[155] *Ibid*.
[156] *Ibid*.
[157] *Ibid*.

desgracia y tanto crímen!'.[158] Don Antonio is a loyal servant of Rosas who has abandoned the city to wage war on the provinces: 'Buenos Aires is an empty centre waiting for the real father to come home and restore order'.[159] In this tragic scene, Don Antonio fills a vacuum that needs to be occupied; he steps in for the dictator himself given that he is the only true federalist and so Mármol refers to *him* as the Restorer. Even though this is a title associated mainly with Rosas, 'it is legitimate even if the dictator does not merit it. The place of the name of the father is still intact; it's the last word'.[160] Mármol's literary representation of the so-called 'barbarians' makes us think about the federalists in a more progressive light as he equates the morality of young Federalists with that of enlightened Unitarians:

> If Daniel's cunning had not already reproduced Rosas's manipulations for us, if good Federalists were not already portrayed as equal to good Unitarians, this word itself would establish the overlap between the apparent antagonists in *Amalia*.[161]

Amalia is the character who survives them all which may be significant given that her name bears some resemblance to 'Argentina'. Despite this brutal on-going war between the Unitarians and the Federalists, the country survives the chaos. Amalia is devastated at the loss of her one true love but there is comfort in the fact that Eduardo's death will be countervailed with a new life. The creation of the couple's consummated love is a child, 'which is perhaps to reincarnate the one brutally murdered in Camila O'Gorman's womb'.[162] These subtle allegories in Mármol's account serve to protest against Rosas's relentless annihilation of thousands; the possibility of a Unitarian baby becoming the product of Amalia and Eduardo's relationship is a reference to the fact that despite the dictator's brutality, Rosas's victims transcended death as the Unitarians would go on to rule after his fall. However, although both lovers serve the Unitarian cause, they come from opposing cities; Amalia is from Tucumán and Eduardo belongs to the upper echelons of Buenos Aires society. In their euphoric rapport, *la bella tucumana* and the *porteño* may have produced a child with mixed blood, symbolizing the harmonious unity of

[158] Mármol, p.833.
[159] Sommer, p.101.
[160] *Ibid*.
[161] *Ibid*., p.102.
[162] *Ibid*.

Argentina. Even after the fall of Rosas in 1852, the procreation of children did not come without repercussions. A problem arose when Argentina tried to repopulate the capital with whites; Catholicism was the only state-recognised religion and there were no legitimate sanctions for intermarriage: 'the Protestants (Unitarians) had no choice but to debase the Argentine women they could not resist and produce illegitimate children'.[163] Another problem came to light when, after welcoming a wave of immigrants to the city, Argentines had to maintain political power and – at the same time – encourage new-comers to build their fortunes. Alberdi summarised how this double jeopardy could be easily controlled, on the condition that Argentines were granted religious freedom. Alberdi – whom Sommer fittingly calls the political matchmaker – argued that if Argentineans broke free from Catholicism, the result would be that *romance* would conquer all and in effect, this would affect parity between prosperous husbands and irresistible wives.[164] This echoes the current power dynamic in today's Argentine society; men are still considered the main bread-winners whilst women, for the most part, do not hesitate to conform to their traditional domesticated role. Alberdi wanted to assimilate the liberal men of the city with the of desirable women of Andalusian origin in the South and in doing so, he would have instigated vast political change:

> Por conquistadores más ilustrados que la España, por ventura? conquistando en vez de ser conquistados: La América del Sud posee un ejército a este fin, y es el encanto que su *hermosas y amables mujeres* recibieron de su origen andaluz, mejorado por el cielo espléndido del nuevo mundo. Removed los impedimientos inmorales, que hacen *esteríl* el poder del bello sexo americano y tendréis realizado el cambio de nuestra raza sin la pérdida del idioma ni del tipo nacional primitivo'.[165]

It is arguable that Amalia is one of these women who are pursued by enlightened men from the city. Sommer argues that her personal traits represent something more than her feelings: 'her charm inscribes erotic desire as a "natural" grounding for any dialectic of political conciliation and economic growth'.[166] It is arguable that

[163] *Ibid*.
[164] *Ibid*., p.103.
[165] Juan Bautista Alberdi, *Las "Bases" de Alberdi ed. Jorge M. Mayer* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 1969), p.406.
[166] Sommer, p.104.

Mármol's fictional tale is the most progressive anti-Rosas material; not only does he use Amalia's relationship with Eduardo as a symbol of political reconciliation in Argentina but he also depicts federalists in a more positive light, alluding to the point that everyone can be morally equal: 'Amalia's love story becomes a foundational fiction because it projects the kind of liberal social intercourse between regions and parties that could establish a legitimate public family'.[167]

Mármol and National Reconciliation

In comparison with Echeverría's *El matadero*, Mármol's work encourages civil reunification between the opposing sides in the interests of political reconstruction. Echeverría understandably demonises the federalists but in doing so, deems the political crisis irreconcilable. His text reflects the atrocities at the time as he describes the sadomasochistic torture of a pompous Unitarian, much like Eduardo Belgrano; the story is about a gang of 'savage' butchers who – with the traditional *mazorca* torture instrument – "rape" a passer-by who happens to be a Unitarian.[168] The text is somewhat one-dimensional and negative since it offers no prospect of reconciliation between the warring parties. Echeverría wrote *El matadero* with the cynical outlook of the then catastrophic political climate after he 'had lost hope of getting beyond traditional dichotomies,[169] and also because 'during the terror it seemed natural to displace the barbarian from the Indian frontier right into the centre of the Argentine body politic.[170] By yielding to the hostility that already existed among Unitarians and Federalists, Echeverría intensifies the hatred between both parties and plunges the knife further into Argentina's political wound, thus rendering it impossible to heal. The fundamental difference between these two works is that while Echeverría's *El matadero* further undermines the prospect of national cohesion between political foes, Mármol's revolutionary *Amalia* encourages a reconciliation, which is precisely why the latter text is more progressive and is considered to be compulsory reading at many higher education institutions in Latin America. Rosas sought to emphasise the irreconcilable differences between the barbarous Federalist

[167] *Ibid*., p.104.
[168] The *mazorca* death squad used a corn-shaped torture instrument, also called the *mazorca*, on its victims (explained in Chapter One).
[169] Sommer, p.106.
[170] *Ibid*.

gauchos and the civilised, enlightened Unitarians; his dictatorship would not have survived had he not convinced his followers that political oppositions could not be bridged. However, Mármol incorporates the nomadic inhabitants of the plains into his reformist novel and elevates the *gaucho* to the status of Argentina's national emblem and thus counters the works of his fellow liberals, who dismissed the gaucho as a figure of negative connotations, belonging to the country's out-dated barbaric past. While most exiled writers were still 'looking to Europe for cultural orientation'[171], Mármol depicts the *gaucho* as the quintessential Argentine who is unique to Argentina and cannot be found anywhere else. Even though Mármol's modern version of the *gaucho* is one that has been somewhat 'improved' due to its interaction with 'civilization', the important point is that he uses his status to promote and glorify the *gaucho*, previously seen as an inferior cultural emblem. Enlightened intellectuals incongruously looked elsewhere for cultural identity when the leading symbol of Argentine identity lay right in front of their eyes. Even though Eduardo and Daniel are the characters with whom we sympathise, Mármol also depicts the *gauchos* as victims and Fermín is a prime example. Daniel's mistreatment of Fermín evokes sympathy in the reader because Fermín is portrayed as a loyal, obedient and peaceful man; he is described as waiting for Daniel: 'tranquilo, como buen hijo de la pampa, el gauchito civilizado en quien [Daniel] dispositaba toda su confianza, porque realmente la merecía'.[172] Mármol also likens Daniel to a *gaucho*, particularly when he emphasises his choice of weaponry which is a collection of leather cords and balls, highly reminiscent of the *boleadoras* – the *gaucho* hunting instrument. By propagating the *gaucho* as a national emblem under which political adversaries can unite, Mármol mocks Rosas's authority over the residents of the *pampas*. The *gauchos* were categorically associated with Rosas given that his powerbase was permeated by the *caudillos* and their *gaucho* troops. However, Mármol cleanses the *gaucho* of their political affiliation with Rosas and of their barbaric savagery. Even though the marginalised *gauchos* – without steady work or fixed property – were reintegrated into Argentine society by Rosas, they were forced to fight for the independence army and so they continued to be deprived of their freedom. Subject to military conscription, and to the control of the *caudillos* as well

[171] Civantos, p.62.
[172] Mármol, p.92.

as being poorly paid, they risked their lives to further Rosas's cause. They are deemed as outlaws and vagabonds of the *pampas* by the Argentine aristocracy but Mármol – in his willingness to repair the political damage – does something revolutionary. He facilitates the cultural appropriation of the *gaucho* by integrating them into liberal law; the body and voice of the *gaucho* are institutionally disciplined to become part of civilisation. Both the Federalists and the Unitarians use the *gaucho* to achieve their own objectives, but it can be argued that Mármol's appreciation of these unique outcasts was candid. *Amalia* promotes national cohesion which is essential in terms of ensuring the peaceful coexistence of political opposites, a concept which Felix Frías reiterated in his 1857 speech before the Argentine House of Representatives. He paid particular attention to the Rosas dictatorship and used his tyrannical rule to exemplify 'the consequence of general national disorder.' In presenting this case as a prime example of the problems that could arise upon the country's political conflicts, 'Frías argues that national order and cohesion are necessary to prevent the rise of another dictator',[173] as he urges the audience: 'Pongamos en orden la familia, señores'.[174]Armillas-Tiseyra argues that broken families proliferate in anti-Rosas literature observing that they:

> not only lose members to violence but are pulled apart and *distorted* such that the (national) family line cannot continue or perhaps even begin —Marmol's *Amalia* (1844) is a canonical example of the latter.[175]

Any symbol of hope in anti-Rosas literature is suppressed when the *mazorca* are involved and this reflects the tragic events that took place under Rosas's administration. *Amalia* emphasises the contribution of the *mazorca* to *la tiranía*: 'in *Amalia*, the menacing presence of the *mazorca* in the daily lives of the *porteños* emerges as the most enduring and persuasive of the cultural markers of 'la tiranía.'[176] Marmól describes the situation in 1840 when the activities of the *mazorca* were still 'limited to searching for suspected dissidents encountered on the streets of Buenos Aires, taking those with weapons to the President of the *Sociedad Popular*

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[173] Armillas-Tiseyra, p.29.
[174] Felix Frías, "El juicio de Rosas." *Escritos políticos*. (ed.) Horacio M. Sánchez de Loria Parodi. (Buenos Aires: Biblioteca del Jockey Club, 2005), p. 146.
[175] Armillas-Tiseyra, p.29.
[176] *Ibid*.

Restauradora and insulting those who were not displaying the insignia'.[177] The terror that plagued Buenos Aires spiralled out of control after 1840 when Rosas continued to accumulate unprecedented power. Mármol echoes the spine-chilling terror of the *mazorca* to which Rosas's victims were subjected: 'Este famoso club de asesinos corría las calles día y noche, aterrando, asesinando y robando, a la vez que en Santos Lugares, en la cárcel y en los cuarteles de Mariño y Cuitiño, se le hacía corro con la agonía de las víctimas'.[178] The terror that plagued the daily lives of Rosas's enemies and followers alike was instrumental in Rosas's dictatorship; he came to power after awakening the hatred between both Unitarians and Federalists but maintained his hold over Buenos with his rule of terror which went unchallenged:

> Pero todo caía vencido por el terrorismo. Rosas, poseedor del secreto de su triunfo real, ya no pensaba sino en vengarse de sus enemigos, y en acabar de enfermar y postrar el espíritu público a golpes de terror. El dique había sido roto por su mano, y la Mashorca se desbordaba como un río de sangre.[179]

Rosas victims were subjected to permanent surveillance by his paramilitary death squad, who were ready to quench their thirst for Unitarian blood. Mármol not only sheds light on the horrifyingly routine terror raids but also shows that the inhabitants of Buenos Aires had now become enslaved: 'Hombre, mujeres, niños, todo el mundo estaba con el pincel en la mano pintando las puertas, las ventanas, las rejas, los frisos exteriores, de día y muchas veces hasta en alta noche'.[180] The *mazorca* ordered people to swear an oath of loyalty to Rosas by not only displaying the federalist insignia on their clothing but also painting and decorating their houses red – any other colours, particularly those of the enemy were forbidden: 'Y mientras parte de un familia se ocupaba de aquello, la otra envolvía, ocultaba, borraba o rompía cuanto en el interior de la casa tenía una lista azul o verde'.[181] It was through the *mazorca* that Rosas robbed civilians of their freedom and instigated the murder of thousands. The terror had no limits; the *mazorca* tore apart Unitarian families and showed no mercy when it came to women and children: 'Otros corrían de cuarto en cuarto, a las

[177] Rea, p.35.
[178] Mármol, p.767.
[179] *Ibid*., p.766.
[180] *Ibid*., p.767.
[181] *Ibid*.

indefensas mujeres, dándoles y cortándoles con sus cuchillos el cabello […] todo esto en medio de un ruido y una grita infernal, confundida con el llanto de los niños, los ayes de la mujer y la agonía de la víctima.'[182] Mármol encompasses the plight of Unitarian families and whilst the *mazorca* was terrorising Rosas's enemies on the outside, the dictator himself was tyrannizing his own daughter inside the confines of his own home.

Mármol's Manuela

In his novel, Mármol indirectly demonstrates how Manuela was the main victim of her father's authoritarianism. As Encarnación's health began to deteriorate, Manuela took over her mother's arduous role – one which she could not escape until her father's fall from power. Despite Manuela's opposing political stance, Mármol wrote about 'la princesa federal' in a positive light that evokes sympathy for her in his literature. In *Amalia*, he exposes Manuela's alleged suffering under her father's rule, labelling her 'la primera víctima de su padre y el mayor instrumento, sin quererlo ser y saberlo, de sus diabólicos planes'.[183] He depicts her as being a rather cheerful and pleasant character who was easy to talk to, with a personality that contrasted with those of her parents: 'Su carácter era algre, fácil y comunicativo. Pero de vez en cuando se notaba en ella, después de algún tiempo, algo de pesadumbre, de melancolía, de disgustos […] lloraba, pero lloraba en secreto como las personas que verdaderamente sufren.'[184] Mármol emphasises that Manuela suffers just as much as Rosas's other victims, but her so-called suffering is psychological torment. Trapped within the walls of her father's household, she is stripped of her freedom to interact with other federalist ladies; Rosas demonstrates an unhealthy and disturbing possessiveness over his vulnerable daughter and thus curtails her social life. Mármol depicts Manuela as a well-educated and graceful lady to such an extent that he almost equates her to that of a Unitarian woman: 'Su

[182] *Ibid.*
[183] *Ibid.,* p.585.
[184] *Ibid*.

educación de cultura era descuidada, pero su talento natural suplía de ella'.[185] He also emphasises the stark contrast between Manuela and her mother: 'Su madre, mujer de talento y de intriga, pero vulgar, no había hecho nada por la perfecta educación de su hija'.[186] According to Mármol, Manuela was forced into this role which she did not enjoy; it impeded her personal happiness as she was not free to socialise or to marry and start a family of her own. Rosas's alleged control over his daughter prevented her from courting any federalist males and imprisoned her in a type of solitary confinement. Mármol notes how her father has stopped her from experiencing love twice: '[…] pero las dos veces, la mano de su padre vino a echar los cerrojos de ellas, la pobre jóven tuvo que ver los más bellos encantos de la vida de una mujer a través del cristal de su imaginación'.[187] He did not want to lose her as an essential political instrument or as a companion. Rosas immediately forced his wife's role upon his daughter when Encarnación's fragile condition was declining; he knew that she was and would continue to be just as popular with the working classes as Encarnación. Manuela was the catalyst in her father's success after Encarnación's death; the masses worshipped her: 'Ella, además, un instrumento de popularidad. Con ella lisonjeaba el amor propio del plebeyo alzado de repente, al condición distinguida en la amistad del jefe federal'.[188] Manuela frequented dances where she always showed her charismatic persona – a key ingredient which facilitates the phenomenon of populism – as we saw in both the Rosas and Perón administrations. Considering that Daniel is somewhat likened to Rosas, Amalia could be seen as an accurate representation of Manuela; she lives under Daniel's authoritative rule, follows his every command and is restricted to the confines of her home. Both Amalia and Manuela are kind and gentle and even though the latter is not a Unitarian, she tries to help her father's victims, namely Camila O'Gorman. Despite the obvious comparisons between the two women in Mármol's novel, there is a bridge connecting the houses of Amalia and Manuela, 'a bridge which is constructed out of the two women's bodies, representing opposite sides of the Argentine nation'.[189] Even though they are enemies, they are united by Mármol under a

[185] *Ibid*., p.586.
[186] *Ibid*.
[187] *Ibid*.
[188] *Ibid*.
[189] Nancy Hanway, *Embodying Argentina: Body, Space and Nation in 19th Century Narrative* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2003), p.31.

common circumstance; they both suffer terribly under the Rosas regime and are stripped of their freedoms. Both women await the call to serve their nations, although, the nation's call in Manuela's case is that of her father. Amalia serves her country through her bravery; she risks her life to save that of Eduardo and thus demonstrates her moral valour. However, Manuela does not serve Argentina in the same way; she only answers the call of her father by facilitating his success. After *Amalia* was released, Unitarians became fascinated by Manuela as they adopted the collective view that she suffered. Masiello reports that Manuela's history was subject to wild and passionate investigations by the *unitarios*[190]as she remarks:

> In an age when sexuality was increasingly confused with politics, liberal writers emphasized an image of Manuela as a maiden enslaved to her father. Some described her as a victim of incest; others painted her as a benevolent figure devoted to helping victims of the regime.[191]

The favourable and allegedly accurate depictions of Manuela as being a generous and self-sacrificing figure call to mind the description of Eva Perón – an iconic figure in Latin-American history who was well-known for her charitable work among the less fortunate. Rosas's attachment to his daughter and the adolescent Maria Eugenia Castro is confirmed by his own nephew, Lucio Mansilla. As well as his reputedly pursuing an improper relationship with Manuelita – wholly inconsistent with the morality that he preached – Rosas also pursued another indecent rapport with his comrade's daughter, Maria Eugenia Castro. She was an adolescent maid who was presented to Rosas as a gift by her father, Juan Gregorio Castro; they went on to have five illegitimate children, who Rosas later abandoned. Mansilla, who despised his uncle's double standards of morality, struggled under the paradoxical legacy of his uncle and consequently denounced him. Hanway observes that Manuela was 'a doubly transgressive figure for the time: both a public woman and a black-identified one'.[192] This is due to the fact that she attended African dances alongside her mother: 'Doña Manuelita de Rosas showed no reluctance to dance on certain occasions with the honest and hard-working *mulatos*, *pardos* and *morenos*'.[193] In

[190] *Ibid*., p.31.
[191] Francine Masiello, *Between Civilisation and Barbarism: Women, Nation and Literary Culture in Modern Argentina* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), p.29.
[192] Hanway, p.31.
[193] Andrews, p.97.

Amalia, Mármol casts Manuela as the helpless victim of her father's heartless attacks on her feminine modesty. Rosas is depicted as the embodiment of barbarism: 'después de acariciar con sus manos sus pies desnudos […] se entretuvo en rascarse esa parte del pecho; sintiendo con ello un verdadero placer, esa organización en quien predominan admirablemente todos los instintos animales'.[194] Mármol does not hesitate to emphasise Rosas's barbaric nature and suspected cruelty towards his daughter; he presents Rosas as encouraging members of his beastly entourage to humiliate his daughter as he forces her to shake hands with the bloodied hands of killers. Her suffering is visible when she is startled by the blood-spattered hands and arms of Comandante Cuitiño: 'estaba pálida como un cadáver'[195] Rosas was the very manifestation of savagery from which Manuela herself was not immune. It is arguable that Rosas was responsible for the moral corruption of Argentine womanhood; women in the Rosas regime were used as political objects as they were forced to wear the *divisa punzó* and thus 'in cultural discourse, they [women] existed only to point up the politically coded message being "transmitted" by their clothing'.[196] The clothing that women were forced to wear is an allegory for the fact that their bodies symbolised the nation in national discourse as they are the figures who 'produce nations biologically, culturally and symbolically'.[197]

In conclusion, while *Amalia* can be deemed more progressive than the previous Unitarian works such as *El matadero*, which aggravate rather than diffuse political tensions, Mármol's polemical attitudes, towards ethnic minorities – shared by other Unitarians such as Sarmiento and most notably Echeverría – means that he still jeopardises the possibility of a united Argentina. He vilifies Rosas as being the source of all evil, killing both Unitarians and Federalists, but ironically Mármol himself is part of a literary cohort which advocates the ethnic cleansing of non-white citizens such as Afro-Argentines. Mármol blatantly overlooks Rosas's contribution to the empowerment of women and ethnic minorities and in doing so, stands in the

[194] Mármol, p.129.
[195] *Ibid*., p.136.
[196] Hanway, p.34.
[197] James Alexander & A. Simone, 'M/othering the Nation: Women's bodies as Nationalist Trope in Edwidge Danticat's Breath, Eyes, Memory', *African American Review*, Vol. 44, (3), September 2011, p. 380 .

way of his own goal of ‘reconciliation’. In this sense, one can say that Mármol wants a political but not *national* reconciliation: he wants an end to the ongoing political conflict between Unitarians and Federalists, but at the same time desires a country which is free of non-European citizens, thus preventing *national* harmony.

CHAPTER THREE

Portraits of Female Power in Argentina

The last three decades of the twentieth century have witnessed a boom in writings on Latin American women to the left of the political spectrum. When considering the topic of leftist Argentine women in power, the image of Eva Perón is inescapable: the impoverished and illegitimate little girl from Los Toldos who went on to become Argentina's *Primera Dama* and was worshipped by millions. Her character, motives, and historical relevance have been debated by historians and writers: she still remains a polarizing figure in Argentina, where she is deemed both a saint who alleviated the lives of the masses, and an 'avaricious prostitute' by members of the *oligarquía* such as the renowned Argentine intellectual, Jorge Luis Borges.[1] But one quality that all seem to agree upon is that she was an immensely powerful and ambitious figure who had a unique affinity with the Argentine proletariat and remains the most influential of cultural icons.

It is because of Eva's rather obscure background that she has received mass attention in the fictional sphere, but in turn, her revolutionary feminist accomplishments have been somewhat overlooked in the historical realm. She is thought of as a mythical saint but her heroine-like status stems from her ground-breaking practical achievements: she passed the bill for women's right to vote in 1947 as well as enforcing universal health care for the poor. Eva has been the subject of extensive biographical and literary treatment: there are numerous accounts of her personal and political life, the most popular and historically accurate being those of Fraser and Navarro and Dujovne Oritz who incorporate the use of existing historical documentation to support their arguments. However, similar to her husband Juan Perón there is a dearth of evidence in relation to Eva's upbringing, childhood, and claim to fame. This has naturally encouraged authors to adopt a New Historical approach when (re)telling Eva's story, and thus blurred the line between fact and fiction.

[1] Gwendolyn Díaz, *Women and Power in Argentine Literature: Stories, Interviews, and Critical Essays* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007), pp.1-2.

The most critically acclaimed New Historical account is Tomas Eloy Martínez's *Santa Evita* (1995) which tells the story of the 20-year odyssey of Eva's embalmed body. Although Eva, a left-wing political activist, has been crowned the unofficial queen of the masses, there is very little mention of right-wing women leaders who also exercised great power. Women involved in right-wing political movements and dictatorships have been largely ignored and excluded from the official historical discourse, which, according to González and Kampwith, has been 'much to the detriment of a more nuanced understanding of women in politics in Latin America'.[2] Notable female political figures on the right have been erased from Argentine history which has arguably hindered 'our understanding of the development of dictatorship and authoritarianism in Latin America'.[3] One of the most prominent right-wing female political figures was Encarnación Ezcurra de Rosas, the wife of the infamous dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas. González and Kampwith argue that 'the stories of both right- and left-wing women challenge the traditional portrayals of men as inherently violent and women as inherently peaceful'.[4] This is precisely the outcome when considering Encarnación's important contribution to her husband's regime: she was partly responsible for organising and managing the *mazorca* death squad in Rosas's absence and neglected her maternal duties to pursue an active role in the male-dominated political arena. Both she and Eva were mocked for their appearance: Encarnación was the subject of profound contempt among the Unitarian community and was scorned for her *fealdad*, based on her masculine appearance. Similarly, Eva was scrutinised by the *oligarquía* for her flamboyant fashion, and dubious profession as a prostitute and actress. Considering the conflict between women on the left and right forces us to confront the reality that 'there is no automatic sisterhood between women, even among those of the same class and ethnicity'.[5] For example Encarnación helped working class and black women regain their place in the Argentine social hierarchy whereas so-called Unitarian 'liberals' discriminated heavily against ethnic minorities. White Unitarian women openly detested Encarnación and Rosas for their barbaric conduct and for the

[2] Victoria González and Karen Kampwith (eds). *Radical Women in Latin America: Left and Right* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), p.1.
[3] *Ibid*.
[4] *Ibid*.
[5] *Ibid*.

unprecedented violence that they inflicted on the nation. One of Eva's fierce opponents Victoria Ocampo was the grand dame of letters and founder of the celebrated journal *Sur* who launched herself into writing to expose what she saw as the deleterious effects of Peronism on Argentine society in the 1940s only to be persecuted subsequently by the Peróns for her status as a member of the elite. Despite women's different political affiliations, the aforementioned writers (Gorriti[6] and Ocampo) and political figures (Encarnación, Manuela and Eva) have something in common: they blur the socially-imposed gender norms and emerge as empowered, independent, and influential women in patriarchal societies, reminding us of their similarities 'even across immense political divisions'.[7] Whereas Juan and Eva Perón subscribed to progressive social policies and championed the interests of the working classes, we cannot classify Encarnación and Rosas as out and out right-wingers given that they helped ethnic minorities regain their place in the social hierarchy and thus challenged the racist attitudes perpetuated by the Unitarians. Rosas and Perón showed how the working classes could be easily manipulated and used for political gain no matter if the leader was on the political left or right. By contrast to Eva's considerable literary treatment, Encarnación Ezcurra has received very little attention in both the literary and historical spheres. While Perón's jealous military colleagues along with the Church felt threatened by Eva's efforts as they thought she damaged Perón's image, Rosas's comrades were forever grateful to Encarnación. In his letter to Rosas in 1833, the Argentine lawyer and Federal politician Manuel Maza[8] commends Encarnación by recognising her efforts to sustain the *paradigma rosista*: 'Tu esposa es la heroína del siglo: disposición, tesón, valor, energía desplegada en todos los casos y en todas las ocasiones; su ejemplo era bastante para electrizar y decidirse'.[9] María Sáenz-Quesada's New Historical account *Mujeres de Rosas* (2012) discusses Encarnación's resilience and important contribution to her husband's government even in her ill health. Similar to Eva, she refrained from staying at home to rest and instead remained politically active until the end of her

[6] Juana Manuela Gorriti was the first woman writer to contribute to the Unitarian literary resistance against Rosas, which was initially a male-dominated cohort consisting of Echeverría, Mármol, Alberdi, and Sarmiento. Referred to in Chapter 1, p.1, and Chapter 2.

[7] González and Kampwith, p.1

[8] Manuel Maza was put to death in 1839 after the discovery of a failed plot to kill Rosas.

[9] A letter from Maza to Rosas (11/11/1833), reprinted in Ernesto H. Celesia, *Rosas, aportes para su historia* (Buenos Aires: Alpe, 1954), p.442.

days. Sáenz-Quesada discusses Manuela's relationship with her father and the pressure she felt when having to assume a burdensome role after her mother's passing. She also mentions Rosas's close relationship with Encarnación sister María Josefa who is a popular figure in literary works such as Mármol's *Amalia*. It is surprising that María Josefa has been a dominant character in literary works – principally portrayed as the head of Rosas's Afro-Argentine female spy network – when it is Encarnación who is the more significant figure and better lends herself to literary treatment, but is barely mentioned. Given the dearth of historical documentation concerning Encarnación, it would seem logical for New Historicists to focus on her life and relationship with Rosas. However, Encarnación's lack of influence on Argentine women at the time may be the sole reason for her absence from both historical and literary discourse. The only New Historical account which focuses solely on Encarnación is Vera Pichel's *Encarnación Ezcurra: La mujer que inventó a Rosas* (1990). Pichel sheds light on Encarnación's feisty and theatrical political persona and her indefatigable efforts to facilitate her husband's rise to power, arguing that she 'invented' Rosas, as implied by the title. Encarnación inverted the gender norm in society at the time by assuming what was stereotypically thought of as a male profession and was partly responsible for her husband's political success. In *Santa Evita*, Perón claims to have crafted the political Eva, stating: 'Eva Perón es un producto mío'.[10] Although both Encarnación and Eva had female enemies from opposing classes, it is their male counterparts who go to greater lengths to vilify them. They have been demonised by Unitarian/liberal male writers for their lack of education and their vulgarity: Encarnación was heavily and irrationally criticised by the Unitarian neo-classical poet, Tomás de Iriarte for her masculinity and her unattractive physical appearance, while Eva was mocked for her promiscuous background as a prostitute and her flamboyant dress sense. Critics ranging from William Harbinson to Jorge Luis Borges have vilified Eva Perón's meteoric rise to global fame by claiming that her egotism and ruthlessness were the real motives underlying her accomplishments, as she possessed an insatiable thirst for power.[11] Male writers' efforts to belittle these women conform to the Hispanic concept of *Marianismo*, which refers to how men, if not able to control women's

[10] Julie M. Taylor, *Eva Perón: the Myths of a Woman* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p.43.
[11] William A. Harbinson, *Eva Perón: Saint or Sinner?* (London: Boxtree, 1996), p.34.

'powers', become fearful of the 'dangerous' and 'threatening' influence that women can have on society. Throughout time, anthropological studies have propagated the conception that powerful women arouse fear in certain societies, particularly those influenced by religion. Julie Taylor identifies the customs that encompass *Marianismo*:

> La mujer y las deidades femeninas presentan la amenaza constante de que su poder se descontrole y se transforme en una fuerza malévola. Ante la ausencia de una autoridad masculina, con frecuencia la del consorte, se teme que la mujer despliegue destrucción y violencia a su alrededor. Pero su poder puede ser benevolente cuando somete su poder al control masculino'.[12]

This is relevant to Encarnación and Eva in the sense that, given the Catholic value system that infiltrates all Hispanic cultures, both women were and still are judged against the paradigm of *Marianismo,* a term that evokes the Holy Virgin Mary, and her accompanying ideals and virtues. Taylor argues that the myths surrounding Eva not only correspond to the Argentine standards of womanhood, but to the multicultural perceptions of womanhood, concentrating on the 'mysterious' powers often associated with women pertaining to their ability to give birth, and their potentially 'destructive' authority if unregulated by a patriarchal social system. However, the account of Nicholas Fraser and Marysa Navarro argues that Eva was a revolutionary feminist and working-class heroine who alleviated the lives of the ill-fated lower classes of Argentine society, more fondly known as *descamisados*. The term *descamisados* which refers to Eva Perón's shirtless or underprivileged ones, was used by Peronists to refer to the 'poor and working-class supporters of Juan Domingo Perón'.[13] Prior to Eva's involvement with Perón, the working classes were ashamed to be associated with the term *descamisado* for it signified contempt, and was used predominantly by the *oligarquía*. It was, however, reinvented by Perón, who transformed it into a sign of pride and solidarity, as well as a kind of rallying call which united working people and dispelled the earlier connotations of shame and marginality. Both fanatical supporters as well as critics of Eva have spent years investigating this remarkable woman, drawn by her seemingly unwavering strength

[12] Julie M. Taylor, *Eva Perón: the Myths of a Woman* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p.16.
[13] Todd L. Edwards, *Argentina: A Global Studies Handbook* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2008), p.292.

and determination. Obvious comparisons between Eva's husband, General Juan Domingo Perón and the notorious nineteenth-century military dictator, Juan Manuel de Rosas have been noted, but the uncanny similarities between the wives – who were crucial to their success – have gone largely unacknowledged. Taylor points out that Perón was compared to Rosas since his first electoral victory in 1955 – an event which the Peronists associate with the Battle of Caseros. The Battle of Caseros took place in 1852 in El Palomar and was between The Army of Buenos Aires, commanded by Rosas, and the Ejército Grande, led by Justo José de Urquiza. Rosas lost the battle and it is considered one of the main catalysts in his fall from power. However, the anti-Peronists use the same tactic to discredit Peronism, by declaring Perón's fall in 1955 the 'Second Caseros' that deposed the 'Second Tyranny'.[14] Taylor also emphasises that Perón's enemies had employed this negative symbolism before: drawing parallels between Rosas and Perón, between their wives, Encarnación and Eva, to denigrate Peronism. There are salient though hitherto unexplored parallels to be drawn between Doña Encarnación Ezcurra de Rosas and Eva Perón but the only writer to comment on this subject is the Argentine essayist Ezequiel Estrada. None of Eva's biographers nor Pichel, who has written a semi-biographical account of Encarnación's life, has investigated such palpable comparisons. Given the absence of comparative perspectives, this chapter critically examines the resounding parallels between the two leader's wives, focusing on how they both blurred the traditional gender norms with their revolutionary actions, and paved the way for female leadership in the Argentine political realm.

It is crucial to examine the objective similarities between Encarnación and Eva. Similar to Encarnación, Eva employed an efficient methodology to form an effective political support system for her husband. Although both women may have married their husbands for power, their instrumental roles in the Rosas and Perón governments, respectively, cannot be ignored: without their devotion, Rosas and Perón would have struggled to sustain their political supremacy. Encarnación and Eva are seen as figures of paramount importance in their husbands' administrations because they were responsible for organising their husbands' electoral campaigns, fundraising and garnering the much-needed political support amongst the

[14] Taylor, p.31.

marginalised sections of society. Juan and Eva Perón had an unbreakable working relationship which is also reminiscent of Rosas and his wife, who followed the orders of her husband to win the approval of the masses: 'In 1833, Rosas instructed his wife to cultivate the poor as a base for a political comeback. He impressed upon Encarnación the importance of adopting populist attitudes and methods in order to win support for the *rosista* brand of federalism'.[15] Rosas had no doubt that his wife was capable enough of working independently on a vital component of their political strategy. He knew that she was just as dedicated as he was to obtaining absolute power and that he could have confidence in her to fulfil their shared political responsibilities. As loyal as ever, Encarnación would always update her husband on her progress and his increasing support from the *descamisados*, known at the time of Rosas as the *desamparados*:

> Mi querido Juan Manuel…las masas están cada día más dispuestas. Los comerciantes nos apoyan, pero los intelectuales de tu círculo siguen callados…Tu también qué vergüenza, pero a mí no me importa, yo peleo con todos […] Acá en me casa entran sólo los decididos. Mándame noticias e indicaciones. Si no lo haces, yo igual sé qué hacer.[16]

This extract from the couple's written correspondence clearly demonstrates the determination of Doña Encarnación during the hour of anarchy in Buenos Aires. She independently built up her husband's support network of *los humildes, débiles y desposeídos* and Eva did the same a century later.[17] It is accurate to say that Encarnación and Eva were both women who worked resourcefully on their own – they did not have to be given instructions as to what to do and neither liked to waste time: 'De todos modos, Encarnación había empezado a mover sus nexos sin esperar pautas de su marido'.[18] This further proves that there was complete trust between Rosas and his wife; she knew that whatever she did to benefit the government would please him and did not need to ask for his consent, but ironically, it appears that he needed to ask for hers. The anti-Peronist author Fleur Cowles who briefly met the

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[15] John, Lynch, *Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p.112.
[16] María Villar, *Encarnación Ezcurra: la mujer que inventó a Rosas*, Escuela Freudiana de Buenos Aires, Reunión Latinoamericana de Psicoanálisis (Tucumán, 2003), p.9.
[17] The humble, the weak and the disowned.
[18] Gabriel di Meglio, ¡Mueran los salvajes unitarios!: *La mazorca y la política en tiempos de Rosas* (Buenos Aires: Penguin Random House, 2012), p.53.

Peróns while working as a journalist, claims that in her determination to manage government operations effectively whilst Rosas was fighting in battle, she had formed a network of proletariat female spies, or as Cowles calls it, 'a Washerwoman's Brigade'. This alleged spy system 'functioned entirely through the uneducated, ill-bred and sometimes, half-witted members of the lowest classes of Argentine society […] female Peeping Toms of no mean scale invaded the privacy of every dwelling'.[19] Cowles goes on to note that Eva Perón formed her own brigade: 'A "washerwoman's brigade" of sorts did function in the earliest days of the Perón movement […] with the wild women of the *descamisado* turning up, but without certainty, with their information for their uncrowned queen'.[20] Even though, proletariat women, owing to their inferior social standing, brought with them a 'promiscuous' reputation to the Rosas government, Doña Encarnación relied heavily on her women 'detectives' and was seemingly proud to be associated with the working classes, which is evident in the fact that she never sought to conceal her ties with her followers:

> La 'Mulata Toribia', así llamaba la prensa federal liberal a Encarnación para mofarse de sus contactos con la plebe. Pero ella no renegaba de esos lazos; por el contrario, durante 1833 los cultivó más intensamente, y apostó a esa relación como forma de triunfar en su disputa con los cismáticos.[21]

We obtain a telling insight into Encarnación's physical appearance and how others perceived her as a child of the working classes even though she was born into the Argentine elite; the fact that she is called a *mulata* not only suggests that she was born to parents of different races but implies that her appearance resembled that of the Pampas inhabitants.[22] As Gallo briefly reiterates in his account, *Claroscuros de la Historia Argentina*, some of Encarnación's enemies even went as far as to say that she was not white and called her 'la Negra Toribia', denoting specifically her dark hair and skin. These nicknames for Rosas's wife were used predominantly as an insult by her political adversaries, the Unitarians, which emphasises their disdain for her relations with the working classes; the common slur *mulata toribia*, used against

[19] Fleur Cowles, *Bloody Precedent: The Perón Story*, (London: Frederick & Muller LTD, 1952), p.67.
[20] *Ibid*., p.157.
[21] Meglio, p.51.
[22] An offensive term used in Spanish to describe a person of mixed race (black and white parents).

dark-skinned working-class women, is akin to calling someone an *india maría*, a disparaging term referring to women belonging to the Mexican proletariat. More significantly, *mulata toribia* insinuates that she was most unattractive as the smear indicates her alleged *fealdad*: 'Doña Encarnación, a quien sus enemigos ridiculizaban apodándola "la mulata toribia" por su fealdad'.[23] Taylor, however, adds a new dimension to Encarnación's character by shedding light on the hyper-sexuality of Federalist women which was used for purposes of propaganda in the Rosas and post-Rosas era: 'The press at the time, in attempts to discredit Rosas's wife (Encarnación) and other Federalist matrons, printed scurrilous accounts of their illicit love-making'.[24] Encarnación was not ashamed of her connections with the working classes and seemed to manifest a sincere determination to help the underprivileged and marginalised, a philanthropic spirit that Eva would reincarnate a century later. Eva's work ethic and resourcefulness certainly matched those of Encarnación; she seemed to be able to work competently on her own, further emphasising her leadership skills. Hedges hints at Encarnación's participation in political affairs: 'Encarnación kept Rosas advised of political developments, purportedly destabilizing his successors and urged him to spare no effort or expense in maintaining the loyalty of the poor [...] much of Rosas's intelligence work was purportedly managed by Encarnación'.[25] It is unknown whether Encarnación genuinely cared about improving the lives of the disadvantaged but this implies that she took advantage of the illiteracy of the *desamparados* to secure her husband's mass following. What is clear is that the masses were invaluable to Rosas' success; after his wife's untimely death, he was careful to maintain the backing of his supporters who were drawn from contrasting economic backgrounds. Rein remarks that his daughter, Manuela, upheld the political allegiance of the masses and played an essential role 'receiving petitions and bringing them to her father in a manner not unlike the functioning of the Eva Perón Foundation, a century later'.[26] It is significant that Rein has compared Manuelita's charitable work to that of Eva Perón's as it leaves one to question the source of Eva's strategic plan to consolidate support from the masses. In her role as a

[23] Pacho O'Donnell, *Juan Manuel de Rosas: El maldito de la historia oficial* (Madrid: Aguilar, 2013), p.27.
[24] Taylor, p.119.
[25] Jill Hedges, *Argentina: A Modern History* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), p.93.
[26] Rein, Monica, *Politics and Education in Argentina 1946-1962* (Oxon: Routledge, 2015), p.93.

calculating political operator, Encarnación managed and mobilised the working classes and Rosas's colleagues during the uprising of 11th October 1833, better known as the 'la Revolución de los Restauradores'. Encarnación was so devoted to politics that she continued to work assiduously whilst away from the political arena and transformed her home into a hotbed for federalist conferences which she had organised: 'Se dice que su hogar, en ese tiempo, parecía un comité por la cantidad de gente que lo frecuentaba'.[27] It was Encarnación's indispensable and indefatigable work ethic that carried her husband to his second term in government, a point that Quesada emphasises: 'Y el 16 de junio vuelven a haber elecciones complementarias para cubrir las vacantes de los diputados rosistas renunciantes. Aquí empieza a jugar un rol fundamental Encarnación Ezcurra'.[28] Some of Rosas's prominent federalist colleagues even go as far as to say that she was the main player in securing her husband's victory; Mansillas, for example, is categorical in assessing Encarnación's services to the federalist cause: 'Sin ella quizá (Rosas) no vuelve al poder'.[29] It is irrefutable that Encarnación's role in her husband's second and final government was identical to Eva's role in aiding her husband in his political endeavours. Eva's second persona, as *La Novia del Presidente*, was instrumental in sustaining her husband's popularity. Fraser and Navarro portray Eva as being her husband's saviour, for it was she, with her rigorous energy and manipulative powers who carried Perón to political prominence: 'Perón entered the presidential campaign with no party, no electoral organisation and little in the way of campaign funds'.[30] Eva engineered Perón's electoral campaign with military precision for, in a short space of time, she miraculously established a powerful support system, consisting of the *descamisados* and women. The fact that she never left her husband's side as he made the same campaign speeches numerous times exemplifies her undying loyalty to him; no candidate had ever had his wife stand by them the way that Eva stood by Perón. However, this loyalty was a quality exercised by Doña Encarnación as she also stood by her husband during his leadership campaigns:

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[27] María Sáenz-Quesada, 'Encarnación y los Restauradores', *Revista Todo es Historia*, No 34, p. 18, Feb 1970.
[28] *Ibid*., p.93.
[29] María Sáenz-Quesada, *Mujeres de Rosas*, 2 ed., (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2012), p.81.
[30] N Fraser & M. Navarro, *The Real Lives of Eva Perón* (London: Deutsch, 1980), p.71.

> Ella acompañará a su esposo en todos los emprendimientos que tuvo, sea como administrador de Los Cerrillos o como de la estancia San Martín. Y, desde luego, también en las vicisitudes de la política, siendo Encarnación una devota entusiasta del fervor federal que abrazó Juan Manuel de Rosas a lo largo de su vida.[31]

It is evident how loyal Encarnación was both as a wife and as a political companion to her husband and his cause. What is more interesting is that both Eva and Encarnación's personal theatrical flair facilitated their winning the support of the masses. Eva's first persona, *La Actriz*, which had helped her orchestrate a meeting with Peron, came to the fore again as she seduced the masses with her compelling and passionate speeches. In his account, William Harbinson, an anti-Eva author, implies that Eva knew how to manipulate an advantageous political position and use her theatrical qualities to gain support for her husband, while also suggesting that this was to fulfil her own narcissistic ambition of becoming a global superstar: 'Evita liked revenge for all the real or imagined wrongs done to her, and now, with her position and power, she set out to get it'.[32] The Eva of Harbinson's conviction was an illegitimate child filled with resentment and anger but his claim is symptomatic of widely-held views that Eva was a ruthless demagogue. His forthright condemnation questions the notions of Eva's genuine concern for the well-being of the masses and implies that she merely used them as a political tool in her rise to power. Harbinson also discourages the opinion that Eva was concerned about the mistreatment of the *descamisados,* implying that she used her virtual radio platform for propaganda: 'Determined to be the First Leader of Argentina, she used her control over Radio Belgrano to shower the listeners, in particular the *descamisados*, with her love'.[33] She lifted them out of an unenviable reality of poverty and squalor, elevating them into a realm of fantasy with her convincing demeanour. The implication of Eva's alleged mendaciousness could consequently sway people's opinion regarding her commitment to the *descamisado*s. It is clear that the descamisados were convinced that Eva was wholly devoted to their cause. However, the fact that Eva was herself in many ways naïve and politically unsophisticated meant that she may have been largely unconscious of the profound effect that her charismatic radio broadcasts

[31] Sáenz-Quesada, *Encarnación y los Restauradores*, p.28.
[32] William A. Harbinson, *Eva Perón: Saint or Sinner?* (London: Boxtree, 1996), p.34.
[33] *Ibid*., 67.

would have on her increasingly fanatical supporters. In *Santa Evita*, Tomás Eloy Martínez introduces the concept of Eva wearing a 'mask', so implying that her kindness and compassion to the *descamisados* was a performance. Martínez thereby suggests that she concealed her underlying motives, which were to sustain support so she and her husband could stay in power. Broaching the wider issue of their general elusiveness and aura of subterfuge, Jorge Luis Borges vindicates the New Historical approach arguing that both Perón and Eva were 'símbolos sometidos a la reelaboración incesante del rumor social y de la escritura; reelaboración que, por otra parte, hace imposible conocer su rostro verdadero'.[34] He categorically believes that the Peróns were disingenuous in their pursuit of helping the *descamisados* and describes their political acts as farcical:

> ¿Que suerte de hombre (me preguntob) ideó y ejectuó esa fúnebre farsa? ¿Un fanático, un triste, un alucinado o un impostor o un cínico? El enlutado no era Perón y la muñeca rubia no era Eva Duarte, pero tampoco Perón era Perón ni Eva era Eva sino desconocidos o anónimos (cuyo nombre secreto y cuyo rostro verdadero ignoramos) que figuraron, para el crédulo y amor de los arrabales, una crasa mitología.[35]

Alluding to the Perons' theatrical personas and their use of 'máscaras', Pinedo and Cebrelli remark that another important point in Borges's *El Simulacro* is the concept of the world 'como un teatro en el cual los hombres representan roles determinados'.[36] They argue that 'este rasgo constituye otra huella de la visión carnavalesca del mundo ya que el carnival, en tanto ceremonia, funciona como una negación de la vida oficial y cotidiana que invierte la jerarquía y los valores, con un carácter popular y universal'.[37] This is wholly relevant to Eva in the sense that she was the Peronist icon with whom all the masses could identity and relate. Encarnación was also rather theatrically adept, possessing a talent for telling lies in order to get her own way. When Encarnación declared her love for Juan Manuel and announced that she intended to marry him, both the Ezcurra and the Rosas families

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[34] Jorge Luis Borges, *Obras Completas* (Buenos Aires: EMECE, 1974), p.799.
[35] *Ibid*., p.789.
[36] Martina Guzmán Pinedo and Alejandra Cebrelli 'Nudos, Máscaras, Representaciones: Rosas y Perón en la Narrativa de J.L. Borges', *Sociocriticism*, Vol XVI, 2001, ©Centre d'Études et de Recherches Sociocritiques, p.108.
[37] *Ibid*.

were enraged. Encarnación belonged to the upper echelons of Argentine society and Rosas, even though a wealthy *estanciero*, belonged to the Pampas and therefore identified culturally with the gaucho.[38] In fact, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento's account, *Facundo: civilización y barbarie*, implies that Rosas was the incarnation of his predecessor, Juan Facundo Quiroga who was condemned as the paradigm of barbarism: 'Facundo no ha muerto: está vivo en las tradiciones populares, en la política […] en Rosas; su heredero, su complemento 'su alma ha pasado en este otro molde, más acabado, más perfecto'.[39] Encarnación's uncompromising nature meant that she had to contrive a plan that would force her family to accept her proposal: 'Conociendo la resistencia de ambas familias a la unión, Encarnación fingió un embarazo. Esta circunstancia de hacerse pública implicaba el mancillamiento del honor familiar, por tanto ambas familias autorizaron el matrimonio'.[40] According to Cowles, Encarnación wrote a letter to Rosas, referring to her alleged pregnancy in the hope that his mother would read it. She knew that such a situation would lead inevitably to marriage. We can see the similarities between Encarnación and Eva in the sense that both women were calculating in their approach to achieving their personal goal of marrying the men they loved. Florencia Canale's account *Sangre y deseo. La pasión de Juan Manuel de Rosas y Encarnación Ezcurra* emphasises Encarnación's efficiency when resolving problems which she faced: 'A pesar de sus tempranos diez años, Encarnación tenía muy claro cómo escabullirse de las situaciones que la incomodaban'.[41] As their childhood personalities reveal, both women were experienced performers and it is this theatrical inclination, particularly in the case of Eva, that was deployed in the service of her socio-political objectives. It is, however, accurate to state that Encarnación was the first to exercise this tactical skill: 'Su fortaleza y su convicción no sólo se manifestaron en el ámbito privado sino también en lo público'.[42] Encarnación's theatrical persona was omnipresent in her

[38] Lynch, *Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas*, p.45.
[39] Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, *Civilización y Barbarie* (Fuenlabrada: Cátedra, 1990), p.38.
[40] Rosana Leonardi, 'Los retratos de Encarnación Ezcurra: Indumentaria e iconográfica', *Épocas: Revista de Historia*, Vol., 6, 2012., p.111.
[41] Florencia Canale, *Sangre y deseo: La pasión de Juan Manuel de Rosas y Encarnación Ezcurra*, (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2015), p.8.
[42] Leonardi, p.111.

duty to generate a mass political following for her husband among the *desamparados*; she was tactical in her role as a government operator:

> Doña Encarnación sabía que al ganarse el cariño de los estamentos más populares, esto le acarrearía a Rosas un caudal muy grande de seguidores, votantes y soldados para sus campañas, y también espías y matones para las arduas campañas políticas de los federales.[43]

It is undeniable that Encarnación was successful in uniting the popular classes and gaining widespread support for her husband; it seems as if both she and Eva used their oratorical powers to demand the same fanatical support for their husbands. Even more significant is the fact that when Rosas and Perón needed assistance in regaining power, Encarnación and Eva came to their aid; each woman found the necessary drive and dynamism when circumstances required: 'La figura de Encarnación Ezcurra emerge en 1833. Su rol resulta clave en la llamada Revolución de los Restauradores de Noviembre del mismo año'.[44] One can infer that Encarnación was fully conscious of the fact that she needed to govern whilst her husband was participating in battle at 'The Desert Campaign'. She and Eva adapted their personal skills for the benefit of their husbands. Undaunted by the prospect of fulfilling her husband's role, Encarnación ensured Rosas' latter term in government when she came into her own during la Revolución de los Restauradores: 'Ella fue la encargada de preparar el terreno político que le permitió a su marido un nuevo período como gobernador de la provincia con la obtención de poderes extraordinarios'.[45]

Moreover, it seems as though Encarnación even possessed the same fiery temperament as Eva, especially in terms of making her anger transparent. Encarnación had a rather fiery temper, a personality trait present in Eva; Even though she is depicted as a ruthless and cold-hearted character, like Eva, Encarnación demonstrated her more nurture and protective qualities when her husband needed support 'Para su esposo, *La Heroína de la Federación*, fue siempre su soporte y escudo protector en sus largas ausencias de Buenos Aires. Su amor fue sinónimo de

[43] Sáenz-Quesada, *Encarnación y los Restauradores*, p.29.
[44] Leonardi, p.111.
[45] *Ibid*.

una entrega y total colaboración a la causa política'.[46] However, when it came to defending her husband against their enemies, she was less merciful; the distinguished Argentine philosopher, José Ingenieros likened Encarnación Ezcurra to a 'she-wolf', emphasising her flamboyant character: 'A principios del siglo XX, José Ingenieros, la denominó "la loba" en sus ensayos'.[47] It was Encarnación's unbreakable self-will and her commitment to the *rosista* cause that enabled her to go on defending her husband until her last days: 'la leona se había levantado soberbia de ira [...] e iba hasta su fin'.[48] Encarnación, like Eva, was a strong-minded child who thought independently from a young age 'A través de un carácter rebelde y un voluntarismo asombroso, que la destacaba desde muy chica. Se imponía a los demás con la fuerza de la mirada o con bruscos movimientos. Sus palabras y argumentos entre hermanos siempre ganaban'.[49] Encarnación also seemed to possess a lively temper similar to that of Eva, particularly when the occasion called for it: 'Ezcurra era de carácter severo cuando las circunstancias así lo imponían, aunque no pocos la retrataron como una mujer que carecía de ternura'.[50] During her childhood, Encarnación was an energetic character who always won her battles, however minor. This determination to avoid defeat and always get what she wanted is even more prevalent in Eva's more established and resilient persona as *La Novia del Presidente*, particularly when she ordered her husband to dismiss Jaime Yankelevich, an esteemed engineer and businessman who was a pioneer in the development of Argentina's television and radio, for demanding – during Perón's incarceration – that she be fired: 'First to feel the hand of retribution was Señor Yankelevich. After the release of Juan Perón, Yankelevich was forced to pay Evita for her absence, give her another enormous rise in salary and throw in limitless freedom'.[51] Although this paints a negative portrait of Eva, Perón himself confirmed that it was, in fact, Yankelovich who was the real villain. In the posthumous account *Yo, Juan Domingo Perón* he is characterized as a malicious individual 'si podía le metía a uno la mano en el bolsillo y le robaba

[46] Ana-María Toscano, 'La reescritura de Encarnación Ezcurra en la ficción y la historia argentina en las últimas décadas', *Ex aequo de Revisita de Associacao Portuguesa de Estudos sobre las Mulheres*, Vol, 17 (17), (2008), p.3.
[47] *Ibid*., p.2.
[48] J.M. Ramos Mejía, *Historias de Rosas* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Rosso, 1934), p.115.
[49] Villar, p.4.
[50] Sáenz-Quesada, *Encarnación y los Restaurados*, p.10.
[51] Harbinson, p.67.

fósforos'.[52] Even though making him pay the price for his cruelty was more of a personal triumph for Eva, Yankelovich's cruelty left her tainted with the natural human impulse of vengeance. Both Encarnación and Eva seemed to be susceptible only to feeling the strong emotions of love and hate. It can be argued that both women sincerely loved their husbands, which is evident in their complete dedication to Rosism and Peronism, but they also seemed to possess a thirst for retribution. Since Encarnación has not undergone much literary treatment, this predisposition is perhaps more prominent in Eva: it emerges clearly for example, in her own writing as well as in the major biographies. Eva once stated in *Mi Mensaje*: 'Sólo reconozco dos palabras como hijas predilectas de mi corazón: el odio y el amor'.[53] This not only exemplifies Eva in her extremity but is also reminiscent of Encarnación's hunger for retribution against the Unitarians. Given both women's uncompromising political engagement allied to their adoration of their husbands and contempt for their enemies, one can argue that they both felt only the extreme emotions of love and hate and it is these feelings that both women have inspired in writers. This tendency to express only these two dangerous emotions has rendered it impossible to develop an impartial view of Eva's predominantly chameleon personality.

Eva Perón seemed conflicted in her view concerning the role of women in Argentine society. Whilst she was essential in the Peronist propaganda machine and was becoming an increasingly dominant figure in the Argentine political arena, she paradoxically encouraged women to conform to their traditional roles, calling for the greater recognition of the value of housework. Despite her revolutionary feminist accomplishments which included facilitating women's right to vote, she denied that she was a feminist: 'many of the pre-*Peronista* feminists had been identified with the *oligarquía* and the landowning upper classes'.[54] It is for this reason that Eva never associated herself with feminism; she viewed the feminist movement as one which only benefited the women of the upper echelons of society and not one that worked to the advantage of working class women, the female demographic whom she

[52] Juan Domingo Perón & L. Calvo, *Yo, Juan Domingo Perón: relato autobiográfico* (Barcelona: Planeta, 1976), p.174.
[53] Eva Perón, *Eva Perón: Mi mensaje. EL último testimonio de Evita* (Madrid: Ediciones Barbarroja, 1951), p.71.
[54] George I. Blanksten, Introduction in Marifran Carlson, ¡*Feminismo*! (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2005), p.6.

championed the most: 'She distinguished herself from feminists by parodying them as manly, elitist and antinationalist'.[55] It is possible that Eva avoided associating herself with feminism considering that, at the time, feminism was a misconstrued concept, perceived as an aggressive movement which consisted of women campaigning for supremacy over their male counterparts rather than gender equality. In *La razón de mi vida*, Eva expressed her opposition to feminism, stating: 'dirán que empezar así un movimiento femenino es poco femenino… ¡empezar reconociendo en cierto modo la superioridad de un hombre!'[56] In her account, she displays her support for the traditional role of women as homemakers while, ironically, deviating sharply herself from such a role through her unconditional devotion to political activity which meant that she spent most of her time away from her home and away from Perón. However, she was still wholly devoted to the empowerment of women, especially as a former victim of male chauvinism. In *Mi mensaje*, Eva refers explicitly to her fanaticism, which she considers not only to be a virtue but instrumental in obtaining victory for the proletariat. She expresses her disdain for half-hearted supporters in her declaration: 'los tibios me repugnan'.[57] Eva's commitment to the *causa peronista* indicates a further link with Encarnación, who also shunned her maternal and domestic duties to contribute to national politics. Both Eva and Encarnación actively participated in what was perceived to be male-dominated profession and in doing so, it can be argued that they flouted the gender stereotypes that are still prevalent in modern day Argentine society, and abandoned their more traditional and domesticated roles as housewives. In her account, Ana Toscano emphasises Encarnación's detachment from her traditional role:

> Ella transgredió todas las reglas impuestas en el plano tradicionalmente asignado a la mujer – el doméstico – para convertirse en una de las féminas que más poder tenía en ese momento. Causó una desestabilización ante las expectativas de género que se tradujo en considerarla una mujer siniestra.[58]

[55] Rebekah, E. Pite, *Creating a Common Table in Twentieth Century Argentina: Doña Petrona, Women & Food* (Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013), p.107.
[56] Eva Perón, *La razón de mi vida* (Catamarca: Buró, 1998), p.131.
[57] Eva Perón, *Mi mensaje* (Madrid: Barbarroja: 1997), p.43.
[58] Toscano, p.4.

José Ingenieros implies that Encarnación was more inclined to fulfill what was stereotypically a man's task: 'Organiza el espionaje y las mazorcadas, ordena las palizas a los adversarios, las instrucciones a los amigos, manda balear casas, maneja sumas cuantiosas, aconseja a los legisladores'.[59] Even though Encarnación's ruthless propensities were justly deplored, it was this sort of resilience and pragmatism, associated predominantly with masculinity that made her so revolutionary: 'By all standards, she was a most untrammelled spirit, a glamorous but none the less unlikely contrast to her times'.[60] Both she and Eva were dedicated to promulgating their party's principles and customs and, with their extraordinary work ethic and appetite for politics, they became the female revolutionaries of their time, with Encarnación assuming the role of Argentina's first radical female political figure. It can therefore be argued that Encarnación paved the way for more female politicians such as Eva in the same way that Eva created a precedent for Argentina's most recent female president, Kristina Fernández de Kirchner:

> Encarnación en cambio era más moderna y advertía la necesidad de postergar el cuidado exclusivo de las estancias y emprender una carrera política que le valdría a Rosas el reconocimiento de sus conciudadanos y, asimismo, plenos poderes en el manejo de las tierras de la frontera, el bien económico más codiciado de la época.[61]

It can be noted that by targeting the often 'illiterate' and 'gullible' *humildes*, Encarnación and Rosas were able to attain absolute power given that the Argentine proletariat would not often question their barbarous and uncivilised moral practices, in the same way that they did not question Eva and Juan Perón's political manoeuvrings a century later. During Rosas's dictatorship, barbarism was a celebrated and traditional way of life in Argentina, the most outward manifestation of barbarism being the *Mazorca*, which took instructions from Encarnación:

> Encarnación cumplía además con tareas bastante menos amables, tales como hacer fijar pasquines injuriosos contra los enemigos, contratar a quien les diera una buena paliza, preparar atentados

[59] José Ingenieros, *La evolución de las ideas* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 1961), p.38.
[60] Cowles, p.28.
[61] Sáenz-Quesada, *Mujeres de Rosas*, 2nd ed., p.70.

> contra las viviendas de los opositores, enviar listos de los amigos y de los enemigos de la causa a todos los pueblos de la provincia.[62]

Encarnación's subscription to the federalist cause, along with her unforgiving attitude towards her enemies made her an unattractive subject for both historians and literary critics. Although she was responsible for instigating many deaths, she played a fundamental role in setting an example for women's leadership in politics; one could even speculate here that Eva, who was likely to be aware of Rosas and his wife, may have followed Encarnación's example and modelled herself on Argentina's chronological *First* Lady. Moreover, one could even speculate that, had Eva been born a century earlier and developed a desire for political success and social justice, she too would have subscribed to the Federalist ideology as she grew up in the dreary and impoverished area of Los Toldos.

Even though Rosas and Perón were undeniably the catalysts in their wives obtaining political occupations, one can also argue that their wives played a fundamental role in their success. If Eva Perón had survived, it is possible not only that Juan Perón's second term in government would have been a success but that she would have also secured his third term in government. In fact, Encarnación and Eva compensated for their husband's relatively distant relationships with ordinary people; we know that from the extensive literature written on her, Eva was an engaging, charismatic and intelligent politician but the same can also be said for Encarnación in the sense that she facilitated her husband's meteoric rise to power: 'Encarnación representa su otro yo para Juan Manuel demostrando cualidades que le faltaban a su esposo, era entusiasta, franca y directa al objetivo deseado, mostraba su cara ante los demás, mientras que Rosas se urdía en artimañas'.[63]

Due to her cumulative devotion to her political role and her running of the government whilst her husband was absent, Encarnación neglected her maternal responsibilities to her children. During her own childhood, Encarnación did not enjoy a close relationship with her mother: 'Teodora, la madre de Encarnación, era una mujer fría, distante, cuyas ilusiones de juventud se habían visto esfumadas a partir de ese casamiento'.[64] It would therefore be accurate to say that Encarnación had denied

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[62] *Ibid*.
[63] Sáenz-Quesada, *Mujeres de Rosas*, 1 ed., (Barcelona: Planeta, 1991), p.57.
[64] Villar, p.3.

her children her love and affection in the same way that she was denied attention from her own mother. Likewise, even though Evita adored her 'children', the *descamisados*, with whom she identified, she had no children of her own (a source of anguish according to Martínez's account in *Santa Evita*). Encarnación's detachment from her children is evident in the fact that she neglected her maternal duties and instead, focused on what she deemed to be more important matters such as increasing the family's wealth and power 'Más que en mimar a sus hijos, Encarnación estaba interesada en incrementar el patrimonio de los suyos y en demostrar a su bello y obsesivo esposo que ella era capaz de ayudarlo a consolidar su fortuna'.[65] Perhaps if Encarnación had spent less time in the political arena and more time interacting with her children, she may have developed a stronger bond with them but instead she chose to devote her time to her one true love; her husband. Alluding to Encarnación's focus on her work rather than her children, Manuelita remarked years later:

> Pobre Mamita si abriera sus ojos y viera a su esposo en la miseria, despojado con tanta infamia de los bienes que ella misma y por su virtuoso humildad y economía le ayudó a ganar y a sus hijos sufriendo la privación.[66]

It seems as though Encarnación was solely focused on her husband's (and her own) success; she was wholly devoted to the *rosista* cause just as Eva gave her life to the Peronist cause. Sáenz-Quesada pinpoints Encarnación's neglect of her maternal obligations and implies that the environment in which Encarnación was raising her children was precarious: 'Y por una vez al menos, Encarnación se coloca en el rol de madre de hijos adolescentes, Juan de 16 años, y Manuela, de 14, que pueden ser perjudicados por estos malos ejemplos y pésimas compañías'.[67] It seems that Encarnación was an irresponsible mother who not only removed herself from her children's upbringing but who exposed them to a world of corruption and violence. The federalists at the time practised violent behaviour as a part of punishing their enemies; not only was the ferocious castigation a form of self-defence but it was the federalist way of asserting supremacy and authority. Encarnacíon became so accustomed to spending her time in a male-dominated environment that she preferred

[65] Sáenz Quesada, *Mujeres de Rosas*, 2 ed., p.69.
[66] *Ibid*.
[67] *Ibid*., p.75.

the company of men, as if she were one herself: 'Ella (Encarnación) prefería admitir en su círculo a los hombres de catadura dudosa, siempre que sirvieran a los intereses de Rosas'.[68] Encarnación is depicted as being more than comfortable in a machista environment where she discussed politics with her husband's colleagues and delegated orders for the *mazorca* to carry out numerous retributive acts and killings if they encountered disobedient citizens and discovered enemies. This paints a rather masculine portrait of Encarnación, which is further emphasised in José María Ramos Mejía's implication that she was the dominant partner in the marriage: 'en la pareja política, la virago que era su mujer resultaba más varonil que su marido'.[69] However, political opponents often discredited Encarnacíon and underestimated her service to the Rosas governments: 'En cuanto a los historiadores de la corriente del revisionismo rosista, como Julio Irazusta, reducen el papel de Encarnación al de 'uno de los mejores elementos de la política del caudillo'.[70] In Lucrecia Martel's 1998 documentary *Historias de Vida: Encarnacion Ezcurra* Encarnación's masculine appearance and idiosyncrasies are further exposed. Martin comments 'this documentary focuses on the historical and political importance of Encarnación, and how her reputation as a weapon-carrying *marimacha* was crucial to her consolidation of Federalist power in Buenos Aires whilst her husband was leading military campaigns in the provinces'.[71] The word *marimacha* is significant given that it was a term used by Encarnación's enemies which means 'tomboy'; however, it was also rarely used as a derogatory term for lesbian which the Unitarians may have used as a slur against Rosas's wife 'A *marimacha* is a woman who is very assertive. That is what they used to call dykes: marimachas, half-and-halfs. You were different, you were queer, not normal, and you were *marimacha*'.[72] Even more astounding is that one can draw parallels between Encarnación and Eva, the irony lying in the paradox that Eva was labelled by Peronist critics as the real man in her marriage to Perón. When Perón wanted to 'give up', as biographer John Barnes claims, Eva yelled at

[68] *Ibid*., p.83.
[69] *Ibid*., p.81.
[70] *Ibid*.
[71] Deborah Martin, *The Cinema of Lucrecia Martel* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), p.15.
[72] CarinIkas, *Chicana Ways: Conversations with Ten Chicana Writers* (Nevada: University of Nevada Press, 2002), p.18.

him to: 'pull himself together and act like a man'.[73] The Argentine essayist Ezequiel Martínez Estrada also implies that Eva's advanced talents compensated for her husband's 'primitive' abilities 'Todo lo que le faltaba a Perón o lo que poseía en grado rudimentario para llevar a cabo la conquista del país de arriba abajo, lo consumó ella o se lo hizo consumar a él'.[74] Estrada also reiterates how dominant Eva was in her marriage to Perón by going as far as to say: 'En realidad él era la mujer y ella era el hombre'.[75] It was Eva who was Peronism's dazzling icon and this is instantly recognizable when remembering the ever-present Peronist symbolism; *los descamisados* used Eva as their national emblem even though Peronism was an ideology associated principally with her husband.

Despite the fact that Encarnación and Eva Perón seemed to be the catalysts in their husbands' political triumphs, both Rosas and Perón minimized the political contribution of their wives. It has been argued that Perón resented his wife's popularity because he knew that she was the true star of the show; he not only assumed the lead role but claimed to have masterminded Eva's destiny: 'Eva fue un producto de mío'.[76] He emphasises that without him, Eva Perón would not exist. It is true that he provided her with the initial platform to launch her career but equally true that she controlled her subsequent political trajectory to the extent that by the end of her life her views – as la Evita Roja – were in conflict with Perón's. Ana Toscano has suggested that in her last days, Encarnación was marginalised by her illness: 'Encarnación no supo controlar la soledad y el vacío que le dejó la falta de actividad en los asuntos políticos del gobierno de Buenos Aires'.[77] Given that Encarnación was suffering greatly, Rosas, regardless of his hero-worship of his wife, may have started to overlook her contribution to his government, particularly her central administrative role. According to Vera Píchel, he stated: 'ahora no tenés nada que hacer'.[78] This is likely to be the case as when Encarnación died Rosas' youngest daughter, Manuela, instantaneously took over the role of her mother and later came

[73] Adams, Jerome, *Liberators, Patriots and Leaders of Latin America* (Jefferson, McFarland & Company, 2010), p.154.
[74] Ezequiel Estrada, ¿*Qué es esto*? *Catilinaria* (Buenos Aires: Colihue, 2005), p.304.
[75] *Ibid*., p.306.
[76] Taylor, p.43.
[77] Toscano, p.3.
[78] Vera Pichel, *Encarnación Ezcurra: La mujer que inventó a Rosas* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 1999), p.149.

to be known as 'La Princesa Federal'. One can argue that both Rosas and Perón were mistaken in thinking that their wives were their creations when, in fact, it was their wives who were mainly responsible for their husband's mass political followings. Ironically, Encarnación was more masculine in speech and sometimes in her endeavours than her husband; she also possessed the traditionally male commercial skills, instrumental in selling the brand of *rosismo* to the underprivileged social sectors.

In spite of their pioneering attainments, the unconventional roles of both women rendered them subject to fierce criticism; Encarnación Ezcurra was satirized by Tomás de Iriarte, the neoclassical poet portrayed as a military man in Sáenz-Quesada's *Mujeres de Rosas*, whilst Eva Perón was mercilessly demonised by Borges. Even though their backgrounds were different, Eva being an illegitimate child and suffering from dire impoverishment and Encarnación Ezcurra enjoying the wealth of her upper-class family, both women were irrationally criticised for not being 'educated'. Iriarte, whose work honoured the humanist tradition, regarded the federalist obsession with 'La Heroína de la Federación' misguided. He had a profound contempt for Encarnación and her barbaric propensities, and despised her relations with 'la hez del pueblo':

> Mujer vulgar, sin educación ni costumbres, se puso en contacto con los hombres oscuros y degradados, con ofertas y promesas de grandes recompensas que les dispensaría Juan Manuel, reunió considerable número de prosélitos del más bajo jaez, pero de armas tomar: no desdeño a los carniceros ni los hombres más corrompidos e inmorales perseguidos por sus crímenes en épocas. […] Tomando el nombre de Juan Manuel hizo varias adquisiciones de hombres con quienes contábamos y que las promesas de la mujer de Rosas decidieron a una infame defección'.[79]

Encarnación's adherence to the *causa federalista* was total and uncompromising: she single-handedly instigated the deaths of hundreds of opponents on behalf of her husband. She had essentially recruited and formed an alliance with the lower echelons of society including criminals and delinquents. Conversely, despite her lack of intellect and academic education, one cannot categorise her as being entirely unintelligent, especially when calling to mind her leadership qualities, and organised

[79] For more info, see Sáenz-Quesada, *Mujeres de Rosas*, 2 ed., p.84.

and premeditated approach to co-running the government. Adrianna Micale conforms to the view that Encarnación was a resourceful woman, even if not in the academic sense:

> Mujer inteligente y dominante, supo oponerse a la rigidez de las autoridades impuesta en América [...] Temperamental, orgullosa e impaciente, difícilmente aceptó obstáculos a su voluntad ni contradicciones a sus opiniones. Ambiciosa, déspota por naturaleza, y sagaz en sus movimientos, supo acercarse al poder desde ámbitos no convencionales, y supo valerse de él para la acción'.[80]

This telling analysis of Encarnación's qualities is essential when calling to mind Eva's behaviour both on and off the political stage. This kind of irrational discrimination stemming from the upper classes can also be attributed to Eva in the sense that sceptics categorized her as incompetent given her underprivileged upbringing. Instead of admitting her tactical intelligence, opponents vilified her based on her unconventional and underprivileged upbringing. Jorge Luis Borges dismisses Eva as *esa mujer*, showing his sheer disdain for her. As late as 1980, Borges claimed that she was 'una prostituta común. Ella tenía un prostíbulo cerca de Junín'.[81] He also repeated the anti-Peronist joke that circulated when the legislature of the province of Buenos Aires was debating whether to change the name of the city of La Plata to Eva Perón: 'Why so much discussion between La Plata and Eva Perón?' Why don't they call it *La Pluta*?'[82] Borges creates a vulgar metaphor, amalgamating *La Plata* and *puta*, the Spanish word for prostitute. The two criticisms of Encarnación and Eva are both rational and irrational. The fact that Iriarte deems Encarnación to be a *mujer sin educación* emphasises her lack of formal education, but one should not discredit her political achievements. However, it would make sense to call her a *mujer asesina* given her responsibility, as Director of the *Mazorca*'s operations, for the deaths of hundreds of 'savage' Unitarians, an ironic reference given that it was the federalists who were the perpetrators of disorderly violence in Rosas's era. Eva is demonised by Borges based on her illegitimate upbringing and for being rather sexually promiscuous in her rise to power. It must be

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[80] Adriana Micale, *Javiera Carrera: la mujer que dividió un país* in Todo es Historia, Buenos Aires, 1997), p.8.
[81] Fermín Chávez, *Eva Perón: Sin Mitos* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Theoría, 1996), p.121.
[82] Laura Dail, *Evita: In My Own Words* (New York: The New Press, 1996), p.11.

remembered, however, that Borges, from an early age, held utter contempt for the lower echelons of civilisation: 'Since his mother had contempt for the new rich of the city and no time for the new immigrants, it was easier to keep the children secluded'.[83] It was Borges' own mother who kindled his disparagement of the Argentine proletariat and encouraged his derogatory remarks about Eva and his hatred of Peronism: 'After the death of Eva in 1952, Borges refused to put up a portrait of Juan Perón and his dead wife on the walls of the Argentine Society of Writers'.[84] Whilst taking into account the fatal activities of Encarnación and Eva's apparent narcissism, the fact is that these two women were pioneers of women's participation in politics. Perhaps the only dissimilarity between Encarnación and Eva was the fact that even though both women adapted their skills to coincide with the environments in which they worked, they sought to appeal to contrasting audiences. For example, it was during Eva's second incarnation – as *La Novia del Presidente* – that she was at her most fallible and seemed to be vulnerable to accusations of hypocrisy. Her flamboyant and extravagant image and lifestyle distanced her from *los descamisados* – although they were indifferent to her alleged mendaciousness. It seemed as though Eva strived to integrate herself into the upper classes of Argentine society. However, it can be argued that Eva only dressed fashionably and rather outrageously to exercise her new-found power, a point which Ortiz illustrates: 'only the gesture mattered, which meant "I am fashion [...]. To dress absurdly was to exert power'.[85] Similarly, when settled into her political role, Encarnación also aspired to please the people with whom she worked and directed while aiming to impress a less sophisticated assemblage of people, the Argentine proletariat. Encarnación's manners were 'so bold, she often seemed like a man in women's clothing; after her position as her husband's political mate was established, her talk became so unladylike it sounded like the lewd and crude conversation of carousing men'.[86] Eva's language was also colourful when talking of issues about which she was passionate. In popular culture, such as in Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical *Evita*, she

[83] Colm Tóibin, '*Don't Abandon Me*, a critical review of Borges: A Life' by Edwin William, *The London Review of Books*, Vol. 28, (9), 2006, p.23.
[84] *Ibid*., p.24.
[85] Alicia Dujovne-Ortiz, *Eva Perón* (New York: Saint Martin's Griffin, 1996), p.195.
[86] Cowles, p.28.

is portrayed as being cunning, aggressive and hypersexual.[87] Whilst in her second incarnation, Eva tried to become more elegant in style and intellectual in thought, Encarnación became more rudimentary in character: 'She had a strange habit of reducing conversation to the most plebeian levels, as if she had to prove her innate scorn of cultured, cultivated minds, whether they were any present or not'.[88] Conversely, it can be stated that, despite her more privileged upbringing, Encarnación embodied the characteristics of the archetypal child of the Pampas '[...] she might have more properly have come from the country. Her spirit, her incredibly individual mannerisms were more like the pampas children who were mysteriously born with the fiery *criollismo* sign on them, and with thicker blood'.[89] It is therefore no coincidence that she and Eva are uncannily alike in so many ways.

The final and perhaps most overlooked parallel to draw between Encarnación Ezcurra and Eva Perón is the striking resemblance between their deaths, the events that followed and how their lives and accomplishments were commemorated. It seems as though the megalomania driving Encarnación and Eva was the reason as to why members of the public incontestably complied with being forced to mourn these two women's deaths. Taylor notes: 'extreme forms of public mourning for Eva were not unique to Argentine history given that the burial of Encarnación slightly more than a century earlier, parallels the homage paid to Eva on a startling number of points'.[90] The manner in which Rosas dealt with this lengthy period of national mourning for 'La Heroína de la Federación' was stereotypically tyrannical as anyone who disobeyed his orders faced severe punishment. The Argentine public was forced into two years of mourning in which observation of mourning weeds was mandatory. Rosas also implemented new clothing regulations upon his wife's sudden death that also give us a further insight into his dictatorship; the *Sociedad Popular Restauradora* decided to:

> Cargar luto durante lo traiga nuestro ilustre Restaurador y conforme al que Él usa, que consiste en corbata negra, faja con

[87] Leigh Courtney, 'Goodnight and thank you, Evita: The Sexualisation of Evita Perón in Popular Culture and Its Implications', Articulate, Vol 15, (3), 2010, p.15 (15-27).
[88] Cowles, p.28.
[89] *Ibid*.
[90] Taylor, p.65.

> moño negro en el brazo izquierdo, tres dedos de cinta negra en el sombrero, quedando en el mismo visible la divisa punzó. Esta disposición perduró por durante 2 años más. En octubre de 1840, Juan Manuel de Rosas resolvió poner fin al duelo federal por su mujer.[91]

The manner in which Argentina was forced to mourn for Rosas wife for two years can be compared with the manner in which they were forced into a period of national mourning for Eva. On the day of Evita's death, the education minister published instructions concerning the protocol to be observed. He ordered 'the education system staff, teachers and pupils to participate in the ceremonies honouring Eva, to visit the coffin and send flowers in the name of the ministry'.[92] Contrary to the national mourning for Encarnación, the forced collective mourning for Eva lasted for one month but nevertheless, drastic measures were taken to ensure that everyone paid their respects. The minister called upon teaching staff to devote time to commemorating Eva by announcing that for the duration of the thirty days mourning, a special passage would be read in Evita's memory during the daily school flag-raising ceremony'.[93] Eva's funeral was something of a public spectacle as three million of the 'fanatical' and 'delirious' *descamisados* jammed the streets to witness the funeral of their beloved 'Santa Evita' and, in doing so, 'eight people were crushed to death and over 2,000 people were injured when her body was moved from the presidential residence to the Ministry of Labour building'.[94] Her followers were so devoted to their 'saint' that they risked their lives to witness her procession pass through the chaotic streets of Buenos Aires. Even after her funeral, the megalomania attached to Evita's legacy did not decline. In fact, one could argue that after her death, she was more alive than ever. Her husband even demanded that she be canonized by the Church, a request that was blocked by the bishops and the Vatican.[95]. Determined to sustain his wife's mythic status within the popular imagination, Perón not only had Eva embalmed by the renowned scholar, Dr. Pedro

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[91] Fermín Chávez, *Iconografía de Rosas y de la Federación* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Oriente, 1970), p.161.
[92] Rein, p.206.
[93] *Ibid*.
[94] William Maloney, *Diseases, Disorders and diagnosis of Historical Individuals* (Dekalb County: Anaphora Literary Press, 2015), p.158.
[95] James F. Hopgood, *The Making of Saints: Contesting Sacred Grounds* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2005), p.68.

Ara, but, according to the journalist and author, Jimmy Burns, also unveiled plans to 'build a gigantic mausoleum, standing taller than the Statue of Liberty, with sixteen marble statues, depicting aspects of their conjugal partnership, lining the circular base'.[96] Perón's vision never came to fruition as in 1955, his government was ousted by the Liberating Revolution Forces and Eva's body was captured and hidden for sixteen years. Although Burns claims the statue was Perón's plan, Tomás Eloy Martínez's *Santa Evita* states that the statue was in fact Eva's idea: the model was initially to feature 'un trabajador musculoso de sesenta metros', but Eva became so enthralled with the project that 'ordenó cambiar la figura del trabajador por la de ella misma'.[97]

Even though there are profound differences between Rosas and Perón, the latter's regimes seeming relatively benign when compared with the savage repression of Rosas whose victims ran into hundreds, there are also parallels, not least in their regimentation of collective mourning, Rosas's authoritarian stance mirrored by Perón in this respect. The manner in which Perón's relationship with the Church became increasingly strained over the question of Eva's canonization can be compared to Rosas's dispute with the Church regarding Encarnación's funeral ceremony: 'Las malas lenguas divulgaron que ante los conflictos presentados en la iglesia por las órdenes dadas para las ceremonias fúnebres el dictador les mandó un recado'.[98]According to Vera Pichel, Rosas was enraged by the Church's refusal to obey his orders: 'les envío una Santa de verdad para que tire de la sotana al fraile que anime sucios pensamientos...'[99] Ironically, Rosas did not attend his own wife's official funeral procession 'Se mantuvo aislado en sus propios aposentos durante varios días "para no tener testigos en su dolor", según confiaban quienes de esto parecían saber'.[100] It is also worth mentioning that both Encarnación and Eva's funerals were exaggerated public spectacles on which a disproportionate amount of money was spent: 'es interesante resaltar que su funeral fue imponente costán dole cerca de treinta mil pesos al estado, quien además ordena ciento ochenta misas en su

[96] Jimmy Burns, *Francis, Pope of Good Promise: From Argentina's Bergoglio to the World's Franics: A Personal Journey* (London: Constable), p.70.
[97] Martínez, *Santa Evita,* p.196.
[98] Toscano, p.4.
[99] Pichel, p.173.
[100] *Ibid*., p.167.

honor'.[101] Through Eva's legendary status and literary treatment, the public became aware of the glamour and drama of her funeral ceremony. Less well known is the fact that Encarnación's funeral was also a public spectacle; Rosas's orders for the funeral preparations became 'un carnaval, funerario y sombrío'.[102] Both women's funerals were frequented, respectively, by *rosistas fanáticos*, and thousands of Peronistas.

> El funeral de Encarnación como el desfile militar para llevar su féretro por las calles de Buenos Aires se los puede comparar con la imagen de las exequias de Eva Perón, dado que ambas, como esposas de gobernantes de la república, tuvieron honores de jefes de estado y fueron idolatradas como 'santas'.[103]

We gain a heightened understanding of how both women's followers equated them to holy figures. Eva was considered a saint to such an extent that 'the Pope received petitions from Eva's supporters urging that he canonize her'.[104] Such requests did not come to fruition.[105] Even though Evita was never officially canonized, Perón would go on for years to claim superciliously that: "She is canonized in the hearts of people, who maintain altars with her picture, and worship her".[106] In fact, Perón was accused by anti-Peronists of: 'wanting his own effigy and that of his wife placed on altars, as had the Argentine *caudillo* and dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas'.[107] Apart from their revolutionary political accomplishments being a contributing factor to the saintly aura of both women, it is important to remember that a core principle of both *Rosism* and *Peronism* was Catholicism. After her death, Encarnación was commemorated at federalist banquets held at the slaughter houses as she was deemed to be 'the beloved patroness of the butchers, who even after her death is venerated by them as if she were still alive because of her Christian virtues and federalist heroism during the revolution against Balcarce'.[108] Both Encarnacion and Eva were considered saintly in

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[101] Toscano, p.4.
[102] Pichel, p.137.
[103] Toscano, p 4.
[104] Maria Flores, *The Woman With a Whip: Eva Perón* (New York, Doubleday & Co., 1952), p.178.
[105] Hopegood, James, *The Making of Saints: Contesting Sacred Grounds* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2005), p.69.
[106] Enrique Pavon Pereyra, *Coloquios con Perón* (Madrid: Técnicas Reunidas, 1973), p.81
[107] Hopegood, p.68.
[108] G. Nouzeilles, & G Montalado, *The Argentina Reader: History, Culture and Politics* (London: Duke University Press, 2002), p.108.

the eyes of their religious followers who would chant religiously-orientated *Rosista* and Peronist slogans in the presence of their angelic heroines. It is clear that *Rosistas* identified Encarnación as their saviour, and thus gave her names with religious connotations for they deitified her: 'Entre nosotros ya había realizado esto ensayo con éxito el Restaurador de la Leyes con el culto funerario de Encarnación Ezcurra, Heroína de la Federación, Madre de los Desamparados y Santa Patrona de la Chusma'.[109] This is redolent of Eva's affiliation with her followers; she devoted her life to helping the impoverished to a better quality of life, even if that meant being ruthless in terms of using her advantageous political position to challenge the supremacy of the *oligarquía*. In return, *los descamisados* worshipped her, just as they had worshipped Encarnación a century earlier. The working classes often identified Eva as 'La diosa madre' but the more widely used term was 'Jefa espiritual de los descamisados'. Encarnación and Eva are linked by their unparalleled commitment to political action and perhaps by their aspiration towards absolute power for their husbands 'Absoluto como es hoy el poder que ejerce Evita en la Argentina, recuerda a Encarnación Ezcurra, la mujer de Juan Manuel de Rosas'.[110] Ezequiel Estrada's account *¿Qué es esto*? briefly reiterates that there are indisputable resemblances between the two political revolutionaries:

> El brazo derecho para perfeccionar esta política (de poder absoluto) lo encontró Rosas en su mujer, Encarnación Ezcurra. Hay escenas en la vida de Encarnación que hacen pensar de tal suerte en sus semejanzas con Evita […] En la Ezcurra hay que pensar si quiere hacerse una pintura de lo que han sido las faldas en el gobierno argentino.[111]

It is almost impossible not to compare Encarnación with Eva for we are left with the iconic imagery of Eva, always by her husband's side, serving the Peronist cause until her last days. A more remarkable point to discuss is that both Encarnación and Eva died premature and sudden deaths; Encarnación died when she was only forty-three from an unknown and mysterious illness, whilst Eva passed away when she was ten years younger at the age of thirty-three from cervical cancer. There has been speculation that the cause of Encarnación's death was a type of cancer but there is no

[109] Estrada, p.322.
[110] *Ibid*., p.323.
[111] *Ibid*.

evidence to further prove the claim. The fact that Encarnación's death was a mystery is not surprising since her life story has never been properly investigated. Vera Pichel's novel, *Encarnación Ezcurra: La mujer que inventó a Rosas*, does not seem to clarify the main circumstances surrounding Encarnación's death but it is clear as Ana Toscano confirms that like Eva, she died prematurely: 'Luego sobrevino una extraña enfermedad incurable y fallece el 20 de octubre 1838'.[112] Given the countless comparisons between the lives of Encarnación Ezcurra de Rosas and Eva Perón, one can argue that, not only was Encarnación Eva's role model but, in a metaphorical sense, that Eva was a reincarnation of Encarnación. The health of Eva and Encarnación deteriorated rapidly but despite their fragile physical conditions, they persevered with their responsibilities: after all, they were key figures within the political frameworks of their governments. One can argue that it was both women's tenacity that facilitated their last days of work before they disappeared from public view. Eva's self-sacrificing actions served as a testament to her statement 'haré lo que el pueblo quiera'.[113] It can be said that she gave up what was left of her physical and mental strength to revive the strength of the masses. This unremitting devotion is also prevalent in Encarnación, for she continued to work even when her health was declining: 'Entre tanto se eclipsaba la influencia de la mujer de Rosas. Tal vez consumida por su entrega apasionada al marido y a la lucha política, su salud había empeorado. Mantenía como siempre su clientela y sus recomendados'.[114] Furthermore, an even more thought-provoking point to examine is that, both women's physical appearances were identical in life and in death. Jerome Adams highlights the irony in Eva's masculine oratory, a surprising quality given her petite figure 'Only five feet, five inches tall, she could be assertive in private with men who often bristled at this unexpected display of feminine will power'.[115]At the time, Encarnación also stunned people with her unparalleled vigour given her diminutive frame: 'Madame Rosas es una mujer de cerca de 40 años, más pequeña que grande, y no parece de una salud robusta, pero ella se anima al hablar, y es fácil ver que tiene alma y energía cuando las circunstancias lo exigen'.[116] The recorded descriptions of

[112] Toscano, p. 4.
[113] Perón, *La Razón*, p.23.
[114] Sáenz-Quesada, *Mujeres de Rosas*, 2nd ed., p.108.
[115] Adams, p.153.
[116] Sáenz-Quesada, *Mujeres de Rosas*, 2nd ed., p.107.

their fragile corpses are also analogous as Villar comments on the effects of Encarnación's illness 'Cada vez más delgada sin color casi no comía, era un rostro sin brillo agalmático'.[117] The historian, John Lynch, also remarks that Encarnación was:

> Una figura deteriorada por el propio desinterés hacia su persona. No registraba si su cuerpo necesitaba descansar, casi no dormía. En cada encuentro con su marido, éste le reprochaba lo delgada y descuidada que estaba, por toda respuesta decía. Estoy sana para seguir luchando.[118]

Encarnación's fighting spirit is reborn in Eva in the sense that even when Eva was bound to her deathbed and suffering from severe and intolerable pain, she continued to be her husband's pillar of strength. Eva mirrors Encarnación's determination to continue working, particularly during her last public appearance at Perón's inauguration in 1952: 'A specially built support made of plaster and wire held up her thin, cancer-ravaged body in the open car as the couple was driven on the triumphal procession'.[119]

In conclusion, while both Encarnación and Eva can be deemed female political revolutionaries of their time, the former had less impact than the latter. Eva was arguably one of the most influential women figures of her time and in *La razón de mi vida*, she remarked: 'volveré y sere millones' and this is precisely what happened. Her legacy is engraved in Argentine history and culture: when in power, it is claimed that female workers in the Fundación Eva Perón emulated Eva's appearance by dying and perming their hair, a point which Martínez portrays in *Santa Evita*. Javier Auyero's *Poor People's Politics* (2001), draws on the accounts of two Peronist women, Susana, the ex-President of the women's branch of the Peronist Party in Cóspito, and Matilde. Both now run a soup kitchen for *comedores infantiles*, and were 'born with Peronism' on the day Perón won his election on 24th February 1946, and have been 'Peronists from the crib'.[120] Both women ironically have

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[117] Villar, p.8.

[118] John Lynch, *Rosas, se época. Revisión de su historia* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2000), p.8.

[119] Adams, 159.

[120] Javier Auyero, *Poor Peoples Politics: Peronist Survival Networks and The Legacy of Evita* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), p.128.

bleached blonde hair just as Eva did and have been involved in social work since they were young. They even wear wristwatches adorned with an image of their icon.[121] Eva has inspired countless literary and biographical studies, and even one of the nation's most recent female Peronist presidents, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, who spoke fondly of Eva and even dressed like her, was often seen with her hair in a tight bun and pearl jewellery. Eva's legacy is so enduring that Andrew Lloyd Webber took her story to Broadway in his musical 'Santa Evita' and Madonna to the Hollywood screen. However, Encarnación has not generated the level of literary output that Eva has nor does she have political successors such as Cristina Fernández de Kirchner. On the contrary, we can deduce that Eva is, to some extent, a political reincarnation of Encarnación since she was the first woman since Encarnación to have such an impact on Argentine politics at the time: 'Each plotted, directed and policed the public's idolatry. Each walked eagerly where their men feared to tread'.[122] Their real-life accomplishments are often overlooked when they were, in fact, of paramount importance to both their husbands' political impact and also to women's empowerment in the Argentine political realm.

[121] *Ibid*., p.128.
[122] Cowles, p.10

CHAPTER FOUR

Women as the Nation: The Literary Representations of Juan Manuel de Rosas and The Unsung Heroines of *La Santa Confederación*

Throughout the totalitarian regime of Juan Manuel de Rosas, Argentine federalist women, particularly the marginalized working classes, were encouraged to assume active political roles, and fulfil duties such as sewing uniforms or flags for men and even participating in the strategic planning of war with their male compatriots. Rosas rejected the idea of education for women, but it is clear that he used women in his family to rally support for his leadership and to help him sustain his political position.[1] Although Rosas may have used women for political gain, he was arguably responsible for promoting gender equality by eliminating the traditional society-imposed gender roles allocated to each sex; federal women were viewed as being equally capable of carrying out stereotypically male duties, as was demonstrated by Rosas' own wife Encarnacíon Ezcurra who was evidently at least as politically intelligent as her husband.[2] The dictator also eradicated racial segregation amongst the masses by employing black women, giving them a place in the Argentine social hierarchy, a move which the Unitarians rejected on racial grounds. After the death of Encarnación Ezcurra, Rosas depended heavily on his daughter, Manuela, to support him in government: she replaced Rosas in meetings with generals and interacted with his supporters. The relationship between Rosas and Manuela has been widely scrutinised by liberal writers such as José Mármol and Juana Manuela Gorriti who had insinuated that she was 'la primera víctima de la tiranía de su padre'.[3] In spite of the fact that the Rosas dictatorship did equate federalist men and women's social status and value, the merciless and unjustified brutality which Rosas visited upon women should not be overlooked; the most infamous murder was undoubtedly his execution of the innocent federalist aristocrat, Camila O'Gorman, a tragedy which brought Argentina to a standstill. While it is clear that, in the early stages of Rosas's career in office he advocated female

[1] Michelle D. Bonner, *Sustaining Human Rights: Women and Argentine Human Rights Organizations*, (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1972), p.36.
[2] See Quesada, *Mujeres de Rosas* (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 1991), pp.71-72.
[3] See José Mármol, *Amalia* (Barcelona: Linkgua Ediciones: 2010), p.475.

participation in the political arena, our focus in this chapter will be on his responsibility, while at the height of his powers, for the moral corruption of Argentine women.

It is important at this point to introduce the literary representations of the dictator's manipulation of women in the fictional works of the exiled anti-Rosas writer, Juana Manuela Gorriti. Born in 1815 in Salta, bordering Tucumán, Gorriti enjoyed the wealth of her upper-class family. Her father, José Ignacio de Gorriti, was trained in the law and later served with distinction in the Spanish-American war, resulting in his becoming the twice elected Governor of Güemes, Salta, from 1822-1824 and again from 1827-1829.[4] After failing to pledge allegiance to the Federalist cause and totalitarian regime of Juan Manuel de Rosas, the Gorriti family was forced into exile in 1831 by José's once trusted companion turned political enemy, Facundo Quiroga.[5] The Gorritis' banishment from Argentina saw them emigrate to Tarija, Bolivia where they rebelled against Rosas and declared their unconditional support for the Unitarians. Bolivia is where Juana Manuela Gorriti wrote most of her works, which draw on themes such as the oppression of women under Rosas, remembrance (*La tierra natal*, 1863), political crisis, and of course, exile.[6] When discussing the theme of remembrance, Francine Masiello states: 'Gorriti begs us to notice the construction of memory as it rises from ruins', whilst pointing out that 'the ruins allow her to reminisce about a past inhabited by illustrious men', one of whom was responsible for her first exile as a child.[7] It was in Bolivia, at the age of fourteen, that Gorriti met her future husband and populist *caudillo*, Manuel Isidoro Belzú, with whom she experienced a second exile after Belzú was expelled following charges of conspiracy against the Rosas government.[8] Bolivia was also the place where Gorriti wrote her now celebrated fictions, which not only established her status as a pioneer

[4] Francine Masiello 'Introduction' in *Dreams and Realities: Selected Fiction of Juana Manuela Gorriti*; trans Sergio Waisman, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p.xx.
[5] Luz Hincapié, Exile, 'Displacement and Hybridity in Juana Manuela Gorriti', *Aesthethika: revista internacional de estudie investigación interdisciplinaria sobre subjetividad, política y arte*. Vol.2, (2), March 2006, p.51.
[6] Gorriti wrote: 'I contemplated the village, which showed me the steps toward progress where I earlier I had sought only a trail of remembrance', cited in *La Tierra Natal*, (Buenos Aires: Felix Lajouane, 1889), p.171.
[7] Masiello, 'Introduction' in *Dreams and Realities,* p. xvi.
[8] Hincapié, p.2.

of the literary resistance to the authoritarian Rosas regime but also enhanced her reputation as exemplifying 'the republican mother as the main model of female participation in the public sphere.[9] While Gorrti received critical acclaim for her literary retaliation against the Rosas regime, she forever mourned in her work the loss of her innocent childhood and expressed the pain she would experience if she ever returned to her homeland: 'Lágrimas de doloroso enternecimiento subieron del corazón, al recuerdo del tiempo en que, niña, de pie y con devota unción, asida a la mano de mi padre, escuchábase ese canto sagrado, en los días clásicos de la patria […]'.[10]

In all her fictions, Gorriti focuses on the theme of the doomed love of characters who stereotypically belong to conflicting social classes, races and political parties. Her first novel, *La quena*, sets the tone for all of her later works, focusing on the forbidden love between the son of an Inca princess and the daughter of a Spanish officer.[11] Although the political backdrop is somewhat different to that of the Rosas era given that the Inca-Spanish conflict took place centuries before, the tale still encompasses the theme of betrayal, by an African slave. This is highly significant because, as discussed in the previous chapter, Rosas garnered a vast political following amongst the most marginalised and less educated factions of society, consisting principally of African slaves who were employed as spies to detect and denounce Unitarians. The second short story, wholly relevant to the Rosas regime, is *El guante negro* (1851), which tells the tale of two women, one good and one evil, who vie with one another for the control of a weak man. Gorriti's title, specifically the colour of the glove, strongly implies something bad will happen and the tale will only end in tragedy. It is the first in a series of civil war stories in which families, friends and lovers are starkly divided by their Unitarian and Federalist sympathies,

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[9] Francine Masiello, *Between Civilization & Barbarism. Women, Nation, and Literary Culture in Modern Argentina* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), p.40.

[10] Juana Manuela Gorriti, "*Impresiones y paisajes." Misceláneas. Colección de leyendas, juicios, pensamientos, discursos, impresiones de viaje y descripciones americanas* (Buenos Aires: Imprenta de M. Biedma, 1878), p. 166. Gorriti refers to singing the national anthem when she was a child which is emblematic of her love for her homeland and her identification with her adopted country. She was so grief-stricken that she never returned to one of her most treasured and sacred places, namely her father's country estate in Miraflores, for fear that the past would exacerbate the psychological pain which she suffered all her life.

[11] Diane E. Marting, *Spanish-American Women Writers: A Bio-Bibliographical Source Book* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1990), p.230.

reflecting real-life tragedy that took place under Rosas. The two resilient women, one of whom is a Unitarian (Isabel), and the other a Federalist (Rosas's daughter, Manuela), struggle to contain their feelings for a man who is not only incapable of deciding which of them he loves but is also indecisive in pledging his political allegiance. The predicament in which they all find themselves worsens when the male protagonist writes a letter stating that he will support the Unitarians, a letter which falls subsequently into Federalist hands. To avoid tarnishing the reputation of the family, his federalist father feels obliged to kill him, but the mother intervenes, killing the father to save her son. The plight of the families and individuals in the tale metaphorically represent the suffering of the whole of Argentina under the Rosas tyranny: 'Here, the violence of authoritarian rule is explored through the devastation of individual families, where their suffering stands for that of the nation'.[12] This short fiction is a melodrama of violence and death, enriched by the theme of madness, supernatural omens and symbols that intensify the horrors of war. Although Gorriti wrote *El guante negro* at a time when political support for Rosas was declining with the approach of his fall from power in 1852, it is still relevant given that the nationalist cause serves as the framework for the story:

> La causa nacionalista es el marco para la creación de "El guante negro" y Gorriti un testigo privilegiado de la historia en su condición de víctima, exiliada. Su longevidad la convierte en un testigo valiosísimo del período más emocionante: la conformación de la patria.[13]

The national cause and national reconstruction is of paramount importance in Gorriti's work; she highlights the devastating effects of differing political opinions which led to banishment from Argentina, imprisonment and mass murder. We know of male writers such as Domingo Sarmiento and José Mármol, who were opposed to Rosas and were subsequently exiled from Argentina, but Gorriti is significant given that she is the first female writer to contribute to the literary resistance against Rosas: she intervened in the male-dominated, anti-dictator discourse of her contemporaries such as, Echeverría and Sarmiento, by basing her fictions on the figure of the

[12] Magalí Armillas-Tiseyra, p.24.
[13] Unknown Author. Retrieved from http://www.belgrano.esc.edu.ar/matestudio/secundaria/2014/gorriti_6_2014.pdf [accessed on 12/10/17].

dictator's daughter. It is arguable that Gorriti was one of the first writers to concentrate on this theme; well-known critics of Rosas, such as Sarmiento, had, of course, shed light on Rosas' pedantic character and his insatiable thirst for violence. Gorriti, for her part, helps to establish the representation of the dictator's daughter as a prominent theme in twentieth-century dictator writing: ' in Manuela Rosas we find traits that are magnified in characters such as Delfina, the dictator's daughter in Enrique La Fourcade's *La fiesta del rey Acab* (1959), and Ofelia in Alejo Carpentier's *El recurso del método* (1974).[14] Similar to the liberal male writers in this literary cohort, Gorriti reiterates that Manuela was indeed 'una víctima de la tiranía de su padre'[15] and depicts her as an innocent and remorseful figure in her short stories. In all Unitarian literature, Manuela is represented as a gentle and kind character who even supported her father's political opponents, all of whom were either killed by the *mazorca* or exiled. Mármol always portrayed Manuela as a lost soul in need of rescue by a hero; however, there were some women writers such as Juana Manso de Noronha who, in her novel, *Los misterios de la Plata*, depicted her as a sinister and perverse individual who was just as brutal as her father. Gorriti's *El guante negro* starts by introducing the stereotypical chivalrous hero Wenceslao, who, 'valiente como su padre, hermoso e inteligente, acababa de recibir una herida en un tremendo combate de cuerpo a cuerpo'. Although he seemingly adores Manuela his heart lies with her adversary Isabel, 'pero el amor por esta bella y encantadora virgen, era el real y verdadero'.[16] Manuela meets Wenceslao when she is visiting his house while working for her father, and becomes consumed by her passion for him: 'La hija del dictador iba allí conducida por tres motivos poderosos: Wencelao seguía las banderas de su padre, Wenceslao había expuesto su vida por defender la honra de la jóven, Wenceslao era el sueño de su corazón'.[17]

After the death of his wife and accomplice, Encarnación Ezcurra, Rosas relied heavily on a young Manuela to conduct political meetings with his army generals which, in this case, worked to her advantage; she longed for Wenceslao, and meeting him at his house was a form of escaping the confinement and isolation that her father

[14] Armillas-Tiseyra, p. 43, footnote 3.
[15] See José Mármol, *Amalia* (Barcelona: Linkgua Ediciones: 2010), p.475.
[16] Juana Manuela Gorriti, *Sueños y Realidades*, ed. Vicente Gregorio Quesada (Buenos Aires: Impr. de Mayo de C. Casavalle, 1865), p. XI.
[17] *Ibid*.

had inflicted on her from an early age. Although Wenceslao is said to be enamoured of Manuela, Gorriti highlights that there is every possibility that his display of affection for her could be disingenuous: '[Wenceslao] amaba á Manuela Rosas por ambición y vanidad pero amaba á Isabel, hija de un cumplido patrio, una de las víctimas de la mas-horca'.[18] Given his apparent underlying ambition to further his authority and wealth, it is perhaps no coincidence that Wenceslao has fallen for two ladies who are the daughters of powerful and prosperous men. The divergent depiction of Manuela and Isabel first emerges when Gorriti describes their contrasting personalities; Manuela is painted as a dominant, ruthless, and resilient force, whereas Isabel is a much more innocent and tender figure: 'la otra jóven que es pura, inteligente y fiel; era Isabel que venía para curar las heridas del enfermo'.[19] The contrasting images of these women being good or evil act as a metaphor for *civilización y barbarie* or *la guerra unitaria federalista* in the sense that all Unitarians are portrayed as innocent, angelic and heroic whereas all of the federalists are depicted as uncivilized, vicious savages who are driven only by power. Although in *Amalia*, Mármol challenges the negative and biased perceptions of federalists as his main hero is Daniel, Gorriti always draws the reader's attention to federalist violence. The most graphic manifestation of federalist violence comes when Wenceslao's letter, pledging his allegiance to the Unitarians, falls into the hands of Manuela who orders her father's men to hunt him down. Wenceslao's parents discover his disloyalty but naturally, the mother is more forgiving than the father, who wants to kill him in order to protect family honour. This predicament highlights the plight of federalist mothers; Wenceslao's mother defends her son's reprehensible behaviour and murders her husband to prevent him from murdering their son: 'Pues muere tú, muere! Porque yo quiero que mi hijo viva [...] Ese traidor era mi hijo y yo he matado á mi esposo por salvar á mi hijo'.[20] In the Federalist world, it seems as if fathers in particular, are willing to dedicate themselves unconditionally to Rosas; they make cruel sacrifices to protect their families' reputation and social status, even if it means killing their own children. Drawing upon Wenceslao's death, Masiello notes: 'the returning trope of bloodshed reminds us of the drained national body,

[18] *Ibid.*
[19] *Ibid.,* p. XII
[20] *Ibid.,* p. XIII

devastated by civil war, despoiled on the landscapes of an emerging nation in which individuals can no longer heal'.[21] Wenceslao's wound is a disturbing reminder of the federalist penchant for crimson as a symbol of loyalty to Rosas.

Manuela is at the forefront of Gorriti's *El guante negro* which sees the issue of social deformation being transformed into a romantic disaster. Just as in Mármol's essay (1851)[22], the Manuela of Gorriti's tale is also profoundly isolated and oppressed: 'el destino de Manuela Rosas, la ha condenado a la soledad y aislamiento del corazón, alejando de ella uno a uno a todos sus amigos'.[23] The lack of evidence renders it impossible for us to know whether Gorriti is accurate in her representation of Manuela as being excluded and alienated from society in the sense that her social life was severely curtailed by her autocratic father. Manuela finds herself trapped in a love triangle with Isabel and Wenceslao but she is last in line; the fact that Wenceslao declares his love for the Unitarian Isabel over Manuela when she was better placed to enhance his ambitions of wealth and power, is a further disappointment to a woman without a love life, thus confirming her status as a sexual outcast. Gorriti teases us with the possibility of a national reunion when Wenceslao overlooks a profitable relationship with Manuela and falls deeply in love with Isabel who is a member of the opposing political party. However, their union is threatened by Wenceslao's colonel father who determines to kill his son on learning that he is going to leave the army to elope with Isabel. Up until the end of the short story, Gorriti garners sympathy for Manuela as she is presented as a forgotten love interest; however, it is when Gorriti articulates the devastating effects of authoritarianism on private and national families that we are tempted to think twice about showing compassion for *la hija del dictador*. Gorriti expresses the consequences of Rosas' totalitarianism in two dimensions. First, we grasp that men who are of the same age as Rosas are extensions of the dictator himself and unconditionally abide by every rule and law he creates. This concept is exercised when Wenceslao's father is willing to murder his own flesh and blood in order to protect his family's integrity as Tiseyra emphasises: 'Wenceslao's father's excessive investment in the regime leads to the

[21] Masiello, Introduction, *Dreams and Realities*, p.xiv.
[22] Jose Mármol, *Manuela Rosas: Rasgos Biográficos*, (Montevideo: Imprenta Uruguyana, 1851), p.21. Online version available at: https://archive.org/details/JoseMarmolManuelaRosas/page/n13.
[23] Gorriti, p.56.

unnatural destruction of his own family, without which the nation cannot stand'.[24] In addition to this, we learn how a potential national reconciliation emerges through the circulation of Manuela's black glove and it is in this context that Manuela's innocence and vulnerability are inevitably overshadowed by her association with the Rosas regime. Manuela's status as a social and sexual outcast leads not only to the separation of Wenceslao and Isabel but to the death of Wenceslao on the battlefield at Quebracho Herrado. In this case, Manuela's significance is expressed in two ways: on the one hand, her social isolation accords with Mármol's compassionate paradigm and, on the other, the destruction triggered by her glove renders her an agent of her father, as Isabel laments: 'Hela aquí se acerca para disputármelo todavía, para arrojar otra vez entre él y yo como un desafío á nuestro amor, este guante negro nos separó'.[25] By making Manuela the centre of the love triangle, Gorriti demonstrates that, irrespective of the conviction in Mármol's sympathetic treatment of her, it is impossible for us to separate her from the instrumental role she played in her father's government which is responsible for countless deaths. From analysing Mármol and Gorriti's portraits of Manuela, we can deduce that she is an emblematic figure of Rosas's rule, preventing her from having a life of her own as she lives to serve her father. The essential difference between Mármol's Manuela and Gorriti's is that the latter's remains an active force of evil; her strong desire for Wenceslao compromises his union with Isabel, and thus the political reconciliation of the nation. As aforementioned when discussing *Amalia*, Doris Sommer establishes a connection between the family and the nation. Her theory of 'national romance' is at the heart of the domestic sphere in that it focuses on the coupling of lovers from opposing political parties. Based on Sommer's theory, the destruction of a romance between a Unitarian and a Federalist can damage national reconciliation.[26] This is precisely what happens in the case of Wenceslao and Isabel, the inadvertent catalyst being Manuela, as she prevents their union albeit unintentionally. By instating Manuela as the obstacle to this relationship, Gorriti dispels the myth that she is somehow the

[24] Armillas-Tiseyra, p.33.
[25] Gorriti, p.67.
[26] Doris Sommer, 'Amalia: Valor at Heart and Home', *Foundational Fictions: The National Romances of Latin America* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press), p.111.

passive victim of Mármol's essay, despite the fact that she is hindered by her adverse circumstances.

Another of Gorriti's stories which encapsulates the national struggle during the Rosas tyranny is *La hija del mazshorquero: leyenda histórica* (1861). This anecdote tells the tale of the notoriously malicious *mazorquero*, aptly named Roque Alma-Negra, who tragically cuts the throat of his heroine daughter, Clemencia, whilst mistaking her for Emilia – the Unitarian woman he intended to assassinate. Ultimately, this story serves as a parable which stresses the collective anguish of Unitarians and Federalists alike under the catastrophic Rosas dictatorship. The murder of Clemencia is the culmination of yet another tragic plot which further emphasises that even those who obeyed Rosas were doomed. In this tale, the angelic Clemencia – who suffers greatly under the rule of her father – replaces Manuela. As the daughter of one of Rosas's prominent assassins, Clemencia's social isolation can be paralleled to that of the dictator's daughter: Clemencia's mother, like Manuela's, passed away from a suspicious and unspecified illness and thus her despotic father, who takes the place of Rosas, is heavily dependent on her. Fully conscious of her father's relentless cruelty, Clemencia seeks refuge in religion, and in order to compensate for her father's sins, she provides aid to the families of Roque's victims as a form of atonement for his reprehensible actions. By offering her support to innocent civilians, Clemencia betrays and dishonours the Federalist cause; she tries to repair the families that her father has so ruthlessly destroyed, and as he continues to massacre innocent people, she attempts to save them. Gorriti depicts Clemencia in a respectful light when she states that she makes reparations to her father's victims; her actions are morally honourable and to some extent heroic as she sacrifices her safety to safeguard others. It can be argued here that despite Gorriti's refusal to replicate Mármol's positive depiction of Manuela, she *does* credit the dictator's daughter by depicting Clemencia as a manifestation of compassion and charity. We develop a growing sympathy for Clemencia and admire her bravery as she suffers in a toxic federalist atmosphere and yet still risks her own life in her efforts to secure the freedom of others. Clemencia is described in angelic terms by the omniscient narrator throughout the story: 'El alma de aquella hermosa niña se parecía a su

nombre: era toda dulzura y misericordia'.[27] Clemencia's death is depicted as a sacrifice; she dies so that Emilia can be saved and be reunited with her lover, but like all anti-Rosas romances, this one ends in tragedy as Manuel is stabbed by Clemencia's father. Gorriti's fiction is presented as a straight-forward political allegory: 'the actions of the father, Roque, stand for the dictator Rosas's violent oppression of Argentina as a whole, figured by Clemencia, who becomes the sacrificial victim of the regime'.[28]

Clemencia also risks everything when she is informed of her father's plans to kill a man named Manuel de Puirredon and she rushes to the plaza to find the young man in the hope that she can save him. In their first encounter, Manuel mistakes Clemencia for his lover Emilia who is the daughter of fervent Rosas supporters. As he clings to the woman he thinks is Emilia, he urges her to join him in fleeing from 'esta patria fatal'.[29] Given that her father curtails her social life and thus, restricts her opportunities to meet the love of her life, one can speculate that Clemencia would often fantasise about escaping the country as Emilia and Manuel had planned. Yearning for love and excited by the prospect of pursuing a romantic relationship, Clemencia falls for Manuel but this love is presented as unfeasible:

> Algunas veces con la mirada perdida en el vació, [Clemencia] sonreía dulcemente; pero luego, como asaltada por un amargo recuerdo, movía la cabeza en ademán de dolorosa resignación murmurando en voz baja: Hija de la desgracia, heredera del castigo celeste, víctima expiatoria, piensa en tu voto; acuérdate que tu reino no es este mundo.[30]

We gain a heightened understanding of Clemencia's wretched fate; the exhilarating thought of falling in love with Manuel and breaking free from her father's chains is juxtaposed with a bitter reminder that she is forever doomed, for her father would never let his most cherished possession out of his sight. Clemencia actively engages in her self-established status as a 'víctima expiatoria' and vows that she will compensate for her father's lamentable crimes; she willingly suffers in order to free

[27]Juana Manuela Gorriti, *Sueños y realidades*. 1855. *Obras completas*. Vol. 6, (Salta: Ediciones Noreste, 1995), p. 121.
[28] Armillas-Tiseyra, p.26.
[29] Gorriti, p.123.
[30] Gorriti, p.124.

others from Roque's terror. This contrasts with the Manuela of *Rasgos Biográficos* where Mármol postulates that Manuela's miserable fate is a product of her father's unhealthy and disturbing obsession with his daughter. By contrast, Gorriti implies that Manuela's plight is self-inflicted; she courageously stands in for the one who deserves the punishment, or if her suffering is magnified, one could argue that she bears the collective grief of the nation under the Rosas dictatorship. Camila is representative of Manuela in this sense as she risks her life to save two Unitarian lovers. While Mármol figuratively sacrifices Manuela as *la primera victima* of her father's totalitarianism, Gorriti literalises the argument as she presents a version of Rosas's daughter who is fully conscious of her status as a symbolic victim. Clemencia exercises her self-imposed responsibility to atone for her father's sins when she uses her status to gain access to the prison, where she takes the place of Emilia, making it possible for Manuel and Emilia to flee Argentina. Roque unpityingly targets the woman he believes to be Emilia, first for being a traitorous daughter as she comes from a family of Rosas supporters, and secondly, to take vengeance on Manuel for evading death. Given Roque's insatiable thirst for bloodshed, the death is violent; he slits Clemencia's throat and she slowly bleeds to death. The cutting of Clemencia's throat calls to mind the barbarity of the countryside which, under the Rosas government, infiltrated the city of Buenos Aires. In *Facundo*, Sarmiento remarks that:

> Las fiestas de las parroquias son una imitación de la *hierra* del ganado, a que acuden todos los vecinos; la *cinta* colorada que clava a cada hombre, mujer o niño, es la *marca* con que el propietario reconoce su ganado, el degüello, a cuchillo, erigido en medio de ejecución pública, viene de la costumbre de *degollar* las reses que tiene todo hombre en la campaña; la prisión sucesiva de centenares de ciudadanos sin motivo conocido i por años enteros, es el rodeo con que se dociliza el ganado, encerrándolo diariamente en el corral; los azotes por las calles, la mazorca, las matanzas ordenadas son otros tantos medios de *domar* a la *ciudad* dejarla al fin como el ganado más manso i ordenado que se conoce.[31]

Sarmiento compares the way in which Rosas runs his government to the administration of a ranch and his supporters to a herd of cattle, as they are required to wear the scarlet red insignia in order to be identified and his victims are slaughtered

[31] Sarmiento, *Facundo*, p.238.

in the same way as farm animals. When Rosas rose to power, the barbaric gauchos inhabited the city of Buenos Aires and, along with Afro-Argentines, were employed as part of the *Mazorca.* Furthermore, the Argentine historian and writer Felipe Pigna claims that barbarism was 'producido por el indio, el gaucho analfabeto y todos los caudillos federales. Pero cabe aclarar que su discurso contra el gaucho no termina con la caída de Rosas y su *Mazorca*'. He also highlights that in a personal letter, Bartolomé Mitre stated that 'no trate de economizar sangre de gauchos. Éste es un abono que es precioso hacer útil al país. La sangre es lo único que tienen de seres humanos esos salvajes'.[32] Drawing upon the barbarous way in which Clemenica is murdered by her father, who stands in for Rosas, we see the culmination of Clemencia's status as she becomes 'the sacrificial body made to bear the weight of the transgressions of others from Roque's perspective, those of Manuela and Emilia and, more broadly, as a figure for the nation under dictatorship'.[33] Despite Clemencia's valiant sacrifice which has spared the lives Manuel and Emilia, Gorriti reiterates that Roque, who substitutes for Rosas, still lives on. The redemptive nature of Clemencia's death in the last lines of the story is not attributed to Manuel and Emila but rather to Roque, who is 'regenerated' ("lo regeneró"). Gorriti implies that as a result of Roque's failure to kill Manuel and Emilia and his devastation over slitting the throat of his own daughter, he will retaliate by becoming even more brutal now that his anger is reignited. Throughout *La hija del mazorquero*, we notice that Clemencia is characterized by her capacity to serve in the place of others, as a kind of surrogate: in her father's house, she assumes the domesticated role of her dead mother, providing support and companionship to Roque; secondly, she compensates for the absence of the murdered father of the widows and children of Roque's victims and finally, Manuel mistakes Clemencia for Emilia at their first encounter on the plaza. Given Clemencia's ability to substitute, she is categorically a sacrificial figure and her connection to Emilia comes to a climax in the scene of her execution in which Roque declares:

[32] Felipe Pigna, *Los mitos de la historia argentina 2*., 18 ed., (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2000) p.270
[33] Armillas-Tiseyra, p.39.

> Delatora de nuestros secretos; cómplice de los infames unitarios, muere en lugar del conspirador que amas [Manuel], pero sabe antes que ni tus huesos se juntarán con los suyos.[34]

We see the culmination of the parallels between Clemencia and Emilia; they both fall in love with Manuel and like Emilia, Clemencia reveals her father's secrets to Manuel and becomes an accomplice of the Unitarians. It is during his killing of his own daughter that the metaphor of Clemencia as the 'sacrificial' victim is deconstructed and presented in a literal sense; Roque kills his own daughter thinking that she is Emilia but one could argue that Clemencia is killed because she has in fact committed the same crimes. It is only when we consider Gorriti's argument that Clemencia is a victim of her self-sacrifice that we understand how her death does not fall under the category of sacrifice, in which she becomes the scapegoat for the transgressions of others, but is rather a punishment for her own treacherous behaviour. Clemencia seems to rejoice when her intentional choice to sacrifice her life materialises:

> Díos Mío – murmuró – ¡mi sacrificio esta consumado! Cumplida esta la misión que me impuse en este mundo: haced ahora, señor, que mi sangre lave esa otra sangre que calma a vos desde la tierra.[35]

Clemencia is a self-proclaimed expiatory victim and it is through her fulfilment of this role that the figurative is catapulted into the realm of the literal and therefore, she undermines the rhetorical infrastructure of nationalist discourse.[36] Given that Clemencia herself realised her *renunciamiento*, which in this case is self-sacrifice, she cannot serve as a definite allegory for the nation: 'as she already conceives of her death as standing in the place of something else'.[37] Even though initially, Clemencia's suffering is considered as a representation of Argentina under Rosas, Gorriti does not restrict her to the position of national icon but rather magnifies her other function as an angelic force and an embodiment of her name: 'El alma de aquella hermosa niña se parecía a su nombre: era toda dulzura y misericordia'.[38] Like

[34] Gorriti, p.131.
[35] Armillas-Tiseyra, p.39.
[36] *Ibid*., p.40.
[37] *Ibid*.
[38] Gorriti, p.121.

Manuela, Clemencia is presented as a virtuous and merciful lady who is an angel of the house, angel of the poor, even an avenging angel, as well as a sacrificial lamb.[39] Even though the expression 'sacrificial lamb' is a metaphorical reference to the fact that Clemencia dies for the common good of others, we can attribute the phrase to Argentina's factual heroine, Eva Perón, who arguably was a champion of the poor as she sacrificed her own life to revive those of the impoverished masses. María Cecelia Saenz-Roby describes Clemencia 'como un verdadero ángel que salvó a la mujer unitaria perseguida y remedió a su facineroso padre'.[40] Gorriti's depiction of Clemencia is reminiscent of Manuela's saint-like reputation and also, of course, of Eva. Gorriti's emphasis on Clemencia as a benevolent but treacherous heroine, who is a saint in the eyes of her father's victims, proves to be more realistic than equating her to the nation. Ultimately, by challenging the logic of the substitute-ability concept which is applied to Clemencia, Gorriti renders the use of women as icons for the nation as unreasonable: 'she points to the impossibility of national regeneration when the discourse of the nation depends so heavily on the instrumentalization of women as iconic representations thereof, rather than as active participants in its development'[41]. Gorriti's observation on how women are overlooked as agents of national reconciliation is what distinguishes her work from that of her fellow liberals; as well as scrutinising and denouncing the Rosas regime, her work provides a critical analysis of anti-*rosismo* and draws our attention to how anti-*rosista* authors use female characters to symbolize the nation and exclude women as active subjects from national discourse which, as Tiseyra reiterates, is itself a form of authoritarianism that needs to be eradicated.[42] The obsolete and unreconstructed notion that women are allegories for the nation is heavily criticised by Dorit Naaman, who theorises that 'before achieving independence, a nation is often compared to a woman who is not quite an independent subject; the bearer, the maker of her own meaning'.[43] She then proceeds to explain that after a nation gains independence, it

[39]Armillas-Tiseyra, p.39.

[40] María Cecelia Saenz-Roby, 'El gaucho como eslabón del proceso nacional en el discurso fundacional de Juana Manuela Gorriti', *Romance Quarterly*, (57), 2010, pp.28-42.

[41] Armillas-Tiseyra, pp.39-40.

[42] Armillas-Tiseyra, p.40.

[43] Dorit Naaman, 'Woman/Nation: A Postcolonial Look at Female Subjectivity', *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, Vol 17 (4), (2000), pp.333.

does not retain its stereotypical feminine qualities but rather goes through a metaphorical 'sex change' in which it: 'literally engages in asserting its newly acquired patriarchal power to suppress those who were oppressed all along, women'.[44] Naaman's theory is undoubtedly most pertinent to the plight of women under the Rosas dictatorship, particularly because it was not long after Argentina became independent that Rosas rose to power. Furthermore, it is important to note that even though male liberal critics such as Mármol condemn Rosas's mistreatment of women, they do not allow women to be vigorous agents of national reparation; instead, they incorporate into their work the restrictive anti-*rosista* literary convention which reduces women to substitutes for the nation, overlooking their real-life contributions to national reconciliation. Gorriti pushes the women-nation logic to its literal ends and in doing so, refrains from using women as metaphors just to comply with the disparaging liberal narrative. Mármol, for example, appropriates Amalia so that she represents Argentina as well as basing her characterisation on the figurative rather than the literal; in doing this, he restricts her significant role in the process of national unity and focuses more on the progressive efforts of her male counterparts (Daniel and Eduardo). It is in this vein that Mármol's novel can be categorised as a robust manifestation of Naaman's woman-nation theory; he recruits his female protagonist to the nationalist project as a bearer of national identity, which paradoxically does not mean that she is given prestigious status; it only exemplifies how her oppression was prolonged as she submits to patriarchal subordination.[45] Naaman's theoretical framework adds depth to the argument that the woman-nation paradigm dehumanises women; the female characters in both pro and anti-*rosista* literature (Clemencia) as well as in real life (Camila O'Gorman) are allegories for the nation and thus their bodies are objects on which violence can be performed by others – Camila is supposedly shot three times and Clemencia's throat is severed.

Rosas and the aftermath of Camila's death

Similar to the situation in *El guante negro*, where we see a parent condoning her child's murder, is the case of the twenty-year-old Camila O'Gorman, who, when eight months pregnant, was savagely murdered on Rosas's command. Camila's

[44] *Ibid*.
[45] *Ibid*.

'crime' was that she had run away with her lover, Uladislao Gutiérrez – the head priest of the Jesuit parish of Socorro – and settled in the safe haven of Goya, Corrientes, where they eloped under the false names of Máximo and Valentina Desan de Brandier.[46] Upon their arrest, they were both incarcerated in Santos Lugares, a paltry prison town on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, which is today known as San Andrés. It is a well-known fact that enemies of Rosas were left for dead in Santos Lugares; they died slowly of starvation or were mauled to death by fierce dogs. Once imprisoned in Santos Lugares, there was no escape; the place symbolized Rosas's inhumane policy whereby prisoners were isolated from the entire world and deprived of any sort of communication. They had no right to a lawyer, or to any claim. Once imprisoned in Santos, nobody got out, unless on the whim of a gratuitous tyrant. However, Rosas decided at the last minute that the disgraced couple were to be set free to experience a more public execution.[47] Immediately after his daughter's escape, her father Adolfo O'Gorman – a leading merchant in the city – sent a letter to Rosas declaring that Uladislao Gutiérrez 'la había seducido bajo la capa de la religión, y la ha robado, abandonando el curato el 12 del presente'.[48] However, when he found out that Camila willingly disobeyed the dictator and was heavily pregnant, he offered Rosas his apologies and gave him unreserved permission to chastise his daughter and Uladislao in any way he deemed fit. Adolfo's commitment and undying loyalty to the dictator and desperation to protect the Irish community in Buenos Aires are demonstrated most laconically in his second letter to Rosas, in which he demands that his daughter be reprimanded for her actions by suffering a 'castigo ejemplar' for participating in 'el acto más atroz y nunca oído en el país'.[49] The Church felt that

[46]Jeffrey M. Shumway, *The Case of the Ugly Suitor: & Other Histories of Love, Gender and Nation in Buenos Aires in 1776-1870* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005) p.91.

[47] Nazareno Miguel Adami '*Poder v sexualidad: el caso de Camila 0' Gorman. Todo es Historia.* Vol. 281., November 1990, pp.14-15.

[48]Adolfo O'Gorman's first letter to Juan Manuel de Rosas on 21st December 1847, cited in Llanos, Julio. '*Camila O'Gorman*' (Buenos Aires: La Patria Argentina, 1883) and reprinted Donald F. Stevens '*Passion and Patriarchy in Nineteenth Century Argentina: María Luisa Bemberg's Camila*', *Based on a True Story: Latin American History at the Movies* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1997), pp.85-102.

[49]Adolfo O'Gorman (1847) second Letter to Juan Manuel de Rosas: ¡*Viva la Santa Confederación Argentina, mueran los salvajes unitarios*! Retrieved from http://chnm.gmu.edu/cyh/primary-sources/69 on 12/10/2017. Cited in Llanos, Julio, '*Camila O'Gorman*' (Buenos Aires: La Patria Argentina, 1883), p.271 and reprinted in Stevens, '*Passion and Patriarchy in Nineteenth-Century Argentina: María Luisa Bemberg's Camila*', *Based on a True Story: Latin American History at the*

they had already given the sinners a chance to redeem themselves as 'they had delayed reporting Camila and Uladislao's disappearance in the hope that they would return and there would be no need to make a private family affair public'.[50] It would appear that the O'Gorman family initially refrained from involving the church or the state authorities in Camila's disappearance; according to a letter of 7th January 1848, signed by Rosas, Adolfo O'Gorman first informed Rosas of his daughter's disappearance on December 16th 1847.

In a sycophantic letter, Felipe Elortondo y Palacios (January 22nd1848), a fellow priest of Uladislao's, states that the Parish's curate [*teniente cura*], Manuel Velarde, had been approached by the family, who had requested that he not say anything. *El Comercio* adamantly claimed: 'El Canónigo Palacios está furioso, no con el rapto, sino con la fuga porque días anteshabía prestado al Cura Gutiérrez unas onzas de oro'[51] which, if true, would have been used to subsidise the couple's escape. When the church failed to locate the couple, Bishopric Vicar Miguel García wrote to Rosas seeking his help to apprehend the suspects. In Rosas's account on January 17th, he claims that he acted almost immediately following the church's request, calling the police chief, who said he had not been informed by the ecclesiastical area. The urgent priority that Rosas gave to the matter was evident in the '*filiaciones* and other flyers which circulated around the area demanding their instant arrests'.[52] The pressure on Adolfo to maintain the respected and untarnished reputation of the Irish upper classes in Buenos Aires was enormous; the two respected figures Father Anthony Fahy and lawyer Dr. Dalmacio Vélez Sarsfield who located and denounced Camila and Gutiérrez in Corrientes, showed no remorse or compassion for Camila and requested 'an exemplary punishment of the wayward

Movies. Edited and translated by Donald F. Stevens, (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1997), pp.85-102. Annotated by Jesse Hingson.

[50] Rea, p.51.

[51] *El Comercio de la Plata*, reprinted in Manuel Bilbao, *Vindicación y memorias de don Antonio Reyes*, 1st ed. (Buenos Aires: Porvenir, 1883), p.355.

[52] Jean Graham-Jones, *Evita, Inevitably: Performing Argentina's Female Icons Before and After Eva Perón*, (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2014), p.24.

daughter that was also giving the industrious and well-regarded [Irish] community a bad name'.[53]

The perpetrators were quick to decide Camila's chastisement but Fahy, who was the chaplain to Irish Catholics, remained silent on what punishment should await Uladislao. It is ironic that Uladislao would have been, in many ways, an ideal husband for Camila; he was of a prominent social class, well educated, wealthy and possessed what was arguably the most important quality in nineteenth century Argentina, a white complexion. However, Uladisalao had already joined the priesthood prior to his elopement with Camila; this was an issue as families often encouraged or even pressured sons to become priests in order to protect social influence and prestige. The priesthood was a noble profession in nineteenth century Argentina; it was restricting and lonely with little means of escape.[54] Most priests eschewed their official vows of celibacy, but most did not belong to a class as socially prominent as those of the lovers. It is ironic that Rosas was said to have been unconcerned – at least initially – by Camila and Uladislao's relationship; Stevens notes that he was even aware of their romance before they fled Buenos Aires. Their relationship did not seem to provoke any public disapproval from the Federalist elite. One prosperous *porteño* explained to Reyes, who was Camila's prison guard and once fervent Rosas supporter: 'if something was whispered regarding what the public or the neighbours presumed about the relationship [between Camila and Uladislao], no one dared denounce their relationship',[55] even more telling is the fact that 'the couple would even ride past Rosas's estate during their many horseback rides through the forest of Palermo, leaving little doubt that the Governor was aware of the couple's actions well before they chose to elope'.[56]

Despite his pre-existing knowledge of the relationship, Rosas still chose the most fatal form of retribution for the two outcasts and it is apparent that he was more angered by the fact that they chose to defy his order that no one was to pursue a

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[53] Maria Theresa Julianello, *The Scarlett Trinity: The Doomed Struggle of Camila O'Gorman against Family, Church and State in 19th Century Buenos Aires* (Cork: Irish Centre for Migration Studies, 2000), p.3.

[54] John Frederick Schwaller, *The History of the Catholic Church in Latin America: From Conquest to Revolution and Beyond*, (New York: New York: New York University Press, 2011), p.151.

[55] Stevens, *Passion and Patriarchy*, p.94-96. Spanish quotation unavailable from original source, which is not stated in Stevens' account.

[56] Stevens, *Passion and Patriarchy* p.91.

forbidden relationship, leading to his decision to execute the pair. Argentina was brought to its knees when, as a consequence of their disobedience, Gutiérrez and Camila were captured, transported back to Buenos Aires and swiftly gunned down by a firing squad on the morning of the 18th of August 1848. Unitarians and Federalists alike were outraged by this atrocity and by Rosas's despicable behaviour; support for Rosas rapidly declined in some parts of the church, among fellow federalists and even among his own soldiers who were repulsed by the prospect of shooting a pregnant woman. It is arguable that, by conducting this horrific murder of three innocent people, Rosas was responsible for the fall of his own government. Upon seizing absolute power, he reformed laws dramatically and granted himself the authority to eliminate opponents under the Confederación Argentina: 'During the Rosist government, legislation was consulted in several cases but, when the laws did not satisfy the dictator's needs in his aim to have absolute control over the social body, unscrupulous physical violence was put in its place'.[57] However, no constitutional authority could save him from the consequences of this action. Ironically, the controversy was not over the 'scandal' of Camila and Uladislao's elopement and illegitimate child but was focused on Rosas's defiance of the then law that protected a pregnant woman from execution; the Criminal Code stipulated that a pregnant woman was not to be murdered before her child was born but Rosas ignored the code and did not even grant the couple a trial.[58] Camila's merciless execution was the catalyst for the demise of the Rosas government: 'Her murder was recorded as the most atrocious and unlawful act in a century where murders abounded and laws were disregarded, to begin with, by the government her death helped bring down'.[59] In a sense, even though Rosas took Camila's life, she obtained vengeance from the grave since her death contributed to his demise. The sweet, innocent and beautiful Camila became a pawn in a dangerous political game with which she was not associated, and her unjust treatment exemplifies the insufferable plight of all young women under the Rosas dictatorship, irrespective of political affiliation. In a politically fissured society, the morally culpable execution of the

[57] *Ibid.*, p.2.
[58] Donna J. Guy, "Mothers Alive and Dead: Multiple Concepts of Mothering in Buenos Aires," in *Sex and Sexuality in Latin America*, eds. Daniel Balderston and Donna J. Guy (New York: New York University Press, 1997), p.155.
[59] *Ibid.,* p.1.

pregnant adolescent helped to entrench anti-Rosas sentiments as well as help the Unitarians to consolidate their opposition to the Governor. From this perspective she can be seen as an unsung heroine. Even one of Rosas's Federalist contemporaries reasoned that 'it would have been better for Rosas to have lost a battle than to shoot Camila'.[60] The murder also exposed Rosas's own hypocrisy given that, after the death of his wife, he impregnated his adolescent lover María Eugenia Castro.

Camila was a key symbol of resistance in the Rosas tyranny; her suave beauty, ladylike education, naturally kind disposition and cultivated manners were a heavenly contrast to the daily horror, vulgarity and killings which plagued Buenos Aires. It is important to mention how members of her own community, including religious figures of social importance supported and encouraged her death; Father Fahy, who reported the lovers, was instrumental in the immigration of his people to Argentina and a well-respected member of the community, and Dr. Dalmacio Vélez Sarsfield, provided the legal sanction to shoot the pregnant woman and her partner. As a result of Dr. Vélez's contribution to the legitimisation of Camila's execution, he was zealously praised by the ultra-religious Catholic community and today there stands a monument in Córdoba which is dedicated to him. Religion was a preordained catalyst in the unjust killing of Camila; her own family were fanatical Catholics who turned in one of their own for what they perceived to be her deceitfulness and for bringing shame on the family. In a family that would sacrifice anything and anyone to conform to religious morality and preserve their social reputation, Camila was doomed from the start of her clandestine elopement with Uladislao.[61] A fascinating point is that Adolfo O'Gorman, an uncompromising holy man, was very much as obsessed as Rosas himself and can therefore be seen as the most outward manifestation of the dictator; he was pedantic in his work ethic and

[60] John Lynch, *Argentine Dictator*, p.240.

[61] The extent to which Adolfo O'Gorman tried to protect his family's reputation is significant given that Camila's dubious comportment was not the first scandal to tarnish their name. Adolfo's own mother, an aristocratic French lady whose real name was Marie Anne de Périchon de Vandeuil but was known as Ana de Perichon or affectionately as 'La Perichona', was also a figure of public disgrace: during her active political role in the Viceroyalty of Río de la Plata, she was accused of being a British spy and had been the lover of Jacques (Santiago) Liniers, a French naval officer who later became the viceroy of the province of the Río de la Plata. The two most interesting comparisons are first, that Camila's paternal grandmother was also shamed for having an illicit affair with Jacques Liniers and secondly, that she died in 1847, just a year before her granddaughter was executed.

entirely devoted to religion, morality and honour; in Rosas's words, he agreed to such a heart-wrenching punishment out of religious conviction and to: 'satisfacer la religión y la ley y para prevenir nuevos casos de la inmoralidad y el desorden'.[62] As a result of this misconduct, Rosas decided to imprison Camila in the Casa de Ejercicios until her parents felt that she had received a sufficient chastisement. His decision to do so may have been motivated by the letter from Camila's own father Adolfo asking that his daughter receive a swift and exemplary punishment. Those responsible for Camila's execution were driven by their uncompromising fundamentalism: instead of exercising the Christian virtues of forgiveness and compassion, they espoused a version of Catholicism with fascistic undertones, which paved the way for a fatal decision. It can be argued that Camila battled against the Holy Trinity which, in this case, was not the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit but rather the Family, Church and State; and that Adolfo O'Gorman displayed an unnatural lack of paternal protection by granting him permission to execute his daughter.

At the end of a letter that Adolfo sent Rosas in December 1848, he labelled his daughter a miserable wretch and then declared: 'V.E. es padre y el único capaz de remediar un caso de tanta trascendencia para toda mi familia.'[63] His attitude is one that would have been prevalent among the male population in Argentina at the time, bolstering Rosas's patriarchal supremacy. The manner in which Adolfo chose to appeal to Rosas indicates the importance of patriarchal ideals to the Federalists belonging to the higher echelons of Argentine society; Adolfo presented himself as a worried father of privileged social standing in the hope that Rosas would be able to identify with his troubling predicament and feel some solidarity with him. Adolfo was fully conscious of Rosas's sense of outrage at Camila's conduct and authorised the dictator to punish his daughter. Even though some aristocratic Federalists such as Adolfo O'Gorman condoned unconditionally Rosas's punitive decision, their women were somewhat less accommodating: in fact, they immediately contested the

[62] Letter from Juan Manuel de Rosas to Miguel García, January 17, 1848, first cited in Julio Irazusta, *Vida política de Juan Manuel de Rosas a través de su correspondencia*, 2nd ed. (Buenos Aires: Albatros, 1953), pp.379–382.

[63] Adolfo O'Gorman to Juan Manuel de Rosas, December 21, 1848, first cited in Donald Stevens, *Passion and Patriarchy in Nineteenth Century* Argentina: María Luisa Bemberg's *Camila Based on a True Story: Latin American History at the Movies* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1997), pp.100-101.

execution. By killing Camila, Rosas punished his own daughter: Manuela was very close to Camila and promised to try and persuade her father to grant the doomed couple clemency. Manuela optimistically furnished a cell in the City Hall prison for Camila, decorating it with a piano and books. Manuela replied to Camila's letter immediately after they had been transported to Santos Lugares, and she reiterated her loyalty to Camila, reassuring her that she would do everything in her power to prevent the monstrous punishment from taking place:

> Querida Camila: Lorenzo Torrecillas os impondrá fielmente de cuanto en vuestro favor he suplicado a mi Sr. padre Dn. Juan M. de Rosas.Lacerada por la doliente situación que me hacéis saber os pido tengáis entereza suficiente para poder salvar la distancia que aún os resta a fin de que yo a mi lado pueda con mis esfuerzos daros la última esperanza. Y en el ínterin, recibid uno y mil besos de vuestra afectísima y cariñosa amiga. Manuela de Rosas y Ezcurra.[64]

However, despite Manuela's desperate plea, Rosas had already decided that he would see through the execution because allies and enemies alike 'needed to be shown his undisputed power, as the moral values and sacred religious norms of a whole society were at stake.'[65] Rosas was at the pinnacle of his career when he sanctioned the unthinkable but he was also at the height of his madness; Camila's execution brought the nation to a standstill and immediately after the horrific murder, Rosas's most trusted army General denounced the dictator for he could not accept nor forget his leader's inhumanity. Years after the brutal execution, Antonio Reyes, who had served as Rosas's aid-de-camp, secretary, Sergeant Major and Chief of Police at Santos Lugares for fourteen years, was so distraught at the prospect of gunning down a pregnant women – which was against Canon Law – that he decided not to participate in or witness the execution and out of compassion, placed both bodies in the same coffin, without Rosas's consent.[66] In his account, Reyes stated that the murder 'lo paralizó de horror' and that he thought that 'la noticia del embarazo

[64] Siri N. Eros, *Rosas y el proceso a Camila O'Gorman* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Haftel, 1939), no page number.
[65] Julianello, p.3.
[66] Canon Law stated that if a pregnant woman were to be executed for treason then she would be killed after the birth of the child.

podría savarla'[67] and so he felt obliged to write to Manuela, thinking that she might intercede with *El Restaurador*. Sadly, the letter did not reach Manuela, but was read by her father, who declined Reyes demand to withdraw his decision. Subsequently, Reyes was punished for 'retrasar la sentencia' and questioning Rosas's moral judgment.[68] When the news of Rosas's crime broke, both Federalist and Unitarian newspapers published details of the execution much to the dismay of Rosas who tried to impose complete censorship of the press and punished any media outlet which distributed details of the gory debacle. However, Domingo Sarmiento, a vehemently anti-Rosas writer and politician, expressed his outrage at Rosas's inhumanity in the liberal newspaper *El Mercurio*, published in Chile where he had been exiled. He publicly condemned Rosas's brutality by stating: 'Ha llegado al extremo la horrible corrupción de costumbres bajo la tiranía espantosa del "Calígula del Rio Plata" que los impíos y sacrílegos sacerdotes de Buenos Aires huyen con las niñas de la mejor sociedad, sin que el sátrapa infame adopte medida alguna contra esas monstruosas inmoralidades'.[69] Sarmiento used the media to facilitate public denouncements of Rosas. In an attempt to humiliate Rosas further, he told his audience of how even Rosas's supporters were outraged: devastated friends and the public from all social classes had showed compassion and visited the couple's grave:

> Algunos amigos fueron a visitar la tumba de Camila y oyeron del cura los detalles tristísimos de aquella tragedia horrible, del asesinato de esta mujer. El oficial que le hizo fuego se enloqueció y en la vecindad quedó el terror de un grito agudísimo, dolorido y desgarrador que lanzó al sentirse atravesado el corazón.[70]

Even members of Rosas's own family pleaded with him to overlook Camila's crime and retract his decision to execute her; not only did Manuela beg her father to grant the couple clemency, but Rosas's sister-in-law and the sibling of his late wife María Josefa – who was just as authoritarian as the dictator – wrote a persuasive letter asking him at least to forgive Camila. She reassured Rosas that she agreed Camila

[67] Reyes' account, cited in Adami, p.20.
[68] Adami, p.20.
[69] Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, Letter in *El Mercurio* de Chile on 3rd March 1848. Cited in José María Rosa, *Rosas, nuestro contemporáneo*, (Buenos Aires: Peña Lillo, 1974), pp.95-96, and cited in Domingo F. Sarmiento, *Política argentina 1841-1851*, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Luz del Día, 1949), p.IV.
[70] Adami, p.22.

and Uladislao had committed a lamentable crime: 'Mi querido hermano Juan Manuel: Esta se dirige a pedirte el favor de Camila. Esta desgraciada, es cierto, ha cometido un crimen gravísimo contra Dios y la sociedad.'[71] However, she does demonstrate her compassionate tendencies by writing: 'Pero debes recordar que es mujer y ha sido indicado por quien sabe más que ella el camino del mal.'[72] Even Encarnación's sister, who was responsible for collecting information from black spies and instructing the *Mazorca*, echoed the sympathy of her fellow Federalists and took a stance against Rosas. Even though María Josefa may have been prioritising her moral conscience when contesting his decision, she still had compassion for Camila and even suggested an alternative and much more subtle method of punishment: 'Si quieres que entre recluida en la Santa Casa de Ejercicios, yo hablaré con doña Rufina Díaz y estoy segura de que se hará cargo de ella y no se escapará de allí.'[73] María also appeals to Rosas's moral conscience by insisting that if Rosas spared Camila's life, then he would set a better example for the whole of society: 'Con mejores advertencias y ejemplos virtuosos, entrará en sí y enmendará sus yerros, ya que los ha cometido por causa de quien debía ser un remedio para no hacerlos'.[74]An interesting point to note is that Sarmiento resorts to referring to the dictator as 'el Calígula del Rio Plata',[75] by which he was commonly known for his 'horrible corrupción de las costumbres'.[76] During his regime, Rosas earned a reputation for his unremitting moral corruption of Argentine society and national traditions which led to him being labelled 'el Calígula', a word meaning 'little soldier's boot', initially associated with Gaius Julius Caesar Germanicus; the young military enthusiast was called *el Caligula* by his father's soldiers for accompanying him during his military campaigns in Germania. The nickname is a diminutive form of 'caliga', meaning hob-nailed military boot and was used by the *gauchos* to glorify the tyrant. However, the expression was cleverly transformed into an anti-Rosas slur

[71] Letter from María Josefa to Rosas, first cited in Alfredo Taullard, *Cartas privadas de la familia de Rosas*, (Buenos Aires: Imprenta López, 1924), pp.20-21, and reprinted in Adriana Schettini, 'Camila O'Gorman: la levadura de un amor prohibido', *Mujeres argentinas. El lado femenino de nuestra historia* (Buenos Aires: Alfaguara, 1998), pp.333-359.
[72] *Ibid*.
[73] *Ibid*.
[74] *Ibid*.
[75] Cornelius M. Buckley, *When Jesuits were Giants: Louis Marie Ruellan. S.J*. (1846-1885)' (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999), p.85.
[76] Pacho O'Donnell, *Juan Manuel de Rosas: El maldito de la historia oficial* (Madrid: Aguilar, 2013), p.50.

by Unitarians as they referred to the dictator as 'la caliga' in order to mock his height; Rosas was a short man and so this name seemed apt given that it was only associated with Gaius during his childhood when he had not, of course, reached his full height.

It was not Sarmiento's demonization of Rosas that fed the flames of fire, but Bartolomé Mitre's remarks which facilitated his final decision: 'se sabe que las Cancillerías extranjeras han pedido al criminal gobierno que representa a la Confederación Argentina, seguridades para las hijas de súbditos extranjeros que no tienen ninguna para su virtud'.[77] Rosas himself never showed any sign of regret but he tried to exonerate himself to some extent by emphasising that others encouraged him to carry out the execution. In an interview which took place in Southampton, he assumed responsibility for his role in the couple's death stating that:

> Ninguna persona me aconsejó la ejecución del cura Gutiérrez y de Camila O'Gorman; ni persona alguna me habló en su favor. Por el contrario, todas las primeras personas del clero me hablaron o escribieron sobre ese atrevido crimen y la urgente necesidad de un ejemplar castigo para prevenir otros escándalos semejantes o parecidos. Yo creía lo mismo. Y siendo mi responsabilidad, ordené la ejecución.[78]

Before she was taken out to the courtyard and shot, Julio Llanos, a witness at the heart-wrenching scene, noted Camila's last words which were 'Voy a morir, y el amor que me arrastró al suplicio seguirá imperando en la naturaleza toda. Recordarán mi nombre, mártir o criminal, no bastará mi castigo a contener una sola palpitación en los corazones que sientan'.[79] Beyond the miseries, the last words of the brave Camila will always resonate with those who are willing to listen to them; Camila's death is seen as the catalyst for Rosas's fall from power and she is therefore deemed

[77] Bartolomé Mitre's Letter, 27th of April, 1848, in Félix Luna, *Camila O'Gorman*: *Colección Grandes Protagonistas de la Historia Argentina*, (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 1999), p.90.
[78] Lucio V. Mansilla, *Rozas. Ensayo histórico-psicológico*' (Buenos Aires: Anaconda, 1933), no pg number.
[79]Julio Llanos, *Camila O'Gorman*, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones de la Patria Argentina, 1883) in Nazareno Miguel Adami, "Poder y sexualidad: el caso de Camila O'Gorman", *Todo es Historia* Vol., 281., 1990, pp.6-31.

as ‘una heroína de la santa federación’ who really cemented Rosas’ reputation as a merciless persecutor.

The story of Camila has inspired several written works and films including *Amalia* by José Mármol; as well as becoming a key figure used as the regime’s historical representation as a tyranny, Camila embodies a model of nineteenth century womanhood on which both liberal and Revisionist writers focus.[80] It can be argued that in the same way that a revision of Rosas was intended to contribute to the nation-building debate, the desirable contribution of women to the nation-building endeavour could be identified through a revision of nineteenth-century ideals of femininity. Revisionists use Camila O’Gorman and Manuela Rosas to consolidate their own specific definitions of national identity and also to illustrate their recommendations for the role of women in 1930s Argentina. Revisionist intellectuals glorify and demonise women according to their morality, which had to parallel that of the dictator’s; they promote their antediluvian definition of nineteenth-century femininity by idealising Manuela as the perfect role model for women while condemning the immoral conduct of Camila O’Gorman. Revisionists – who exalt Rosas – sought to justify Rosas’s brutality in eliminating Manuel and Ramón Maza, a father and son killed for having attempted to overthrow his government. However, they had greater difficulty in trying to offer a justification for Camila’s execution; the Revisionists’ statement for the justification of Camila’s murder was released – with exquisite timing – when Bloomberg and Vale Paz were reconstructing the story of a young girl who fell in love and also fell victim to the Rosas regime in a popular radio serial, reinforcing sympathy for the Unitarians and confirming Rosas’s reputation as a brutal tyrant.

Manuel Gálvez, who was a disreputable *rosista* sympathiser, wrote a book on the dictator entitled *Vida de don Juan Manuel de Rosas*. In his work, he evidently seeks to provide a comprehensive justification for Camila’s death. He begins by

[80] Revisionism (*revisionismo*) is an authoritarian, racist, anti-Semitic political movement initiated in the 1930s, which has since tried to improve Rosas’s reputation and more notably, establish another dictatorship, namely during the 1989 presidency of Carlos Saúl Menem Akil, modelled on Rosas’s regime. Revisionists exalt Rosas in the literary realm, the key pioneer being Rosas’s biographer, Antonio Saldías. However, when constructing their fictions, some revisionists, such as Manuel Gálvez chose to base their depictions of Rosas and Manuela on the work of their political archenemy, José Mármol rather than on that of Saldías or Jose Rivera Indarte.

emphasising nineteenth century moral standards and social customs to his readers in order to make them aware of the magnitude of Camila's alleged transgression. Gálvez insinuates that Rosas was only complying with the moral conventions of the time but it can be argued that he ordered the couple's execution solely to assert his masculinity through patriarchal supremacy in order to preserve historically and socially established conceptions of privileged masculinity. To contest Gálvez's claim, further proof that Rosas wanted to kill Camila and Uladislao solely for challenging his authority is highlighted in a letter from the dictator to one of his political confidants: 'No soy niño, para sorprenderme con los escándalos de los clérigos; lo que no puedo permitir ni tolerar es que falten a la autoridad, se rían de ella, la ridiculicen'.[81] Rosas was humiliated to the extent that he vowed to do everything in his power to ensure that the traitors received their comeuppance: 'Los he de encontrar, aunque se oculten bajo la tierra…los de he de hacer fusilar'.[82] Worried by the prospect of the scandal threatening his reputation and his ability to rule, Rosas felt the need to prove to his national and international critics that his political supremacy was unchallenged and sentencing the couple to death was the perfect opportunity to do just that. It is telling that the couple's elopement aroused such unwarranted anger in Rosas given that, at the time, his administration was grappling with far more pressing economic and political difficulties: 'Rosas's early years as Governor witnessed severe deficits, public debt, currency devaluation, a four-year drought, increased opposition from the House of Representatives, not to mention conflicts between ranchers and indigenous inhabitants'.[83] Rosas's unforeseen outrage can be put down to the surging wave of public criticism and mockery against his patriarchal regime, ultimately posing a threat to his construction of a hegemonic masculinity. R.W. Conwell argues: 'a hegemonic masculinity is defined by a male leader's ability to subordinate women and weaker men in order to sustain his own masculinity and his ability to rule effectively'.[84] As mentioned in Chapter One and emphasised by Lynch, Rosas's favourite word was subordination and authority his ideal.[85] The extent to which *El Comercio* defies Rosas's

[81] Governor Juan Manuel de Rosas to a political confident, as reprinted in Bilbao, pp.357-358.
[82] *Ibid*.
[83] John Lynch, *Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), p.50.
[84] R.W. Conwell, *Masculinities*, (Cambridge: Policy Press, 1995), p.77.
[85] *Ibid*., p.125.

construction of hegemonic masculinity is even more significant when juxtaposed with his fear of losing his ability to assert his authority. In 1839, his secretariat revealed his reservations about upholding law and order: '[Rosas] knows the people hate him; he goes in constant fear…he has a horse ready saddled at the door of his office day and night; I am not exaggerating, there is an Indian appointed solely as his bodyguard… [Rosas] is constantly looking around at the slightest noise'.[86] Although the Secretariat documented his observation of Rosas's behaviour some nine years prior to Camila's execution, it nonetheless highlights his paranoia over his ability to rule and his awareness of populist opinion of his government. As a result of his anxieties, Rosas chose to self-identify socially with the emblematic Argentine *gaucho*, a cultural affiliation which helped him to validate his manhood and his unparalleled authority. He even went as far as to masquerade his privileged social standing to assimilate himself into the *gaucho* community, sacrificing his comfort and fortune, as confessed to an Eastern diplomat in 1829:

> Me pareció muy importante conseguir una influencia grande sobre esa gente para contenerla, o para dirigirla, y me propuse adquirir esa influencia a toda costa; para esto me fue preciso hacerme gaucho como ellos, hablar como ellos y hacer cuanto ellos hacían.[87]

It is important to note that academics of the Revisionist school which emerged in the 1930s, sought and still seek to manipulate the historiography which classifies the polarizing dictator as the first populist leader, highlighting his popularity amongst the illiterate masses, arguing that it is anachronistic to judge him by modern moral standards. Ultimately, Gálvez wants to pardon Rosas for his murder of the innocent couple because it would have been the 'morally honourable' punishment for any social or religious misconduct in Argentina at the time. As Shumway has argued: 'To examine Rosas is to enter one of the most enduring, intense, and vociferous debates in Argentine history […]'.[88] Gálvez implores his audience: 'si en estos tiempos

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[86] Correspondence from Enrique Lafuente to Felix Frías, 18th April 1839, cited and quoted in John Lynch, *Argentine Caudillo Juan Manuel de Rosas*, p.96. Spanish version unavailable.
[87] Rosas's account, reprinted in Arturo Enrique Sampay (ed.), *Las ideas políticas de Juan Manuel de Rosas* (Buenos Aires: Juárez, 1972), pp.131-32.
[88] Jeffrey M. Shumway, "Juan Manuel de Rosas: Authoritarian Caudillo and Primitive Populist," *History Compass* 2 (2004), p.2.

semejante falta horroriza, calcúlese lo que sería en el ambiente social de entonces'.[89] He seeks to cast doubt on her pregnancy and in doing so, curtail the controversy surrounding her infamous execution. In his punitive analysis of the social predicament, Gálvez postulates that Camila's gender determined her doomed fate as Rosas would have punished her for setting a bad example to women with her morally culpable behaviour: 'Rosas la fusila para salvar a la sociedad toda, por un noble motivo. No quiere que el país se corrompa, que las mujeres faltan tan gravemente a la ley de Díos y a la ley de los hombres'.[90] Gálvez indicated that Camila's death served a wider political purpose; Argentina was the subject of foreign aggression and in order to demonstrate a united front, Rosas sentenced Camila to death for the 'right' reasons, no matter how excessive the method. An interesting point is that in Gálvez' interpretation of the reasons for Camila's execution, it appears that the innocent young woman serves as a sacrificial figure who must die for the good of the nation to preserve the moral traditions of a generation of Argentine women.

In her account, Lucía Gálvez describes the horrifying murder that undoubtedly left a psychological scar in the minds of both the witnesses and the perpetrators. As a last gesture of Christian charity, Camila was visited by the prison chaplain, Father Castellanos, in her cell where she was made to drink Holy Water and had consecrated ashes placed on her forehead in order for the unborn baby to go to heaven. Gálvez states how the apprehensive and reluctant executioners placed and tied both Camila and Uladislao to chairs, then – on two long poles – lifted the accused and paraded them through the crowd. As is customary for people condemned to die before a firing squad, the victims were blindfolded and escorted by the battalion's band to the courtyard surrounded by four walls and 'bajo el pañuelo, los ojos de Camila dejaban escapar dos hilos de lágrimas que, a pesar del dominio de sí expresado en un rostro inmutable, no podía evitar'.[91] Accounts claim that it took 'three rounds of fire before Camila died', which perhaps could represent her metaphorical resistance against Rosas.[92] The man who carried out Rosas's orders stated that the couple was placed in a single, albeit divided, coffin; the location of

[89] Manuel Gálvez, *Vida de don Juan Manuel de Rosas*, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Trivium, 1971), pp.455-456.
[90] *Ibid*.
[91] Lucía Gálvez, *Historias de amor de la historia argentina*, (Buenos Aires: Penguin, 2012), p.50.
[92] Jean Graham-Jones, p.24.

their burial has never been identified and Camila was buried before her brothers came to retrieve her body. The guilt and remorse of the sodiers who carried out the punishment was visible too: 'Mientras los soldados los ataban nerviosamente a los banquillos, Camila y Gutiérrez pudieron hablarse y despedirse, hasta que este último comenzó a gritar: "Asesínenme a mí sin juicio, pero no a ella, y en ese estado ¡miserables...!"'[93] Despite Uladislao's desperate plea for Camila's life to be spared 'sus palabras fueron acalladas por el capitán Gordillo, que mandó redoblar los tambores e hizo la señal de fuego. Cuatro balas terminaron con su vida'.[94] The bystanders were struck with a feeling of profound sadness and heart-break as Camila was shot and inhaled her last breath: 'Después, se oyeron tres descargas y Camila, herida, se agitó con violencia. Su cuerpo cayó del banquillo y una mano quedó señalando al cielo [...] en la vecindad quedó el terror de su grito agudísimo, dolorido y desgarrador'.[95]

In light of Camila's death, we learn that individual actions can have a profound effect on the whole of the nation which determine its rise and fall as Rea notes: 'Camila's story also serves as a reminder to women within the readership of Revisionist texts that the success of the nation is linked to the success of the family and that private actions can translate into national consequences'.[96] Without Camila's sacrifice, it is arguable that the nation would never have been freed from the chains of tyranny and would never have recovered from the decades of civil unrest by Rosas. In *Vida política de Juan Manuel de Rosas a través de su correspondencia*, Irazusta highlights some of the reasons as to why the Unitarian exploitation of the scandal were to blame for Camila's execution. He attributes some of the responsibility for Camila's death to the liberal press for exploiting the controversial predicament and thus undermining the dictator. He also quotes a scathing anti-Rosas article in the *Comercio de la Plata*, the newspaper of the Montevideo-based exiled liberals: 'El Canónigo de la Plata está furioso, no con el rapto, sino con la fuga; porque días antes había prestado al Cura Gutiérrez una onza de oro. En Palermo se habla de todo eso como de *cosas divertidas* porque allí se usa

[93] Lucía Galvez, p.50.
[94] *Ibid*.
[95] *Ibid*.
[96] Rea, p.52.

un lenguaje *federal libre*'. [97] The article continues to draw attention to the decline of moral standards in Rosas's Buenos Aires as it exposes his own nephew, who had been accused of attempting to kidnap a young woman of a wealthy family and high social standing: 'Lucio Mansilla dijo que Franklin Bond, hijo de la hermana de Rosas intentó también robarse otra jóven, hija de familia; pero se pudo impedir á tiempo el crimen'.[98] This is a scandal that *El Comercio* undoubtedly wanted to publicise in order to disparage Rosas and mock his lack of patriarchal authority over his own family.[99] As Camila and Uladislao evaded the authorities, Sarmiento produced an even more inflammatory article which was published in Chile's *El Mercurio* on March 27th 1848. Irazusta remarks:

> Ha llegado a tan extremo la horrible corrupción de las costumbres bajo la tiranía espantosa del 'Calígula de la Plata', que los impíos y sacrílegos sacerdotes de Buenos Aires huyen con las niñas de la mejor sociedad, sin que el infame sátrapa adopte medida alguna contra esas monstruosas inmoralidades.[100]

Matters were made worse when Rosas's niece and younger sister of Lucio, Eduarda Mansilla de García, provided Unitarians with another reason to mock the dictator. Eduarda was a prominent writer in nineteenth-century Argentina. Defined by her elegant writing style which links her to the literary mannerisms of the Generation of 1880, she devoted her life to musical composition, theatre scripts, children's literature, novels and journalism, covering a variety of issues, ranging from the early conquest of America to travelogue reflections on North American Culture.[101] Eduarda's allegiance to the *causa federalista* would become questionable when she eloped with Manuel Rafael García, a prominent ambassador of Unitarian persuasion, who had received critical acclaim for both his international diplomacy and his writings on political economy and the law. Sosa de Newton notes that the marriage

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[97] *El Comercio del Plata,* Montevideo, martes 5 de enero de 1848, No. 664, p.1, col. 4. Retrieved from: http://aurora-arg.blogspot.com/2010/11/los-unitarios-salvajes-auspiciaron-el.html [accessed on 12/01/2018].

[98] *Ibid.*

[99] *El Comercio de la Plata* in Bilbao, '*Vindicación y memorias*', p.355.

[100] Irazusta, *El Mercurio*, 27th March, 1848. No 6, p.386, first cited in Lauren Rea '*Argentine Serialised Radio Drama*' (2013) and Marta Merkin, *La historia de un amor inoportuno* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 1998).

[101] Doris Meyer, *Reinterpreting the Spanish-American Essay: Women Writers of the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995), p.69.

of Eduarda and Manuel Garcia can be likened to Romeo and Juliet: 'En la época se comparó a la pareja con Julieta y Romeo por la declarada ideologia unitaria del novio'.[102] The Mansilla siblings betrayed their uncle in the sense that Lucio denounced Rosas's double standards of morality in light of his controversial relationship with María Eugenia Castro whereas Eduarda had fallen in love with a member of the political opposition and also formed friendships with Unitarian women writers of her time, two of whom were Juana Manuela Gorriti and Juana Mansa de Noronha. Interestingly, as echoed by Sosa de Newton, Eduarda linked her identity as a writer to her intervention in national politics, which is precisely the case with her sisterly colleagues, Gorriti and Manso de Noronha. We have already seen how Manuela assumed a role of high importance in her father's government and the same can be said for Eduarda. Her life was also permeated by politics as she grew up in a political environment; she would be of great use in her uncle's government. Eduarda demonstrated her impressive academic calibre in her role as a French translator throughout the Rosas administration.[103] She was renowned for her 'effortless elegance, poise and striking beauty, qualities which rendered her a fitting match for García'.[104] Her formidable education, combined with her taste for European fashion was, in retrospect, a robust indication of her disenchantment with the Federalist way of life.

The scandalous elopement of Eduarda Mansilla and Manuel García inevitably proved to be fresh material with which the liberal press could further humiliate Rosas. Whilst the Unitarian critique of Rosas and their practice of publicly exposing his brutality was morally commendable, it was perhaps, in the case of Camila and Uladislao, not the most intelligent and tactful move. Furthermore, the liberal scholar Valentín Alsina, who was the director of *El Comercio* – which was arguably the most popular and widely-read tabloid associated with the *Rosista* opposition in Uruguay – thrust the news of Camila's scandalous elopement into the international spotlight, placing the blame on 'la escuela de Palermo (donde estaba la quinta de Rosas) en la

[102] Lily Sosa de Newton, 'Eduarda Mansilla de García en el recuerdo', *Feminaria* Vol., 3, (5), April 1990, p.41.
[103] Natália Fontes de Oliveira, *Three Travelling Women Writers: Cross-Cultural Perspectives of Brazil, Patagonia and the U.S., from the Nineteenth Century*, (Oxon: Routledge, 2018), p.50.
[104] *Ibid*., fig. 2:1, p.53.

que en esa línea se ven y se oyen ejemplos y conversaciones que no pueden dar otros frutos'.[105] The publication criticised Rosas for exaggerating the affair, noting that it was amusing whilst also mocking the leader's naiveté.[106] The periodical even went as far as to blame Rosas and not Uladislao for permanently tarnishing Camila's public reputation (as well as that of her family's), insisting she was now 'una mujer cuyo deshonor no puede reparar'.[107] By divulging the scandal, Rosas incited hatred and public outrage towards Camila when this could have been avoided as 'illicit sexual relations and even illegitimate births could be prevented from dishonouring women (even those from elite families) if the circumstances were kept private and out of the public view'.[108] Nevertheless, Camila was doomed from the start; given Uladislao's role as a local parish priest in Buenos Aires, his status as the nephew of the Governor of the province of Tucumán (a staunch Rosas ally) and the dictator's public acknowledgement of the affair, 'it became impossible for Camila to re-establish her honour in the face of the dominant nineteenth century ideal for "proper" comportment for elite women'.[109] Although liberals such as Sarmiento and Bautista advocated formal female schooling in order for them to be able to contribute to politics, it is important to note that they and other Unitarians contradicted themselves by aiming to protect female sexual purity and exclude women from the public sphere. Even though Sarmiento defended women's rights, he was a fervent supporter of 'proper' womanhood and female honour, to which promiscuous male advances and illicit relations posed a continual threat. He even explained in his seminal work *Facundo*: 'No es sólo virtud lo que la hace resistir a la seducción: es repugnancia invencible, instintos bellos de mujer delicada, que detesta los tipos de la fuerza brutal, porque teme que ajen su belleza'.[110]Although during his time in office,

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[105] *El Comercio de la Plata* in Bilbao, *Vindicación y memoria*, p.355 and also reprinted in Jorge Meyers, *Orden y Virtud: el discurso republicano en el régimen rosista*, (Buenos Aires: Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, 1995), p.60.

[106]*El Comercio de la Plata* in Stevens p.355. Original Spanish unavailble.

[107]*Ibid*.

[108] Ann Twinam "Honour, Sexuality and Illegitimacy in Colonial Spanish America" in *Sexuality and Marriage in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Asunción Lavrin (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), pp.118-155.

[109] Thomas John Brinkerhoff, 'A Case of Forbidden Love: Camila O'Gorman, Ladisalo Gutiérrez and the Gender Anxieties of a Nineteenth Century Argentine Caudillo', *The Latin Americanist*, Volume 59, Issue 2, June 2015, p.71.

[110] Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, *Facundo*, (Buenos Aires: Ministerio de Educación, 2011), p.126.

Sarmiento created numerous academic institutions and was thus successful in facilitating the intellectual development of women, it has to be reiterated that his establishment values were obsolete and only accommodated women of a certain social standing, namely the liberal elite. The schools' instructions were still limited and detrimental to the advancement and expansion of traditional female domesticated roles such as childbearing and maintaining the household. Furthermore, only women pertaining to the upper echelons of Argentine society 'became beneficiaries of Sarmiento's educational reforms', while others, namely women of an inferior social standing, remained excluded from the educational sphere.[111]

It is apparent that critics such as Sarmiento and Alsina did not think about the potential impact their public provocation could have on the fate of the already doomed couple at the heart of this scandal. By criticising the dictator, liberals were stoking Rosas's anger and so, indirectly, sealed the couple's fate. Irazusta comments on the hypocrisy of the liberal writers who were outraged and horrified by Camila's death when ironically, they were the people who had – in part – provoked it. Rosas's opponents, who had always exposed the dictator's killings, had now actually helped to facilitate a murder themselves. The anti-Rosas articles distributed in monthly editions of *El Comercio* sparked bitter reactions from the official Federalist press and the dictator himself. The Buenos Aires periodical *La Gaceta Mercantil*, the semi-official press of the Rosas regime, engaged in a heated and hate-fuelled defence of the Uruguayan paper's attacks against Rosas. The Federalist newspaper always strived to provide a justification for Rosas brutality stating that he tried to uphold the principals of justice and felt that a punishment was necessary given the sinners' defiance and immorality to their families, the Church and the state:

> Procedió conforme a los principios de la justicia y ha tenido por objeto evitar con un escarmiento saludable nuevas víctimas y que el desórden e inmoralidad en las familias, en el Sacerdocio y en el Estado, cundan de un modo pernicioso y fatal.[112]

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[111] Susanne Meachem, *Women Actions, Women's words. Female Political and Cultural Responses to the Argentine State*, (University of Birmingham: e-theses Repository, March 2010), p.iii.

[112] *La Gaceta Maercantil*, No. 7491, Sala Reservados, Buenos Aires, Biblioteca Nacional. First cited and quoted in Lelia Area, *De esto no se habla: el caso Camila O´Gorman en la novela familiar*

Even though Irazusta sheds light on how the Unitarian opposition partly instigated Camila's death, he ultimately blames this horrendous act on Rosas, admitting: 'pero de todos modos, el error del caudillo es evidente…Ningún otro hecho de su largo mándo causo más dano a su fama postúma'.[113] Whereas Irazusta pardons Rosas's chastisement of Ramón and Manuel Maza in the name of preserving national unity, he cannot provide any justification for the crime of the dictator in the case of Camila O'Gorman, stating: 'la última pena para un delito de amor, era el mayor anocronismo en pleno auge del romanticismo del siglo XIX'.[114] However, despite concluding that Rosas's decision to execute Camila was flawed, he still defends him while postulating that Camila's pregnancy was a lie conjured up by the Unitarian press: 'Y como siempre en estos casos, se mezclaron los trovadores, para poner el drama en redondillas, agregando a la realidad la fantasía; en esas trovas apareció la fábula de embarazo de la víctima'.[115] The 'troubadours' to whom Irazusta refers are the liberal anti-Rosas intellectuals who were a part of the esteemed intellectual cohort at the time, known as the Generation of 1837. The fact that Irazusta emphasises the influence of romanticism on liberal writers during this period implies that the Unitarians embellished facts in order to poeticise and romanticise the tragedy of Camila O'Gorman, which inevitably undermines the integrity of their proclamations.

Both Gálvez and Irazusta's interpretations of Camila's execution differ significantly from the account published by Saldías in his 1833 *Historia de la Confederación Argentina*. Saldías puts emphasis on his great sympathy for Camila and depicts her as the definitive heroine of a nineteenth-century romance novel. He illustrates Camila as the product of an austere and regimented childhood and in doing so, portrays her as a victim wanting desperately to break free from the chains that bound her to a life of misery and discontent. Similarly, his representation of the romantic hero, Uladislao, gives the impression that he is most unsuited to the priesthood: 'En su pecho ardían las pasiones en un fuego semejante al que levantan

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argentina del siglo XIX (Universidad Nacional de Rosario: Fundación del Gran Rosario, 2003). Retreived from http://www.lehman.cuny.edu/ciberletras/v10/area.htm. [Accessed on 1/01/2021]

[113] *El Comercio del Plata,* Montevideo, martes 5 de enero de 1848, Año III, No. 664, p.1, col. 4. Sala Reservados, Buenos Aires, Biblioteca Nacional. First cited and quoted in Lelia Area, *De esto no se habla: el caso Camila O´Gorman en la novela familiar argentina del siglo XIX* (Universidad Nacional de Rosario: Fundación del Gran Rosario).

[114] *Ibid*.

[115] *Ibid.*

las tierras volcánicas de su país (Tucumán)'.[116] Saldías tries to justify Rosas's judgement by emphasising that he consulted with the courts before arriving at the decision to execute the lovers:

> Estudiaban la cuestión del punto de vista de los hechos y del carácter de los acusados ante el derecho criminal, y colacionándolos con las disposiciones de la antigua legislación desde el Fuero Juzgo hasta las Recopiladas, resumían las que condenaban a los sacrílegos a la pena ordinaria de muerte.[117]

An important point is that it is almost as if Rosas wanted to be pushed to his limits in that it seems as if he was eagerly anticipating protest at his unjust decision from the Unitarian Press. The articles from the Unitarian newspapers, which are reproduced in Julio Irazusta's *Vida política*, were already incorporated into Saldías' *Historia de la Confederación Argentina*. Saldías reiterates the notion that Rosas was waiting to have his patience tested by the liberals in order to proceed with the execution. We can speculate that Rosas may have thought that if his final decision appeared to be a direct result of the irresponsible comments offered in the Unitarian articles, he may have been able to conjure up an excuse for his deplorable killing of Camila, Uladislao and their unborn child. Of these fatal articles, Saldías remarks: 'esta propaganda inaudita produjo los efectos deseados. Rosas, sin reflexionar que descendía al bajo fondo a que pretendían llevarlo las declamaciones convencionales de sus enemigos, se decidió al imponer el castigo ejemplar que ésos demandaban'.[118]Although Saldías expresses disapproval for Rosas's malicious actions, he interestingly puts the blame on the dictator's 'foolishness' for being provoked by his opponents, rather than just blaming him for being morally corrupt. Camila tragically never reached her personalised cell as hazardous weather conditions diverted the boat carrying prisoners to Santos Lugares.[119] Whereas the Revisionists demonise Camila and emphasise the moral justification of Rosas in sentencing her to death, Saldías adopts a more compassionate approach by

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[116] Adolfo Saldías, *Historia de la Confederación Argentina*, (Buenos Aires: El Ateno, 1951), pp.234-5.
[117] *Ibid*.
[118] *Ibid*., pp.238-9.
[119] *Ibid*., p.239.

romanticising her, especially in her last moments: 'La sociedad y el mundo la condenaban: pero ella, con la abnegación de quien de la sangre y la vida en sacrificio, se había creado el mundo de cuya luz y de cuyo aire vivía. Era Gutiérrez.[120] Saldías does not consider that their relationship merits moral condemnation but instead, uses Camila's pregnancy to magnify the utter tragedy of their predicament; his sympathetic attitude towards the doomed couple alludes to the reality that the pregnancy was not the consequence of a clandestine and scandalous affair but the innocent consequence of their love. Saldías acknowledges that there was a child by reporting its baptism whereas the Revisionists question its very existence.[121] Saldías, who established himself as a Camila sympathiser, also indicates that he is not alone in his view of the event: many of his contemporaries, according to him, shared his belief that Buenos Aires was more scandalised by the deplorable execution that by the alleged 'transgression'. Saldías' honest testimony from 1883 clearly aims to challenge Gálvez's innumerable attempts to ignite moral indignation amongst his readership of 1940. When discussing Camila, the Revisionists diverge significantly from Saldías' pro-Camila account as they must condemn her in order to provide a justification for Rosas's actions.

Camila is seen as a transgressive aristocratic woman who proudly defied the so-called morality of Church, Family and Society in order to pursue her love for Uladislao and is therefore seen, in the view of the liberals, as a revolutionary figure whose tragic execution has become ingrained in Argentine national consciousness. As a result, she has inspired several films and books, namely the short story *Camila O'Gorman* (1876) by Juana Manuela Gorriti, the film *Camila* (1984) by María Luisa Bemberg and the novel *Una sombre donde sueña Camila O'Gorman* (1973) by Enrique Molina. An interesting point to note is that, whilst Camila's story has sparked the interest of intellectuals and film directors and thus reached an array of audiences, the documentation regarding her execution has not been as widely distributed; according to Donald Stevens, the Catholic church were responsible for the dearth of information on Camila, arguing that throughout the twentieth century, the fundamentalist institution openly opposed any works, fictional or otherwise on

[120] *Ibid*.
[121] *Ibid.,* p.240.

Camila O'Gorman.[122] It can be stated that in a sense, just like Eva Perón, Camila transcended her death; even though unworthy of any credit in the eyes of the religious fundamentalists, her legacy is enshrined in the Argentine national story as she helped shaped the nation's history. When examining Camila, commentators have often focused on her perceived sexual deviance and immorality and have analysed how her elopement challenged the sanctity of female purity and sexual nobility whilst also dishonouring the patriarchal family values in nineteenth century Argentine society. Federalist and Unitarian attitudes towards gender norms, particularly with respect to the comportment of elite women were indistinguishable; the most notable difference with regards to Unitarian and Federalist definitions of 'proper' female comportment were in the realm of education. Liberals defended women's right to education and also argued that formal schooling was a means by which women could make a valuable contribution to local and national politics. Given that, in the eyes of both the Revisionists and the Catholic Church, Camila was an inconvenient and unfit heroine of 'la Santa Federación', they dedicated themselves to establishing the only other prominent female figure as the ultimate heroine of the Rosas era who was of course, the dictator's daughter herself, Manuela de Rosas y Ezcurra.

[122] Stevens, *Passion and Patriarchy in Nineteenth-Century Argentina,* p.87.

CHAPTER FIVE

Manuela Rosas: The Submissive Daughter or The Government's Real Power Broker?

It can be argued that from a liberal historical perspective, Manuela's benevolence was a form of resistance to her father's tyrannical regime. It is a well-known but widely contested claim that Manuela was oppressed under the rule of her father, both in the household and in the political arena. Francine Masiello claims that this power dynamic between men and women is concordant with a number of nineteenth century Latin American texts which reiterate the notion that the family of an illogical man always suffers and is 'headed toward irreversible destruction when managed by an irrational father, a metaphor for state authority'. In these texts, the depiction of the women is always favourable as she is portrayed as the saviour of the family and thus 'becomes a figure of opposition to the state'.[1] Manuela's compassionate nature, juxtaposed with her father's unprecedented brutality, has elevated her to a heroic status in the *década infame* and thus shed a more positive light on the Rosas regime. It is plausible that Manuela single-handedly facilitated the success of her father's government, especially during times of war; she was generously praised for assuming the legendary role as mediator between Rosas and *el pueblo* as McCann reaffirms: 'For all who appealed to General Rosas in an extra-judicial character, his daughter Doña Manuelita was the universal intercessor'.[2] The irony lies in the paradox that Rosas perpetrated the senseless violence yet ordered his daughter to offer sympathy and condolences on his behalf: 'Questions of moment to individuals, involving confiscation, banishment and even death were thus placed in her hands, as the last hope of the unfortunate'.[3] As the more subtle figure out of the father-daughter duo, Rosas utilised his daughter's gentle and charming nature as a political tool in order to maintain a diplomatic relationship with the public. It is Manuela's role as a political mediator that has expedited her transformation from a

[1] Francine Masiello "Women, State and Family in Latin American Literature of the 1920s" in *Women Culture and Politics in Latin America*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), p.34.
[2] William McCann, *Two Thousand Miles' Ride Through the Argentine Provinces* [1853] (New York: AMS Press, 1971), p.23.
[3] *Ibid*.

historical idol to a mythical heroine. Given that Manuela can be seen as a source of calm in the turbulent and often violent streets of *Rosista* Buenos Aires, she can be classified as a representation of the Argentine nation, as Mary Pratt affirms: 'women were at the centre of a symbolic economy in which female icons symbolized the nation – that is, what was at stake between opposing groups of men'.[4] Manuela aroused the imaginations of both Federalists and Unitarians; to the *rosistas*, she was seen as the resilient and gracious *heroina de la federación* and to the opposing political party, she was seen as a victim of her tyrannical father who desperately needed rescuing, hence the liberals' sympathetic depictions of her in anti-*rosista* literature.

Even though Mármol's and Gorriti's portrayals of Manuela are rather divergent, both liberals are instrumental in elevating Manuela to her mythical status; Mármol, a fervent opponent of Rosas, not only fictionalised Manuela in *Amalia* but also discussed her importance in his essay a year earlier. Mármol's essay arguably promotes female domesticity and republican motherhood, emphasising the stereotypical gender role to which women adhered. It is important to acknowledge that Mármol romanticised Manuela with his descriptions of her appearance and character: 'Su frente no tiene nada de notable, pero la raíz de su cabello castaño oscuro, borda perfectamente en ella, esa curva fina, constante, y bien marcada, que comúnmente distingue a las personas de buena raza y de espíritu'.[5] Given that Mármol never met Manuela in person, it is highly likely that his detailed descriptions of her are based largely on the 1850 official portrait of Manuela by the artist Prilidiano Paz Pueyrredón, whose painting was used as a depiction of Rosas's brand of Federalism. Pueyrredón's painting of Manuela is the embodiment of her father's ideal federalist woman; she is wearing a traditional red dress and her complexion is considerably lighter than it was in real life. In reality, Manuela is said to have had a deep olive skin tone and resembled the appearance of a *mulatto* woman such as her mother, thus rendering her porcelain skin in Pueyrredón's portrait factually inaccurate. The Afro-Argentine community ardently glorified Manuela to the extent that she would be the subject of praise in their hymns: 'in the poem-song "Hymn to

[4] Mary Louise Pratt, 'Women, Culture and Politics in Latin America', *Seminar on Feminism and Culture in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), p.53.
[5] Jose Mármol; Félix Weinberg, *Manuela Rosas y otros escritos políticos del exilio*, (Buenos Aires: Taurus, 2001), p.105.

Da. Manuelita Rosas" – sung by African women on the occasion of Manuela's birthday – Conga women declare Manuela their "queen", "mother" and "loyal protector" and lament that their ancestors died in Congo without having seen Manuela's gracious beauty'.[6] Manuela is also praised for having thrown into the abyss the "diabolical Union" as well as being described as 'a moon that radiates beauty, joy and light, guiding *felices morenas* throughout their journey.[7] Pueyrredón's representation of Manuela is further discredited by the fact that the Buenos Aires elite disparaged her *trigueño* complexion whereas the Conga women celebrate her skin tonality, asking the sun not to 'eclipse the colour'.[8] In his biography of Pueyrredón, José León Pagano reaffirms that Manuela had dark skin by describing her prominent features: 'presenta cabello castaño oscuro, ornado por una diadema de brillantes y la divisa federal; cutis *trigueño* y ojos negros'.[9] Never having met Manuela, Mármol perceived Pueyrredón's painting to be accurate and, in his account of her appearance, he describes her as being of 'la buena raza' when this claim could not have been further from the truth. Whilst such an uninformed assertion would seem uncharacteristic of Mármol, it can be argued that he intentionally took Pueyrredón's portrayal to be an exact image in order to compare Manuela with Camila as Rea notes: 'The tone of Mármol's piece is reminiscent of Saldías' descriptions of Camila, suggesting that romantic embellishments within historical works and essays are acceptable during the nineteenth century, especially when the subject is female'.[10] A further explanation as to why Pueyrredón chose to purify Manuela's complexion is because he was not only 'fond of reflecting European tradition in his work, but he had to obey the strict guidelines issued by a committee of influential men'.[11] As well as whitening her skin to Europeanise her, Pueyrredón uses a romantic backdrop of a desk, and armchair and flowers of soft and

[6] For further information, see Ricardo D. Salvatore, *Beyond Slavery: The Multilayered Legacy of Africans in Latin America and the Caribbean*, (Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2007), p.64.
[7] *Ibid*.
[8] *Ibid*.
[9] José León Pagana, *Prilidiano Pueyrredón*, (Buenos Aires: Academia Nacional de Bella Artes, 1945), p.67.
[10] Rea, *Argentine Serialised Radio Drama,* p.48.
[11] Nancy Hanway, *Embodying Argentina: Body, Space and Nation in Nineteenth Century Narrative*, (Jefferson: Mcfarland, 2003), p.53.

feminine colours. The fact that her face presents a look of adoration as she gazes into the distance is significant, not only because it suggests she is looking at someone she loves, but because the person on whom she is focusing her attention is in fact, her father. Mármol published strict guidelines which had to be followed by Pueyreddón:

> Manuela debía aparecer parada, con una expresión risueña en su fisonomía, y en al acto de colocar sobre su mesa de gabinete una solicitud dirigida a su tatita. Representándose de este modo la bondad de la jóven, en su sonrisa; y su ocupación de intermediaria entre el pueblo y de su Jefe Supremo en la solicitud que colocaba sobre la mesa […].[12]

The positioning of Manuela in the painting is an accurate reflection of her unhealthy relationship with her father; Rosas was the only man with whom she was allowed to pursue an intimate relationship. After Encarnación's death, Manuela was forced to assume the role of her mother, providing support and companionship to Rosas, rendering her a victim of her father. Despite the fact that she had an older brother, Juan Bautista, Manuela was considered as her father's political successor in 1839; her popularity and influence among the masses was unparalleled, thus deeming her a fitting replacement.[13] In the year of Mármol's essay and Pueyrredón's official portrait, Manuela was 33 and still unmarried, undoubtedly because of her father's unrelenting control of her life, as Mármol indicates: 'vistas futuras en su política…hacen que Rosas vele, como un amante celoso, los latidos del corazón de su hija'.[14] Mármol sympathises greatly with Manuela's plight and reinforces what he sees as her unenviable future characterized by isolation and spinsterhood. However, he also draws attention to the possibility that, even if Rosas was willing to part with his most prized political ally, there might still be a dearth of potential suitors for her. During *los años de tiranía*, the natural order was reversed which ultimately resulted in Manuela becoming more powerful than any of her prospective suitors, and tempted, therefore, to reject a romantic relationship with an 'inferior' man. It is

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[12] Mármol, José/ Teodosio Fernández. '*El retrato de Manuela Rosas*'. *La Semana,* No. 21 (6th October 1851), pp.207-209.This version (Alicante: Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes, 2011. Retrieved from http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/obra-visor/el-retrato-de-manuela-rosas/html/63046a6a-a0f9-11e1-b1fb-00163ebf5e63_2.html. [accessed on 1/12/2017].

[13] John Lynch, *Argentine Dictator Juan Manuel de Rosas*, p.169.

[14] Mármol, p.107.

arguable that Rosas's uncivilised traditions which had been ingrained in the mind-set of his fellow federalists had emasculated their personality traits: 'Gira sus ojos y esa mujer desgraciada en medio de su teatral felicidad no descubre sino hombres, débiles, sometidos, prosternados, que se hacen un deber y un honor en humillarse delante de la mujer misma a quien pretenden lisonjear'.[15] Mármol postulates that Manuela simply would not be attracted to men who belonged to her father's social circle and therefore, she would never find love unless she met her ideal man who would most likely be a Unitarian. Interestingly, whereas both Unitarian and Federalist perceptions of Manuela compliment her skin tone, César Aira implies that, just like her mother, Manuela was unattractive by referring to her as 'fea y pálida'.[16] Given that Mármol's depiction of Manuela is inaccurate as it is based on Pueyrredón's painting, New Historicism deserves a mention. Mármol's treatment of Manuela can be likened to a New Historicist's approach in the sense that he imaginatively recreates Manuela to align with his beliefs (that she resembled a porcelain-skinned Unitarian woman), when there is no existing evidence to support this portrayal.

Even though Mármol's essay can be deemed as a wholly sympathetic and favourable portrayal of Manuela, the same cannot be said for that of Gorriti's representation of the same female icon. Liberal writers have used women as substitutes for the nation as countries are often perceived as feminine in order to consolidate an abstract idea; for example, cultural aspirations such as freedom and justice which were desired by the Unitarians were better personified and communicated by women, evident in their compulsive use of Camila O'Gorman and Manuela Rosas in literature. Mármol and Gorriti not only use women as a symbolic representation to explore what transpires in wider society but they place the women in romantic relationships which already constitute allegorical tropes. Mármol's Eduardo and Gorriti's Manuela are both Unitarian whereas both Amalia and Clemencia are reluctant *federalistas* and thus their elopement would be a metaphor for national harmony. It is evident that the anti-Rosas and anti-dictator discourse is a male-dominated school of thought which – despite her different approach – Gorriti infiltrates as she mobilises women as the central metaphor for the nation. In theory,

[15] Mármol, p.109.
[16] César Aira, *La liebre*, (Buenos Aires: Émece, 2004), p.11.

she uses Clemencia as a 'primary site for testing the reconciliation of politics and the nation, tradition and modernity, betrayal and hope and indeed, the possibility of rebirth'.[17] The possibility of rebirth is a concept that is predominant in *Amalia* as in the end; we learn that she is with child, which could be a reincarnation of the one that was killed in Camila's womb.

We have seen that liberal intellectuals use women to affirm the notion of nation building and it is no different in the case of pro-*rosista* writers. For example, Gálvez, elevates Manuela to a mythical status who symbolises the nation, the irony lying in the paradox that if he adopts Dorit Naaman's woman-nation theory (mentioned on p.140), then, unbeknownst to him, he is also confessing that Manuela is a victim of Rosas's patriarchal authority. By stating that Manuela is a national icon, Gálvez enlists her as the carrier of tradition and nationalism which are shaped by women. Gálvez's Manuela encapsulates the most honourable qualities which are bastions of the social conduct for the women of her time; she is loyal, charitable, self-sacrificing and most importantly, obedient. This description of Manuela echoes that of Mármol who identifies her as a saint-like figure. However, the fact that Manuela sacrifices herself to become a servant of her father's autocracy means that she cannot be considered a heroine. Mármol implies that given Manuela's exposure to the terror that unfolded during the regime, she would never be able to experience the same emotions as other women: 'Supongamos que la naturaleza hubiese dado a Manuela Rosas, cuanto es imaginable de delicado, de sensible, de mujeril, en una palabra ¿pero es natural, imaginable siquiera que tales propensiones se conservasen puras entre la atmósfera en la que vivían? no: mil veces imposible'.[18] Whereas some Unitarians do not use Rosas's authoritarianism to excuse Manuela, Mármol concludes that had Manuela been blessed with a different father, she could have been a brilliant person, although, not even being burdened with Rosas as a father had turned her into a force of evil. It seems as if the liberal opposition appreciates the plight of the alleged oppressed federalist women; Mármol and Gorriti attribute to their factual and fictional characters the desired qualities that are identified with

[17] This quotation is taken from James Ogude's critical analysis of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's representations of women as the nation, and applied to Manuela Rosas. For further information, see James Ogude, *Ngugi's Novels and African History: Narrating the Nation* (London: Pluto Press, 1999), p.109.
[18] Mármol, p.125.

Unitarian ladies. The personalities of Manuela and her representative, Clemencia, are manipulated to accommodate the Unitarian standards for females as Mármol emphasises Manuela's benevolence: 'Manuela oye a todos; recibe a todos con afabilidad, y dulzura. El plebeyo encuentra en ella bondad en las palabras y en el rostro. El hombre de clase halla cortesía, educación y talento'.[19] It is ironic how both the pro- and anti-Rosas writers glorify Manuela and attribute to her the qualities of romanticised femininity; her willingness to receive ordinary citizens and show compassion for their struggles makes her an attractive literary figure for both schools of thought. Having said this, neo-*rosistas* use Manuela to honour the Rosas dictatorship whereas anti-*rosistas* use her to demonise it. Whilst recognising her significant role in the regime, liberal writers also define Manuela as a maiden enslaved to her overbearing father whilst hinting that she is a victim of incest. Rivera Indarte highlights Manuela's incestuous relationship with Rosas as he states in *Es acción santa matar a Rosas*: 'Rosas es culpable de torpe y escandaloso incesto con su hija Manuela, a quien ha corrompido'.[20] Indarte's claim that Rosas pursued his daughter is refuted by Saldías, who became a leading contributor to the Revisionist movement, as he scornfully remarks: 'la dedica torpes calumnias, en lenguaje cínico y brutal que transpire algo como el furioso despecho de una pasión jamás correspondida, si es que Rivera Indarte pudo amar realmente a una mujer, él, que trató mal a su pobre madre'.[21] Despite his polemical portrayal of Manuela's relationship with her father, Indarte corroborates the general opinion that Manuela had the potential to become a good woman. Alluding to the theme of Indarte's novel, he encourages everyone to attempt to kill the dictator but he especially encourages women to take action: '¿De tantas mujeres que insulta y deshonra, que penetran hasta él, no habrá una que asesinándolo quiera hacerse la mujer de *la patria*?'.[22] In this sense, Indarte fully acknowledges the plight of women under the Rosas government and implies that if a woman murders the tyrant then she will be upheld by the nation as a model of female nobility and honour. He even goes as far as to demand that Manuela kill her own father: 'La misma *infame* Manuela se lavaría de su mancha

[19] Mármol, p.129.
[20] José Rivera Indarte 'Es acción santa matar a Rosas', *Rosas y sus opositores*, 2.ed., (Buenos Aires: Imprenta de Mayo, 1853), p.338.
[21] Saldías, p.347.
[22] Indarte, pp.159-160.

profunda con la sangre de su espantoso seductor'.[23] It is the only way in which she can redeem herself and, in doing so, aspire to the status of true national heroine. It is this suggestion which culminates in Indarte's very different but empowering version of Argentine womanhood; his bold proclamations to the effect that everyone should try to kill Rosas, render him a literary outcast: no one, not even his liberal counterparts, Mármol and Gorriti, had suggested anything as extreme before. Even though Indarte's pronouncement is somewhat controversial, it is a revolutionary interpretation of Manuela: he does not conform to the conventional liberal tradition of focusing on her compassion and submissiveness but rather on her resilience which is required for the commission of a crime aimed at freeing other people. This is precisely why Revisionists refrain from addressing Indarte's depiction of Manuela and instead turn to Mármol and Saldías for an historical antecedent upon which to mould their own interpretations of Manuela.[24]

It is ironic how the Revisionists chose to refer to the work of Mármol – who is their political enemy – rather than that of Saldías – who belongs to the same school of thought – in order to construct their own portraits of Manuela. For example, Saldías, who is Rosas's defender, does not state in his account that Manuela urgently pleaded with her father to save the life of Camila O'Gorman; he indicates that she only intervened on the eve of the execution but her help was anything but voluntary and was in fact, solicited by Reyes. Saldías' less extravagant role for Manuela in the attempted prevention of Camila's death does not accord with the sympathetic Manuela that the Revisionists want to project. It is when addressing Camila's death that we see the heightened impact of Mármol's work; they use his work to preserve the parable of her compassionate intervention. Rea emphasises that Mármol's influence over the Revisionists is visible in the tone adopted in their indulgent descriptions of Manuela.[25] In Carlos Ibarguren's *Manuelita Rosas* he praises her vulnerability and tenderness as well as referring to Mármol's description of her as a mediator: 'ella fue, y se lo reconocieron hasta los más encamizados enemigos de su padre como José Mármol, la esperanza y el consuelo de los suplicantes y de las víctimas; por eso la niña pudo desempeñar, al lado del dictador, la dulce función de

[23] *Ibid.*, p.358.
[24] Rea, p.58.
[25] *Ibid*.

la clemencia y de la gracia'.[26] Despite Ibarguren's acknowledgement of Manuela's role as a political mediator, he does stress that whether or not she was able to defuse tension between her father and his followers was wholly dependent on Rosas's mood. He explains that Manuela's kindness was expressed but not necessarily practised: 'Su bondad tuvo que ser, durante la tiranía, más pasiva que activa…Tal era "La Niña"'.[27] The term 'La Niña' – which was used as a mark of respect for unmarried women – was attributed to Manuela and became her unofficial title. The irony is that Rosas wanted Manuela to remain la Niña for the rest of her life. Manuela's alleged oppressive upbringing saw her pledge unconditional loyalty to her father, even if that meant suppressing her natural female desires; Rosas's ferocious love did not suffice as Jerome Adams laments: 'Manuelita's home was a strange mixture of love without tenderness and of companionship without delicacy'.[28] Manuela's entrapment is an aspect of the Rosas regime that liberal intellectuals draw on in their work in order to arouse sympathy for her whereas the Revisionists steer away from writing anything about her relationship with Rosas. It is telling that in order to portray the Rosas regime in a positive light, Revisionists do not focus on Rosas's 'achievements' but rather on Manuela's beauty and sensibility; they have emulated and built upon Mármol's work which, out of principle, they should be challenging. It is unsurprising that the myth of Manuela Rosas was conjured up so promptly after the elopement and execution of Camila O'Gorman. The liberals allegorised Manuela as the nation to bring to light the regime's destruction of womanhood and the neo-*rosistas* used the figure of the dictator's daughter to divert attention from the unforgivable crimes of Rosas towards the end of his time in office. Both Mármol and Gálvez presented their romanticised versions of Manuela when she was in her prime in 1850, but before then, from the untimely death of her mother to the demise of her father's government, she had been invisible and excluded from literary treatment. Both enemies and supporters of Rosas revived the myth of Manuela when she was in her prime to propagate their own agendas; however, the liberals continue writing about her even when she leaves her father. When in exile, she defied Mármol's expectations by marrying Máximo Terrero and having two

[26] Irazusta, p.344-5.
[27] *Ibid*., p.30.
[28] Jerome Adams, *Notable Latin American Women: Twenty-nine Leaders, Rebels, Poets, Battlers and Spies 1500-1900*, (Jefferson: McFarland, 1995), p.153.

children. During this period, Rosas was plagued with feelings of jealousy and rejection and, according to Lynch, never forgave his daughter for abandoning him during his hour of need. Even though her correspondence shows that she did still care for her father, Revisionists stay clear of probing her later life as the Manuela of 1850 makes for a much less complicated heroine.

Next, we shall turn to María José Lojo's *La princesa federal* to dismantle the image of the woeful Manuela that is so convincingly consolidated in liberal literature. In an interview with Lojo, Kathryn Lehman states that the liberals and the Unitarians have both portrayed Manuela as a victim of her father, using her as an allegory of the captive nation, proceeding to ask if there are works in which she is represented in a more ambiguous fashion. Lojo reiterates that Mármol is mostly responsible for the portrayal of the virtuous Manuela. This would be true given that in his work, he stated that even though the two had never met, he was infatuated by her. It is probable that Mármol portrayed her as a victim because of his own prejudices concerning feminine nature, which were shared by many men of his time. Even though Mármol evoked sympathy for Manuela, his discriminatory attitude towards women in power, which was previously unacknowledged, is finally addressed by Lojo: 'Mármol believed that Rosas had "perverted" Manuela's femininity, by bringing her directly into contact with power , because obviously, he believed that matters of power are not for women, that this association with power corrupts their feminine nature'.[29] If Mármol perceives Manuela to be a victim solely because she fulfilled male-dominated duties then his portrayal of her can be seen as somewhat reactionary. According to Lojo, he also believed that women were fragile and delicate beings, prone to a frivolous and light-hearted imagination, who become masculinised and insensitive once they face the harsh realities of violence in politics.[30] Alluding to Mármol's reservations about Manuela finding love, he was accurate in stating that she would not find any suitable man as her sweet and feminine nature had been degraded by her father's decision to masculinise her. Manuela's marriage to Máximo Terrero would have delighted her liberal admirers as she would have finally broken free from her imprisonment but Lojo contests that she

[29] Kathryn Lehman, 'Women, Subalternity and the Historical Novel of María Rosa Lojo', *Studies in 20th and 21st Century Literature*, Vol.29 (1), (2005), p.83.
[30] *Ibid*.

even wanted to escape her father in the first place: 'It is Mármol's work that motivated me to construct my character from another interpretation of Manuela Rosas who I consider to be much more of a protagonist of her destiny than that image desired by the imagination of poets or liberal writers'.[31] Lojo suggests that Manuela was responsible for her own fate and did not suffer under her father; in fact, the proof that she was not a victim lies in the help which she offered Rosas's biographer Adolfo Saldías. When she was an elderly woman living in England, she granted Saldías access to her father's archives; this was arguably an act of historical vindication which she herself had facilitated, making her tremendously proud. She was so proud of Saldías's biography of her father that 'when Máximo fell ill after suffering a stroke, she would read to him Saldías's work chapter by chapter so he would not tire'.[32] There is no indication that Manuela was forced to assume her role in government but rather that she imposed the duties on herself. It is due to the lack of evidence that we cannot say that she is ashamed or resentful of her father even though she would not have agreed with some of his lamentable crimes such as that relating to Camila O'Gorman. Lojo's arguments culminate when she states that in her view, Manuela believed that she and her father were providing the nation with a necessary service.[33] A fascinating point is that Manuela went on to have a harmonious relationship with one of her father's political enemies, Juan Bautista Alberdi, whom he exiled; this suggests that Manuela's anger was not directed towards the traditional adversaries, namely the Unitarians, but in fact was aimed at Rosas's once trusted confidants who denounced him to benefit themselves. Figures such as Dr. Dalmacio Vélez Sarsfield, who was prominent in the post-Caseros era, condemned Rosas after his fall from power and likewise, the Anchorena family, whom Rosas always favoured 'did not lift a finger to improve Rosas's situation in exile'.[34]

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[31] *Ibid*.

[32] "Really, Reyes, that work of Dr. Saldías is fantastic! We are reading the first volume just now, I read aloud so that my poor Máximo does not lose track, so he understands it well and it does not tire his mind" Letter from Manuel Rosas to Antonio Reyes in *Manuelita Rosas y Antonio Reyes. El Olvidado Epistolario. (1889-1897*), (Buenos Aires: Archivo General de la Nación, 1998), p.89.

[33] Lehman, p.84.

[34] *Ibid.*

Throughout her account, Lojo effectively deconstructs the myth of Manuela as a victim. There is an important passage in the diary of Pedro de Angelis who was Rosas's secretary, which emphasises the irony of any assumption that Manuela was trapped – the fact was that she did not want to be freed: 'Todos creen que Manuela desea ser liberada por la mano de héroe capaz de arrebatarla cuando el dragón está dormido. Todas ignoran que el dragón nunca duerme, y lo peor: que ella en verdad no desea liberarse'.[35] Angelis, who was in love with Manuela, closely observed her relationship with her father and recognised that she did not want to leave her father and even if she did, it would be an impossibility because 'tenía un pacto con la fiera y las llamas que parecen apresarla son apenas el reflejo del muro que sostiene el castillo'.[36] Lojo turns the victim myth upside down, implying that Manuela is just as dependant on her father as she is on him; she is not a captive of her father's predator-like fixation on her because she has volunteered to remain by his side and therefore, it seems, she does not want to slay the dragon which fiercely guards her but rather tame it. Angelis provides a further insight into the carnivalesque world in which Manuela was in her element; he completely disproves Mármol's claim that she was a damsel in distress by emphasising the fulfilment her 'burdensome' role brought to her life. He describes a scene in Rosas's house which disgusts him; he despises racial contact and is sent into shock when people of all races are conversing as friends in the living room. As mentioned in previous chapters, Manuela was always the guest of honour at African rituals and celebrations and this is a world which fascinated rather than suffocated her (as suggested by Mármol). In Lojo's novel, the young and charismatic scientist, Gabriel Victorica, interviews Manuela at her home in London, during which she recalls her upbringing on the nomadic *pampas*. Lojo confirms that Manuela understands the desires of human beings in general and knows how to manipulate them through these desires; this is reminiscent of her relationship with her father as he may have been the head but she is the neck which turns it, rendering her an outstanding candidate as a mediator for her father and eminently appropriate for Victorica's psychological treatment. *La princesa federal* suggests that Manuela is being subjected to patriarchal authority: she is influenced by her father, written about by Angelis, and analysed by Victorica which, according to Lehman 'places her in a

[35] María Rosa Lojo, *La Princesa Federal,* (Buenos Aires: Debolsillo, 2013), p.162.
[36] *Ibid*.

submissive position with respect to men who once again use the power of language and of hegemonic discourse to represent women'.[37] However, given that Manuela infiltrates the male-dominated political arena, it can be said that she neutralises masculine authority with her feminine power. Lojo's Manuela possesses emotional intelligence which was undoubtedly put to use in order to resonate with the marginalised groups; she knew what other people desired and empathised with their plight. She became known as 'La Reina del Carnaval'.[38] She found out what people in her father's social circle liked which facilitated the success of her dinner parties; she was a skilled and experienced hostess and even though hosting events was a challenging task, she accommodated everyone's preferences to ensure that the lavish occasions ran smoothly.[39]

Even though her role as an entertainer for the masses exposed her to social interaction, Manuela was somewhat socially maladroit – a result of her social isolation. Manuela volunteered to become the subject of Carl Jung's Freud-inspired 'Electra complex'. Victorica visited London to see Manuela in 1893 and also to interview Dr Sigmund Freud, whom Lojo's Manuela mockingly called 'Mr Alegre', doubting that there was any kind of credible scientific discourse which could resolve the mystery of the human soul.[40] Ironically, she was wrong. According to Neo-Freudian psychology, the 'Electra complex', as proposed by Carl Jung, is defined as a girl's psychosexual competition with her mother for possession of her father and, at its most basic level, refers to the phenomenon of the little girl's attraction to her father and hostility towards her mother, whom she now sees as her rival.[41] The girl's desire for her father's attention is identified as penis envy or the phallic stage of Freud's psychosexual development. It has to be said that there is no Electra complex per se. Jung manipulated Freud's 'Female Oedipus Complex' in order to distinguish himself from his counterpart but did not elaborate or further develop the notion. In his work, he simply wrote that 'the daughter develops a specific liking for the father, with a correspondingly jealous attitude towards her mother'. Jung builds upon the

[37] Lehman, p.87.
[38] Lojo, *La princesa federal*, p.38.
[39] *Manuelita Rosas y Antonio Reyes*. *El Olvidado Espitolario*. Cited in Lehman, p.89. Spanish account unavailable.
[40] Lehman, p.87.
[41] Jill Scott, *Electra After Freud: Myth and Culture*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), p.8.

Oedipus complex and brings to light the story of Electra 'who took vengeance on her mother, Clytemnestra, for murdering her husband Agamemnon and thus robbing her – Electra – of her beloved father'.[42] Given Jung's failure to explain his work, Freud dismissed the plausibility of his theory, and refuted the Electra complex in 1913, renaming it the feminine Oedipus attitude or the negative Oedipus complex.[43] According to Freud, Jung's theory was psychoanalytically inaccurate: 'what we have said about the Oedipus complex applies with complete strictness to the male child only [...] we are right in rejecting the term "Electra complex", which seeks to emphasise the analogy of the attitude between the two sexes'.[44] Manuela Rosas is a prime manifestation of this theory as Lojo reiterates her fascination with her father: 'He visto y tratado en mi vida a muchos hombres, caballeros y patanes, doctores y sacerdotes. Muy pocos, o ninguno de ellos a la verdad, podrían compararse a mi padre en gallardía y en belleza varonil'.[45] To be accurate, the feminine Oedipus attitude ('Electra complex') is visible in Manuela's femininity; Mármol made known his distaste for any notion of Manuela's defeminisation as a result of her constant exposure to a male-dominated environment. However, the argument that she was the embodiment of a different type of femininity is plausible: 'The girl directs her desire for sexual union upon her father and thus, progresses to heterosexual femininity'. Manuela's femininity has not been destroyed; it has been masculinised by her infatuation with Rosas and her surrounding environment. Furthermore, Freud's theory can be adopted in order to explain Manuela's subservience to her father: 'Freud considered the Feminine Oedipus attitude to be more emotionally intense than the male counterpart, with the result that the girl might develop a less-confident personality'.[46] Drawing upon Manuela's unusually submissive nature, it can be said that it was she who was the dominant force in her relationship with her father. Rosas was obsessed with subordination, particularly of women, and it can be argued that Manuela's self-imposed submissiveness was what attracted her father's attention, enabling her to assume complete control over him. Conversely, Rosas's control over

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[42] Carl Gustav Jung and Carl Kerényi, *Essays on a Science of Mythology: The Myth of The Divine Child and the Mysteries of Eleusis*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), p.154.
[43] Sigmund Freud, *On Sexuality: Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality and Other Works* (London: Penguin, 1991), p.375.
[44] *Ibid*.
[45] Lojo, p.132.
[46] Alan Bullock and Stephen Trombley, *The New Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*, (London: Harper Collins, 1999), pp.259, p.705.

his daughter is perhaps most discernible in the fact that he made Manuela an extension of himself which, in Freudian analysis, is a process identified as 'Protective Identification'. Rosas projects aspects of his character, which he cannot express himself, on to Manuela – a concept which is supported by the Personal Identification theory which postulates that 'in order to feel powerful and in control of nature, men unconsciously project unacceptable aspects of themselves on to women.[47] 'Unacceptable' aspects of Rosas's personality, which would be considered as too feminine for a man, would be those of 'dependency, helplessness and emotionality'[48], and this is precisely how Rosas lived vicariously through Manuela and avoided taking responsibility for his 'feminine' vulnerabilities.

In *La princesa federal*, the myth that Manuela was trapped in a toxic environment for a considerable period of her life is in fact, demystified; when asked about her mother's untimely death, Manuela defends her mother's efforts to contribute to what she thought was a noble cause: 'Murío dichosamente entera, sin ninguna duda de que había combatido por la mayor causa, o por la única posible' and goes on to commend her mother's commitment: 'Manuela sintió que su madre no era la muerta, sino la Heroína del Siglo, la que devisó y accumuló el poder para Rosas en la Revolución de los Restauradores'.[49] Lojo also claims that, to contradict accusations that she was afraid of her father, she welcomed his praise and affection: 'Está orgulloso porque no tenemos miedo y vamos contra el viento, está más orgulloso de mí que de Juan, porque soy menor, soy niña y acaso debiera temer, por la natural debilidad propia de mi sexo, pero no lo hago'.[50] She romanticised the image of her father by commenting on his physiognomy: 'Brilla de la cabeza a los pies pero lo más brillante no es el punzó del uniforme, sino los ojos azules' and when asked if her mother was as aesthetically pleasing, she replies: 'No, mi madre no brilla. Mi madre es una mano sobre la frente en las noches de fiebre. Huele a espliego, tiene un surco pronunciado en una de las mejillas, da órdenes en voz baja para no despertarme'.[51] Manuela confirms Unitarian claims of her mother's alleged

[47] Samuel Slipp, *The Freudian Mystique: Freud, Women and Feminism*, (New York: New York University Press, 1993), p.48.
[48] *Ibid*., p.49.
[49] Lojo, *La Princesa Federa*l, pp.25-26.
[50] *Ibid*., p.32.
[51] *Ibid*.

'fealdad' which, as previously stated, earned her the name of 'Mulatta Toribía.' The Manuela of Lojo's account is one who is honest and wise, so much so that she has managed to charm Dr Victorica into avoiding conflict with her. However, despite her honesty, she is reluctant to answer questions or to be interrogated about the tragic case of Camila O'Gorman or the controversial relations between her father and his mistress, namely Eugenia Castro. When asked if she received a catholic cross which was given to Rosas, Manuela responds: 'No, fue una persona allegada' and thus suggests that he gave it to another person close to his heart. After Victorica asks who the recipient is, Manuela 'se demoró en responder' and vaguely states: 'Una muchacha que sirvió a mi madre durante su enfermedad, y luego se ocupó de la atención de Tatita'. Her response prompts Victorica to ask: '¿No sería María Eugenia Castro?' – a suggestion that does not go down well: 'Manuela me miró con tirante suspicacia'.[52] Manuela makes her frustration known by accusing Victorica of being ignorant of the facts: 'Me desconcierta usted. Parece ignorar algunas cosas obvias y sabe tanto de otras. Acabaré por creer que además de médico es brujo'.[53] He further ignites her anger by stating that her ambiguous responses are to blame for his assumption and reveals to her that Eugenia Castro is the name which has been circulating as of late. Angelís reiterates that after his wife's death, Rosas: 'sin duda hallaba su lecho demasiado solitario' but 'no eligió para su compañía a una mujer de la 'clase decente, sino a una muchacha del servicio, una joven menor que su hija, ni criada rasa ni pariente pobre'.[54] The social class of Eugenia Castro is irrelevant given that she still lives under Rosas's roof which places her under his control: 'El padre es el virtual marido y el guardián de todas las mujeres de la casa'.[55] Victorica comments on the absurdity of Eugenia's social class given that her father was a well-known and well-respected colonel but she has ended up working as a low paid maid. Lojo claims in her account that Manuela was jealous and envious of her father's new love interest as she writes: '[Eugenia] era una de esas chinas calladas que parece que no rompen un plato, pero cuando uno se descuida …' It is startling that Manuela does not think

[52] *Ibid.,* p.119.
[53] *Ibid*.
[54] *Ibid*.
[55] *Ibid.,* p.120.

to condemn Rosas's pursuit of his vulnerable teenage maid; she provides an explanation for Eugenia remaining in the Rosas household:

> No era ninguna santa. Antes de morir mi madre ya se encontraba en estado. Y por culpa del general Rosas, como se ha dado en creer. Su primera hija, Mercedes, llevó el apellido Costa porque fue engendrada por Sotero Costa Arguibel, un sobrino de mamita.[56]

She hints that her father impregnated Eugenia and disparagingly remarks: 'algunas mujercitas son como animales. No digo que en eso haya mala índole. Nadie culparía de maldad a una yegua en celo que se deja cubrir por el semental de la tropilla'.[57] While pursuing Eugenia, Rosas fathered five more children who 'invaden los jardines palermitanos',[58] and stayed with their mother under the dictator's watchful eye until his exile. Lojo's Manuela does not comment on the disturbing age gap between Rosas and his lover and justifies Rosas's abandonment of his illegitimate children: 'Si hubiese sido sólo Eugenia. Pero esos niños [...] Encantadores hasta los dos años. Después se volvían insoportables e insolentes. Alentados por mi padre, que es lo peor'.[59] Manuela's vindication of Rosas's decision to abandon his children is indicative of her desire for his undivided attention. She expresses her discontent and irritation at her father's relationship, for she is still competing for the 'possession' or 'repossession' of her father: 'Nadie sabe qué pasa en el silencio de los cuerpos. Nadie sabe qué hay en el alma de los que callan. Nadie sabe quién es más valioso ante los ojos de nuestro padre'.[60] Finally, she reveals how much she valued her father's company: 'Tatita siempre estaba fuera. Quizá por eso lo he querido tanto cuando tomó el gobierno, y ya no se marchó de casa, y pude recuperarlo'.[61] Even though Rosas used Eugenia for physical gratification, he was forever fixated on Manuela. Even though she, according to Lojo, was jealous of her father's amorous relationships and he was jealous of hers, the father and daughter were inseparable and stayed in close contact even after Manuela's marriage. It is through Lojo's innovative depiction of Manuela as an empowered and independent woman that we question the credibility of both the liberals and the Revisionists. She focuses on

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[56] *Ibid*.
[57] *Ibid*.
[58] *Ibid.,* p.133.
[59] *Ibid*.
[60] *Ibid.,* p.136.
[61] *Ibid.,* p.133.

Manuela's indispensable role in her father's government because of her intellectual talent and not because of her feminine beauty whilst also dismissing the implication that she was repressed. However, Lojo's indication that Manuela clung tightly to her father for the first half of her life out of choice, leads us to believe otherwise. Her resilient and liberated Manuela does not give rise to the construction of a new myth but refreshingly, reflects the credible reality that she controlled the strings of her world, thus contrasting with the Manuela mythologised in other works as a victim.

In conclusion, contrary to the mythical narrative perpetuated by the liberal opposition, the material examined in this account explicitly demonstrates that Manuela remained by her father's side from personal choice. After examining several fictions in which Manuela is depicted as a victim, it is arguable that she was not forced to serve under her father's rule but rather, willingly chose to stay with him for the first half of her life out of loyalty. Even when Rosas did not speak to his daughter for several months after her marriage to Máximo de Terrero, she still kept in contact with him through written correspondence which eventually led to their reconciliation. It is largely incorrect to say that she detested or even resented her father for his paternal authority over her: if this was really the case then she would have completely abandoned him as soon as they arrived at Southampton. By countering the inaccurate narrative which has been monopolised by Unitarian intellectuals for nearly two centuries, this chapter provides an alternative explanation for Manuela's enduring relationship with her father. In letters to the ex-army general, Antonio Reyes, Manuela expresses her infatuation with her father and thus, it is highly unlikely that she would have wanted to break free from him, as propounded by the liberal opposition. Even when Manuela settled into family life with a husband and two sons, she ensured that her father's legacy would live on; when her spouse suffered ill health, she would recite, as we have already mentioned, Adolfo Saldías' biography of Rosas to him, an account which she praised as being 'fantastic'. The myth of Manuela as a victim is dispelled when we apply logic and evidence to the process of uncovering her life. In my view, although the liberal works, particularly those of Gorriti, have shed light on the plight of women – such as Camila O'Gorman – under the Rosas dictatorship, María Rosa Lojo's *La princesa federal* is the most historically accurate. Although less artistic and imaginative than Gorriti, Lojo is a historian who refers to factual evidence, which has inevitably influenced her

approach to writing fiction. While Gorriti incorporates a degree of suspense into her fictional works and depicts her interpretation of reality through fantasy, Lojo is a contemporary and realist writer whose style is deadpan and predictable, hence the lack of creative reconstruction in the telling Manuela's story. On the contrary, her lack of imagination only makes her account more plausible.

In their use of fiction, Unitarian authors have implemented a rather anti-woman approach to deciphering Manuela. By depicting her as an oppressed, helpless and uneducated figure, they disempower her – an accurate reflection of their real-life mysoginistic attitudes. Mármol and Gorriti's works are biased in the sense that they base their fictional depictions of Manuela on their subjective interpretations of reality: both writers have presented a convincing but deceitful argument for Manuela's victimisation, which of course is heavily influenced by their profound contempt for Rosas. Conversely, Lojo bases her Manuela on what can be deemed as almost concrete reality. She has incorporated into her account historical evidence in the form of written correspondence between Manuela and Reyes in which she showers her father with praise, rendering her admiration for him incontestable. Lojo empowers Manuela as she portrays her as being in full control of her own life which, in my view, is an even more compelling argument. By supporting her claims in her interview with Kathryn Lehman, Lojo diversifies the narrow-minded debate regarding Manuela's life, in which reality has been eclipsed by Unitarian fantasy and its demonization of Rosas. When liberals have fictionalised Manuela in the past, her real-life story has been lost in myth and thus, there is no distinction between the literal and the metaphorical. Prior to writing her novel, Lojo sought out a more plausible explanation for Manuela's life as she grew frustrated with the misrepresentation of the dictator's daughter, of whom she said: 'Este poderoso y persistente cliché: una hija inerte e inerme, víctima de un padre autoritario, resultó el disparador de *La princesa federal*, que trabaja, en buena parte, para desarticular y desconstruir esta imagen'.[62] *La princesa federal* adds a new dimension to the argument as it most closely correlates with Manuela's real life. Even though Lojo's novel is to some extent imaginative it is not a recreation of the dictator's daughter but

[62] María Rosa Lojo, "En el nombre de la hija: una visión de Juan Manuel de Rosas desde doña Manuelita, la niña. Apuntes sobre el proceso de escritura de la princesa federal", *Revista de literaturas modernas*, Vol. 13, (42), 2012, p.194.

a semi-biographical account of her life. She uses the foundations of what seem to be Manuela's true intentions and feelings. A prime example of this comes in her exchanges with Dr. Victorica: Manuela acknowledges the controversy surrounding the death of Camila O'Gorman and Rosas's distasteful relationship with Maria Eugenia Castro but she does not say a word to denigrate her father; she remains silent. In actuality, Manuela never condemned her father's unsavoury taste in younger women, nor did she denounce his deplorable crimes, namely the execution of Camila O'Gorman. Although she wrote to Rosas and pleaded with him not to execute Camila, she did not voice her horror following the atrocity, but rather proceeded to offer her father her unwavering support.

What Mármol, Sarmiento and Gorriti perceive to be Manuela's fear of challenging her father's authoritarianism, Lojo portrays as the opposite. She hypothesises that Manuela stayed with her father because she too wanted to enjoy political supremacy: after all, the Rosas dictatorship was among the first to afford women the opportunity to assume unofficial though highly important roles in government. The counter-progressive and anti-women attitudes of the Unitarians are often ignored; alleged liberals such as Mármol and Sarmiento masked their misogynistic sentiments by stressing the importance of preserving femininity. It is apparent that Unitarian men did not condone the social and professional progression of their female counterparts, strongly emphasising that the out-of-home environment led to the 'masculinisation' of women. I am referring specifically to Mármol's aforementioned theory that women should not be active in the political arena as they will be 'defeminised' and also to Sarmiento's discriminatory public policy of allowing only upper-class women to receive a scholarly education and only to a certain extent. Other notable liberals such as Sánchez Zinny and Antonio Dellapiane also postulate that 'denaturalisation' occurs when women are placed in the field of power. On the contrary, Rosas exercises the opposite views. In correspondence between the dictator and his close compatriot, José María Roxas y Patrón, Rosas crystalizes his views on women in power: 'No creo en la monarquía pero tampoco en la república, como están al presente. Son formas extremas [...] partiendo de la idea de poner hereditaria de la república a una persona [...] mi opinión ha sido siempre que

debía ser una mujer'.[63] In the letters – which were written during Rosas's exile – both men express their admiration for Queen Victoria and they reveal more interestingly that, in 1841, José María Roxas led the campaign to nominate Manuela as the political heiress of her father. Rosas's views on women in power can paradoxically be deemed more progressive and feminist than those of the 'enlightened' Unitarians. He was not discriminatory towards the concept of women becoming as powerful as men. Lojo imagines that Rosas was responsible for his daughter's exposure to the outside world as she writes: 'trabajó para hacerla perder la timidez de su sexo, exponiéndola a peligros y haciéndola cabalgar potros briosos…'[64] By introducing her to stereotypical male activities, Rosas conditioned Manuela for her political agency in later life, a role which she arguably enjoyed. Ultimately, whilst it is possible that Manuela did feel pressurised into complying with her father's demands and proving her worth in the political arena, to say that she was 'oppressed' strongly implies that she suffered, when the available historical documentation demonstrates that this claim is largely incorrect. That being said, it is impossible to know the nature of Manuela's relationship with her father. This is precisely why the uncrowned princess has lent herself to imaginative reconstruction, an approach to history which has arguably redefined what it means to be a historian. Could Lojo's account just formulate an alternative narrative to that of the Unitarians? The lack of distinction between the fictional and factual has made it impossible to establish the absolute truth.

[63] Letter from Rosas to Roxas-Patrón in Alfredo Burnet-Merlín, *Cuando Rosas quiso ser inglés: Historia de una anglofilia*, (Buenos Aires: Libera, 1976), p.89.
[64] Lojo, *La princesa federal*, p.179.

CHAPTER SIX

Redefining Truths: Juan Perón as a Subject of Imaginative Reconstruction

Juan Manuel de Rosas had both a positive and devastating impact on Argentina; he practised social equality by employing people of ethnic minorities – namely the Afro-Argentine population – to organise his spy network while also advocating the preservation of gaucho culture. However, his rule intensified hatred between the upper and lower classes, a legacy unmatched by any previous leader. After the dictator's fall from power in 1852, Argentina experienced a transformation in leadership accompanied by a transfer of power to Rosas's political archenemies. Under the governance of Unitarian Presidents – who accommodated the aristocracy and discriminated against the working classes – the people to whom Rosas had given a voice were now silent. The inhabitants of the *pampas* were forgotten and suppressed under Unitarian rule until, in 1946, the working classes rediscovered their voice thanks to one man: Juan Domingo Perón. Here was an unbreakable political force who transformed the lives of the Argentine proletariat, fondly named *los descamisados* and gave them a strong sense of dignity and self-respect.[1] He was deemed a champion of the working classes, a status which he arguably could not have achieved without the support of his wife, Eva Duarte.

While Perón pursued progressive social policies, his commitment to democratic principles was often questioned. His administration is considered by some scholars as a regime which may not have been overtly fascist but nonetheless suggested by its conduct and some of its policies (e.g. the establishment of a monolithic Peronist Party) that it had distinct fascistic inclinations. It is true, however, that some historians, such as Felipe Pigna, absolve Perón of fascism,[2] claiming that his association with fascism was peddled for ideological reasons by his political archenemies. When asked in an interview if his account 'rechaza que a Perón y al peronismo se los califique de fascistas?' He replies:

> Sí, efectivamente. Esta confusión tiene un origen entendible por la clara admiración de Perón por Mussolini, pero que no se traduce en

[1] Daniel James, *Resistance and Integration: Peronism and the Argentine Working Class, 1946-1976* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pps. 14-16.
[2] Felipe Pigna, *Los mitos de la historia argentina* (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2008), pp.28-19.

> su práctica política en cuanto al sujeto social que elige, el movimiento obrero, y en cuanto a los cambios que lleva adelante en la estructura social argentina'.[3]

To further negate his ties with fascism, Tulio Halperín Donghi claims that even though Perón never attempted to hide his admiration for Fascist Italy, Mussolini had neither a strong influence on Perón's ideals nor on Peronist doctrine. Moreover, Arturo Jauretche maintains that Perón was never a fascist or an anti-fascist, but simply a realist.[4] However, other scholars have concentrated on exposing Perón's totalitarian dispositions, manifested in various ways ranging from his manipulation of his own supporters to, more notably, his acceptance of Nazi war criminals in Argentina. George Blanksten is the most distinguished commentator to have shed light on Perón's controlling instincts. Blanksten himself conducted further investigation into Perón's administration by travelling to Argentina while Perón was in office in the early 1950s and later penned an account, revealing Perón's autocratic tendencies, many of which remained secret and therefore escaped criticism. During his stay in the capital, Blanksten found that Perón's fascistic tendencies were more prominent than he had anticipated and included censorship of the press. Perón had first issued citizens with a card of 'good morality', known as the *buena conducta*, which they had to present to the police on a daily basis or else face punishment. Second, he even employed his paramilitary police – known as *El Control del Estado* – who, with Perón's authorisation, arrested and even tortured anti-peronists and political spies.[5] This is reminiscent of Rosas's very own death squad, the *Mazorca*, whose role in securing the passivity of the population would have been familiar to Perón. Also plausible is the accusation that Perón sought to dictate workers' political allegiances by developing policies that initially appeared to accommodate the labourer but in fact, were primarily aimed at maintaining Perón's political supremacy. A prime example of this is *Justicialismo*, the official Peronist ideology

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[3] Silvina Friera, Interview with Felipe Pigna (January 2009), "La izquierda cometió muchos errores con el peronismo". Retreived from: https://www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/suplementos/espectaculos/2-12661-2009-01-25.html [accessed on 01/02/2021].

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[5] George I. Blanksten, *Perón's Argentina* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953).

which practised a 'humane' form of capitalism and controlled workers' political activity.[6]

The Early Years

For decades, scholars have attempted to unravel Perón's background regarding his family origins and birthplace, which have been shrouded in mystery due to lack of historical records and Perón's inconsistent responses to his biographers' questions. Perón was born to Juana Sosa Toledo and Mario Tomás Perón in Lobos, officially on the 8th October 1893, though the date is disputed as we shall see. His family roots can be traced to Spanish Sardinia, from where his great-grandfather immigrated to Buenos Aires in 1830.[7] Throughout his time in office, he always publicly expressed pride in his Sardinian roots.[8] Perón also had Spanish, British and French Basque ancestry.[9] After immigrating to Buenos Aires, Perón's great-grandfather became a successful shoe merchant in the Argentine capital and his son, Perón's grandfather, was notably the most academic in the family since he was a highly-respected physician:

> Mi padre era hijo de don Tomás L. Perón, médico y doctor de química. La vida de ese abuelo está sembrada de honores: fue senador nacional (ministra) por la provincia de Buenos Aires, Presidente del Departamento Nacional de Higiene, que él mismo había creado, y prácticamente mayor del Ejército en la Guerra del Paraguay.[10]

The premature death of Perón's grandfather in 1889 left his widow destitute, However, their son, Mario, identified a business opportunity and moved to Lobos, then a rural settlement, where he administered an *estancia* and met his future wife. Mario and Juana had their first son, Avelino Mario, out of wedlock but eventually married ten years later, on 25th September 1901.[11] In the same year, the newly wed

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[6] *Ibid*., pp.280-305.
[7] Norberto Galasso, *Perón: Formación, ascenso y caída 1893-1955* (Buenos Aires: Colihue, 2005), p.25.
[8] Joseph Page, *Perón: a biography* (New York: Random House, 1983), p.20.
[9] David Cox, *Dirty Secrets, Dirty war: Buenos Aires, Argentina: The Exile of Editor Robert J Cox* (Charleston: Evening Post Books, 2008), p.28.
[10] Tomás Eloy Martínez, *Las memorias del General*, (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 1996), p.20.
[11] Paul Lewis, *The Crisis of Argentine Capitalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1990), p.150.

Peróns moved to Patagonia where Mario purchased a sheep ranch. Juan's early childhood on the Patagonian plains was significant as it shaped his outlook on country life and he developed an admiration for the native *peones* who, in Perón's words, 'nos acompañó durante los primeros años de la estada en la Patagonia. Eran como de la familia, y yo los trataba como a tíos'. Similar to Rosas, Perón was fascinated and intrigued by the indigenous peoples and grew fond of their warmth and kindness: 'Hay que reconocer, también, que se trataba de gente magnífica; en su infinita humildad cabía una grandeza que no me fue fácil encontrar luego en gente más evolucionada'. Not only did Perón echo Rosas's interest in the nomadic inhabitants of the *pampas*, but he aspired to be like them throughout his childhood: 'Cuando era chico, mi ambición era ser como ellos: seres extraordinarios en lucha continúa con la naturaleza'.[12] During his short childhood on the Patagonian plains, Juan was close to his parents but received a strict upbringing from his father: 'Mi padre era severo en lo relacionado con nuestra crianza. Todo los aprovechaba para dejarnos una lección. No por eso nos escamoteaba su profundo cariño'. He also engaged in suburban activities with his family and assisted his father on the ranch: 'Solíamos salir con él, mi madre y mi hermano a cazar avestruces y guanacos que abundaban entonces en nuestro campo'.[13] He expresses a great admiration for his mother, with whom he had an unbreakable bond, reminiscent of that between Rosas and his mother: 'Mi madre, nacida y criada en el campo, montaba a caballo como cualquiera de nosotros, e intervenía en las cacerías y faenas de la casa con la seguridad de las cosas que se dominan'. He even appreciated her effective parenting style: 'Veíamos en ella al jefe de la casa, pero también al médico, al consejero y al amigo de todos los que tenían alguna necesidad'. It is arguable that the young Perón considered his mother the more influential parent, for it was she who was responsible for teaching him important moral values: 'Esa suerte de matriarcado, ejercido sin formulismo pero bastante efectivo, provocaba respeto pero también cariño Y en mi concepto, el cariño es la mejor forma de respeto entre los hombres'.[14] Despite Juana's integral role in forming her son's moral compass, Davies argues that she was 'hardly the traditional "angel of the house" of nineteenth-century culture', referring to the fact that she inflicted most of Perón's psychological wounds, one being that

[12] Martínez, *Las memorias*, p.21.
[13] *Ibid*. p.24.
[14] *Ibid*.

she bore him out of wedlock. But perhaps the most notable psychological wound was her infidelity to Perón's father, which materialised in Juan's adolescence: 'Returning home from a hunting expedition, the wounded Juan did not find the chaste and protective mother whom he expected, but rather the mother in *flagrante delicto*, fornicating with a labourer twenty years her junior'.[15] Joseph Page notes that due to her disloyalty and betrayal, Perón 'had a very cold attitude towards his mother, with whom he maintained virtually no contact'.[16]

There has been much controversy surrounding the date of Juan Perón's birth as well as the names of his parents. Perón's official date of birth on the 8th October 1895 has been disputed by Hipólito Barreiro, as stated in Norberto Galasso's account. Barreiro claims that Perón was, in fact, born on the 7th October 1893 and not in Lobos but Roque Pérez, a small town close to Lobos.[17] In an interview with Pablo Andrés Bobadilla Enchenique, Hipolito Barreiro draws attention to Perón's indigenous ancestry by claiming that his mother, Juana Sosa was 'Aónikenk', the name that Tehuelche people used to describe themselves. Barreiro also postulates that Perón received a strict and traditional Indian upbringing, starting with his birth. Barreiro claims that Perón was born in accordance with an indigenous birth practice in the house of his mother. According to Tomás Eloy Martínez's *Las memorias del General* (1996) Perón was brought up in a rural setting and when he was two, a *gaucho* – known as the Chino Magallares – trained him to ride horses without a saddle. Barreira also states that he lived in Patagonia until the age of eleven, speaking Mapuzungun; he was so passionate about the language that, according to Barreira, he wrote two books: one on Araucanian toponymy and a dictionary on the Araucanian language.[18] The extent to which his fixation with Indian culture manifested itself in his later life is unclear.[19] However, Barreira remained a close

[15] Davies, p.57.
[16] Joseph Page, 'Introduction', *Evita*, *In My Own Words*, trans. Laura Dail (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1997), p.22.
[17] Galasso, p.21.
[18] Pablo Andrés Bobadilla Enchenique's interview with Hipólito Barreiro, '*Sounds and Colours*', November 1st 2017. Retrieved from: https://soundsandcolours.com/articles/argentina/juan-domingo-peron-son-indian-woman-interview-hipolito-barreiro-38805/ [accessed on 5/11/2018].
[19] Although Perón was proud of his indigenous roots, his ancestry was not favoured by the military and thus could have been detrimental to his rise in the social scale. In 1910, his maternal grandmother feared that he would be unsuccessful in his pursuit of a military career. Judged by the very rigorous social customs at the time; the military would never have accepted an illegitimate son,

friend of Perón right up until the General's death in 1974 – a friendship which would have seen Perón share his innermost secrets.

Rise to Power

'Perón's rise to power was grounded in the 1930 military coup that overthrew the middle-class Radical Party government of Hipólito Yrigoyen'.[20] Uriburu's coup was executed with military precision; he led a small detachment of army troops into the capital, encountering no substantial opposition, allowing him to take control of the *Casa Rosada*.[21]After Yrigoyen was overthrown, Uriburu, who was Argentina's first *de facto* president, assumed power from 6th September 1930-19th February 1932, before dying from stomach cancer two months later on 29th April. His successor was the military officer, General Agustín Pedro Justo Rólón, who favoured gradual conservative reorientation of the country and was in power from 1932 until 1938.

Before Perón became a leading figure in the political realm, he was assigned to study mountain warfare in the Italian Alps in 1939, where he attended the University of Turin for a semester. His attending the University of Turin shaped his future political views that would later influence the running of his own government. Perón studied Hitler's Nazi Germany and Benito Mussolini's Italian fascism, for which he developed a distinct admiration. After Perón returned from Italy in 1941, he immersed himself in political activity, which would ultimately instigate his climb to the top. Perón joined a secret group of military officers called the Grupo de Oficiales Unidos (GOU), which he claimed to have co-founded along with his fellow collaborator Domingo Alfredo Mercante.[22] Perón discussed his ideas to promote the

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nor a child with indigenous ancestry. Taking into account his Indian roots, Juan would be deemed highly ineligible to apply for a place at the *Colegio Militar*. Upon realising that these problems would impede Juan's progress in the military profession, the Peróns conjured a plan to gain Juan entry. With the assistance of her late husband's social relations, she forged a birth certificate that would allow her grandson to satisfy the military requirements.

[20] Thomas C. Wright, *Latin America since Independence: Two Centuries of Continuity and Change* (Forbes Boulevard: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), p.195.

[21] Daniel K. Lewis, *The History of Argentina*, 2nd ed., (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp.83-84.

[22] The principal aim of the GOU was to strengthen the nation's military readiness, block communist advances, oppose an alliance with Britain and promote its members' careers.Colonel Perón is said to have had a great political influence on the GOU, 'which had no ideological coherence, unlike Perón himself'.See Laurence A. Clayton & Michael L. Conniff, '*A History of Modern Latin America*' (Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth, 2005), p.362.

trade unions, labour rights and prevention of election fraud, which was rife from 1930-1943, a thirteen year period commonly known as the *década infame.* It is said that the 'discussions which took place amongst group members, gave birth to the principal *peronista* policies such as working-class rights, the development of the military and the need for political and economic independence'.[23] The most daring aim of the GOU was to overthrow the government of Ramón Castillo – Perón ensured thorough preparation for the coup, known as the Revolution of '43.[24]

The GOU members installed themselves in power and for the next three years, the country was successively run by three members of the military junta: Arturo Rawson Corvalán (1943), Pedro Pablo Ramírez (1943-44) and Edelmiro Fárrell (1944-46).[25]After the successful coup, Rawson declared himself president of Argentina but apparently only after overcoming competition from his companion, Pedro Ramírez, who was appointed War Minister by Castillo in 1942.[26] However, Rawson's time in office was short for two reasons; his brief presidency compromised his shared leadership of the GOU and more importantly 'his young cabinet officers decided to withdraw their confidence from him'.[27] Perón was appointed as the new War Minister in Ramírez's administration , a role in which he thrived: 'By 1944, Colonel Perón had succeeded, in his capacities as war minister and secretary of labour and welfare, in capturing the machinery for the mobilization of the military and the workers in defence of the new regime'.[28] Argentina damaged its relationships with the Axis powers, under pressure from the United States which 'set in motion events leading to the resignation of President Ramírez and the accession of his vice-president, Edelmiro Fárrell'.[29] Under Fárrell, Perón's power peaked; he held three

[23] Further evidence to suggest that the nationalistic GOU laid down the foundations for the Peronist Party are claims that it was, 'intensely anti-communist, anti-liberal, and also a hotbed for anti-Semitic talk, a polemical issue which would later tarnish Perón's government. See Jill Hedges, *Argentina: A Modern History* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), p.82.

[24] Galasso, p.140.

[25] James D. Henderson & Helen Delpar, *A Reference Guide to Latin American History* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2000), p.210.

[26] Pablo Mendelovich, *El Final* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones B, 2010), p.144.

[27] Pedro Ramírez took over the presidency and Rawson congratulated him in doing so. Although neither Rawson or Ramírez were not democratically elected and brought to power by a coup d'état, 'Peronist history does not consider them dictators.' See Alberto Ciria, *Parties and Power in Modern Argentina 1930-1946* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1974), p.77.

[28] Blanksten, p.165.

[29] *Ibid*.

offices, the most prestigious being the vice-president of the nation. He remarked during his inauguration that he was particularly proud of three attributes: being a soldier, being considered the first Argentine worker, and being a patriot.[30]

Once he was a step closer to realising his dream, Perón's next move was to recruit members for the GOU while serving in the Ministry of War and garner support from the Argentine working classes. In his post as Head of Labour and Social Security, Perón recognised the potential of the working classes and intentionally appealed to them in order to earn their allegiance, which would facilitate his future ambitions.[31] Other politicians were quick to dismiss the hardship of the working classes and Perón identified and capitalised on this opportunity; he saw that while the needs of the working class Argentines were being largely ignored by the government, their numbers and therefore national importance were rapidly expanding.[32] What Perón did next could have possibly weakened his popularity in that his actions defied both the military and the Catholic Church. His main desire was undoubtedly to form a working-class support network, an ambition which saw him heavily criticised by Catholic nationalists and the army. The right-wing *nacionalistas* did not favour Perón's integration of the Argentine plebeian population into the national community as they 'bemoaned what they saw as Perón's excessive pandering to working-class demands'.[33] As well as the army's general intolerance of labour activities, the Catholic Church was reluctant to condone the socio-political assimilation of the masses, as they were more left wing and would thus challenge the right-wing ecclesiastical hegemony. It was because of his invaluable military experience that the plight of ordinary people was well-known to Perón. During his years as an officer, 'he conversed with conscripts who came from impoverished families, lacked decent clothes and entered the army barefoot'.[34] Although Perón

[30] Even after being assigned the vice-presidency, Perón did not forget his desire to transform the Department of Social Welfare which, 'for years had languished in neglect'. See Blanksten, p.165.
[31] Harry E. Vanden & Gary Prevost, *Politics of Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.146.
[32] Alexander Dawson, *Latin America Since Independence: A History with Primary Sources* (New York: Routledge, 2011), p.171.
[33] Michael Goebel, *Argentina's Partisan Past: The Politics of History* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011), p.97.
[34] Marvin Goldwert, *Democracy, Militarism and Natiomalism in Argentina 1930-1966: An Imterpretation* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1972), p.87.

identified his winning ticket to progress in the political scale, he was still faced with two major challenges, which threatened his chances of running for President: taking full control of the GOU and gaining the support of the political arena at large. As early as 1943, while seeking civilian support for the revolution, Perón, alongside General Edelmiro Fárrell, and Colonel Juan Filomeno Velasco, had been in contact with the Socialist leaders, Angel Borlenghi and Jose M. Argana.[35] Not only did Perón have the backing of labour politicians and the military, but full media coverage of his good deeds.

Although it is common knowledge that Perón met Eva when they both attended the San Juan fundraiser charity ball, George Blanksten argues in his account that the pair had begun their relationship early after the revolution of '43: 'Eva met him [Perón] at a Radio Belgrano party in October of 1943. He was 'undersecretary of war in the Ramírez government then, and, from their first meeting, Perón and Evita found much to admire in each other'.[36] In light of Eva and Perón's blossoming relationship, Radio Belgrano, identified a money-making opportunity; as Perón's rise to the presidency was imminent, they increased Eva's pay in return for Perón's endorsement of the network. The military's code of ethics insisted that no senior officer could live with their mistress but Perón violated this rule when he openly lived with Eva: '[Perón's] meteoric rise antagonised military leaders who coveted his positions and prominence, opposed his overtures to labour or were annoyed by his relationship to radio personality Eva'.[37]

The support from his military counterparts rapidly declined, as they were consumed by their anger at his public liaison with entertainer Eva Duarte. As a consequence of flaring tensions, Perón was forced to resign his government offices on 9th October and was subsequently arrested three days later, on the orders of General Eduardo Ávalos, who emerged as the leader of the military opposition, and led the anti-Perón forces against the General and his followers.[38] Perón was

[35] Within a year of initiating collaborations with these key figures, Perón became a household name as he passed 29 new labour laws and took part in 311 labour disputes. See Goldwert, p.88.
[36] Blanksten, p.90.
[37] Scott Mainwaring & Timothy R. Scully, *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), p.209.
[38] Robert Jackson Alexander, *A History of Organised Labour in Argentina* (Connecticut: Praeger, 2003), p.84.

imprisoned on the Island of Martín García, in the Rio de la Plata estuary. Perón's incarceration demonstrated the fruits of his labour in the sense that his support network facilitated his release with maximum efficiency. By 'using both the "carrot and the stick," he had built a broad base of supporters who then fought for his release from jail and then voted him into the presidency'.[39]

Now that Perón had the support of labour and the nationalist parties, he needed the backing of one more institution: the Catholic Church. Perón's affiliation with the working classes and Eva alienated both the military and the church but conveniently, he reconciled with both parties in time for his election. The election took place on the 24th February 1946 and – in a stark contrast to recent years of military coups – was 'peaceful and orderly'. One foreign observer remarked that 'after such an efficiently unfair campaign, there could be a free – and legal – election.[40] The election was praised for its absence of corruption or fraud and is characterised by Peter Smith as the most 'scrupulous and democratic election' in Argentine history.[41] However, other commentators such as Paul H. Lewis vehemently contest the claim that Perón justly won. He maintains that Perón only emerged with a resounding victory because the elections 'were marred by violence'.[42] Even though Perón was democratically elected, it is somewhat ironic that he was given the power to 'install his undemocratic regime'.[43]

Perón's term in office is often hailed as one which reconfigured the political landscape of the country and transformed the lives of the proletariat. Blanksten remarks: 'The Perón revolution, after all, *is* a revolution. It has seized an essentially agricultural country which was traditionally ruled by the landowners who expressed little concern for the welfare or grievances of the lower classes'.[44] Poverty alleviation and the sovereignty of Argentina were principal agendas of the Perón government and, depending on the audience, 'Perón would either talk about anti-communism or

[39] Peter H. Smith, 'Social Mobilization, Political Participation, and the Rise of Juan Perón', *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 84, No.1, March 1969, p.44.
[40] Josephs, p.136.
[41] Smith, p.47.
[42] Lewis, p.150.
[43] Katherine J. Wolfenden, 'Perón and the People: Democracy and Authoritarianism in Juan Perón's Argentina', *Inquiries Journal for Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities*, Vol., 5 (2), p.1.
[44] Blanksten, p.vi.

social justice'.[45] These prominent themes would drive the rise of a hegemonic *Peronist* philosophy better known as *Justicialismo*, for which there is no official English translation. From an optimistic perspective, *Justicialismo*, which was part of the Five Year Plan, seemed to be the most outward manifestation of Perón's allegiance to the working classes as it was an ideal which advocated the incorporation of labourers into the political system without causing any damage.[46] It was renowned for the moral underpinning of its principles and defined as a form of humane capitalism 'which meant that the state could assume a role in the marketplace and facilitate the legitimate growth of the capitalist economy, but without infringing workers' rights and affecting their wages'.[47] In accordance with the belief that *peronista* ideology was based on morality, it has been described as 'un nuevo humanismo, como ya hemos visto, a diferencia del humanismo clásico, centra su preocupación en el hombre del Pueblo'.[48] The socially deprived complied with Perón's new dogma because it was being portrayed as essentially 'an idealised view of human behaviour, along with touches of Catholic morality', which made it 'culturally, but indefinably attractive'.[49] In retrospect, Perón's ideological superstructure could just have served as a masquerade for his naked drive for power. This is evident in the sense that he demanded control of so many institutions, which all consolidated the necessity for such an ideology:

> What is *Justicialismo*? It is more than a dubious political theory; it is a system of practical politics. *Justicialismo* is a juggler's act, a huge vaudeville performance. Perón is the clown, and Argentine special interest groups are the balls he juggles. The clown has seven balls. They are called the "army", the "Church", the "Oligarchy", the "foreign imperialist", "labour", the "interior (provincianos)" and the "porteños". *Justicialismo* is a juggler's act: the performer must keep all seven balls in motion, and he must remain equidistant from all of them. It is, in a sense, a tragic performance if the observer harbours sympathy for the clown.[50]

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[45] Burdick, p.49.

[46] Perón's Five Year Plan was a Plan of Government, devised in the second half of 1946, to ensure a period of economic growth from 1947-51.

[47] Burdick, p.49.

[48] Chono Martínez, *Los trabajadores: ordenamiento sistemático de la doctrina peronista y la doctrina social de la iglesia* (Buenos Aires: Dunken, 2006), p.120.

[49] Colin M. MacLachlan, *Argentina: What Went Wrong?* (Wesport: Praeger, 2006), p.116.

[50] *Ibid*.

A Peronist Education

Under Perón's government, the Argentine education system underwent a drastic transformation which afforded the working classes the *birthright* to an education. A new education system called the *Consejo Nacional de Educación* was established in 1948 and headed by Oscar Ivanessevich. The Ministry served to coordinate infrastructural changes within the educational system which comprised the construction of new schools all over the Republic, namely vocational and adult schools.[51] The construction of these new educational institutions also indirectly contributed to industrial and economic growth, providing basic skills training for life in urban and rural areas.[52] Some of the labourers' needs were met through the expansion of vocational and technical education, while new job opportunities arose for the urban middle classes.[53] By organising all education under one administration, Perón effortlessly achieved a populist national integration, which contrasted with the elitism of the *oligarquía*.[54]

However, although Peron's 'democratisation' of the education system saw an influx of working-class people attend school, it can be argued that any benefits they received were limited by a strictly controlled syllabus. It becomes more apparent that Perón indoctrinated children under the guise of social justice and fashioned a generation of peronists whom worshiped him. The argument that Perón was a working-class champion becomes more implausible given that 'he almost completely destroyed free democratic education in the pursuit of erecting a super-state of semi-totalitarian character'.[55]

Control through Fear

Perón's authoritarian propensities were felt not only in the educational sector but also in the public realm. Similar to Rosas, Perón had obtained unparalleled power and control over civilian activity and he did so through the use of terror. Although

[51] Rein, p.47.
[52] Cowen & Kazamias, p.534.
[53] *Ibid*.
[54] Rein, p.45.
[55] *Ibid*. p.275.

Perón's methods were arguably not as severe as those of Rosas, his time in office was little short of a reign of terror for his political adversaries. One of the most overlooked manifestations of Perón's attempt to regulate civilian liberties was in 1948, when his administration issued a decree which classified and listed the various documents that the Argentine public had to carry with them at all times. One of these papers was named *un certificado de "buena conducta"*, which had to be carried by every Argentine citizen to show that they were in 'good standing' with the government. It is worth noting that the *buena conducta* was a prime example of citizens' allegiance to Perón in the same way that the wearing of the scarlet insignia or "*divisa punzó*" demonstrated loyalty to Rosas during his regime.

One of the reasons why Perón has not been classified as a dictator is because there is little documentary evidence suggesting that he used violence to maintain public support. However, scholars have arguably been unaware of the existence of a para-military force which Perón employed to sustain citizen subordination, known as '*El Control del Estado*' or more commonly, '*El Control*'. Perón's secret police who operated under the president started to infiltrate government agencies, such as the military, to weed out disloyal elements in the early stages of the administration or as anti-peronists might classify it, the "regime".[56] *El Control* can be likened to Rosas's merciless death squad, the *mazorca*, in the sense that it literally controlled people by terrorising them. *El Control* even had its own instrument of torture, the *picana electrica*, which was used to castigate anyone who contributed to the anti-Perón resistance: 'Very little has been published on the *picana eléctrica*, or the electric goad, which is the contribution of the Argentine *Control del Estado* and Federal Police to techniques of modern physical torture'.[57] Moreover, this torture instrument was designed to damage the same parts of the body as the tools used by the *mazorca*.[58] Perón's biographers have avoided addressing the accusation that Perón's political adversaries were tortured, but the most wounding of Martínez's exposures

[56] This lesser-known secret of Perón's government renders him even more comparable to Franco, who created the *Falange*, and Mussolini who formed the Organizzazione per la Vigilanza e la Repressione dell'Antifascismo (OVRA), but more significantly, to Rosas.
[57] Blanksten, pp.182-3.
[58] The *picana electrica* was used in Argentina for the purpose of herding cattle and the rod, when touched against a sensitive part of an animal's body, delivered an electric shock, which inspires the beast to move rapidly in the direction desired by the herder. *Ibid*.

relates to this very allegation. Perón claims that his government was essentially benign and that he was not aware of police malpractice until it was too late for him to act.[59] However, the meticulously documented footnote on the same page offering full details of torture victims, including the disappearance of one of them, undermines any claim of innocence. These documentary elements embedded in fictional accounts, proving that Perón's opponents were tortured, serve simply to police the main text although they are not part of it. They call into question the claims of the autobiographer (Perón), indicating his recollections of the past are often selective and fictional.

Although it is clear that Perón sought to consolidate absolute power through the implementation of what can be deemed fascist policies, it is important to remember that he drove a political revolution which facilitated the expulsion of liberal hegemony from the political system. Irrespective of the socio-economic class that liberal ideology might favour, liberalism has always been a dominant political force in Argentina: 'Between 1852, when the last powerful caudillo, Juan Manuel de Rosas, was defeated, and 1930, liberalism was the unquestionably hegemonic ideology shoring up one of the most modern states in Latin America'.[60] Perón's policies eclipsed aristocratic supremacy in the political arena but ironically, this transformative period saw the rise of anti or non-liberal movements such as nationalist groups or ideologies and more importantly, the Catholic Church – a startling reflection of the Rosas era .[61] Although Perón eventually fell from power and his party became fragmented, his legacy among the *descamisados* lives on today, as Smith indicates: 'however cynical and selfish he actually might have been, it was he who gave the urban lower class a feeling of significance and strength'.[62]

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[59]Martínez, *Las memorias*, p.54).

[60] Up until 1930, Argentina had experienced two different types of liberalism; one favoured the Unitarian aristocracy, commonly known in Argentina as the *oligarquía*, while the other benefitted the deprived proletariat; Perón's liberalism favoured the latter social class.After almost a century of elite liberalism under the governments of Unitarian presidents, who arguably neglected the masses, Perón ensured that his administration would restore the working classes to their former glory. See Jorge Nallim, *Transformations and Crisis of Liberalism in Argentina: 1930-1955* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2012), p.1.

[61] *Ibid*.

[62] Smith, p.49.

Despite his strong affiliation with the masses, authors such as Borges have challenged the credibility of Perón's concern for his followers. This debate has formed part of the 'literary Perón'. Borges's short story about Perón is entitled – significantly *El simulador* and according to Martínez, Perón's military colleague, Augusto Maidona, described him as 'un simulador'.[63] Although Perón removed his jacket, he kept his distance from his earthy *descamisados*, shunning contact with his people. He captivates from afar with his rhetoric and his gestures. Davies notes that Perón is 'best known for his pragmatism and flexibility and his capacity for moving from one position to another with the same agility that allows him to say one thing and mean another'.[64] According to Tulio Halperín Donghi, Perón displays 'una orfandad ideología traducida en un oportunismo que excedía el nivel de la táctica para dominar su entero modo de concebir la acción política'.[65] In *Santa Evita* (p.144), Martínez sees Perón as novelist who makes of his life a fiction with scant regard for 'facts, refusing to be bound to a past that he would rather consign to a Nietzschean forgetfulness.[66] According to Sigal and Verón, he even determines his own age: 'yo tengo los anos que quiero'.[67] Perón himself appears to vindicate a New Historical approach to his story. There are certain elements of that story that resist verification such as his precise date of birth and his family connections with Sardinia. Here we will compare the different approaches to the Perón story by Joseph Page, Nino Tola and Peppino Canneddu – whose broad aim is to reveal the 'truth' about Perón – with the New Historical perspective of Tomas Eloy Martínez which revels in that story's fictional possibilities.

Joseph Page: Domesticating Perón

Martínez's accounts of Perón differ to that of Joseph Page – the only author to implement a traditional approach in his biography, shaped by meticulous research with supporting evidence in his pursuit to establish a 'factual' and unembellished Perón. He aims to stabilize a historically unstable subject by 'separating truth from

[63] Martínez, *Las memorias*, p.109.
[64] Davies, *Projections of Peronism*, p.96.
[65] Tulio Halperín Donghi, 'El lugar del peronismo en la tradición política argentina' in Samuel Amaral and Mario Ben Plotkin (eds), *Perón: del exilio al poder* (Buenos Aires: Cántaro, 1993), p.27.
[66] Davies, *Projections of Peronism*, p.96.
[67] Silvia Sigal and Eliseo Verón, *Perón o muerte* (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 2003), p.12.

fiction, fact from hearsay, and logical interference from imaginative embellishment'.[68] While Martínez is a creative writer who considers the truth and facts to be authoritarian, the gold standard for Page is 'reliability', which is determined by facts. He is driven by his desire to define Perón which requires turning him into a self-consistent figure who is able to fit into biographical categories such as 'The Making of a Leader (1895-1942)'; 'The Colonel (1943-1946)' etc. However, by filtering out the uncertainties and discrepancies, Page is moulding Perón into something he is not, and inadvertently creating his own version of his subject, even if his intention is to refrain from doing so. Despite facing challenges, Page's biography passes all the conventional tests largely owing to old-fashioned tenacity in conducting his research: 'the persistence of seven years' work in good fortune in securing source materials and interviews, hundreds of documents released under the Freedom of Information Act [...] the help of many individuals'.[69] Contrary to Martínez, Page adopts an impersonal and authoritative style, aiming to explain rumours and establish facts. His account is devoid of any acknowledgement of his personal input: his own perspective is largely erased and his role as biographer dematerialised.[70] Whereas Martínez's accounts feature his acknowledgement of his 'emplotting' by Hayden White's definition ('the way by which a sequence of events fashioned into a story is gradually revealed to be a story of a particular kind),[71] there is no reference in Page's account to his construction of a particular type of narrative to accommodate his subject. There is one aspect of Perón's life, namely his relationship with women, which is addressed through contrasting methods by Page and Martínez. In *La novela*, Martínez remarks: 'Una vez más, el general Perón soñó que caminaba hasta la entrada del Polo Sur y que una jauría de mujeres no lo dejaba pasar'.[72] This dream is clearly based on fiction but nonetheless alludes to an observed problem of Perón's: his difficulties with women. Martínez's imaginative angle forces into question the credibility of Perón's dream about walking to the South Pole and encountering a pack of women who prevented him from doing something he really wanted to do. In a single line, the novel unveils how the rest of

[68] Davies, *Projections of Peronism*, p.105.
[69] Joseph A Page, *Perón: a Biography* (New York: Penguin Random House, 1983), pp.ix-x.
[70] Davies, *Projections of Peronism*, p.100.
[71] Hayden White, (as mentioned in Introduction, p.6), '*Metahistory*', p.7.
[72] Martínez, *La Novela*, p.11.

the 'information' will be presented. A few paragraphs later, the indication that Perón's relationship with women has been one of psychological strain is compounded: 'Al General le habían aterrado siempre las mujeres que iban más lejos, abriéndose camino entre sus no sentimientos.'[73] Martínez's language in this sentence is particularly flamboyant and novelesque to the extent that he presents his own embellishments as facts. Joseph Page also discusses Perón's relationship with women, particularly his relations with Eva:

> Given what is known about their personalities, Evita probably took the initiative in rapidly cementing the relationship. She found new quarters for them in a building on Posadas Street, behind the posh Alvear Palace Hotel and not far from Radio Belgrano, where she worked, although for the sake of appearances the couple rented adjoining apartments. Perón must have been fascinated by the uninhibited aggressiveness of his new companion. He did nothing to conceal their liaison. Indeed, on February 3 (1943), both he and Mercante allowed themselves to be photographed with her on a visit to the radio station.[74]

In contrast with Martínez's New Historical style, evident in the previous quotation, this statement suggesting Eva took the lead in the relationship is not embellished or descriptive but rather written in a direct and objective manner, aiming simply to present information. There are, however, several stylistic choices in Page's account which corroborate, rather than contrast with Martínez's *raison d'écrire*: the notion that historical fact is not necessarily the only representation of truth. For example, the first line of Page's passages: 'Given what is known about their personalities' draws on the fact that what is already known is not enough to establish a truth. A deeper reading also sheds light on the possibility that the existing information was communicated to the press by select individuals. Another sentence: 'Evita *probably* took the initiative' is out of keeping with Page's brisk matter-of-fact style. Page also writes: 'Perón *must* have been fascinated' – *must* again is also a conclusion drawn by Page based on his prior knowledge of Perón's persona. The lack of certainty in these quotations is a prime example of why the line between fact and fiction is difficult to draw in Perón's case. Martínez would have arguably valued Page's principles (meticulous research, historical evidence, etc.) in his previous profession as a

[73] *Ibid*., p.12.
[74] Page, p.84.

journalist when attempting to discover the truth about an individual's life, but it is clear that Perón was not bound by similar priorities. While Page perseveres in his aim to reveal the 'factual' Perón and 'control' his subject, Martínez abandons such aspirations, adopting instead Perón's creative approach. Martínez was initially a teacher and an established journalist but upon his life-changing encounter with Perón 'las vidas del General se transformaron en una obsesión tan personal como literaria'.[75]

The Sardinian Connection

There was wide speculation in Argentina regarding Juan Perón's family origins when he rose to political prominence in the 1940s, but it seems that all that was disputed among his critics was the year and place of his birth. However, owing to a series of anomalies and incongruities in the official documentation relating to his family background and military career, Perón has become something of a cultural phenomenon in Italy, where the historical reconstruction of his family heritage and origins has been taken to literal extremes in more than one account. Perón's obscure heritage has inspired the publication of three notable accounts written by an Italian journalist, a Sardinian native from the small town of Mamoíada, and another writer, who all claim to different extents that the populist leader was in fact a man of Italian origin, named Giovanni Piras. They postulate that this individual, allegedly the son of Marianna Massída and Antonio Piras, immigrated to Argentina in 1910 in search of a better life and later became the country's president in 1946. The first prominent accounts were two short articles written by the Italian journalist Nino Tóla when suspicions about Perón's real identity surfaced during the late 1940s and 50s. Early investigation suggested that a young and impoverished Giovanni Piras was born in the small Sardinian town of Mamoiáda at the same time as Perón, who proudly emphasised his Sardinian roots in his public speeches and interviews. Although Tóla's 1951 articles were never circulated in Argentina, as they would have aroused a great deal of controversy amongst dismayed *peronistas*, they would go on to draw

[75] Carlos Martín Rodríguez, *La novela de Perón, de Tomás Eloy Martínez: ficción, entrevista y autoficción*, p.11. Retrieved from: https://revistas.unc.edu.ar/index.php/recial/article/viewFile/17526/17407 [accessed on 20/12/2018].

mass social commentary in Italy. Some twenty years after Tóla's publication, Peppino Canneddu, who was a young resident of Mamoiáda, took up further investigation and his findings appeared in his account entitled *Juan Perón-Giovanni Piras: due nomi, una persona* (1984). Upon interviewing Tóla for his account, Cannedu discovers that when Perón's adversaries, namely those political figures belonging to the *oligarquía*, discovered his piece on the Piras-Perón affair, the story was sold to anti-*peronista* newspapers in an attempt to tarnish their opponent's career. Once the General's aids received news of this malicious intent, the tabloid was immediately closed down.[76] Tóla and Canneddu erroneously postulate that Perón was Giovanni Piras, who immigrated to Argentina in about 1910 and worked as a labourer on the construction of the railways, before becoming president. This can be categorically disproved as it has been discovered that in fact, Piras died in Santa Fe in 1959, leaving behind three children.[77] It is impossible that Piras arrived in Argentina at the meagre age of fifteen with limited schooling and managed to master speaking and writing Spanish, especially as articulately as Perón who was well educated.

Whereas Tóla and Canneddu have both historically reconstructed Perón's identity based on the imaginative claim that he was Giovanni Piras, the most recent account, written by an Italian researcher, is arguably the most convincing in terms of making a case for a Sardinian Perón. Raffaele Ballore's *El Presidente, El Caso Piras-Perón: La leyenda de un sardo que se habría convertido en Juan Perón* (2011), makes a conscious effort to determine whether there is any substance to the Piras-Perón story, which had been heavily mythologised. Ballore's intention is to address any doubts surrounding the Piras-Perón connection and correct the inaccuracies and inconsistencies in the previous two accounts, which have been the subject of heavy criticism, particularly in Argentina. For instance, despite the likeness in the facial characteristics of Piras and Perón in their later adult years, he draws our attention to the fact that the photographs of Perón as a young man and military officer do not correspond with the photographs of Piras as a child or adolescent. Moreover, no evidence or official government record of Perón's ancestral

[76] Peppino Canneddu, *Juan Perón-Giovanni Piras: Two Names, a Single Person* 2nd ed., (Rome: Bibliosofica, 2012), pp.14-15.
[77] Santini, p.40.

presence on the island can be found. The question of Perón's identity captivated Ballore and his team of researchers as he states: 'después de estas investigaciones, tanto a mí como a muchos otros nos contagió la que nosotros llamamos el virus de la 'Peronitis' y, digamos, de una forma muy intensa'.[78] The unending speculation concerning Perón's family heritage inspired Ballore to conduct the investigations forty years after Tóla's article:

> La cuestión del joven Juan Piras que se habría convertido en Perón nos fascinó durante tanto tiempo, hasta que, a partir de 1993, empezamos a investigar más a fondo y a juntar papeles y materiales para poder escribir algún argumento de película.[79]

Ballore used the materials and documentation that he had gathered to produce a film and the result materialised in a screenplay registered with SIAE in Rome in 1998. So complex is Perón's heritage that even after conducting meticulous research, Ballore was still unable to join together the missing pieces of the Perón-Piras puzzle. The lack of historical documentation has greatly influenced Ballore's opinion in that he does not categorically believe that the two men are the same person. His doubtful attitude is also evident in the title, but he does nonetheless postulate that Perón was from Sardinia. While both Tóla and Canneddu ignore historical evidence, Ballore incorporates an abundance of immigration records into his account which ultimately substantiates his argument that Argentina's three-time president, who has been both venerated and vilified, *was* a son of Sardinia. After examining important documents of Perón's first wife alongside Piras's military records showing his physical characteristics, Ballore was able to prove that the General was not – at least not through Piras – a native son of Mamoíada: 'La pista del Perón de Mamoiáda la descuidamos enseguida, ni bien se analizaron los datos de la primera esposa del General y aun un dato antropométrico en el papel militar de Piras, que fue comparado con el de Perón'.[80] Although the Piras-Perón comparison may have been fashioned into folk legend throughout Italy, Ballore acknowledges the lack of scientific evidence. He refers to Perón-Piras simply to emphasise Perón's Sardinian origins: 'de hecho, escribiremos "Piras-Perón" hasta el final, pues con este juego de

[78] Ballore, p.10.
[79] *Ibid*.
[80] *Ibid*., p.11.

apellidos queremos dar más significado al caso, exactamente lo de un Perón sardo'.[81] It is important to note that Ballore's account does not attempt to assess Perón's political accomplishments nor does it set out to confirm or disprove any alternative myths. Instead, it aims to enrich and advance the discussion of Perón's identity, as he, alongside his wife, remains a largely mythical figure.

Ballore's account informs us of how the Sardinian natives have adopted the Piras-Perón myth as the absolute truth. He acknowledges why people would think that Piras was Perón given that he was of the same character, as claimed by Tóla: 'era un joven serio, inteligente y simpático'.[82] However, when drawing upon his interviews with the Mamoíada residents, he calls attention to their biased responses, which have arguably been inspired by Tóla and Canneddu's highly exaggerated historical reinterpretation of his life.

It can be argued that Juan Perón was of Sardinian origin as he used to express his pride at his Sardinian roots, which were supposedly from his paternal ancestry. MacLachlan states: '[Perón's] family traced its origins to a Sardinian immigrant of the Rosas era of the 1830s', which could arguably have been his grandfather, the esteemed physician, Dr. Tomás Liberato Perón.[83] Perón was evidently proud of his grandfather's accolades but he also professed that his great-grandfather was a well-respected aristocratic figure in Sardinian society. Jerome R. Adams argues that Perón once claimed to an electorate consisting mostly of Italian immigrants that his great-grandfather had been a Sardinan Senator. What is more significant is that integral to this claim was speculation that his family name was in fact 'Peroni', which had been modified to 'Perón'.[84] The General was consistent with this particular story as corroborated by Frank Owen, who also affirms: 'Juan Perón *himself* used to claim that his great-grandfather was a senator'.[85] It is clear that Perón used his Sardinian ancestry to his benefit when trying to garner support in order to ascend in the political scale. Perón's own statements establish his Sardinian roots which validate

[81] *Ibid*.
[82] Nino Tóla, '¿Nació en Mamaóida El Dictador Juan Perón?', *L'Unione Sarda*, Cágliari, 20th March, 1951, p.2.
[83] Colin MacLachlan, *Argentina: What Went Wrong?* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), P.101.
[84] Jerome R. Adams, *Liberators, Patriots and Leaders of Latin America: 32 Biographies*, 2nd ed. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company), p.142.
[85] Frank Owen, *Perón*: *His Rise and Fall* (London: Cresset Press, 1957), p.6.

Ballore's principal argument, claiming that Perón descended from a middle-class Sardinian family and thus could not have been the impoverished Piras.

Prior to the publication of these biographies, Perón had been much vaguer about his identity, which Ballore claims is because of what they wrote about him in San Juan, 'comunicándole que, en el registro de pasajeros en 1823, quedaba un tal Pedro Perón y que había aún un otro Perón, Domingo, desembarcado en Buenos Aires en 1848, procedente de Montevideo'.[86] However, in *La novela*, the General gives a meticulous and exhaustive but yet completely contrasting account of his ancestry, stating that his great-grandfather, Mario Tomás Perón 'partió de Alghéro en 1830', not 1860. For the first time, Perón is specific and names an actual city linked to his identity called Alghéro, located in the province of Sássari. In *Las memorias*, Martínez's Perón elaborates on his great-grandfather's life; there is no mention of his role as a Sardinian senator; instead, he presents what seems to be a carefully-constructed claim that his great-grandfather 'era un hábil comerciante que en Argentina puso un próspero negocio de venta de zapatos (vendió botas también a la "Mazorca", la policía del dictador Juan Manuel de Rosas).[87] There is no evidence to suggest that his great-grandfather was a shoe merchant but there is an equal dearth of factual information confirming his alleged occupation as a Sardinian Senator, thus it is impossible to conclude which claim is a figment of Perón's imagination. There is no mention of a Senator in Martínez's accounts as he accepts that Perón's great-grandfather was a shoe merchant – whether Martínez states this for fictitious purposes, to romanticise the link between Rosas and Perón, or because he is convinced the claim is true, remains a mystery. The only information that seems to be certain is that his grandfather was an esteemed physician, who died from pneumonia at the age of fifty in 1889. His grandfather's marriage to Dominga Dutey, produced three sons, one of whom was Perón's father, Mario Tomás (1867-1928) 'que fue ganadero y agricultor y después de haber trabajado como empleado, se instaló en Lobos con su pareja, Juana Sosa Toledo'.[88] The profession of Perón's mother is nuclear, but according to some writers, who Ballore does not identify, 'era

[86] Ballore, p.22.
[87] Martínez, *Las memorias*, p.20.
[88] *Ibid*.

campesina que fue mucama en la casa del padre de Perón pero, otros dicen que ejercía como comadrona'.[89] Ballore identifies another inaccuracy in the dates of Perón's ancestor's immigration to Argentina. The news retrieved by the journalists, Torcuatro Luca de Tena, Luis Calvo, and Estaban Peycovich for their biographical account, *Yo, Juan Domingo Perón* (1976), suggests that Perón stated that his *great*-grandfather emigrated to Argentina in 1860, much to Ballore's surprise given that, in all probability, he would have been deceased by 1860. If there is any substance to this claim then the reference is most likely to have been to Perón's grandfather, who died almost thirty years later. The Italian authors' accounts are wholly relevant to this study as they provide an insight into the different ways in which New Historicism is used to recreate Perón's life. By comparing and contrasting the Italian authors' works with those of Page and Martínez, we learn how New Historicism has a dual purpose: whereas Tóla's articles present fiction as solid fact, Martínez manipulates the established facts and presents them as fiction, but acknowledges he is doing so.

Martínez and Perón: Kindred Spirits

The lack of evidence on Perón's life combined with his contradictory and inconsistent statements mean that no one will attain complete ownership over his story. Perón has become a subject of historical recreation, which is characteristic of a broader literary movement, New Historicism. As discussed in the previous chapter, this imaginative literary approach had been unconsciously used by writers who opposed Rosas in the nineteenth century, such as José Mármol and Juana Manuela Gorriti, who have completely reinterpreted the dictator's relationship with Manuela in order to reinforce their own political agendas. However, towards the end of the twentieth century, the movement was established as a cultural phenomenon which infiltrated the literary world as writers began to exercise their postmodern freedom:

> En términos generales, esta novela histórica, tan en auge a fines del siglo XX, se caracteriza, ante todo, por una relectura crítica y desmitificadora que se traduce en una reescritura del pasado encarada de diverso modo: se problematiza la posibilidad de conocerlo y reconstruirlo, o se retoma el pasado histórico, documentado, sancionado y conocido, desde una perspectiva

[89] Ballore, footnote 22, p.23.

> diferente, poniendo en descubierto mistificaciones y mentiras, o en un movimiento casi opuesto, se escribe para recuperar los silencios, el lado oculto de la historia, el secreto que ella calla.[90]

While there are common practices between the postmodernist and New Historical movements – 'such as self-scrutiny and emphasis on textuality'[91] – it is important to distinguish between the two movements: postmodernism is more detached from reality than New Historicism, 'putting inverted commas around what is being said' as affirmed by Hutcheon.[92] New Historicists such as Tomás Eloy Martínez do not base their writing solely on historical fact but instead interweave the real and the fictitious to such an extent that truth and fiction become blurred. Davies states that Martínez in particular 'clings to the concept of a 'limping' truth'.[93] Juan Perón's most notable historical recreation is found in Martínez's critically acclaimed, *La novela de Perón* (1985), which is inspired by words carefully dictated by the General himself. Martínez's depiction of Perón is based to some degree on evidence, but given that 'los hechos históricos son como son'[94], he was convinced that the Perón story needed to be enriched by imaginative resources, insisting that facts alone do not do justice to the complexity of reality: 'es preciso salir en busca de otros hechos que la enriquezcan'.[95] Martínez's conception of historical representation conforms to that of Márquez Rodríguez, who argues that the historical character of any novel is dependent on 'la presencia de personajes y episodios históricos, tratados de un modo tal que sufran proceso de ficcionamiento'.[96] Seymour Menton, on the other hand, is faithful to Anderson Imbert's (1951) 'straightforward' definition of the historical novel: 'Llamamos "novelas históricas" a las que cuentan una acción ocurrida en una

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[90] María Cristina Pons, *Memorias del olvido. La novela histórica de fines del siglo XX* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 1996), p.23.
[91] Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), p.68.
[92] Linda Hutcheon, *The Politics of Postmodernism*, *New Accents* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), p.1.
[93] Lloyd Hughes Davies, 'Tomás Eloy Martínez and the Literary Representation of Peronism: A Tale of Bifurcating Paths?' in *(Re) collecting the Past: History and Memory in Latin American Narrative*, ed. By Victoria Carpenter (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010), p.119.
[94] Tomás Eloy Martínez, 'Ficción e historia en La novela de Perón', *Hispámerica* (49), (1988), p.44.
[95] *Ibid*.
[96] Márquez Rodríguez, *Historia y ficción en la novela venezolana*, (Caracas: Monte Avila Editores, 1991), p.40.

época'.[97] Therefore, Martínez's *La novela* fails to meet Menton's criterion given that 'abarca el tiempo histórico en que vive el autor'.[98] Martínez was the only writer to have the advantage of a personal relationship with El General which might lead us to the conclusion that his accounts would be the most reliable, but this could not be further from the truth. Perón believed that he had the right to recreate his own story, and it seems as though this notion manifested itself in Martínez's writing, as he became known as a novelist who, above all, reimagined his own life, incorporating himself into Chapter 16 of *La novela* in which he is standing on the top of Notre Dame Cathedral. In doing this, Martínez has redefined what it means to be a historian; he has adopted an imaginative approach to telling the Peron story, and subsequently blurred the norms for biographical writers. In other words, he has contaminated traditional scholarly approaches to unearthing the truth and inadvertently encouraged them to use their imagination rather than depend exclusively on factual evidence. Martínez is fully conscious of his own inability to tell the truth and warns his audience not to believe what he has written about Perón. However, *La novela* is not meant to be a historical account of Perón's life. Diógenes Valenzuela states that the account:

> promete al lector un discurso desplazado de lo mítico hacia lo histórico. Sólo que es preciso tener en cuenta que desde el título se nos dice que ese discurso histórico va a estar más cercano a lo ficticio que a lo que tradicionalmente se denomina como Historia.[99]

Martínez can be classified as a New Historical writer, who, like postmodern auto-biographers 'is sceptical about whether the truth about past events can ever be purely and objectively known'.[100] He arguably did not seek to discover the absolute truth about Perón, but rather to hear Perón's version of his life story and combine it with his own imaginative resources, which evidently facilitated his fictional masterpiece. The literary approach of the authors treated here seems to be the reverse of that of

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[97] Menton, *La nueva novela histórica de América Latina, 1979-1992* (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1993), p.16.
[98] *Ibid*., p.16.
[99] Diógenes Fajardo Valenzuela, 'Procesos de (des)mitificación en La novela de Perón y Santa Evita de Tomás Eloy Martínez', *Literatura: teoría, historia, crítica*, (Universidad Distrital y Universidad Nacional, Bogotá, Colombia), Vol 1, 1997, p.120.
[100] Lloyd Hughes Davies, *Projections of Peronism in Argentine Autobiography, Biography and Fiction*, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007), p.9.

New Journalism writers, who use a highly fictionalised and literary style of writing to tell factual stories, which was 'a contrast to traditional journalism, where the journalist is typically "invisible" and facts are reported as objectively as possible'.[101] Instead, Martínez uses a factual and sometimes journalistic style to tell fictional stories, in order to emphasise 'truth' over 'facts'. Martínez's novels on Perón seem to be the most outward manifestation of this approach; for example, *La novela de Perón* starts with a very definite action: the definitive return of Perón after his 18 year-long exile in Spain. Diógenes Valenzuela argues that although the beginning of this account is factual, 'para el novelista, ese regreso de Perón el 20 de junio de 1973 se convierte en el cumplimiento del mito del eterno retorno que le permitirá trazar los ejes temporales sobre los cuales se creará la realidad de la escritura ficcional'.[102] Martínez creates fictional characters who, he claims, are more real than factual characters as they 'introduce elements of doubt into history'.[103] It seems that Perón's biographers, be they historians or fictional writers, are fully aware that it is impossible to gather sufficient evidence to determine the truth. Perón supposedly remarked to Martínez that 'se puede dar la verdad al desnudo, pero el periodista está muy consciente de que la verdad es inalcanzable: está en todas las mentiras, como Dios'.[104] Thus, instead of using facts, writers seek to make use of existing information and use it for creative purposes, which seems to be the case with Martínez's work as it is 'informed by the driving impulse of New Historicism – the breaking of boundaries between literary texts and those once regarded as extraneous to literature, including autobiography and biography'.[105] By using what is believed to be the truth alongside imagination, Martínez '[ha] creado un discurso imaginario sobre acontecimientos reales que puede ser no menos "verdadero" por el hecho de ser imaginario'.[106] To pursue the historical truth in Argentina is a futile endeavour because the truth is always in question and often inaccessible, which may be a further

[101] Michael Korda, *Another Life: A Memoir of Other People*, (New York: Random House, 1999), pp.329-340.
[102] Valenzuela, p.119.
[103] Television Interview with Martínez conducted by CBC News in 2004. The video is no longer available to obtain the original Spanish.
[104] Perón in Tomas Eloy Martínez, *La novela de Perón*, (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 1991) [1985], pp.38-39.
[105] Davies, p.9.
[106] White, p.74.

reason for Martínez avoiding all semblance of presenting a factual account. After all, to uncover Perón's history is an unending challenge to the extent that no writer will have the final say on his life. Martínez reiterates the unending struggle that all Perón scholars experience when trying to unveil the General's true origins and acknowledges with Joseph Page that 'narrar a Perón es un oficio inagotable, y que nadie podrá escribir el libro definitivo'. [107] Whereas the reader may be persuaded that Joseph Page has written the definitive work given his reference to what he believes to be facts, what is more compelling is Martínez's attempt to instill in us a greater understanding of the complexity of such an elusive figure and of the sense that 'the life which is increasingly real to us is the fictitious life'.[108]

In *La novela*, Martínez, far from attempting to provide a coherent account, 'revels in the ambiguities that rupture its sense and meaning'.[109] However, Martínez's fixation with his new literary icon came at a price: exile. After his lengthy and intimate collaboration with Perón, Martínez was exiled from Argentina to Venezuela from 1975-1982 after receiving countless threats from the Triple A.[110] The devastating effect of Martínez's exile can be identified allegorically in chapter sixteen of *La novela* when, on his travels in Paris, the young Martínez witnesses an old man committing suicide, as he throws himself off the top of one of the Notre Dame towers and crushes a young, married couple on their honeymoon: 'Este episodio puede ser pensado, además, como un claro ejemplo de la tensión que la autoficción produce entre los pactos autobiográficos y ficcionales'.[111] He creates a new reality by amalgamating the stories of the author, character and narrator, as they all intersect in the same dimension. Martínez's interview with Juan Perón 'no tardó en convertirse en las memorias "canónicas" del líder justicialista',[112] as the transcriptions of these interviews were published in 1970. However, there is more to this analysis; in *Las vidas del General* (2004), Martínez admits that 'Cuando

[107] Martínez, *La novela*, p.323.
[108] Virginia Woolf, 'The New Biography' in The Essays of Virginia Woolf, ed. Andrew McNeillie, 4 Vols, (London: Hogarth, 1986-94), IV: 1925-28, pp.473-80 (p.478).
[109] Davies, *Projections of Peronism*, p.95.
[110] The Triple A or Triple AAA (*Alianza Anticomunista Argentina)* was a far-right death squad which was particularly active under the rule of Isabel Perón (1974-1976).
[111] Carlos Martín Rodríguez, p.11.
[112] *Ibid*.

compaginé las grabaciones, advertí que Perón había omitido hechos importantes y que, en algunos casos, los había tergiversado, ordenándolos bajo una luz más favorable'.[113] He becomes aware of Perón's propensity to oscillate between the real and the fictitious and Martínez later follows suit; he does not conceive literature to be a mere mechanical reproduction of reality, but rather a device which interprets and transmutes it. He adopts the role of the narrator who produces this transformation and creates the new reality or 'true fiction', the function of which is to 'llenar un vacío de la realidad (…) o bien rehacer la realidad'.[114] Martínez assumes the task of bridging the gaps left by lack of historical evidence and by Perón's selective reconstruction, thus closing 'la distancia entre lo dicho y lo no dicho, entre la realidad y la ficción, entre la creación literaria y el periodismo'.[115] Nowhere in *La novela*, does Martínez pronounce on the historical status of his confessional account in chapter fourteen; there is no footnote reference or explanatory note to clarify the scope of his experience, namely his encounter with Perón in Puerta de Hierro, 'en donde lo real y lo textual se entremezclan inexorablemente'.[116] Martínez reveals that listening to Perón was similar to entering 'una fotografía de ningún tiempo (…) me pareció de pronto que lo estaba viendo en la pantalla de los cines, le oí voz de Pedro López Lagar. Me sonó adentro de un tango de María Elena Walsh'.[117] It is not only Perón's inability to refer to historical fact that renders the task of uncovering his past impossible but also the author's own incapacity to stop fictionalising. Martínez's allusion to photography, cinema and two renowned actors and the lyrics of a tango call to mind the world in which an interpretation becomes the 'reality'. Through his use of constant artistic references, we learn that Martínez's shaky grip on reality is just as imprecise as that of Perón; his text lacks any specific references indicating the veracity of his journalistic experiences with the General and thus, 'hace de la realidad una multiplicidad de realidades'.[118] There is a parallel to be drawn between the historical character (Perón) and the writer (Martínez) as they are both novelists

[113] Martínez, *Las vidas*, p.17.
[114] Tomás Eloy Martínez, *Ficciones verdaderas. Hechos reales que inspiraron grandes obras literarias*, (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 2000), p.13.
[115] Carlos Martín Rodríguez, p.13.
[116] *Ibid*.
[117] Martínez, *La novela*, pp.261-262.
[118] *Ibid*., p.15.

and inventors of a kind who, with their creative license, 'resist interpretive closure and re-write history'.[119] In essence, Martínez has redefined what it means to be a historian given that his accounts of Perón are based less on facts, and more on his creative imagination and recollection of his personal encounters with Perón. As a supposedly historical writer, Martínez has indeed contaminated other writers' judgment of Perón (such as that of Ballore) and in doing so, paved the way for widespread creative treatment of El General whereby all literary depictions deviate from historical evidence.

Although Perón has undergone extensive fictitious treatment, there is something that makes Martínez's star shine with exceptional fervour: he is the only writer to have experienced a personal relationship, and to some extent, a friendship, with 'El General', which blossomed from the moment their paths crossed in 1966 in Puerta de Hierro, Madrid. Martínez spent countless hours interviewing Perón: 'Yo había grabado ese conjunto de memorias durante un total de treinta e dos horas, entre 1966 y 1970',[120] and recalled that for this particular exercise, there was an uncommon journalistic technique which proved invaluable: silence. Martínez acted as more of a companion to Perón, adopting a non-investagory approach and patiently observing and listening to his subject's recollections. Martínez was faced with the arduous challenge of extracting information from an exiled politician who was capable of unparalleled ideological indiscipline and autobiographical elasticity, and he prevailed. However, it seems that there was one subject who was off limits: Eva Perón. The mention of this would be greeted with dismay from the General's ghoulish private secretary and astrologer José López Rega who would always materialise to close the line of enquiry. Rodríguez notes that, according to Martínez, López Rega's incessant interrupting 'obstaculizaba el normal desarrollo de las entrevistas'.[121] After Perón's death, Lopéz Rega went on to tarnish his country's political history while immersing himself in a spiritualist belief system. Martínez explains in *La novela* how López Rega supervised the depositing of Eva's embalmed

[119] See Davies, *Projections of Peronism,* p.113.
[120] Tomás Eloy Martínez, *Las vidas del General*, (Buenos Aires: Aguilar, 2004), p.128.
[121] Carlos Martín Rodriguez, p.11. This quotation is not from Martínez in *La novela*, but rather a conclusion drawn by Rodríguez (regarding Martínez's growing frustration with López Rega during the interview process).

body in the Madrid mansion, where several attempts were made to achieve the clinching metempsychosis; the transferral of the spirit of the dead idol into the body of Perón's new wife, an actress by the name of Isabelita. However, the spirit did not fly; Isabelita's presidency from 1974-76, opened the gates to hell.[122] Lopéz Rega also played a key role in *Las memorias* as he blatantly usurped Perón's position and acts as though his own identity and his master's were interchangeable, which Davies notes may be his attempt to 'compensate for his failure to infuse Isabel with the spirit of Eva by engaging in a parallel operation involving himself and Perón'.[123] It is ironic that Perón, with his disgust for intimacy and his obsession with controlling both his private and public personae, suffered the indignity of having his autobiography subverted by editorial interference. Martínez violates Perón's instructions in *Las memorias* by an equivocal observation reminiscent of Perón himself: 'este libro respeta y al mismo tiempo se subleva contra esta voluntad'.[124] Given Martínez's editorial authority over Perón, his reservations about López Rega's control over the General can be seen to be somewhat hypocritical. While Martínez emphasises that Perón story cannot be pinned down by any authoritative account, he himself inevitably exercises some control over his subject's story albeit by imaginative means.

Twenty years after the death of Perón, Martínez turned his attention to the mythical existence of his wife, Eva, employing similar literary techniques based on the contrasting accounts of the odyssey of her corpse, stored in numerous places and guarded by different people, which gave rise to the prevailing posthumous myths. The lack of historical information on these political figures has rendered them some of the most discussed characters in the fictional realm, and thus, they have transcended their deaths. Even though these three cultural icons have lent themselves to historical reinterpretation, they have been reconstructed to different extents. For example, Martínez's *Santa Evita* (1995), follows both the story of the plain, destitute girl who reinvented herself to become first the uncrowned queen of Argentina's

[122] Ivan Briscoe, 'Tomás Eloy Martínez and the Argentine Dream', *Open Democracy*, 9th June 2010. Retrieved from: https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/tomas-eloy-martinez-and-argentine-dream/ [accessed on 17/12/2018].
[123] Davies, *Projections of Peronism*, p.75.
[124] Martínez, *Las memorias*, p.14.

masses and then their unofficial canonised saint, and also the oddessy of her corpse, which enhanced her mythic status: '*Dejó* de *ser* lo que *dijo* y lo que *hizo para ser* lo que dicen que *dijo* y lo que dicen que *hizo*'.[125] Although it is generally assumed that rigorous investigation is the key to uncovering history, Martínez's imagination is used to reconstruct Eva's past. Such an approach is almost *de rigueur* since primary sources are scarce[126] and the overall nature of the subject resists coherent analysis.[127] By comparison, Manuela Rosas has undergone a more profound literary transformation in that the Unitarian interpretation of her character and relationship with her father is highly inaccurate; she is mythologised as a victim when the existing historical evidence, as used by Lojo (namely a letter from Manuela Rosas to Adolfo Saldías, mentioned in Chp.4), strongly implies that she was an empowered and independent woman who was in control of her own destiny.

One would assume that Martínez's biographical accounts of Perón are the most accurate given that some of their content was dictated by the General himself. However, in these lyrical books, fiction and reality are still virtually indistinguishable as Perón is highly unreliable as a narrator. Perón is in a constant state of contradiction and wanted only *his* memories to be perceived as the absolute truth, rendering the writer's task of extracting factual information almost impossible. A subject which has been highly disputed by scholars in the literary realm is that of Perón's obscure Sardinian heritage alongside the date of his grandfather's immigration to Argentina. Despite other meticulous accounts of Perón's life story, such as that of Enrique Pavón Pereyra, Martínez's version is the most logical since it is highly likely that the year of Tomás Liberato Perón's immigration to Argentina was 1830, which is also plausible 'desde un punto de vista anagráfico'. In *Yo, Juan Domingo Perón*, the General posthumously writes: 'De modo que acaso soy descendiente de españoles afincados en Cerdeña desde la época en que España ocupaba la isla. Mi tatarabuelo era médico, médico sardo'.[128] Martínez's work on

[125] Tomás Eloy Martínez, *Santa Evita*, (Buenos Aires: Planeta, 1995), p.20.
[126] See Joseph A Page's introduction to *Eva Perón, In My Own Words: Evita*, trans. Laura Dail, (Edinburgh and London: Mainstream, 1997), p.9.
[127] Lloyd Hughes Davies, 'Portraits of a Lady: Postmodern Readings of Tomás Eloy Martínez's Santa Evita', *The Modern Languages Review*, Vol. 95, (2), (2000), p.415.
[128] Torcuato Luca de Tena, et al. *Yo, Juan Domingo Perón, relato autobiográfico* (Barcelona: Planeta, 1976), pp.19-20.

this matter is 'la más interpelado y citado por los investigadores históricos'. The reason for this is because Perón himself spent hours dictating his life story to Martínez, with the help of his 'oscuro, inquietante y omnipresente secretario personal, José López Rega'. Together, Perón and López Rega 'dictaron las memorias al escritor con abundancia de detalles; orígenes, historia, y anécdotas', [129] which was in total one thousand pages, before they reduced it to 352 pages to avoid boring the reader. Perón's biographical memories, enriched with vivid recollections of his childhood and youth, are the direct result of years of work on his part combined with López Rega's important input. Perón is fully conscious of the contradictory accounts of his life and fervently argues that his documents 'se borran, se destruyen y se crean' and emphasises his constant fear of someone publishing inaccurate information about his life:

> *[…] esta pasión de los hombres por la verdad siempre me ha parecido un hecho insensato...Alguien escribió que tengo que estudiar mejor los documentos. Ya. He aquí todos los documentos que quiero. Y si no hay, López los inventa…Nadie sabrá cómo era la cara de Mona Lisa o como sonreía, porque esa cara y esa sonrisa ni es lo que realmente era, más bién lo que pintaba Leonardo da Vinci. Eva me dijo lo mismo hay que poner las montañas donde uno quiere, Juan porque donde las pones, ahí se quedan. Así es la historia.* [130]

Martínez states that Perón 'quería las memorias que él había dictado, y punto' [131] and sourced Perón's ideological promiscuity back to his early career, when the German military, including the acclaimed strategist, Count Alfred Von Schlieffen, exerted a growing influence over the army's methods. Martínez attests that it was Von Schlieffen who offered two axioms for Perón to apply to his political life: always attack and have a Plan B. The rest, it appears, is the filling provided by opportunity and circumstance, or – in the case of the meeting with Eva – serendipity. Martínez's Perón is incapable of restraining himself and instead just accumulates sentences to add to his story: '*¿La patria socialista? Yo la he inventado. ¿La patria conservadora? Yo la mantengo viva. Tengo que soplar para todos lados, como el*

[129] Raffaele Ballore, *El Presidente, El Caso Piras-Perón: La leyenda de un sardo que se habría convertido en Juan Perón* (Morrisville: Lulu, 2011), p.24.
[130] Martínez, *La novela*, p.216.
[131] Martínez, *Las vidas*, p.128.

gallo de la veleta. Y no retractarme nunca sino ir sumando frases'.[132] It is a common trait of Perón to claim ownership of everything significant, which consists not only of the discourse of his era's political rivalry between the socialists and the conservatives, but of his wife too, as he once stated: '*Eva Perón es un producto mío*'.[133] Drawing upon Von Schlieffen's concept, Perón further states: '*La* [*frase*] *que hoy nos parece impropia puede servirnos mañana. Barro y oro, barro y oro*'.[134] He applies this theory to his own life and never withdraws his incongruous statements as they serve as his defence mechanism. Similar to Hugo Chávez, who applied military theory to his own methods of government, Perón thought it more advantageous to have two pedals: steady democratic and fast authoritarian.[135] Moreover, in *La novela*, Perón's remark to López Rega reveals his utter disdain for traditionalist approaches towards uncovering the truth. Perón is not fond of historical fact; after all, his aim in life was to re-write his own history: '*Usted sabe que yo no digo malas palabras, pero para la historia no hay sino una. La historia es una puta, López*'.[136] Perón lends himself to historical recreation because he has made a conscious effort to reconstruct his story to such a profound extent. He has arguably re-moulded his family history for the sole purpose of transcending his death. His own contrasting accounts of his identity have made him one of the most fascinating literary figures for decades and thus, he is still very much alive. He explains exactly *why* he chose to recreate his history: '*Y cuantas más leyendas le añadan a mi vida, tanto más rico soy y con tantas más armas cuento para defenderme. Déjelo todo tal como está*, *no corrija nada*'.[137] Perón developed his mythical background to cement himself into Argentine history so that he would not be forgotten, a pursuit in which he was successful. It seems as though Perón displayed a blatant contempt for historical accuracy, which Martínez faithfully conveys through the use of vulgar language: '*No es una estatua lo que busco sino algo más grande. Gobernar a la historia. Cogerla por el culo*'.[138] Perón detests historical fact and instead, together

[132] Martínez, *La novela*, p.217.
[133] Julie M. Taylor, *Evita Perón: the Myths of a Woman* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p.43.
[134] Martínez, *la novela*, p.218.
[135] Wolfenden, p.2.
[136] *Ibid*.
[137] *Ibid*.
[138] *Ibid*.

with López Rega, strives to make fantasy a reality; he cannot even confirm that the young boy in his childhood photos is really him and contradicts himself in a myriad of topics, in respect to his family, politicians and his relationship with Evita. Who helped the General sustain his mythical history? Was it his imposter secretary? This is the view of Ballore:

> Pero, ¿Quién realmente puso en órden los hechos, las fechas y todo lo demás? Fue el "filtro" López Rega, la sombra oscura de Perón, él que contaba sus biografías, el manipulador de sus memorias y papeles, él que siempre estaba en estado de alerta, vigilaba, justificaba y arreglaba casa cosa de su manera. López Rega puso en órden, insertó, desmontó, creó, y si duda fue uno de los pocos a sospechar o a saber los reales orígenes del General.[139]

Ballore argues that López Rega made it his duty to recreate Perón's story with his powers of manipulation: 'Con más énfasis y creatividad hizo propio el "pensamiento" de Perón en este sentido. Fue el responsable de la eliminación de detalles, temas dudosos e inseguros que habían en las memorias oficiales'.[140] According to Martínez, Perón's secretary encouraged him to reconstruct the historical facts of his origins and childhood, as in *La novela*, he urges the General to forget uncomfortable details:

> *Los elimine. Los sople lejos de las memorias oficiales para que no dejen ni siquiera un grano de polvo…Toda persona tiene derecho de decidir su propio futuro. ¿Por qué usted no tendría que tener el privilegio de elegirse su pasado? Sea el evangelista de usted mismo, mi General. Separe el bien del mal. Y si se olvida algo, o se confunde, quién se atrevería a corregirlo*?[141]

If López Rega insisted that Perón re-write his history, then we must question his motives for doing so. Why was it so necessary for Perón to change and contradict his statements? Why did he behave in this way? What was there to hide? It may be the case that he did not need to conceal a secret but rather create the impression that he *was* hiding something, in order to sustain interest. Ballore suggests the apt name of *Lopecito* to describe this dark and mysterious secretary. Ballore claims that López

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[139] Ballore, p.26.
[140] *Ibid*.
[141] Martínez, *La Novela*, p.220.

Rega was both a feared and enigmatic man and was 'el secretario de mil usos de Perón exiliado y de su esposa'. Ballore argues that he was the instigator 'de la involución post-Evita, que llevó al poder a Isabelita, para después entregar Argentina en manos de los militares golpistas'.[142] Drawing upon his spirituality, he was commonly known as *El Brujo* (the warlock or sorcerer) 'por su esoterismo que utilizaba para tejer sus intrigas, practicaba insulsos rituales "macumbas", típicos de Brasil y la mágica de África con una mezcla de fe católica'.[143] His fixation with far-right politics and the supernatural meant that he exercised Rasputin-like authority over Isabel Perón: 'Lopecito se convirtió en la eminencia gris de Isabelita, la tercera esposa de Perón: consejero astrológico y, por último, su líder espiritual exclusivo. Tenía una grande influencia sobre el General, a pesar de la fuerte personalidad de este último'.[144] Although, in Martínez's view, Perón himself strongly implied his distaste for historical fact, it can be argued that it was López Rega, who was the driving force behind the General's inconsistency, encouraging him to be creative about his past.

Perón emerges in a mainly negative light in *Las Memorías* and *Yo, Juan Domingo Perón* is no more favourable, 'largely owing to the interventions of the editors in both works'.[145] However, the editors of *Yo*, *JDP* seek to leave their own imprint on Perón's writings but often adopt a more positive approach. Drawing on Perón's inability to praise anyone or talk about his personal life, as highlighted by Martínez in *Las memorias* (esquivaba cuidadosamente las historias que aludían a su intimidad o a su vida sentimental, p.12), the editors of *Yo, JDP* comment on what they consider to be Perón's masterful depiction of Miguel Miranda, referring to 'el enorme interés humano de esta semblanza que con mano maestra traza Perón de uno de sus más importantes colaboradores' (p.181).[146] This aspect of Perón might stem from his longstanding secretiveness about his private and personal relationships as he refused to speak about his mother's marital infidelities. Perón even found it difficult to speak fondly of Eva and instead belittles her by saying: 'Eva Perón era un

[142] Ballore, pp.26-27.
[143] *Ibid*.
[144] *Ibid*., p.27.
[145] Davies, p.70.
[146] Miguel Miranda was an Argentine Economist and Businessman who served as President of the Central Bank of the Argentine Republic during the presidencies of Edelmiro Farréll and Juan Perón.

producto mío […] la necesitaba en el sector social de mi conducción'.[147] He also fails to acknowledge his financial debts to Eva: while he drew on her emotional and human capital while she was alive, he depended on the financial capital generated by *La razon de mi vida*, which provided economic stability after his removal from office in September 1955. The editors of *Yo*, *JDP* also superfluously intervene to clarify Perón's use of the affectionate diminutive 'Isabelita' to refer to his third wife ('sigue llamando a doña Maria Estela Martínez con el nombre que utilizaba en Panamá: "Isabelita"').[148] Similar to Martínez, the editors of *Yo, JDP* seek to remedy their subject's omissions and half-truths, but their approach is less systematic than Martínez's: while they indicate that Perón's mother was Indian, they ignore the more significant fact of her illicit affair which left Perón with psychological wounds as mentioned above. Despite the frequent editorial interventions, some of Perón's 'uncontaminated' memoirs serve to enhance his reputation. It is clear that he appeared to have a strong sense of justice, instilled in him by his father who admired and was compassionate towards the Indians: 'nosotros los llamamos ahora indios ladrones y nos olvidamos que somos nosotros quienes les hemos robado todo a ellos'.[149]

In conclusion, it is inevitable that due to the broad range of the imaginative reconstruction of Juan Perón's origins, historical truth has been lost in literary myth. The lines between the fictitious and the real have been blurred to such an extent, even by Perón himself, that there is no way of determining the absolute truth. Upon examining Perón's origins, even the most credible journalists and writers have not been able to resist recreating his ambiguous past. Even Martínez fell victim to imagining the truth when collaborating with Perón and resorted to using his imaginative resources. However, whereas Italian authors such as Tóla, Canneddu and Ballore try to convince us of the truth of their versions of Perón's identity, Martínez fully acknowledges his reconstruction of the General's story and insists that, despite their intimate collaboration, the material included in *La novela* should not be taken as a faithful interpretation of Perón's life: 'Cuando yo digo: 'Este texto es "una novela"

[147] Martínez, *Las memorias*, p.47.
[148] *Yo, JDP*, p.259.
[149] Martínez, *Las memorias*, p.26.

no tiene que creerse una sola palabra de lo escrito allí'.[150] Martínez recalls that during their many hours of conversation, he discovered that 'él era enormemente inteligente, muy hábil', but nothing he said was convincing. Perón was never in touch with actual reality; all his responses were based on his illusions and ability to recreate the past. For example, Martínez notes one bizarre instance in which Perón had completely invented a story: 'me cuenta una vez que él salva al Che Guevara del servicio militar'. Perplexed by this anecdote, the writer responded: 'usted era presidente de la Nación ¿Cómo iba a salvar a un desertor?'[151] Martínez reaffirms: 'nada de esto ocurrió [...] Y sin embargo, Perón no mintió al contar esas historias. Eran mentiras, pero las contó tantas veces que terminó creyéndolas'.[152] Martínez does not emphasise Perón's reputation as a pathological liar, but rather demonstrates how easy it is to reimagine one's life to the extent where dreams are perceived as reality. Perón's dishonesty did not infuriate Martínez but intrigued him and even inspired him, leading him to conclude that 'Perón tenía una enorme imaginación. También Perón fue un maestro de la incertidumbre'.[153] Perón's incongruent accounts of his life have almost given his biographers the authority to reconstruct his story and create their own truths as Martínez insists: 'Me dije, bueno, si un personaje tiene la libertad de construir su biografía como mejor le parece, un novelista tiene la potestad de construir la imagen de ese hombre tal como le parece que es'.[154] Perón's biographers portray him as the man they want him to be and thus, he will never have an accurate identity in the literary or historical world. Due to his dismissal of historical facts and partiality for the imaginative reinvention of his own life story, Perón's personal and political trajectory remains open to interpretation, permitting writers to create their very own versions of him. It is such writers who exercise the strongest claim over Perón rather than traditional historians in the mould of Joseph Page who persist with their traditional methodology, seeking to control their elusive subjects by a process of reductionism and minimalization.

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[150]Alberto Amato's interview with Tomás Eloy Martínez, *Fondo de Cultura Económica*, 29th April 2006. Retrieved from: https://www.fce.com.ar/ar/prensa/detalle.aspx?idNota=408. Accessed on 20/12/2018.

[151] *Ibid*.

[152] Martínez, *La novela*, p.274.

[153] Alberto Amato's interview with TEM.

[154] *Ibid*.

CONCLUSION

Aside from analysing the credibility of the Rosas-Perón comparison, this thesis has offered the first comprehensive account of the literary representations of both leaders, focusing principally on how and why New Historicism is the dominant approach adopted in these important works. Although the works of Gorriti, Mármol, and Echverría have been analysed previously (Armillas-Tiseyra and Sommer), they have not been discussed from a comparative perspective. This study critically examines these works, taking into consideration their somewhat contrasting depictions of Rosas, Manuela, race, women, and gender: I have compared Gorriti and Mármol as their works encompass similar views on Rosas and Manuela. Both also use romance to reveal the devastating effects of the country's political turmoil, as Coromina remarks: 'el conflicto entre unitarios y federales se cristaliza en la relación amorosa de la protagonista con un hombre a menudo de filiación política contraria'.[1] Both writers emphasise that under Rosas, tragedy is inevitable: 'Del choque entre la lealtad política y la lealtad amorosa nace la tragedia: muerte del hombre amado, muerte o locura de la protagonista'.[2] Mármol's *Amalia* is slightly more progressive than Echeverría's *El matadero* as he promotes national reconciliation, but he should not be excused given his misogynistic and racist attitudes, shared by the Argentine elite. I have also examined the representations of violence and political chaos in Echeverría's *El matadero*, which hardly promotes the cause of national reconciliation as it demonises all Federalists, especially women and ethnic minorities. The least acknowledged literary intervention is that of Lojo who, in *La princesa federal*, offers a stark and refreshing contrast to the typically biased Unitarian accounts. I have offered what can be deemed the first critical analysis of this novel, which allows us to view Manuela through a different lens. Lojo's novel has added a new dimension to the Manuela story and brought into question the credibility of the Unitarian accounts that portray her as a victim. I have looked specifically at the way in which Mármol uses his biased and preferred perception of Manuela, similar to the approach of New Historicists, when analysing Manuela: he uses Pueyrredón's inaccurate painting of the dictator's daughter (in which she has porcelain white skin emphasising her

[1] Irene Coromina, *Ficciones Femeninas inspiradas en el Rosismo: El Aporte de la Escritora a la Narrativa Politíca en la Argentina*, 1846-1876, 2002, p.6.
[2] *Ibid*., p.8.

femininity) to support his own argument that she was better suited to Unitarian society than to a Federalist environment.

A Distorted Vision of Manuela

As discussed, Rosas and Perón lend themselves to New Historical treatment, inspiring imaginative recreation but for different reasons: Rosas's merciless brutality inflicted on the Argentine nation has given rise to several fictitious Unitarian accounts from Gorriti, Mármol, Echeverría. Each of their accounts, are informed largely by their own bias and prejudices towards women's roles in society and the plight of the working classes. Echeverría focuses on dehumanising Rosas's supporters by comparing them to animals, while also emphasising the chaotic violence which plagues Buenos Aires. However, Mármol and Gorriti are somewhat more sympathetic and progressive in their portrayals. Mármol's *Amalia* does not dwell on Rosas's uncivilised ways, but rather tries to encourage national reconciliation by presenting a friendship between the Federalist hero Daniel Bello and Eduardo, whom he saves from death. A romance blossoms between Eduardo and Daniel's cousin Amalia, but only ends in tragedy as Eduardo dies, emphasising that under Rosas, political reconciliation is impossible. Gorriti focuses on the impact of Rosas's authoritarianism on national families through a series of fictional romances involving Manuela. Despite her broad agreement with Mármol's sentiment that Manuela is *la primera víctima de su padre*, she concludes that she is still partly responsible for the disasters which transpire in her short works because of her association with Rosas. Each author foregrounds the fictional approach, often subordinating the 'factual' record to the process of historical reconstruction and creation. Although Mármol's *Amalia* is the most progressive account, his ignorance of the relationship between Rosas and Manuela should not be ignored: never having met Manuela, he assumes that she is oppressed and frequently portrays her as a metaphor for the nation. Moreover, he presents a largely inaccurate portrayal of her physical appearance, based on Pridiliano Pueyrredón's painting of the uncrowned princess of the masses. The reality of the father-daughter's relationship (which admittedly cannot be determined definitively) along with Rosas's progressive attitudes towards women in power have been eclipsed by Unitarian fantasy.

Although Unitarian authors have often manipulated the truth in order to tarnish Rosas, María Rosa Lojo's largely unheralded *La princesa federal* is equally guilty of implementing the same approach. Lojo presents Manuela as a liberated and independent woman who loved her father, and in doing so dismisses all accusations of her suffering under Rosas. Lojo seems to refer to and incorporate the most historical evidence, rendering her account more plausible than those of the Unitarian writers, but her reconstruction of Manuela's attitude undermines any claims to historical veracity as she too presents fictional statements as though they were facts. Although Lojo's Manuela appears to display a neutral attitude towards her father's attitudes and crimes (which is arguably a true reflection of the historical Manuela who did not publicly condemn Rosas), Lojo does not refrain from deploying fictional characters such as Dr. Victorica. It is as though Lojo is using Victorica's interview with Manuela to reinforce her own perspective (that Manuela was empowered) and to undo the image that the Unitarians had painted. What Manuela says to her interviewer does not imply that she resents her father but rather that she admired him. Lojo's motivation for presenting a resilient Manuela could have been influenced by the absence of an account which reflects only what we know and the abundance of politically motivated Unitarian fictions. Given the lack of historical evidence on Rosas, Encarnación, and Manuela, a wholly accurate account of their lives is an impossible endeavour and thus, all such figures better lend themselves to New Historical treatment. Writers can manipulate existing myths and construct new ones, thereby foregrounding their interpretive procedures rather than follow the authoritative approach of traditional historical investigation.

Rosas, Race, and Women

Whereas existing scholarship has largely overlooked Rosas's view on women in power, this thesis argues that he contributed enormously to the empowerment of women, particularly those from ethnic minorities, who actively participated in his government. The principal reason as to why Rosas has been historically viewed as misogynist is the vast negative Unitarian literature shedding light on his alleged incestuous relationship with his daughter and the brutal execution of the pregnant Camila O'Gorman and her lover. While the latter subject is of historical fact, which brought Argentina to a standstill, the former is an exaggerated myth which Unitarians have presented as fact and used as political ammunition to further their own agenda.

Had the Unitarians concentrated only on Rosas's destruction of national families and speculated about his relationship with Manuela then their accounts would be much more credible. Although Rosas may have been overbearing towards his daughter after the death of his wife, there is no evidence implying that she resented him. Manuela never publicly condemned her father's actions, but rather praised him in her correspondence with Rosas's biographer Adolfo Saldías referred to in Chapter 5. Lojo reaffirms Manuela's admiration for her father in her interview with Kathryn Lehman, drawing on her regular reading of Saldías's biography to her indisposed husband. The Unitarians have presented Rosas as the oppressor of women when in reality, he afforded women more rights than his so-called 'liberal' archenemies. Rosas employed Federalist women and women of ethnic minorities to serve as spies, whose responsibility was to detect and denounce any Unitarians. As discussed in Chapter 3, Rosas relied heavily on Encarnación to organise and instruct the *mazorca* in his absence in the same way that Perón depended on Eva to attend public events and form positive relationships with the masses. From the written correspondence available (discussed in Chapter 3), Rosas fully appreciated his wife's efforts and acknowledged her vital role in his success. Furthermore, Rosas's niece, Eduarda Mansilla, who was fluent in French, worked for his government as highlighted in Chapters 4 and 5. Although Rosas may have used women for personal gain, available evidence suggests that he considered women as being equal to men and permitted them to assume stereotypically masculine professions. In doing so, he blurred the gender lines which remained inflexible in Unitarian society. Prominent Unitarian figures such as Sarmiento and Mármol criticised Rosas for his moral corruption of Argentine womanhood when ironically, they themselves held archaic views on women in power. In a Unitarian society, women were only permitted a certain level of formal education before being expected to marry and raise a family: 'Las mujeres no tenían acceso a la educación universitaria: en la nómina de graduados de la Universidad de Buenos Aires entre 1830-1852 no figura ninguna mujer'.[3] Their male counterparts believed that allowing them to attend university and gain employment would lead to their defeminisation: Mármol argued that Manuela's 'entrapment' in a Federalist environment led to her defeminisation and that, had she received a 'liberal' upbringing, she would have become a better woman. The Unitarians seemed to think

[3] Chávez, pp.68-72.

that just because they did not exercise violence towards women, their misogynistic outlook could be excused.

Perón: A Man of Multiple Truths

This thesis has argued that Rosas has become the subject of imaginative recreation because of both the lack of hard evidence regarding key aspects of his life such as his relationship with his daughter, and also because of the overwhelmingly negative and partial view projected by Unitarian literature. For his part, Perón has become a New Historical phenomenon because of his contempt for the truth. Driven by his unfailing instinct to control textual representations of his past, Perón has reconstructed his life story numerous times in interviews, most notably those conducted by Martínez. His inability to be consistent has given way to editorial intervention and multiple versions of his life story. The writers considered in Chapter 6 all use the New Historical approach but in different ways: Tóla and Canneddu maintain that Perón was the Sardinian, Giovanni Piras, while Ballore acknowledges that their accounts are completely fictional. However, he still argues that it is entirely possible that Perón was from a Sardinian family. Martínez's spectacular intervention in the Perón story comes in *La novela de Perón*, with the disclaimer that his audience should not believe a word he has written. Joseph Page, however, is the only writer whose aim is to offer an unbiased and historically accurate account of Perón. Although there is no bold trace of editorial intervention, it becomes clear that not even a traditional historian such as Page can escape placing his own imprint on the Perón story. His choice of vocabulary as mentioned in Chapter 6 suggests uncertainty, discrediting 'the facts' presented as the absolute truth. We learn that all the alleged historical accounts of Perón become literary, as the truth is unfathomable. Despite historians' efforts to produce a wholly accurate version of Perón, any confident narrative style is often infected by manifestations of doubt, as exemplified in Page's account, as it is impossible for them to know the absolute truth. Perón has applied a New Historical approach to his own life given his inconsistent statements, rendering himself a malleable literary figure. The New Historical approach has been used mainly in portraits of women such as Eva, but it has inevitably influenced the literary approach to male figures. The lack of facts concerning a popular historical figure may encourage or persuade writers, and even historians, to make use of and manipulate the existing material to form their own truths. This is precisely why New

Historicism has proved to be a much more attractive literary approach: it allows writers to use their imaginative resources and creativity to change history and even insert themselves into their subject's story, just as Martínez does with Perón. Whereas a traditional historian would be bound by typically limited evidence or documentation, and might struggle to corroborate arguments and to project authority, a New Historicist has the editorial freedom and authority to challenge previous accounts, thereby rendering his work more appealing to some readers though perhaps alienating more conservative ones.

Original Contributions

This study has challenged and compared the most important fictional works on Rosas and Perón, which had previously undergone minimal critical analysis or been completely unacknowledged in the literary realm. Chapters 2, 4, and 5 have offered a comprehensive insight into how almost all of the Unitarian works present a warped interpretation of Rosas and Manuela's relationship and demonise him for his crimes against national families and women. While I discuss Rosas's crime against Camila O'Gorman, I also highlight Rosas's contribution to the empowerment of Federalist women, whom he encouraged to participate in politics. This thesis shows that Rosas's record on gender – apart from the execution of Camila O'Gorman – was relatively positive for the time: he granted rights and freedom to Federalist women irrespective of their skin colour. This thesis has drawn on the irony of the Unitarian criticism of Rosas's treatment of women, in view of their own reactionary attitudes towards women's liberation and progress in society by allowing them to pursue only a certain level of education, not to mention their overtly racist attitudes towards Afro –Argentines and *mulattas*. Chapters 4 and 5 have both contested Rosas's alleged indecency towards his own daughter – a claim that is exaggerated in Unitarian fiction – and disputed Lojo's insistence that Manuela was completely free of her father's tyranny. Chapter 3 is an original contribution to scholarship as it offers the first comparative analysis of Encarnación and Eva – who have never been the subject of the same study. This chapter draws on striking similarities between the two women's backgrounds, characters, and relationships with their husbands and the masses, and shows how they were demonised by their elitist archenemies for being uneducated and 'unfeminine'. If Perón was aware of Rosas then it is likely that Eva knew of Encarnación and drew inspiration from what she had read or heard about her.

Nevertheless, there is no evidence suggesting that this was the case and thus this thesis presents the facts to form a credible argument but does not assume Juan and Eva deliberately imitated their predecessors.

Suggestions for Further Research

While this research has focused largely on men in power, suggestions for future study would include investigating the life of Encarnación Ezcurra, who has been largely unacknowledged in Argentine history and literature. Whereas Eva Perón has inspired an array of biographical and fictional accounts, Encarnación – who can be seen as a political predecessor for Eva – has been invisible in literary history with the exception of Vera Pichel's *Encarnación Ezcurra: La mujer que inventó a Rosas*. Encarnación's absence from both the historical and fictional realms is surprising given that she was integral to Rosas's success and paved the way for women in politics. Coromina considers her an embodiment of 'rebeldía femenina' given that she defied patriarchal norms and became one of the most influential women politicians of her time.[4] Coromina describes Marquita Sánchez, Encarnación Ezcurra, and Camila O'Gorman as 'mujeres que pasaron a la historia por haber desafiado con éxito – las dos primeras – o con un estrepitoso fracaso – la tercera – las convenciones morales de la época'.[5] Both Encarnación and Camila exemplify a form of *rebeldía adolescente* given that they both disobeyed their families, and defied social conventions to pursue romantic relationships with their lovers: Encarnación, who was from a wealthy family, married Rosas who was of lower social standing when she was just seventeen and he nineteen. Although 'la oposición al matrimonio vino de parte de los padres del novio, que lo juzagaban demasiado joven para casarse'[6], Encarnación conjured a plan to 'fingir el embarazo para que los padres apresuraran la boda'.[7] It would be useful to examine how women who lived in the time of Rosas defied patriarchal norms in different ways. Although historical evidence is generally scant, some written correspondence between Rosas and Encarnación exists, in which they discuss her progress in terms of garnering political support in her husband's absence. This could serve as a foundation for a historical

[4] Coromina, p.26.
[5] *Ibid*.
[6] Sáenz-Quesada, *Las Mujeres*, p.49.
[7] *Ibid*.

study or for a New Historical novel: the lack of certainty regarding Encarnación gives writers editorial freedom and scope to recreate her life story. Encarnación would be a fitting subject for a New Historical Novel which might explore her relationship with and dedication to Rosas, and the role she played in his rise to political prominence. One could even elaborate on speculation that Encarnación was a source of inspiration for Eva, and create a dialogue between the two prominent women, drawing on their roles and importance in the husbands' governments as well as the discrimination they faced from the Argentine elite.

Given that New Historicism is the dominant approach to writing about Argentine politicians/dictators, it would be useful to research how the literary movement has influenced approaches to popular Latin American political icons overall. In general, it seems as though there has been a rapid decline in the traditional approach to investigation because of the paucity of facts relating to many historical subjects. For postmodernists and New Historicists, who both believe that appeals to the 'truth' serve as a cover for authoritarian approaches, popular figures who are difficult to uncover serve better as fictional characters with the scope to put forward their own agendas and present new arguments and interpretations. Whereas Old Historicism is hierarchical, New Historicism allows for parallel reading, presenting history as recorded in written documents (history as text). They use their imagination and creative resources as a powerful means of contesting and providing alternative interpretations to previous accounts in a less authoritarian manner: their principal aim is not to represent the past as it really was, but to present a new reality. Whereas historical accounts present only facts which are established by evidence, which we must believe because they are true, New Historical works implement a less fascistic, and thus more attractive and exciting approach to unveiling their subjects, encouraging their readers to question existing material.

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