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Fiction of Rafael Arevalo Martinez

Margaret Winifred Durkin

The University of Montana

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THE FICTION OF RAFAEL ARIVALO MARTÍNEZ

by

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B. A., Montana State University, 1929.
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Master of Arts

Montana State University
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INTRODUCTION

Rafael Arevalo Martínez, one of the outstanding Guatemalan authors of today, has not had great fame in the United States. When he is mentioned in literary histories, it is as a poet. Several of his poems have appeared in anthologies of Latin American poetry, and English translations have been made of some of them. With the exception of one story, El hombre que parecía un caballo, his prose works, on the whole, have been ignored in this country.

It is the purpose of this study to consider the fiction of Rafael Arevalo Martínez. To examine all his prose output would be too vast an undertaking for this thesis although all the available writings of Arevalo Martínez have been read.

We have divided the author's fictional works into three groups which will be studied in three separate chapters. In the first section are the autobiographical novels: Una vida, Manuel Aldano, and Honduras.

The second division comprises the psycho-zoological stories, or those belonging to what Arevalo Martínez calls the "Animal Cycle". Arevalo Martínez includes the following works in this group: El hombre que parecía un caballo, del trovador colombiano, Las fieras Trópico, Nuestra señora de los locos, La signatura de la esfinge, El besiculado, and
El mundo de los Maharachías.  

The third chapter deals with the other novels and stories of Rafael Arévalo Martínez. It is difficult to classify these "left overs" because they range from the fantastic, highly imaginative piece to the serious novel with political implications. Not finding any better classification we have labeled them Miscellaneous Works. El viaje a Ipanda in which we meet again some of the characters of El mundo de los Maharachías, the last work in the "Animal Cycle", will be the first work analyzed in this group. Las noches en el palacio de la Nunciatura, Por cuatrocientos dólares, and two short stories will be reviewed. Mention will be made also of the poetry of Arevalo Martínez and of the subject matter of his non-fiction prose works.

By this thesis we hope to acquaint the reader with the life and fiction of Rafael Arévalo Martínez. The writer has been in communication with both Rafael Arévalo Martínez and his youngest daughter, Teresa Arévalo. Through a friend who lived in Guatemala for almost two years, we have been able to obtain nearly all of the works of this writer and also some information about the author himself.

1 Alberto R. López, "Rafael Arévalo Martínez y su ciclo de animales," Revista Iberoamericana, IV:324, February, 1942.
CHAPTER I

GUATEMALA

A. POLITICAL HISTORY OF GUATEMALA

Guatemala, "el país de eterna primavera" is coming to be considered by North Americans as more than just one of those little far away Central American countries. The increasing accessibility of all our southern neighbors, due to better roads and greater air travel accommodations, is helping to bring these countries closer to us. During the last war when travel to Europe was impossible, tourists and students from the United States "discovered" Mexico where they began to go by the hundreds for sight seeing and study. Now they are "discovering" the country just beyond the Mexican border whence they return with accounts quite as alluring as those brought back from Mexico.

Guatemala has always been a favorite subject for travel books, for it seems that one can not visit that country without writing of its charms. Lately we find many articles about Guatemala in the current magazines, with some of them, such as the National Geographic, adding exquisite, enticing, colored photographs that would make anyone want to drop whatever he is doing to take a trip to such a paradise.

In addition to the natural beauties of the country,
travelers are attracted to Guatemala for other reasons. Archaeologists in Petén, which for centuries was the site of the so-called Mayan "First Empire," have barely begun to scratch the surface unearthing ruins in their efforts to reconstruct the civilization of these Indians. Ethnologists are studying the modern Guatemalan Indians to learn the problem of their ancestors' ability to build such wonderful monuments only to leave them to be swallowed up by the jungle overgrowths.

Every visitor to Guatemala returns with stories and often with pictures of the colorful Indians who are responsible for the splendid handicrafts, the most popular of which are the woven and knitted textiles. Guatemala is most remarkable for its weaving which experts proclaim one of the world's outstanding folk arts. Women's magazines often comment on the magnificent work that may be obtained there, and even Carleton Beals claims that in Guatemala one may find handicrafts that are the most beautiful of any country in the Americas.¹ Each Indian community has its own typical dress, its own patterns, colors, and symbolic designs. There are said to be about 275 distinct costumes in Guatemala.² When these Indians in their different dresses

gather for a fiesta or come to the city on market day an 
unforgettable picturesque display is witnessed. 

Towns and villages with intriguing names such as 
Zacapa, Chichicastenango, Amatitlán, Huehuetenango, 
Chiquimula, and Totonicapan receive their share of enthusiasti-
astic tourists. Guatemala City, the capital, with a 
population of about 165,000 inhabitants, has been called one 
of the cleanest cities in the world. The drive to Antigua, 
the ancient capital, declared a National Monument four years 
ago, twenty five miles from Guatemala City, is a must on the 
agenda of every tourist to this Central American country. 
The trip through the magnificent mountain scenery to this 
unique example of a Spanish colonial city is one long to 
be remembered. Many a story has been written about Antigua, 
one of the most delightful being House in Antigua by Louis Adamic. 

The year round moderate climate of Guatemala attracts 
many visitors. However a glance at a map will show us that 
all Guatemala is not the country of "eternal spring." The 
lowlands of the Pacific and Atlantic coasts are torrid. The 
interior tablelands, though, at an altitude of 2000 to 3000 
feet do have an agreeable climate; higher than 5000 feet the 
country is cool. There are some high volcanic peaks reaching 
alitudes of 12,000 and 13,000 feet.
The name Guatemala was not always applied to just this small country of approximately 45,000 square miles. At one time it was given to the captain generalcy of Spain which included all the Central American countries, the present northern border of the Republic of Panama and also most of the present Mexican State of Chiapas. The history of Guatemala began almost with the discovery of the New World by the Spaniards. In 1502 Columbus on his fourth voyage discovered this part of the world when he sailed along the coasts of present day Nicaragua and Honduras.

It was in 1523 that Cortes sent Pedro de Alvarado with an army into this territory equipped for exploration as well as conquest, for they had heard legends of great cities decorated with gold and silver. On July 25, 1524, Alvarado had the region conquered and proclaimed the sovereignty of Spain at a town he called Santiago - later named Santiago de los Caballeros.

There are several stories as to where the name Guatemala came from. One is that it came from the Maya Indian "Quauhtemallan" which means "full of trees." The account most generally accepted is that the Tlaxcalan Indians who formed part of Alvarado's army called the place Guatemala (at that time spelled Quauhtlimallan), meaning Land of the Captive Eagle. The Cakchiquel kings wore crests of eagle plumes. Variant spellings such as Goathemala or
Guatemala were common down to the 18th century. Alvarado applied the name to the region he conquered; when the Spaniards spoke of Guatemala, they meant all of Central America.

Alvarado made several trips back to Spain, and a few other excursions away from Guatemala. He went to Peru hoping to share the vast wealth that Pizarro was acquiring there. In 1541 while in southern Mexico Alvarado was fatally injured. Doña Beatriz, the wife of Alvarado, who proclaimed herself governess of all Guatemala, perished in an earthquake and flood that swept over the capital of Guatemala in 1541. Many tales have been written about Doña Beatriz, "la sin ventura"-the luckless one.

Since Guatemala did not produce for Spain the kind of wealth that Peru and Mexico did, interest in the colony soon dwindled. Of the colonial period, except for accounts of pirate raids and some legends about interesting figures, there is little material to be found on Guatemala. In 1773 the capital of Guatemala, present day Antigua, was destroyed by a terrific earthquake. The capital was then moved to its present site, Guatemala City. Antigua has suffered no earthquakes since it ceased to be the capital while Guatemala City has had several bad ones.

When Mexico and the countries of South America declared their independence of Spain, Guatemala, too, was
finally freed from the mother country. Iturbide annexed the whole Central American region except Panama when he was Emperor of Mexico in 1822. Iturbide abdicated in 1823. At that time the Federation of Central America was formed, made up of Guatemala, Honduras, Salvador, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua. At first the Federal capital was in Guatemala, and this caused jealousy among the other states. It was moved to Salvador in 1833. However in 1838 the Republic of Central America split up into five different states.

Rafael Carrera was the leader under whom the separate republic of Guatemala was formed. Except for a brief period, Carrera ruled until his death in 1865. Carrera, a mulatto with Indian blood, was an illiterate, cunning caudillo, whose reign showed little progress but plenty of bloodshed.

Rufino Barrios, honored as the nation's great liberator and reformer, ruled as dictator from 1873 until his death in 1885. Barrios was killed in battle with Salvador as he was leading the Union forces in a final attempt at restoration of the Central American Federation. Barrios dissolved the religious societies and exiled the monks and nuns. He confiscated much wealth of churches and great families.

Barrios was an able administrator who wanted Guatemala to be a progressive nation. He built public schools, roads, and railroads. However, authorities do not all agree
as to the benefits of some of Barrios' reforms.

General Manuel Barillas, with a peaceful six-year rule, followed Justo Rufino Barrios. In 1891 Reyna Barrios, the nephew of the great liberator, was elected president of Guatemala. He was re-elected in 1897 and assassinated in 1898.

In 1898 Manuel Estrada Cabrera became president, actually dictator, of Guatemala and remained in office for over twenty years. Sometimes Cabrera received more votes than there were people in the voting population! Outwardly Cabrera's rule was calm; he had spies everywhere to keep people in line. One of the accomplishments of his administration was the effort to stamp out tropical diseases with the aid of the Rockefeller Institute. Even foreign countries were impressed by his temples to Minerva and sent representatives to study the education system in Guatemala. These foreign visitors returned to their countries with nothing constructive gained from their Guatemalan trip.

Cada año fueron subiendo en pompa y solemnidad los festejos escolares. Los maestros habían durante el año escasez y necesidad, sueldos pequeños jamás satisfechos, ingrata posición en el mecanismo administrativo, dedicó a sus personas y hambre en su hogar; en el período escolar los niños carecían de libros y útiles de enseñanza......3

3 Rafael Arévalo Martínez, ¡Beso Períodico! (Guatemala Tipografía Nacional, 1945), p. 73.
According to the census of 1920, ninety-six per cent of the population of Guatemala was illiterate. Cabrera liked fine buildings even though they were not used. He built schools that had neither pupils nor teachers; he built a magnificent hospital, El Asilo de Convalecientes, which never admitted a patient.\(^4\) It was destroyed by the earthquake of 1917.

Cabrera exploited tradespeople, making the carpenters and tailors work long hours for the government while they supplied their own tools and machines.

For a man who has been described as extraordinarily intelligent, Cabrera left little that can be called constructive to Guatemala. Other character sketches of Cabrera label him as ambitious, despotic, vindictive, and cruel. For slights he received when a child Cabrera made the relatives of his alleged insulters suffer later.

The Revolution of 1920 put an end to the Cabrera regime. There followed a ten-year period of disorder with five different presidents serving in office. General Jorge Ubico became the president of Guatemala in 1931. Although Ubico, too, was a dictator, some good things have come out of his administration. It was Ubico who put into effect the famous probity law which requires that anyone taking public office must make an inventory of his personal property at

\(^4\) Arévalo Martínez, op. cit., p. vii.
the beginning and end of his term. If there is any discrepancy between his salary and assets, a severe penalty is imposed. Ubico balanced the budget, cleared the national debt, and began a public works program. Great progress in hygiene was made under Ubico, and there was some improvement in education. According to Carleton Beals, Ubico did not build a public welfare institution or a school during the fourteen years he held office.5

In October, 1944, Ubico was overthrown. Three men, members of the Revolutionary Junta, governed Guatemala until the new president Dr. Juan José Arévalo took over in 1945. Juan José Arévalo is the first president of Guatemala under the liberal constitution of 1945. He was educated in Guatemala and in Argentina. Arévalo is called the school-teacher president because he taught primary and secondary schools, and was a professor at the University of Tucumán in Argentina. Dr. Arévalo believes in free press, free assemblage, independent political parties, labor and peasant organizations.6 He is making every effort to lower the rate of illiteracy in Guatemala; free schools with classes for workers to learn to read and write have been established.

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6 Ibid., p. 366.
The radio is being used to urge the people to seek an education by repeatedly saying: "Remember, your country needs good citizens, men and women who can vote and elect their own government."7 Another phrase that is continually heard over the Guatemalan radio is the following: "The Guatemalan Government wants a free press, a free discussion of all issues of state so that the authorities may know what is wrong. Only by pointing out the mistakes can they be corrected."8

Under President José Arévalo intellectual life has been quickened. Several magazines, including the admirable Revista de Guatemala, have been founded. To encourage literary works, President Arévalo, on the second anniversary of the revolution, in 1946, awarded life pensions of $300.00 per month and medals to the Guatemalan authors: José Rodríguez Cerna, Rafael Arévalo Martínez, and Lisandro Sandoval.

B. LITERARY HISTORY OF GUATEMALA

Before studying the life and works of Rafael Arévalo Martínez, one of the authors honored by President José Arévalo, let us mention some of the other outstanding men of

8 Ibid.
letters of Guatemala.

The early writers in the New World were chroniclers who recorded the voyage of discoveries, of conquest, and histories of the native races. The Popul Vuh (sometimes written Popol Buj), which has been the subject of much debate, is a legendary and mythical history in the Quiche language of Guatemala. It was written after the conquest by a native scribe who had learned the Spanish language and alphabet.

Bernal Díaz del Castillo, the greatest historian of the early days of the Spanish conquest, wrote his True History of the Conquest of New Spain when he was an old man living in Guatemala.

Education in the colonies was in charge of the Church. The priests compiled dictionaries and grammars of the Indian languages. Merroquín, the first bishop of Guatemala, began the first regular school there to teach both Spanish and Indian children. As early as 1548 Merroquín asked for a university in Guatemala, but it was over a century later before one was established there.9

Guatemala had the third printing press in the New World, installed in 1660. However an ecclesiastical censor

had control in the matter of publications, and it was mostly religious tracts that were printed.

The first truly outstanding Guatemalan writer was the eighteenth century poet, Rafael Landívar (1731-1793) who belonged to the classicist school. Landívar wrote in Latin, his best known work being Rusticatio mexicana, a rich panorama of nature and of country life in Mexico and Guatemala. He is said to be the first master of landscape, the first to bring out the characteristic features of nature in the New World, in flora and fauna. This poem of Landívar, several portions of which have been translated into Spanish, is still loved by Mexicans and Guatemalans.10

An early master of satire was Antonio José de Irisarri (1786-1868), who traveled a great deal in his active political life, so that he did not spend much time in Guatemala. He left an unfinished autobiographical novel, The Wandering Christian.

José de Batres de Montúfar (1809-1844) is ranked by the Spanish critic Menéndez y Pelayo as among the best poets of America. His principal work is Tradiciones de Guatemala, consisting of humorous tales spiced with bits of gossip.

Antonio Batres Jauregui (1847-1926) was Guatemala's greatest literary critic; he was also a linguist, philologist,

and scholar. He wrote *Literatura Americana, Vicios del Lenguaje, El Castellano en America, La Historia de los Indios*, and *La Historia de Guatemala*. In his writing he has attempted to give the literature of various Spanish American states, classify Spanish Americanisms, and has well stated the case of American Spanish.  

There are many other nineteenth century Guatemalan writers, but in this paper we are reviewing only the most important ones. A Guatemalan historian whose works are still enjoyed was José Milla (1822-1882). Milla was the father of the Guatemalan novel and the official historian of his country. He wrote a *Historia de Guatemala*, several historical novels, and was to write a history of Central America from the time of its conquest to the end of the colonial period. Milla died without completing this history although two volumes of it have been published, one posthumously. Milla's legends of early Guatemala are often cited, especially those about the quetzal, the beautiful bird and national symbol of liberty in Guatemala.

Guatemala has always attracted literary figures from other lands. "En Guatemala siempre han encontrado buen

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11 Erickson, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

acogida las intelectuales de las repúblicas americanas."\textsuperscript{13} Several of these foreign writers have had a great influence on Guatemalan literature. During the 1870's and later, political refugees went to Guatemala. Two of the most famous were the Cubans José Martí and José Joaquín Palma.

Rubén Darío was the most distinguished visitor to Guatemala, and perhaps the one to have the greatest influence on the young men who came in contact with him. Rafael Arevalo Martínez met Rubén Darío when the latter returned to Guatemala shortly before his death.

José Santos Chocano from Peru lived many years in Guatemala and at once became popular with the writers there. The poets Arevalo Martínez, Carlos Wyld Ospina, and Carlos Rodríguez Cerna were all taught by Chocano. Both Darío and Chocano singled out Arevalo Martínez and Carlos Wyld Ospina as poets whom the future would point to as their successors.\textsuperscript{14}

Under the influence of Martí, Darío, Palma, and Chocano, modernism in literature reached Guatemala. No satisfactory explanation of this movement can be given in a few sentences. It may be defined, though, as an outgrowth


\textsuperscript{14} Erickson, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 33.
of the cumulative effects of parnassianism and symbolism — both of which movements had their beginnings in France as reactions against romanticism — coupled with a return to little-known or forgotten meters once used by Spanish poets. To this must be added the spirit of the age which demanded freedom in all things, in government, in politics, and in art. In Spanish America this movement was representative of its own cultural life and its own authentic personality.

A few Guatemalan writers anticipated the modernists. Domingo Estrada (1850-1901) stands out because of his predilection for French and English poets and for his translation of Poe's "The Bells."

Two other precursors were José Vicente Martínez, who trained the first real modernists, and Maximo Soto Hall, a close friend of Darío, who wrote the book, Revelaciones íntimas de Rubén Darío.

Among the first true modernists we find José Rodríguez Cerna, mentioned above as one of the recipients along with Arévalo Martínez of a monthly pension from President Arévalo. José Rodríguez Cerna is a lawyer, journalist, and critic. Some of his works are: Nuestro derecho internacional, a treatise on Guatemala's place in international law; Tierra de sol y de montaña, Un pueblo en marcha, El libro de las crónicas, and Entre los escombros.
The three greatest modernist prose writers, according to Erickson,15 and possibly the three best known authors of Guatemala today are Rafael Arevalo Martinez, Carlos Wyld Ospina, and Flavio Herrera.

Carlos Wyld Ospina was born in Antigua, the old capital, about which he wrote his first verses. He spent most of his life in newspaper work but now lives quietly in a small mountain village where he devotes himself to agriculture and to Indian lore. El Autocrata, one of Wyld Ospina's main works, is a study of three dictators in Guatemala: Carrera, Rufino Barrios, and Estrada Cabrera. La tierra de las Nahuyacas is a collection of short stories filled with Indian folklore and language. One famous novel of Carlos Wyld Ospina with a typically Spanish American scene is La Gringa - novela criolla. In this novel Carlos Wyld Ospina states his belief that the future of Spanish America is not in Chile or Argentina but rather in the Caribbean basin.

Flavio Herrera is famous as both a poet and a novelist. In poetry he was influenced by Verlaine and Dario and in prose by Valle Inclan. His first book of poetry was El alma de la montaña. Flavio Herrera has written two very fine

15 Erickson, op. cit., p. 106.
novels, *El tigre* and *La tempestad*. *El tigre* is said to be worthy to stand with *La Vorágine* and *Doña Barbara* as a novel of the American scene. It is a novel of the jungle told in jungle language.16 *La tempestad* is a regional novel of the coffee country of Guatemala. Excerpts from *La tempestad* appear in several anthologies of Spanish American literature. Flavio Herrera is a professor of law and Spanish literature in the National University of Guatemala.

Many more Guatemalan authors could be listed here, but we have tried to choose only a few of the representative ones. Guatemala has had some *mencionistas*, and its "Generation of 1920," when much was written on freedom and love of country and when an impetus was given to sociological studies. The 1930's and the 1940's brought in new generations of writers with many of them showing a great deal of interest in the history and legends of their own country and in the Indian of Guatemala.

In spite of its small size, its frequent political upheavals, its lack of reading public, Guatemala has achieved an outstanding development in the field of literature. As we have seen above, writers from other countries were always welcomed in Guatemala; Guatemala was the cultural center as well as the political center when it was

the captain generally. In Central America Guatemala stands out as the leader in intellectual development, and a sense of responsibility for literary leadership is prominent among the present day writers there.17

CHAPTER II

LIFE OF RAFAEL ARÉVALO MARTÍNEZ

A. BIOGRAPHICAL DATA*

He was born in the City of Guatemala, July 25, 1884.

His parents were don Rafael Arévalo Arroyo and doña Mercedes Martínez Fineda.

In 1890 he entered the Escuela de Primeras Letras of doña Concepción Aguilar.

In 1891 he studied in the Colegio de don Luis Castellanos up to the Second year of Secondary Teaching in order to obtain the title of Bachiller.

From 1892 to 1902 he studied in the Colegio de Infantes.

In 1903 and 1904 he worked in two offices of Money Exchange.

From 1905 to 1907 he worked in the Banco Agrícola Hipotecario.

From 1908 to 1911 he taught classes as a professor of grammar and history, principally.

In 1911 he married Eva Andrade Díaz. His children are: Rafael, Emilia, Alberto, Alfonso, Manuel, Eva and Teresa.

In 1912 he was editor in chief of the daily "La República" in the City of Guatemala.

In 1913 he published the review "Juan Chapín" in the City of Guatemala.

*These biographical data were sent by Rafael Arévalo Martínez to the writer of this paper, July 3, 1948. They have been translated and copied exactly as presented by the author.
In 1914 he taught school.

In 1915 he was Secretary and professor of several courses in the Escuela Práctica de Señoritas of the city of Quetzaltenango.

The first months of 1916 he taught classes in the Escuela Práctica de Varones of Guatemala City; and the rest of that year he was editor of "El Nuevo Tiempo de Tegucigalpa."

From July of 1915 to June of 1918 he was editor of "Centro America," a publicity organ of the Oficina Internacional Centro Americana; and from July of 1918 to June of 1920, he was Secretary of the same institution and director of the aforementioned review. In the second semester of 1920, he visited Los Angeles, U.S.A.

From 1921 to 1925 he was a professor of several courses.

During eighteen years from 1926 until 1945 he was Director of the Biblioteca Nacional of Guatemala City.

From the first of September, 1945 until the eleventh of July, 1946, he was delegate ad hoc to the Panamerican Union of Washington, with the rank of Ambassador.

He is a member of the Academia Española de la Lengua, F.E.N., International Association of Writers, included in the list of the 100 classics of America, formed by the Instituto Iberoamericano.

By the consent of the Government of Guatemala of September 21, 1946, together with the Licenciado José Rodríguez Gerna and the Engineer Lisandro Sandoval, he was rendered national homage of recognition for his contribution to the national bibliography and was awarded a monthly pension of $300.00 for life.

He has published the following works:

Poems:

Maya, Guatemala, C. A. Tip. Sánchez & de Guise, 1911.
Los Añormentados, Guatemala, C. A., Unión Tipográfica, 1914.

Llama, Guatemala, C. A. Unión Tipográfica, 1934.

Por un Caminito así, Guatemala, C. A., Unión Tipográfica, 1934.

Los Duques de Endor, Drama, Guatemala, C. A., Centro Editorial, 1940.

Novelas:


El Hombre que parecía un Caballo, Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, C. A., Tipografía Arte Nuevo, 1915.

Manuel Aldana, Guatemala, C. A., Talleres Gutenberg, 1922.


Viaje a Ipana, Guatemala, C. A., Centro Editorial, 1939.


Ensayo:

Nietzsche el Conquistador, (La doctrina que produjo la 2ª guerra Mundial), Guatemala, C. A., Sánchez & de Guise, 1943.

Biografía:

¡Ecce Pericles! (Biografía del Presidente guatemalteco
Una Vida and Manuel Aldano are autobiographical. Part of Honduras is also autobiographical.

B. LIFE

With exception of the preceding pages of biographical data, a great deal of information on the private life of this Guatemalan author is not available. We have the author's personal history in these few lines which he sent to Torres-Ríosoco:

As for biographical data, I can only say that I was born in 1884, that I was married in 1911, that I have seven children, a body incredibly emaciated (I weigh 94 pounds), and that I have had a chronic neurasthenia since I was fourteen years old. And nothing more.1

We have been able to glean a little more about this very interesting person from his own autobiographical works, from some of the authors who have written about him, and from people who have visited with him. Alberto R. Lopés gives us this added physical picture of Arévalo Martínez:

"Cuerpo endebbe - rostro afilado, ojos pequeños y hundidos de apacible mirar, bigote recortado, cejas espesas,

The family was in Washington, D.C., we receive an telegram from the Cuttington Daily kept by Teresa Areceo when
the Pan American Union in 1947.

The appendix dedicated to Quamana to the government of the Passive, appeared in the Pan American Bulletin when he was
martinez honors and accomplishments, together with his
the National Library of Quamana, a target of Areceo
in the United States, and that for twenty years he was director of
edited newspapers and magazines, that he worked in the
We know that Areceo Martinez, his Santho school,

EXPRESSES WTENTION BY E CONSERVE HOSO WHICH APPEARED IN "HE
EXPLANATION WRITTEN BY E CONSERVE HOSO WHICH APPEARED IN "HE
IN 1920 THE DEATH OF PEREZ, ARECEO MARTINEZ WAS
A PERO ARECEO MARTINEZ can be seen at Medellin"
Marine family lived in Washington, D.C., the author was little.

At Christmas time of the year when the neighbor

...erintendent, President Roosevelt, don't care to appear in a newspaper... lane in the procession the one he will raise. I don't, - come easy, even录取, please any ammado.

Teresa’s book is an illustration of the foreshadowing. 

It seems that sometimes we're not any different from

... because the people were not any different from

... the same time since I was young. Teresa was

Ethelmore into the character and personality of her father.
Todos nos damos cuenta de que es la víspera de Navidad y antes de que llegara este día habíamos hecho planes de cómo la pasariamos. Es primer Nochebuena en que estamos lejos de casa y siendo una familia numerosa como es la nuestra, y tan hogareña y unida, sentimos nostalgia ahora de que sólo cuatro nos sentáramos ante el fuego del hogar, y más con papá enfermo. Antes de que se enfermara papá fue el más entusiasta en hacer proyectos para celebrar el nacimiento del Señor, ... El pobre quiso trasponernos su ardor, para que no pensáramos con tristeza en los cinco hermanos, las tres nietas y los dos cuñados que permanecen en Guatemala.  

Many incidents could be quoted from Teresa Arévalo’s book showing the affection of her father for his family, his kindness, gentleness, and sentimentalism. Arévalo Martínez is not one of these authors who shuts himself off from his family in his own “ivory tower”. When the family moved from a hotel where they had been staying for several months into a larger apartment where they had cooking facilities, each member took his turn at doing the dishes. “Mamá hace la comida, yo la ayudo en la limpieza y además lavo y plancho mi ropa y hago mi semana de lavar platos, de la cual no están excluídos ni ni hermano ni papá.”

One day the poet, Juan Ramón Jiménez, and his wife visited with Arévalo Martínez and his family in Washington. The two families went riding along the Potomac River. Teresa tells us that it was the wife of Juan Ramón Jiménez

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5 Ibid., p. 170.
6 Ibid., pp. 209-10.
who drove the car and goes on to say, "Cenobia se llama la muy simpática esposa del poeta.... La dulce Cenobia es a Juan Ramón lo mismo que mamá es a papá: algo imprescindible y complementario." 7

Other authors writing about Rafael Arévalo Martínez said that he was blessed with an intelligent, sympathetic, and understanding wife and with a large and gifted family.

The general impression received by others of Rafael Arévalo Martínez' character is one of mildness. "En su vida, los actos ordinarios se clarifican en bondad." 8

In the autobiographical works of this Guatemalan author we have the story of his education, his adventures in earning his living, his literary acquaintances — also a spiritual biography of the author, the development of his neurasthenia which had such a profound affect on his whole life and on his writings.

7 Ibid., p. 45.
CHAPTER III

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WORKS

A. UNA VIDA

Una Vida, the first of the autobiographical writings of Rafael Arevalo Martinez, is an unimposing little booklet in which the author tells of his school days. Rafael was only five when his mother, weeping, left him and his sister, both sobbing, at the Escuela de Primeras Letras of Doña Concepción Aguilar.

Rafael was soon the pride of the school, for in two weeks he had learned to read. But this precocious youngster did not make friends with the other children. "Esta precocidad, este triste don de nacer con un alma vieja, hizo que muy pronto me separaran de los niños, ...\(^1\)

He began his second school year in El Colegio de Infantes where he remained seven years. Rafael kept very much to himself, having a morbid fear of his classmates - "temor que nunca desapareció de mí y que después hizo extensivo a los hombres."\(^2\)

\(^1\) Rafael Arevalo Martinez, \textit{Una Vida}, (Guatemala: Imprenta Electra, 1914), p. 12.
\(^2\) \textit{Ibid.}, p. 32.
In spite of his ready ability to learn, the first five years that Rafael was in El Colegio de Infantes, he did not apply himself seriously to his studies but spent all his time reading, acquiring books by all kinds of ingenious means. At the age of ten he horrified his instructors by being found with copies of Zola and Balzac. Reading has always been one of the main pleasures of Arévalo Martínez. 

"La ficción me es desde entonces preciso como el alcohol al beodo. Desde entonces la lectura no interrumpida empezó a crear en mí una segunda extrahumana naturaleza, falseada y deformada."\(^3\)

Rafael's nearsightedness added to his timidity and irresolution. When he read Le Petit Chose of Daudet, he loved the author and pictured himself being described, for Rafael, too, was unimpressive in appearance and very often the victim of his companions' jokes.

From Una Vida and Manuel Aldano, the second of the autobiographical books, we are able to piece together a little about the parents of Rafael Arévalo Martínez. López states that Arévalo Martínez was the son of a wealthy lawyer. In Una Vida Arévalo Martínez writes that his father died a few months before the birth of his sister, Adela, when

Rafael was scarcely a year old. Speaking of his mother, he says: "En vida fué una santa mujer, llena de caridad, viviendo la vida de todos, menos la propia, temerosa de todo, aislada, infinitamente triste."4

From his mother Rafael learned that his father was also sad and severe. Referring to both his parents he notes: "Los dos poseían la misma sangre ascética, el mismo tomar en serio la vida, como un deber sagrado."5

Rafael's mother must have been a very gentle, sympathetic person, extremely sensitive to her son's every mood and perhaps too solicitous. But she did allow her son to read by the hour instead of making him get out in the sunshine and play with boys his own age. "¡Pobre mi madre! Llevó las más halagüeñas esperanzas a su espíritu mi desmedida afición a la lectura. No sabía entonces que el que no fué niño no será nunca hombre."6

It is not too surprising that in this atmosphere of a sad and serious home with a timid mother, the child Rafael developed into a lonely, retiring, nervous, somewhat morbid youth. His childhood was certainly not that of a normal youngster. In school he was not happy; his companions

4 Ibid., p. 15.
5 Ibid., p. 16.
6 Ibid., p. 13.
terrified him for they would not excuse Rafael's unpardonable crime of isolating himself from them. Examinations, that were both private and public, were an ordeal for Rafael, and probably were for his companions, too.

No tenía más conocimiento que el de los héroes y heroínas de las fábulas de autores más o menos celebres. Sabía de memoria las tramas de cien novelas de folletín. Y callaba como un muerto a las preguntas de los examinadores: ¿cuántas partes constituyen un huevito? ¿qué es el máximo común divisor?

Then during his last two years at the Colegio de Infantes, Rafael, with a great desire to please his mother, really got down to work and studied most assiduously. While he was earning the highest honors a pupil in that school could receive and his ten silver medals, Rafael ruined his health. His doctor declared that further study for Rafael was out of the question. Rafael, sick and discouraged, has the feeling that it will be his sad existence to do nothing, to be nothing but "un poeta decadente más; un poeta decadente hispano americano más."

B. MANUEL ALDANO

The life story of Rafael Arévalo Martínez from the time he left school until he reached the age of twenty-one

7 Ibid., p. 36.
8 Ibid., p. 46.
is continued in the volume entitled Manuel Aldano (La Lucha por la Vida). The author's prologue states that it is the story of the first steps of a poorly equipped adolescent in the anxious search for his own road.

Manuel's first job (obtained through his uncle) was in a store named "El Aguila". In this store Manuel was to work without wages until he proved himself useful. It seemed as though the timid, self-conscious youth would never learn, for he was awkward with his hands and his near-sightedness made even his sweeping unsatisfactory. At first Manuel was more of a nuisance than an asset in "El Aguila". The indifferent, or even worse, the mocking attitude of the other employees and the boss's reminder that for work in a store more ability was necessary than it took to decline Latin nouns did not increase Manuel's self-confidence. He was constantly humiliated and made fun of because the other workers disliked his fastidiousness and his pedantic speech. Gradually, though, Manuel acquired an objective attitude toward his work and surroundings, but it was an exhausting job standing on his feet all day with the waiting for customers more tiring than the waiting on them.

Then to return to the reception of his devoted mother and eager sister bothered Manuel more than the vexations at the store. "Sentía que se esperaba de mí una cosa que no
podría dar, y nada hay más triste que defraudar una con-
fianza."\textsuperscript{9} Manuel's sister, not understanding that he worked
for nothing, expected her brother to bring home pretty things.
She begged so often for a shawl that finally Manuel's mother
gave him the money to buy it.

Manuel, who was never comfortable while employed at
El Aguila, became more wretched after he had the unhappy
thought to dedicate a poem to his boss. Now the jests of
his fellow employees increased, always ending with the
phrase: "Vaya Ud. a hacer versos." After about six months,
Manuel quit his job. His uncle was thoroughly annoyed and
told Manuel that henceforth he could find his own jobs.
Although his mother was worried, she said: "No te avenes,
querido Manuel. Dios proveerá."\textsuperscript{10} After a few weeks of
rest Manuel tried to get some other work, knowing that his
choice would be very limited since he did not have normal
vision nor a strong body. "¡Ah! si fuera fuerte!"\textsuperscript{11}

After some unsuccessful attempts to get employment in
a couple of stores, Manuel had the good fortune to make the
acquaintance of a Mr. Wolf, a German Jew, whose store was
called 'El Antropófago'. Wolf recommended Manuel to Juan

\textsuperscript{9} Rafael Arévalo Martínez, \textit{Manuel Aldano}, (Guatemala:

\textsuperscript{10} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 38.

\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 43.
Feil, another German Jew, who did hire Manuel. When Francisco, an Indian boy who had worked for Feil before, arrived in the capital, Manuel was again without a job. The few weeks of working with Francisco had a good effect upon Manuel, for Francisco was practical and down to earth. He, too, was myopic and had to wear glasses but did not worry about his affliction. Francisco begged Manuel to use plainer words because when Manuel talked like a book Francisco could not understand him.

Yo hablaba 'en libro', según decía Francisco. Hablaba 'en libro' sin afectación, porque 'en libro' había vivido, con la vida en tinieblas de las carceles que devoran bibliotecas, desacado como un insecto en el museo de un sabio; fijo a un cartón por el alfiler de la ciencia. No era la primera vez que se me pedía el uso del lenguaje corriente. Y no todas las peticiones habían sido acompañadas de la franca y clara sonrisa de Francisco. En la tienda de los catalanes habían sido inexorables para consigo. Cada vocablo era motivo de innumerables burlas.12

With his first salary, the thirty pesos Manuel earned working one month for Feil, he bought a hat. His mother's comment on learning that he was again without a job was:

"¡Pobre hijo! Me heredaste. Era muy inútil para todo. ... Yo fuí siempre inútil, -- continuaba; -- todo me ha costado mucho."13

Wolf, learning of Manuel’s idleness, placed him in

12 Ibid., pp. 57-8.
13 Ibid., p. 62.
there was such a sociability of these little boys that they were
exchange with French children and people and the money
again manual work by feet to work in the money
ready to bete in anything that gave him faith in life.
looking confidence and hope. And we were optimistic and astute
Henault had need of such a treat to give him some reality
experiences as esperanza de esperanzo.

esperanza en intercambio, y esperanza que esperan a futuro
esperanza en acción, me deparó al esperanza
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and paint. Henault felt that his manual call he had a
and paint. Henault felt that his manual call he had a
who had lived a pohrparian and different experience in parts
severe illness. They painted men were not cotton and stroller
of central America, for be exhibited and equipped to the
work without cooperation. Call had some weird notions
meridian in Guatemala, had his nephew come from Spain to
San Miguel, Guatemala, call, nephew call, uncle, who was a
about the time Henault made the acquaintance of

very generous.

mailed for six months, they were good months as John was
another money exchange, that of Pedro, don, where Henault re-
When people saw Manuel and Francisco sorting out the money, they would beg them for even one bill. "Aquella exhibición, como todas las exhibiciones de riqueza, provocaba la cólera y la codicia."  

Soon the work was becoming slack again, and Manuel was worrying about losing his job when his uncle came to announce that he had found a place for Manuel in the bank. Of course, Manuel would have to make a personal application, too; the uncle never allowed himself or anyone else to be too optimistic. Another recommendation for Manuel was that of the good name his own father had always had. Besides, his very appearance was in his favor as shown in the following description of Manuel Aldano - or Rafael Arévalo Martínez.  

Pero no fueron estas las únicas recomendaciones que tuve. Ante aquel aguilucho de los negocios, que había aprendido el arte de conocer a los hombres, mi aspecto acabó de recomendarme. Yo tenía toda la apariencia de un buen muchacho; un bicho débil, un animalillo asustado y bueno. Mi gran nariz, mis enormes orejas, tenaces, aferradas a la vida, energicas, eran desmentidas por la línea suavísima y espiritualizada de una barbilla tenue. Mi boca pequeña negaba la sensualidad. Entre las gafas limpidas de reflejos dorados, que miraban tan francamente, había hecho su nido la tristeza. Mi sola presencia inspiraba en las almas buenas el deseo de protección. Y cuando mis ojos se posaban, fijos, se sentía que yo era un hombre sincero y

15 Ibid., p. 81.
honrado. Con un aspecto así se defienden todos los seres inermes de la naturaleza.\(^\text{16}\)

Another thing which was now in Manuel's favor was that his speech was becoming easy and persuasive. "Cuando hablé con el Gerente, afirmé mi percepción de que el discurso era mi mejor arma. Y desde entonces, jamás ha errado. Cuando se me deja solo con un individuo, siempre he logrado hacerlo mío."\(^\text{17}\) Manuel often repeats that his speech was his greatest asset.

Manuel received the position in the bank, and for the first time in his working career had the feeling of importance. In all his other jobs Manuel had been more or less an errand boy; in this one he did have responsibility. However he soon realized that he had not received the preparation necessary for this work in his classes. In spite of the prizes that Manuel had received in his accounting class, he had trouble with simple practical bank operations that he would work out twice on paper and still get wrong. His first few days in the bank were filled with anxiety.

As usual his fellow employees made him the target for their jokes, but his application, facility in learning, and

\(^{16}\) Ibid., p. 84.
\(^{17}\) Ibid., p. 84.
his desire to be useful soon won over these new comrades. In his eagerness to study everything about his position, Manuel would get to the bank three hours before opening time. Not having the physical stamina for such long hours, Manuel became very tired and nervous. Often he would consult with his physician and friend, Dr. Esquerdo.

Dr. Esquerdo thought that Manuel had a typical case of neurasthenia but tried at first to convince Manuel his illness was the result of too great a preoccupation with himself. At other times the doctor would discuss freely and sincerely with Manuel his ideas and theories about neurasthenia, the line of separation between the sane and the insane, science and religion.

Manuel received several promotions in the bank; each time he exerted himself to the utmost to do his new job perfectly. He worked out some ways of improving the existing methods of doing things in the bank; but it did not take him long to learn that the reformer gets nothing for his troubles but grief and the hatred of his companions. Manuel was such a willing and model employee that he was depended upon for more and more tasks until he was overburdened with work. He became so tired both mentally and physically that the slightest bank operation cost him tremendous effort and much time. Manuel's mistakes, which were becoming very frequent, caused him to suffer more than his illness did;
protestion of the country

economic protests, the Indian protests, and the national
was rebellious for the first time the social protest, the
rebellion became connected for governments and her people. He

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At times in the reading of Manuel Aldana, it seemed as though Manuel would develop into a psychopathic case; his low vitality, his introspection and constant thinking about himself, his hypersensitivity, and his unfitness for the world he was trying to struggle in—all made normal adjustment for Manuel seem impossible. However, whether because of his background, serious though it was, or his own strength of character with his constant striving for perfection in whatever he was doing, or his desire not to disappoint his mother and sister, we know that Manuel will be more than "un poeta decadente más."

There is hope, too, for Manuel in his taking cognizance of the many enigmas to be solved in Guatemala. We have the feeling that Manuel will aid in their solution.

C. HONDURA

Honduras, the third of the autobiographical works of Rafael Arevalo Martínez, is the last novel written by this author. Both Una Vida and Manuel Aldana were written when the author was many years younger, the first in 1914 and the second in 1922. It was twenty-four years later, in 1946, that Honduras appeared. Arevalo Martínez says that Honduras is partly autobiographical.

The title of this novel did not seem to have any special significance until it was given to a book of poems
written by the hero, Alfonso Celado. The poems were judged to have little value by Alfonso's severest critic and best friend, a priest, named Father Lorenzo Castañeda. Father Castañeda had taken into his school in Quetzaltenango the young untutored Alfonso Celado when the latter had decided that he wanted an education and made the trip from his little village of San Marcos to visit the priest. This orphan boy had received rough training from his muleteer uncle. Alfonso made up his mind to become a teacher after being given a dictionary by the village school master. Because of Alfonso's natural aptitudes Father Castañeda was able to prepare him for Normal Teacher Training School in six months.

Alfonso became a tutor in the Campos home where he met a poor relative of theirs, Magdalena, the daughter of Guillermo Bird. Her father had gotten into trouble with Cabrera, the dictator of Guatemala at that time. Bird went to Honduras and died a short time later. Magdalena and her younger sister Antonia were always called the Calvinist, the name of their mother. The mother had died giving birth to her third child.

Magdalena was beautiful, dignified, and proud. She had had many suitors but had loved only one, Doctor Goicoechea, whom she generously gave up when the girl who was engaged to the doctor in his youth begged Magdalena...
not to come between them. Magdalena was five years older than Alfonso, taller than he, and much more sophisticated; yet Alfonso fell in love with her and loved her all his life without ever succeeding in winning completely her affections.

Frequently Magdalena made trips to the capital to visit her sister. Antonia was engaged to a very fine young man who loved her dearly and who could offer her a secure and happy home. Antonia apparently loved her fiancee but kept postponing the date of their wedding with one excuse or another. This strange attitude of Antonia distressed Magdalena and the friends of the two girls. It was when Magdalena was away on one of her visits to Antonia that Alfonso realized he was very much in love with Magdalena.

When Alfonso told her of his love, he was greatly taken back by the reception Magdalena gave to his declaration. "Jamás olvidaría Alfonso la mirada que entonces le dirigió Magdalena. Era una mirada de extrañeza, de frío orgullo, desdénosa; la inequívoca mirada de la hembra cuando la reclama un macho que le parece indigno de ella."20 Alfonso was so completely dejected that he neglected his duties and started to drink. Magdalena did what she was to do many times again: she wrote to Father Castañeda who sent for Alfonso under some pretext or other.

20 Rafael Arévalo Martínez, HONDURAS, (Guatemala: Imprenta de "La Hora," 1943) p. 25.
From time to time Magdalena was bothered by the unwanted attentions of one of Cabrera's soldiers, Juan Alfaredo. In a very melodramatic scene Alfonso played the hero by rescuing Magdalena from this ruthless fellow who came in the middle of the day to carry her off. After shooting Alfaredo, Alfonso was taken to a dreadful prison where the prisoners were treated inhumanely. Alfonso might have been left to starve in the prison if Cabrera had not sent for him. Alfonso was able to convince Cabrera that Alfaredo was killed for threatening Magdalena and not because he was Cabrera's soldier.

Alfonso remained in the capital to study law. Magdalena, too, came to the capital to be closer to Antonia. Out of gratitude for having saved her from Alfaredo, Magdalena finally consented to marry Alfonso. During one year Alfonso was very happy until Magdalena confessed that she did not really love him and could not continue the mockery. Even though Alfonso had become a successful lawyer, had many friends, and could aspire to fine government positions, he could not win Magdalena. Without Magdalena life meant nothing to Alfonso; he continued seeing her. He wrote a novel, El Precio de la Vida, and a work on sociology, Sociología Guatemalaense under her inspiration. Magdalena thought both the books were very good, but Father Castañeda frankly told Alfonso that neither one was of any value.
At the funeral of Alvaro, one of Alvaro's friends, Corazza:

Death

He paid no attention to the heat, and drank freely of her resistance. Alvaro tried to force mediation in alarming hope that she and her lover she would finally break down, a few of 1920 in Guatemala, Alvaro kept on pouring mediation, and 1916 in Guatemala, the world war in Europe, the revolution half of the world, the extraordinary events that occurred with many different happenings in the year went on with many things happened in
the activities of college students in Latin American countries.

In Honduras it was not always easy to find the parts of the story which were autobiographical. Certainly the character Alfonso Celado is physically diametrically opposite to Rafael Arévalo Martínez. His background and training, too, were different except for a few instances.

We mentioned above in the study of Manuel Aldano that Manuel, really Rafael Arévalo Martínez, discovered that one of his greatest talents was his ability to speak convincingly. Alfonso had that gift also.

Alfonso promised Father Castañeda that he would refrain from making speeches while Cabrera was in power in Guatemala. Father Castañeda realized that Alfonso would only get into trouble by talking against the government. Rafael Arévalo Martínez was advised by his friends to refrain from publishing one of his stories, Las Fieras del Trópico, the picture of a ruthless leader, written in 1915, until the end of Cabrera's dictatorship.

As was pointed out in the Introduction of this paper, Guatemala has always welcomed literary figures from other countries. One of the most interesting parts of Honduras is that in which poets of Guatemala and other Latin American countries are introduced. The greatest poets who have found refuge in Guatemala and who appear in the pages of Honduras
are José Santos Chocano, Porfirio Barba-Jacob, and Rubén Darío. Chocano, the opportunist, was always engaged in some commercial, get-rich-quick scheme. "En México había sido amigo de Villa; en Guatemala lo sería de Cabrera." 22

The style of Chocano is well described in the following lines:

Apuntaba a la fama y la poesía; era entonces el poeta más notable de la América. Don José Vicente Martínez lo llamaba el Caballero de los Espejos, para señalar su maravillosa objetividad, tan alejada de la lírica profundamente subjetiva de Darío. "El Caballero de los Espejos" de la cita cervantina, reflejaba el mundo exterior y cuando había luces en un salón, fulgía; reflejaba a los emperadores incas y aztecas, a las cúspides andinas de triangular figura, a la magnolia, al puma, al lagarto, al león americano.... Maravilloso declamador, cuando recitaba sus versos, surgía un mundo nuevo. 23

From what Arévalo Martínez has said himself, we know that he was influenced by Chocano, and the friendship between Alfonso and Chocano in the story Honduras probably represents that between Arévalo Martínez and Chocano. Chocano taught Arévalo Martínez to write verse in the new style, showing him how the proper syllables should be linked together to produce the desired effect. Arévalo Martínez stated that Chocano was subjective in personality but objective in his poetry whereas the reverse was true of Darío. While Chocano, the man, appealed to Arévalo Martínez because of his

22 Ibid., p. 75.
23 Ibid., p. 74.
strength and generosity, the verse of the Peruvian repelled him because of its impersonality. On the other hand, although Darío was distant and formidable to meet, his poetry was spontaneous and warm-hearted, having tremendous appeal for Arevalo Martínez.24

Arevalo Martínez was only a child the first years that Rubén Darío was in Guatemala, but he met Darío when the latter returned to Guatemala in 1915. "El pobre poeta, muy enfermo, venía a morir en su Centro America."25 It was in his native Nicaragua that Rubén Darío died. His last days in Guatemala, before he left for Nicaragua, were very sad. Darío was in Guatemala under the patronage of Cabrera who, at first, had Darío stay in the finest hotel; for he expected the great poet to dedicate some verses to the Cabrera regime. When no poem was forthcoming, Darío was obliged to live miserably in a poor boarding house. At the hotel people from everywhere had gone to visit the great poet;

...y se repetía una vez más la crucifixión de Rubén, pendiente de la cruz por tres clavos: un clavo de gloria, el otro de incomprehension y el tercero de sabiduría. ... A él iban tres clases de gentes; todas solicitaban algo. En primer lugar iban poetas y escritores que le pedían un poco de gloria o comerciantes que solo querían un poco de dinero; es decir, los que pensaban

24 Frickson, op. cit., p. 97.
25 Arevalo Martínez, Honduras, p. 19.
expotarlo. Otro grupo estaba formado por los que simplemente sentían curiosidad: estos sólo le pedían distracción eran mujeres en su mayor parte. Los más puros iban a él solicitando conocimiento lo veían fulgir entre las tinieblas como una llama de sabiduría. En las tres clases había categorías; mucha gente bohemia, sobre todo nicaragüense, iba a él en demanda de las más elementales viandas y alcoholes para saciar su hambre y su sed. Esta gente bohemia a veces esperaba horas enteras a que Rubén descendiera de sus paraísos artificiales para poder comer las sobras de los alimentos profusos que conducía a su cuarto el malhumorado dueño del hotel. 26

Porfirio Barba-Jacob, sometimes called Ricardo Arenales, was another visiting poet whose influence had a profound effect upon Alfonso Celado in the story of Honduras and in real life on Rafael Arévalo Martínez. It is generally known now that the masterpiece of Arévalo Martínez, El hombre que parecía un caballo, is a picture of Porfirio Barba-Jacob. From their first meeting Alfonso felt attracted to Arenales, and they were intimate friends for a long time.

Many Guatemalan poets are mentioned in Honduras, some of whom are now famous. Several of them are at present writing serious prose. In this story which takes place in the first quarter of the century, they were for the most part young men belonging to the "esquisuches", the nickname given to the literary generation of that day. The term "esquisuches" comes from the word esquisuchil, an

odoriferous plant native to Guatemala, a plant so sweet in scent as to be revolting. It was Enrique A. Hidalgo who gave these poets the name of "esquisuchelas." Hidalgo himself edited the journal, La Campana. He was a humorous writer, clever satirist, critic, and poet in his own right.

José Vicente Martínez, mentioned in the Introduction of this paper, acted as critic and teacher of the young poets.

Era un dulce poeta, un fino crítico, un sabio humanista, adiestrado continuamente en mil disciplinas intelectuales, como un Menéndez Pelayo criollo; lo había leído todo, lo recordaba todo; tenía una gran bondad y una paciencia inagotable para los jóvenes escritores y poetas; todos le llevaban sus composiciones literarias, para que se las corrigiera y ejerciera de crítico; no torcía su buen juicio ninguna consideración; y era claro al señalar defectos y generoso al aplaudir bellezas, justo siempre y comprensivo.

During one of the gatherings at the home of José Vicente, our author introduces himself:

Un poeta cadáverico, alto, delgado, con antecjos de miope, creyó llegada su hora y sacó tímidamente del bolsillo su última producción; se llamaba Rafael Arévalo Martínez. La impresión primera que le dio a Alfonso y la que perduró fue la de una continua e inurable introspección.

In these chapters of Honduras devoted to writers, we meet Carlos Wyld Ospina, who had just written his beautiful

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27 Frickson, op. cit., p. 63.
26 Arévalo Martínez, Honduras, p. 67.
29 Ibid., p. 69.
verses dedicated to Antigua that were highly praised by José Vicente. Flavio Herrera, gallant, courteous, and proud, was among the group; it was before he had begun to write his famous "hai-kais". Máximo Soto Hall is pictured as being of arrogant presence, of elegant dress. Alfonso would never forget the way he recited his verses.

José Rodríguez Gerena who is still living and well known today, was at that time a journalist; he had a congenial personality; he was both a humorist and a stylist.

In Honduras we have Arévalo Martínez’ theory of the novel in the words of the priest, Father Castañeda, when he is asked by Alfonso -

¿Cómo concibe usted la novela?

-¡Yo! - dijo el padre. Como un álbum de estampas; la elección de motivos principales para las estampas representa la síntesis: sólo se dan escenas culminantes; el detalle de las estampas representa el análisis. En la estampa debe quedar, como en una fotografía, la flor en el buscador, el peinado de la dama, la actitud del héroe... En la novela - que es el género más alto, difícil y noble de la literatura - caben todos los géneros. Toda obra acabada constituye un nuevo género. Nada vale la preceptiva a que obedeceas; si tienes mano de creador harás obra bella. Poco importa el procedimiento con tal de que el producto sea artístico; es indiferente la forma de la vasija si es esbelta; no investigues la naturaleza del continente con tal de que el contenido sea un vino generoso....

In style the priest warns Alfonso to refrain from preciosity. In the story Honduras Alfonso, in the priest's

30 Ibid., p. 89.
opinion, is incapable of writing either poetry or novels. The only parts of Alfonso’s novel that Father Castañeda found to have any worth were the pages in which he made a study of the social state of Guatemala. After a few years Alfonso had finished his third literary production, *Sociología Guatemalteca*. When Father Castañeda read this last literary effort of Alfonso, he had to tell him that the only purpose it served was its contribution to Alfonso’s own growth; otherwise the work was worthless.

Like Alfonso, Arevalo Martínez’s first literary attempts were in verse; then he wrote novels, short stories, and finally works of a more philosophical nature. Unlike so many other authors who write poetry in their youth and then abandon it completely for prose, Arevalo Martínez has kept on writing poetry. The last book he had printed, *Por un Caminito Así*, 1947, is a collection of poems.

Another insight we receive from the story of Honduras is of Arevalo Martínez interest in and study of psychiatry. In the incident of Antonia’s postponement of her marriage, we have a problem solved by psychiatry. Antonia, when finally pinned down by her relatives and friends into setting a wedding date, did consent to name a day. However on the arrival of the time for the marriage, Antonia became temporarily insane and had to be taken to a hospital. A friend of the family, Doctor Goicoechea, the same one who
had loved Magdalena, was able to cure Antonia on finding out the cause of her fear of marriage. Antonia was only a child of nine when her own mother died in childbirth. The little girl had been all alone with her mother until the midwife arrived, and throughout her life Antonia had been haunted by the terrifying experience. Doctor Coicoschea explained to Antonia the reasons for her phobia, and also in the words of the doctor:

Le enseñé que el destino de la mujer es el matrimonio, que debía afrontarlo, como lo afrontan todas las mujeres. Le enseñé que el nacimiento de un hijo solo en un caso dentro de diez mil produce la muerte de la madre.31

Antonia's sanity was restored, and she was able to face marriage in a wholesome, normal way.

_Hondura_, then, besides being a novel with a fairly interesting plot, enlightens us on the events of the day in Guatemala. It acquaints us with the important literary figures of the time, showing us how some of them composed their works. The reactions of some of these authors to World War I are given. Almost everything of importance with which Guatemala was concerned during the years 1910 to 1920 are, at least, mentioned in _Hondura_. Cabrera, the dictator of Guatemala, frequently comes out of the background where we feel he is throughout the whole story. Of

31 Ibid., p. 97.
course, the Guatemalan Revolution of 1920 and the steps leading up to it receive their share of attention.

Moreover the many sides of the character of Rafael Arevalo Martínez are revealed to us through *Hondura*. We saw him as a timid, lonely school boy in *Una Vida*, and how he developed the neurasthenia from which he was to suffer all his life. *Manuel Aldana*, the story of a youth and the various positions he held, took Arevalo Martínez up to his twenty-first year. As he had all the symptoms of a neurasthenic - incapacity for disciplined and daily work, emotionalism, exaggerated sensitivity, and egoism - he had a difficult time in adjusting to his surroundings and to his fellow workers. In *Hondura* we have Rafael Arevalo Martínez, the poet, in a milieu of poets.
CHAPTER IV

WORKS OF THE ANIMAL CYCLE

Rafael Arevalo Martínez' reputation for originality depends, in a large part, on a group of works belonging to what he has called his "Animal Cycle" and which have been classified by critics as psycho-zoological tales. In this series the author develops a new type of story in which people take on the characteristics of animals they resemble. Arevalo Martínez includes seven stories in his animal cycle: El hombre que parecía un caballo, El trovador colombiano, Las fiera del tropical, Nuestra señora de los locos, La signatura de la esfinge, El hechizado, and El mundo de los Maharachías.1

There are countless stories in which animals, insects, and birds assume the traits of men, as in the fables of Aesop and La Fontaine and the play Chantecler by Rostand. Human beings have been changed into animals in numerous fairy tales and other narratives. Odysseus' men were outwardly changed into swine by Circe while they still retained their minds of men. Accounts have also been found of animals that have been trained so cleverly to act like men that they have

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1 Alberto R. Lopés, "Rafael Arevalo Martínez y su ciclo de animales." Revista Iberoamericana, Vol. IV, Febr. 1942, p. 324.
actually deceived people as the orang-utang did in the story of Wilhelm Hauff, translated by Christopher Morley with the title of The Young Stranger.

In the "Animal Cycle" of Arevalo Martínez, animals are not acting like people, nor are people changed into animals. In some of these stories the characters have a strange physical resemblance to certain animals; in addition they have the dispositions and traits of the animals they resemble. At no time do these characters cease to be human beings although they may show a complete lack of morals and have many of the attributes of animals.

Dorothy Parker's short story Horsie is the closest to this type of psycho-zoological story of Arevalo Martínez that the writer has encountered, but the comparison of the nurse, Miss Wilmarth, to a horse is not so complete nor so profound as the analyses given by Arevalo Martínez in his "Animal Cycle". Miss Wilmarth looked so much like a horse that it was said of one of the other characters in the story, "once he looked he stayed fascinated, awaiting the toss and the whinny."² He resented Miss Wilmarth's resemblance to an animal. "All I say is, no, has any business to go around looking like a horse and behaving as if it were all right.

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² Dorothy Parker, Here Lies, p. 131.
You don't catch horses going around looking like people, do you?" 3

ii. EL HOMBRE QUE PARECÍA UN CABALLO

The most famous of all of Arevalo Martínez' "Animal Cycle" stories, in fact the best known of all this author's works, is El hombre que parecía un caballo. This book has been praised in all Latin America, the United States, and Europe. It has been translated into French with the title L'homme qui ressemblait un cheval. So far the story has had nine printings, a most unusual record for any work in Guatemala. Martin E. Erickson, who went to Guatemala in 1939, said: "The writer knows of only two books which have gone through more than one printing during the author's life time in Guatemala - El Tigre by Flavio Herrera and El hombre que parecía un caballo by Arevalo Martínez." 4

Many of the outstanding Spanish American literary figures were thrilled when El hombre que parecía un caballo appeared. Rubén Darío in telling the poet José Santos Chocán about Arevalo Martínez' famous work stated: "Notable acierto. Te sorprenderá y te gustará como a mí. No es Poe ni Lorrain. Es algo nuevo y maravilloso. Ya verás." 5

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3 Ibid.
4 Erickson, Guatemalan Literature.
5 Ibid., p. 104.
Then José Santos Chocano said that his impression on reading *El hombre que parecía un caballo* was extraordinary. "Te confieso que no he leído nada en que se hable del 'misterio' con mayor ni siquiera igual encantadora sencillez, nada en que se traten o insinúen tópicos transcendentales con tan ingenua y fresca naturalidad."6 Gabriela Mistral wrote from Paris in 1927 to Arevalo Martínez, "*Su hombre que parecía un caballo* es una de las lecturas perfectas que me ha dado la vida."7 Other renowned writers, such as the poet, Porfirio Barba-Jacob, and José Vasconcelos of Mexico as well as foreign newspapers and reviews have all given high praise to *El hombre que parecía un caballo*, the first story in Arevalo Martínez' psycho-zoological gallery.8

The theme of *El hombre que parecía un caballo* is very simple - nothing more than an incident taken from the author's life during the time of his acquaintance with the Colombian poet, Porfirio Barba-Jacob. The letter is the Mr. Aretal of the story and the author himself is the narrator, the young poet. When the two poets first met, the resemblance of Mr. Aretal to the horse did not strike the

6 Ibid.

7 Letter of Gabriela Mistral printed in *Opiniones sobre su obra* in the 1927 copy of *El hombre que parecía un hombre*, p. 165.

8 *Opiniones sobre su obra*, pp. 165-73.
young poet. It was because the two men were frequently to- 
gether that this strange horse-like appearance and manner 
of Mr. Aretal had a chance to penetrate his consciousness. 

At his introduction to Mr. Aretal, there was awakened 
in the young poet one of those rare spiritual experiences 
that thrilled him to his very soul and made him say to him- 
self:

"Éste es el hombre que esperabas; éste es el hombre 
por el que te asomabas a todas las almas desconocidas, 
porque ya tu intuición te había afirmado que un día 
serías enriquecido por el advenimiento de un ser único. 
La avidez con que tomaste, perzebiste y arrojaste tantas 
almas que se hicieron deseas y defraudaran tu esperanza, 
hoy será ampliamente satisfecha; inclínate y bebe de 
esta agua."

So the young man looked into the well that was the soul 
of the poet, Mr. Aretal, and he saw there some wonderful 
things. It was the well of mystery; the bottom could never 
be seen; but all those who looked shone in the reflected 
light. Mr. Aretal seemed to be a divine messenger, an un- 
knowing messenger, who lavished good without having it with 
him. Maybe the young poet dazzled Mr. Aretal just as much 
as he himself was being dazzled. At any rate, there was a 
mutual attraction which brought the two very close to each 
other in a communication of souls. The young poet bloomed 
when nourished with the wonderful spiritual food he received 
from Mr. Aretal.

9 Rafael Arévalo Martínez, El Hombre que parecía un 
caballo, p. 8.
Then the angel, Mr. Aretal, began to take the form of an unknown obscure little cloud, the shadow cast by an approaching horse. Our young poet was disillusioned in the character of Mr. Aretal, for Mr. Aretal was a drinker. Alcohol came between the two friends and shut their souls off from each other. When Mr. Aretal drank, he became coarse, speaking of base things. Even though the young friend kept seeing Mr. Aretal, he never again found the charm of their earlier meetings.

One day the young man had his first vision of Mr. Aretal in his resemblance to a horse — he stretched his neck like a horse. When the two poets were walking together that same day, the second vision came — Mr. Aretal fell like a horse. Then came the other visions in which Mr. Aretal's resemblance to a horse became more and more apparent: the way he looked at things, his manner of moving his arms, and even the way Mr. Aretal approached women.

El señor de Aretal se acercaba a las mujeres como un caballo. En las salas suptuosas no se podía estar quieto. Se acercaba a la hermosa señora recién presentada, con movimientos fáciles y elásticos, baja y ladeada la cabeza y daba una vuelta en torno de ella y daba una vuelta en torno de la sala.10

Mr. Aretal became colored by the companions and things around him. Mr. Aretal confessed that to the young

10 Ibid., p. 18.
poet, who loved him, he showed his best side. At the same
time he warned his young friend that of two people with him,
he, Mr. Aretal, became the color of the baser. "Huya de mí
cuando esté en una mala compañía."11

Finally, the young man asked himself what was the true
soul of Mr. Aretal, and the only answer he found was that
Mr. Aretal had no soul, that he had no morals, but that he
was amoral, just as amoral as a horse that would let itself
be mounted by any rider.

No woman had ever loved Mr. Aretal. He knew no
modesty and was indecent in his relations with women. Mr.
Aretal did not know true friendship with men, for he had no
deep feeling of friendship. He lacked the solidarity to
love his friends with human love so that they could feel
bound to him by human ties. The young poet told Mr. Aretal
that he was beyond morality, but that there were times when
the two sides of his character, horse and angel, met, and
that at such times Mr. Aretal seemed divine.

When the young poet's lack of enthusiasm for Mr. Aretal
became apparent, their friendship ceased. The brute
nature arose in Mr. Aretal, and he sent his friend away.
Then Mr. Aretal went away having left his secret, the same
as that of the Centaur, to the young poet.

11 Ibid., p. 21.
Alberto R. López who visited with the author of this unusual psychological sketch said Arévalo Martínez told him that El hombre que parecía un caballo was a work of youth and that he could not write it now because he has become more tolerant as he has become older.\(^{12}\) Torres-Rioseco who knew the Colombian poet depicted in El hombre que parecía un caballo admitted that he did have a strange equine aspect with the attractiveness of a racing thoroughbred who at times was transformed by his lower bestial instincts.\(^{13}\)

B. **EL TROVADOR COLOMBIANO**

Second in this series of psycho-zoological stories is **El trovador colombiano**, describing León Franco, a poet from Colombia. Franco was like one of those noble domestic dogs that almost become human. "Ese pobre perro que en la especie canina representa al pobre poeta en la especie humana y por eso es calumniado por los de su raza!"\(^{14}\) All that this type of domestic dog knows how to do is to love and be loved. He is not a hunting dog, he does not save lives like the Saint Bernard nor track down criminals like the blood hound.

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León Franco lived like a Bohemian dog, attaching himself to anyone who would give him bread and affection. He soon began to follow our young poet, who noticed that Franco resembled a Newfoundland dog, even to his big teeth that were constantly bared, but mostly in his clear faithful look. Franco, when asked what he wanted of life, would reply, "Nothing!"

Nada! Nada! Era un buen perro. ¡Qué alma de perro aquella! ¡Qué alma de perro, vagabundo y ocioso! No pensaba nada, no quería nada. ... Ninguna noción de hogar ni de familia. Veneración para seres superiores: deseo de serles grato; un poner a sus órdenes colmillos y patas; un sumiso soportar de golpes; un pedirles cariño y par. Y luego nada: el vacío hasta que un yéndito que corria a otras tierras lo empujaba.

Franco was like a domestic dog that is brought home by one member of the family and follows the next member who goes out. "Así Franco vio a un amo invisible y lo siguió." 16

C. LAS FIERAS DEL TRÓPICO

With the two stories El hombre que parecía un caballo and El trovador colombiano, Arévalo Martínez intended to publish the third work in his "Animal Cycle", Las fieras del trópico. However, at that date, Manuel Estrada Cabrera was the dictator in Guatemala. Since Cabrera might have seen a

15 Ibid., p. 46.
16 Ibid., p. 56.
resemblance to himself in the dictator of the story, Arévalo Martínez' friends warned him not to publish it. Las fieras del trópico was published in the book called El señor Monitot in 1922. In a preliminary note, Arévalo Martínez explained why this work was held back so many years and also stated that unfortunately the scene could have been laid in any of the Hispanic-American republics where frequently are found men of the psychology of Señor Vargas, the main character of this story.

The narrator of Las fieras del trópico is a young salesman, Mr. Ardens. He was traveling through Heliopolis when he met Señor Vargas, the governor of the state, on the train. Señor Vargas was as handsome as an archangel and as cruel as a tiger. "Se conocía que aquel hombre bello y claro era el señor de la comarca, por derecho propio, con la realidad no usurpada que a orillas del Ganges tienen los tigres de Bengala." 17 "Se le acusa de ser fríamente cruel como un tigre." 18

Señor Vargas wanted to know what the young man had heard of him and his government. There were many fine things to be told: it was the first time the country was ever ruled by someone who did not steal, the country was

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17 Arévalo Martínez, Las fieras del tropico, p. 62.
18 Ibid., p. 63.
economically more sound than ever, the capital city had been improved, roads had been built. In spite of Señor Vargas' good deeds, the young salesman had been told that "la vida de un cerdo yanqui en Chicago es más valiosa que la de un ser humano bajo sus garras." 19

Mr. Ardens feared and at the same time felt the tiger-like attraction of Señor Vargas. "El tigre es uno de los animales más bellos. Es tan suave como una mujer; es tan ligero de movimientos como una mujer; tiene ojos claros tan hermosos como una mujer; viste con tante elegancia como una mujer." 20

When Señor Vargas and the salesman got off the train, they went to a hotel where Señor Vargas was to dine with the young man. Instead while Mr. Ardens sat around for hours worrying over his fate, Señor Vargas played billiards. "Se la creyera un gato gigantesco jugando con bolas de lana blanquecina." 21

Mr. Ardens heard many tales of the governor's cruelty, inhuman, diabolical cruelty, that only a jungle-like creature could conceive. Señor Vargas could torture one of his victims, or worse, keep him in suspense for a long time,

19 Ibid., p. 63.
20 Ibid., p. 64.
21 Ibid., p. 66.
then turn around and invite the sufferer to dinner or give him a handsome gift. Mr. Arden was detained for one month by José de Vargas. When he was finally given permission to return home, Vargas took off his magnificent ring which he sent to Mrs. Arden with apologies for delaying her husband. As the train bearing Mr. Arden to his own land was pulling away from the station, he watched Señor Vargas who, on his part, was "viendo alucinado, el ligero reptar de la gigantesca sierpe de acero, contra la que nada podían sus garras formidables; acaso herido en sus instintos de fiera por aquel símbolo de la civilización..."22

"Al lado estaba su reino. Su reino animal: aquel revuelto rebaño de gacelas y tigres confiados a su custodia - la dormida ciudad tropical."23

This study of the man who resembled a tiger is probably one of the most clever in the "Animal Cycle" of Arévalo Martínez. Maybe it is the easiest one for us to understand, for we are constantly hearing of political figures being compared to tigers. In the August 2, 1948, issue of Time appeared a cartoon of an enormous tiger with his black stripes spelling the word COMMUNISM on his back. He is in a position ready to pounce upon a piece of territory

22 Ibid., p. 103.
23 Ibid., p. 104.
labeled South East Asia. The face of the tiger, complete with mustache, is that of Joseph Stalin.

D. NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LOS LOCOS

Nuestra señora de los locos is the story of Ema de Eguilaz and the Licenciado Reinaldo. It has been translated by Victor Clark in the Living Age under the title of Our Lady of the Afflicted. Señorita de Eguilaz with her white soul and dressed in white feathers was like a very beautiful white dove. All the unhappy, all the misfits, all the unfortunates gathered at the home of Señorita de Eguilaz and received comfort from her. Most of her friends spoke of her as the "consoler", but one poet had named her "Nuestra Señora de los locos."

When Señor Reinaldo began to frequent the home of Señorita de Eguilaz, "hubo una coalición de locos. Todas los locos de la señorita de Eguilaz se unieron para preservar a ésta del gordo Doctor." Señor Reinaldo was an ugly man, but attractively so, resembling a serpent. "Aquél hombre sensual era prudente, cauto y fríamente previsor como la serpiente."

In spite of the plottings of the "locos", Señorita

24 Arévalo Martínez, Nuestra señora de los locos, p. 36.

25 Ibid., p. 37.
de Egilaz became engaged to Señor Reinaldo, for "el Licenciado Reinaldo era la eterna serpiente que había seducido a la mujer; la eterna serpiente, de fascinadora frase bíblica, que sabía hacerse oír de la mujer." But the day after her wedding, Señora Reinaldo left her husband; he never saw her again. The last that the "loco" who told the story heard of her she had been living in a small village for twenty years, alone with her son.

E. LA SIGNATURA DE LA ESFINGE

Both La signatura de la esfinge and El hechizado contain the same two characters, Elena and Professor Cendal. La signatura de la esfinge, dedicated to Gabriela Mistral, pictures a domineering, majestic woman whose appearance and disposition, according to Professor Cendal, are similar to those of a lioness. "Todo aquel bello rostro de mujer se alzaba sobre la poderosa forma de bruto ... la ví como una hermosa leona echada." Even her beautiful hand resting on the rug "era una admirable y terrible garra leonina, a pesar de su belleza." Elena, this woman who resembled a lioness, is sad and tormented; people have said that she is not

26 Ibid., p. 55.
27 Arévalo Martínez, La signatura de la esfinge, p. 16.
28 Ibid., p. 18.
very feminine. Professor Cendal, however, has made a care-
ful study of her character and assures Elena that what
others refer to as her masculinity is only her superiority.
She can be very feminine but not with anyone inferior to
herself either mentally or physically. "Usted no puede ser
verdaderamente hembra mas que para otro león. Para los
demás será la Dominadora, la Señora, la Reina. No puede
tener amantes sino siervos o domadores. Necesita un león
para que aparezca toda su asombrosa feminidad; pero los
leones no abundan. De aquí su continuo tormento."29

Elena listens very carefully to the professor's
analysis of her character from which she receives very
little consolation. It is fine to tell her that she would
become feminine and cease to be domineering when she would
meet the right man, one with the character of a lion, her
problem is still not solved. "Pero: ¿es que todavía queda
algún león sobre la tierra?"30

F. EL HECHIZADO

In El hechizado, Professor Cendal tells Elena his
problem, his love for a woman whom he calls Miss Incognita.
Miss Incognita was an artist. Now divorced, she had been

29 Ibid., p. 19.
30 Ibid., p. 32.
married to a movie star in Los Angeles. She traveled a great deal; wherever she went she caused trouble. Miss Incognita came to Guatemala, and Professor Cendal was sent by his newspaper to interview her. He began visiting her every day; she was continually in his thoughts. Still he did not love Miss Incognita in the common meaning given to the word love. Professor Cendal was bewitched by Miss Incognita and loved her with a platonic love.

After telling Elena about his true feelings for Miss Incognita, who, of course, is really Elena, Professor Cendal realizes that by having bared his soul to her, he has lost her completely.

"Elena, la nocturna cazadora, que sólo hace su presa en las tinieblas, corría hacia los espacios abiertos, llevando mi alma despedazada entre sus fauces sangrientas."31

G. EL MUNDO DE LOS MAHARACHIÁS

El mundo de los Maharachiá is the longest of the psycho-zoological stories and different from the others in that this time people are not resembling animals. Arévalo Martínez gives free play to his imagination, taking us to a Utopia where live the Maharachiá, people with tails, marvellous tails. We are taken to this strange country on

31 Arévalo Martínez, El hechizado, p. 53.
the Costa Dorado by Manuel, an ordinary person from Lucia. He was the only survivor of a shipwreck in this land of the Maharachías and was cared for by them.

Aixa is the one inhabitant without a tail among these strange people. She lost hers and with it all her hope of love and happiness in the land of her fathers. When Manuel regained consciousness after being very ill for days, the first person he saw was Aixa. "Aixa estaba en zueillas, sobre un estrado especial, como acostumbran descansar los grandes monos, y tenía toda la apariencia de uno de estos animales, a pesar de su fina belleza de mujer." 32

Manuel fell in love with Aixa. Then he met her cousin, Isabel, and fell in love with her, too. Isabel had a magnificent tail with silky blond hair at the end, that she tied with a white ribbon. Manuel was torn between and tormented by his two loves - the passionate, violent love aroused in him by Isabel, and the tender, protecting, spiritual love he felt for Aixa. Finally, it was his love for Aixa that won out.

Besides this thin plot of the Lucia's struggle over which of the cousins he should renounce, we learn in this story all about the fantastic Maharachías. They were a good,

32 Arévalo Martínez, El mundo de los Maharachías, p. 7.
that she was responsible for their door, for one thing in the
but all these households were to perform, with

pressures, the

intelligence and aptitude to choose all topics equally in
accompanied with all the important households, whose keen
a different guest at the table so that the judge became

each day the host of Heaven named Kubera Agro, seated

for the enthusiasm of those de sue oosae a

when the households were Daniel — perhaps (18) Rechman
when he attended, Heaven was unable to hear the noise to
and listen; they could not hear their feet, the noise, and listen the households attached from which they hung by their

where many evidence from a wedding to a dance. In the dance,

in the land of the households, Heaven was taken to

the households Stein, some, some best, and

story and thought in the households can households, note too.

were found out about her people. He was amazed at their

more than with any of the other households, it was from her

"He is in the rooming, these households were with

- - from Gentleman were here, the doctors and focus of a man.

Kubera people, but at the same time were a profoundly mean.

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absence of her father, Mahma Aron, she gave some bad advice to the Ipandeses. These people were in the habit of consulting with the very wise Mahma Aron before making any important decisions. Aixa told them to accept the people of Dromona, who had begun to make a peaceful invasion into the land of the Ipandeses. These people from Dromona, without tails, which meant they had lost "el sentido de la tierra", had turned out to be warlike. They condemned to death the Maharachías - all one thousand nine hundred and ninety seven - the number of Maharachías that were still living.

Aixa told the story of her people to Manuel, so that it would be preserved for posterity; but the Maharachías died without giving the Lucía their supreme message.

Rafael Arévalo Martínez' "Animal Cycle" was written over a period of twenty-five years and shows the evolution of both the style and the ideas of the author. His first work revealed a romantic, intolerant youth; his last in this series reveals a philosopher, in spite of the almost childlike imagination shown. All the stories of the psychozoological group are fascinating to read though some of them are difficult to understand. Perhaps one has to be a poet like Rubén Darío or Gabriela Mistral to thoroughly appreciate Arévalo Martínez in these strange stories.

Torres-Ríoseco, in speaking of this "Animal Cycle",
states:

The greatest power of Arevalo Martínez lies in his human sympathies and his strangely intuitive and compassionate understanding of his fellow men. He feels a sort of Christian pantheism that makes all created things one; and like a literary St. Francis he experiences a true affection for Brother Tiger, Brother Horse, Brother Serpent and Sister Dove. 36

36 Torres-Rioseco, *The Epic of Latin American Literature*, p. 201.
CHAPTER V

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

From the fiction of Rafael Arévalo Martínez which is neither autobiographical nor belonging to his "Animal Cycle", we have tried to choose for consideration here a few works that show the wide variety of interests of this author as well as some of his theories on government, education, and economics.

A. EL VIAJE A IPANDA

It is in El viaje a Ipanda that Rafael Arévalo Martínez reveals to us his political and social views. This novel, although making frequent references to El mundo de los Maharachías and continuing with the character Manuel of El mundo, is complete in itself. Manuel interprets to us the problems of the Ipandesa society. Manuel is sent by Mahma Aron, the leader of the Maharachías, to Ipanda, the land of promise, the ideal democratic state. The inhabitants of Ipanda, the Ipandeses, are wise people, having been trained by the superior Maharachías.

Hernon, an Ipandesa, who has been consulting with Aron, takes Manuel to Soler, the capital of Ipanda, where Manuel becomes acquainted with the customs of the Ipandeses.

One of the first things Manuel finds out about Ipanda
I agree to participate. It's a strange pomegranate.  

Then at twenty the Ipanemans may resume the education or find  

though every Ipanema youth must do compulsory manual work.  

Any wealth over this amount is paid to the state to alleviate the most laboured tasks.  

The Ipanema are the highest paid people in Ipanema. After they come the school teachers and then the workers do the most laboured tasks.  

There are no enormous fortunes in Ipanema — no one is allowed to possess more than one-half million "mendanos".  

It's only necessary to do in Ipanema, to acquire a degree.  

Whether he has to study about eighteen hours a day?  

Then at twenty the Ipanemans may resume the education or find.
queremos ni debemos dedicar al aprendizaje - comprendiendo por éste, clases y estudios en los textos, a la vez - más de seis horas diarias."2

Suffrage is obligatory and considered a sacred duty in Ipanda. It is granted to both men and women at the age of eighteen. Even those very ill in the hospitals do not fail to vote. Of course, the hospitals are attractive, airy, sunny buildings staffed by efficient, cheerful doctors and nurses. After Manuel has visited one of these hospitals, he remarks: "En aquel hospital aprendí el secreto de lo que influye el alma para curar el cuerpo."3

Even the prisons in Ipanda are comfortable. Prisoners are kept there to prevent them from harming society by their conduct. They are treated not as delinquents but as ill, and everything is done to cure them. "¡Ya se le castiga bastante con solo privarlo de la libertad! El primer don es el de la libertad."4

Through Hernon, Manuel meets Bolisario, the president of Ipanda and an international political figure, who has initiated a League of Nations with the help of various powerful friendly countries. This league watches over world

2 Ibid., p. 21.
3 Ibid., p. 71.
4 Ibid., p. 168.
Botharzio, the wise, clever reader, has writ-

the square, dark-enlumined, somnolent lizarders.

between the tall, round, democratic pyramids and these

interior rescue. An economic oxides exists and a conclu-
country. There is an interlude of intermedieate or a colored and

Indian states for being the most pleased and appetizing

over intermedieation although we set the boundary still exists.

there are neither custom nor restrictions nor restrictions

while. The measure of nations has exceeded all boundaries so

This dear state of India; however, is not all sun-

stood one another better.

speaking the same language, they can feel closer and under-

considered the most important and simple. With all people

numbered of people, they „lande“ was chosen because it was

examination of the four languages spoken by the greatest

justification – but not an articulated one. After all this

or importance a universal language on the country of the

one of the products of the league of nations is that

county proportioned to the population and wealth.

maintained by the government of the league, those of each

among the countries. The expense of the army andschema is

functions as an enabler when those countries: any conti-

nation. It introduces products of international interest

peace but does not interfere in the internal affairs of any
troubles and neglects his duties of state at this time of crisis. Cota, his extremely beautiful wife, not only is unfaithful to him but also helps the cause of the forces opposed to democracy. Bolisario tries to serve two masters — his country and Cota. "El que a dos amos sirve, a uno sirve y a otro engaña." Finally Bolisario loses the vote of confidence needed to retain his office.

Tremel, although representing a group opposed to the old order and a discipline that teaches man to suppress his individual, personal instincts for the benefit of the common good, because of his magnetic and domineering personality, is elected to replace Bolisario.

Soon after he has been elected president, Tremel leaves the Assembly for the home of Hernon to try once more to persuade lovely Seda, Hernon's daughter, to marry him. Tremel has tried many times before, but Seda does not love Tremel and is engaged to someone else. Unable to win Seda, Tremel kills her and himself. The mother of Seda dies of a broken heart several weeks later. Her father, Hernon, crushed as he is by the tragedy of his family, seems to take strength from it. Had Tremel not died, Hernon would probably have avenged his daughter's death by killing Tremel. Now Hernon, who will certainly be the leader of the Ipandeses,

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5 Ibid., p. 117.
will take care of the whole subversive, inferior race which has been appeased too long. He sees his responsibility and will face it calmly and quickly. There may be some hope of rescuing the dying democracy of Ipanda in Hermon.

The two factions have lost their leaders - Bolisario and Tremel. Perhaps the country of Ipanda will come to anarchy. Already the League of Nations, formed after a war, is losing its authority. During a few years of peace, men are forgetting the horrors of war. Revolutions are fomenting everywhere; several nations are trying to extend their territories and power.

Pondering over what has happened in Ipanda and the other countries, Manuel thinks that perhaps this world is no more than that mechanism in which caged squirrels cause a wheel to move with the illusion of advancing when in reality they remain in the same place.

Mí optimismo entonces se preguntó si la vida era una espiral y esa línea que regresaba al mismo punto indefinidamente lo hacía cada vez más alto.  

From the story of El Viaje a Ipanda it seems that Rafael Arévalo Martínez does not think democracy is workable because of man's innate evil and greed. The ideal state of Ipanda, which supposedly existed centuries ago since it is contemporaneous with the era of El Mundo de las Maharachías,
is possibly the world of today with the causes of its down-
fall the same as those which brought on our second World War.

Rafael Arévalo Martínez in his El viaje a Ipanda expresses some interesting theories concerning the League of Nations, education, economics, but the novel suffers from the inclusion of so much extraneous material. Then the author has to kill off quickly and melodramatically several of the main characters.

As we have seen in the novel, Honduras, Arévalo Martínez is not at his best in this genre. Moreover his creative, imaginative genius does not deal too successfully with problems of government and economics.

B. POR CUATROCIENTOS DÓLARES

Second in his literary works, after El hombre que parecía un caballo is the place that Rafael Arévalo Martínez accords to his short story, Por cuatrocientos dólares. It was published in the first edition of the literary magazine, Revista de Guatemala, in 1945.

A Guatemalan youth - who is never named - is the hero of this story. He was fifteen when the 1917 earthquakes ruined all his father had in Guatemala City. The boy had to quit school and go to work at the farm of a brother-in-law.

7 Letter from Arévalo Martínez, July 1948.
Through a stroke of good luck, he became overseer of a neighboring farm where for five years he led a dissipated life doing just as he pleased. Then his mother paid him a visit, and our youth was quickly sent to the United States to be under the direct supervision of an older brother, Daniel. The boy did not tell his desperate family, which was having a struggle gathering together enough money for his fare, that he had $1,000.00 himself, realized from the sale of hunting dogs, weapons, cattle, etc., he had illegally acquired during his term of overseer.

In San Francisco, in spite of Daniel's guardianship, our Guatemalan youth got into a great deal of trouble seducing the wives and girl friends of other men. Life was not going too smoothly for the Guatemalan in California, so when a friend of his, Recaredo Amenábar, signed up for a fishing expedition in Alaska, he joined it, too.

This company was not authorized by the government and was run by a couple of racketeers. They solicited the men necessary for the trip from the dregs of San Francisco waterfront society: "Boxeadores, desesperados, invertidos, rufianes, asesinos, ladrones, aquellos que se habían echado la vida a la espalda y estaban dispuestos a jugarla contra pocos centavos." The derelicts, living in close quarters

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8 Arévalo Martínez, *Por cuatrocientos dólares*, p. 59.
for sixty days, while waiting for the signal of the salmon run in order to work for twenty days, are far from attractive. Each fisher had signed up for four hundred dollars to be paid to him at the end of the expedition. However, to idle away the time, the men played cards and checkers, smoked, and drank; the money for these pastimes was charged against their $400.00. Some of the men who had used up all their credit and could not stand the waiting jumped into the icy Alaskan waters. Others did not bother to wash themselves or change their clothes during all the time they were on the ships.

Still, no matter how hardened and perverse some of these characters were, they were affected by the beauty of their surroundings.

¡Cuántas veces la mano que sostenia un naipes—o una espalda quedo en el aire, durante largo tiempo sin que ninguno de los otros jugadores, presos también por el encanto divino de la hora y enajenados, protestaran! A todos llegaba aquel mensaje; pero el hombre es ciego, y luego nos escondíamos en su encanto, bebiendo alcohol en cantidades que hubieran envenenado a un coloso.  

When, at last, the salmon were sighted, the men were stirred from their lethargy to work long hours each day. To keep the men on their feet after their energy was exhausted, they were given marihuana cigarettes. They often fell into

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9 Ibid., p. 65.
bed without removing their clothes and were summoned to work again at the end of four hours sleep. With twenty-four hours of daylight they seldom knew what time it was nor what day it was.

Back in San Francisco at the end of the expedition, the fishers were paid what was left of their $400.00. Our Guatemalan youth had over $200.00 coming to him but divided it with Amenabar who received much less. The men who had not spent their dollars on the expedition, soon spent them in San Francisco. "Todos quedaron en manos de las prostitutas!" 10

*Per cuatrocientos dólares* is the most vigorous and surprising of all Arévalo Martínez' works. No idealist of refined language but a realist has written this story.

In most of Arévalo Martínez stories, one is not too aware of the setting; in *Per cuatrocientos dólares* the setting is all important. A fascinating description of the work in connection with salmon fishing helps to relieve the bad taste left in one's mouth after reading about the more obnoxious and vulgar activities of the miserable fishers.

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10 Ibid., p. 71.
C. LAS NOCHES EN EL PALACIO DE LA NUNCIATURA

Last of Rafael Arévalo Martínez' long fictional works is Las noches en el palacio de la Nunciatura. This story was written after the author had spent many years without literary output because of illness and discouragement over the lack of enthusiasm accorded his other efforts. Las noches en el palacio de la Nunciatura is dedicated to Pedro Arce y Vallardes who acted as the author's secretary in writing it.

Arévalo Martínez does not say that this work is wholly or partially autobiographical, but in it we again meet the character of Manuel Aldano. In the story entitled Manuel Aldano, Manuel was Arévalo Martínez. It is felt that the author continues his spiritual autobiography in this work. "Sigue la confesión espiritual en Las noches en el palacio de la Nunciatura."11

Manuel Aldano is no longer a youth in this story but a forty year old poet living with his wife, Andrea, and their large family. One day there comes to Manuel's door a certain José Meruenda who produced on Manuel two different impressions: "la primera de estas sensaciones era de juventud, de ingenuidad, de vida; la segunda tendría una

11 Torres-Rioseco, Grandes Novelistas de la América Hispana, p. 12.
sombra de pecado y de dolor sobre todo esto; y esta segunda sensación era a veces tan penosa que la cara de angelote de Meruenda se volvía grotesca hasta causar pena."\(^{12}\)

Manuel was so touched by the simplicity of Meruenda that when the latter spoke of financial difficulties, Manuel invited him to stay in the Aldano home. Since the Aldanos were not wealthy, Manuel set a limit of twenty days to his offer of hospitality at which time the guest is to leave without having to be reminded to do so. Of course, Meruenda gratefully accepted this arrangement.

The morning of the first day of Meruenda's moving in, the whole household of Manuel Aldano was very happy. Meruenda played with the children; he laughed, he sang; this cheerful guest brought gayety and new life to the Aldano home. But at lunch it was discovered that Meruenda had an enormous appetite, and soon the youngest child was in tears.

\[\text{--¡Pero qué te pasa, qué te pasa, muchacho?} \]
\[\text{--¡Ay, mama, el señor se está acabando todo el dulce! ...} \]
\[\text{El señor era Meruenda, que, en realidad, había dejado sin postre a sus comensales!}^{13}\]

At each meal the gluttony of Meruenda was more noticeable. Manuel tried to quiet his wife's fears of being eaten out of

\(^{12}\) Arévalo Martínez, Las noches en el palacio de la Nunciature, pp. 8-9.

\(^{13}\) Ibid., p. 12.
house and home by reminding her that their guest was to be
with them for only twenty days. It was almost more than
Senora Aldano could stand, though, to find Meruenda drink-
ing the children's emulsion. Every day of their guest's
stay brought new causes for worry.

Three nights before the twenty days were up and the
Aldanos were sick and tired of Meruenda, Manuel and his
wife heard a terrible, inhuman noise. On opening the door
of their room, they discovered Meruenda in a frightening
and frightful condition. They succeeded in getting him
back to his own room and to sleep, but there was no sleep
for the Aldanos that night. They were beginning to realize
that something more serious than just an annoying appetite and a peculiar ability to
upset their household.

On the following days, Manuel and Andrea discovered
that gifts, including soap, fruit, and a watch, Meruenda
claimed had been given to him were stolen by him from their
rightful owners. Manuel had not been too surprised at these
"gifts" because he realized Meruenda had a certain child-
like appeal until one became better acquainted with him.

As the Aldanos heard from their friends more and more
stories of the strange activities of their guest, they could
scarcely wait for the twenty days granted him to be over.
Yes, he had to be reminded to leave!
"Y al fin, Meruenda salió de aquella casa dejando bien pocos gratos recuerdos de su permanencia en ella."\textsuperscript{14}

Mr. Aretal again appears in the second part of Las noches en el palacio de la Nunciatura. Mr. Aretal has informed his friend Manuel Aldana that he is to be in town for a short time. Manuel and Mr. Aretal have wonderful times together talking and reciting poetry. One night Meruenda is mentioned in their conversation, and Manuel asked who this Meruenda really was.

—Meruenda era el diablo o su pariente cercano — afirmó con énfasis el señor de Aretal.\textsuperscript{15}

Indeed, it seemed that Meruenda must be related to the devil after Aretal finished telling of his experiences with this strange character. In Aretal's story we learn where the title Las noches en el palacio de la Nunciatura comes from. A palace had been built in Heliopolis to house the Papal Envoy, but he was never allowed to enter the country. So the luxurious palace was turned into apartments, and Aretal who at that time was working for a newspaper in Heliopolis was able to stay there, occupying the whole third floor except for one small apartment in which a young couple lived.

Meruenda begged Aretal to let him sleep at the foot of

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., p. 33.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p. 46.
In the nook of the peacock, de la Humeurture, as in

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D. SHORT STORIES

With the exception of *Hondura, El viaje a Ipana*, *El mundo de los Maharrachis*, and *Las noches en el palacio de la Nunciatura*, most of Arévalo Martínez' stories are short. Those belonging to his "Animal Cycle" have been called novelettes. A few might even be classified as "short" short stories.

*El hombre verde* is one of the best known of Arévalo Martínez' short stories. It is told to the author by Cornelio, a poet. It is an extremely simple "boy meets girl" tale. A man has been accustomed to going to the park every day and sitting in the same place. One day he overhears a girl referring to him as "el hombre verde". At once he realizes that he deserves this description for his eyes are green and so are his suit, hat, and tie. He meets this same girl several times, always in the same place at the same hour. One day in the street an envelope is delivered to him that is addressed only with: "Para el hombre verde." The note it contained was signed, "Alicia", but the man knew at once that it was the girl he had been meeting.

This story stands out among Arévalo Martínez' works because he makes clear his debt to Poe when he explains how *El hombre verde* was written.
After Cornelio finished his relation of El hombre verde, our author says:

- Pero, hombre, por qué hace Vd. tan malos versos cuando puede hacer tan admirables cuentos? .... Su extraña historia de "El hombre verde" es digna de que la firmen Hoffmann o Poe. En el difícil género, - acaso el más sugestivo y digno de interés - de estos dos autores, no conozco nada más puro. Los dos caracteres del hombre y de la mujer - sus protagonistas - están trazados de manera magistral. Qué sobriedad y qué discreción de líneas! Nada falta, nada sobra, como en la obra de un buen escultor.

The "short" short story we have chosen from among the many of Arévalo Martínez, to review here, is called El mensajero. The messenger of the king to his distant people at first presented himself to the latter immaculately dressed and observing every detail of ceremonial etiquette. After many years of service, when the messenger had won the king's confidence and carried serious messages because of urgent circumstances, he paid less attention to the externals of his office. Arriving with a last important message from the king, the governor and nobles refused to let him in until he would go home and dress properly. The messenger insisted that there was no time to change his clothes before delivering his urgent message, for he was dying. So he stammered in anguish his communication from the king to a courtier and he died behind the door that had been closed to him by those insisting upon the letter of the law. Here

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18 Rafael Arévalo Martínez, El señor Manitot, p.110-11.
the story ends, but Arévalo Martínez adds:

Ah, acaso todos los más graves y luminosos mensajes dados a los hombres no pueden ser transmitidos sino por un mensajero agonizante, suspendido entre el cielo y la tierra, y entre balbuceos y congojas.19

E. NON-FICTIONAL PROSE WORKS

Although this thesis is concerned with the fiction of Rafael Arévalo Martínez, we shall mention here the subject matter of some of his other important works.

Probably the most ambitious of all the writings of this Guatemalan author is !Ecce Pericles!, a 642-page biography of Manuel Estrada Cabrera, who was in power in Guatemala for twenty two years, from 1898 to 1920. !Ecce Pericles! was chosen as the entry from Guatemala in the second Latin American contest of Farrar & Rinehart, New York, 1942.

Nietzsche el Conquistador (La doctrina que engendró la segunda guerra mundial) analyses the influence of Nietzsche on the German people and the paranoia of Hitler.

F. POETRY

Los duques de Endor, the one drama written by Arévalo Martínez, is in verse and is about the abdication of Edward VIII of England.

Arévalo Martínez has published five books of poetry.

19 Ibid., p. 158.
the last one being *Por un caminito así*. The title poem of this book, which is representative of the authors poetry, follows:

*Por un caminito así*²⁰

Por un caminito así
una vez yo me perdí
y fui a parar a la gloria
por un caminito así.

Lleno de sombra y de encanto,
con misterioso horizonte,
que se adentraba en mi alma
y se metía entre el monte.

En un caminito así
una vez yo me encontré.
Desde que volví a perderme
ni donde ni cuando sé.

¿Dónde iré ese caminito?
¿Será el mismo de aquel día
en el que yo me encontraba,
en el que yo me perdí?

Por un caminito así
una vez yo me perdí
y fui a parar a la gloria
por un caminito así.

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²⁰ Arévalo Martínez, *Por un caminito así*, p. 10.
Along a little road like this
Once I got lost.
And I came to glory
Along a little road like this.

Full of shade and of charm,
With a mysterious horizon,
That entered into my soul
And was led astray in the obstruction.

On such a little road
Once I found myself.
Since I again got lost
Where nor when I do not know.

Where could that little road go?
Could it be the same one of that day
On which I was finding myself,
On which I was getting lost?

Along a little road like this
Once I got lost
And I came to glory
Along a little road like this.
CONCLUSION

Rafael Arevalo Martínez has said that literary works are mirrors of their authors. "Todos los escritores no escriben más que un libro en el que sólo figura un único personaje, que es siempre el autor."1 Certainly Arevalo Martínez is ever present in his own fiction not just as a passing character but as a strange dominant personality baring his soul to his readers. In his autobiographical works, he tells us very little of his own every day life but he reveals to us his youthful morbid temperament and his supersensitive spirit. He shows himself to be preoccupied with his neurasthenia and the "divine madness" of poets. Arevalo Martínez was very happy when Rubén Darío told him that he was "loco como yo mismo. Loco como Nerval y como Poe."2

From the first of these autobiographical works, we receive the impression that the author will go through life as a misfit and maladjusted person who will never succeed in finding any happiness or rest for his weariness. We are almost surprised that there is nothing of the decadent or intemperate in his personal life. On the contrary he lives

1 Arevalo Martínez, El señor Monotot, p. 173.
2 Erickson, op. cit., p. 96.
very quietly with his large wholesome family who, as we have seen from his daughter's diary, Gente Menuda, treat him no differently from the other members.

Introspection from his early youth has led Arevalo Martínez to greater understanding and desire to understand his fellowman. He seems to have a special insight into the complex personalities of abnormal characters. It is in his "Animal Cycle" especially that we are aware of this deep penetration of the peculiar psychology of unusual people.

When one of Arevalo Martínez' readers complained to him that his animal stories all ended in the same way with "el personaje animal" leaving for a far off or near place, he replied: "Es, le contesté, que cuando hago la evocación de mis protagonistas, acuden éstos dícese al reclamo de mi pluma. Llenan mi fantasía y ocupan de tal modo mi calenturiento cerebro de escritor que para terminar mi historia tengo que hacerlos partir, para poder quedarme solo y descansar. Si no lo hiciera así, continuarían acompañándome."  

Arevalo Martínez shows clearly in his "Animal Cycle" his belief in unity of all, animal and man, matter and spirit as one, except for superficial differences. Although he has

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3 Arevalo Martínez, El señor Monitot, p. 173.
ceased writing stories in this "Animal Cycle" vein, he is still concerned with his pantheism. At present, he tells us, "Estoy escribiendo La Heredia de Los Poetas. Me propongo probar como gran parte de los poetas de todos los países y en todas las épocas han profesado doctrinas panteístas." 4

In El viaje a Ippanda we have Arévalo Martínez as a thinker on political and social problems. He sets up an ideal utopic state that does not work. He offers no solution for the chaotic condition in which he leaves Ippanda, nor does he give us much hope for the working of democracy; for all this disaster was brought on by man's own bad behavior. About Arévalo Martínez as a serious writer, Barrett has this to say: "Hace demasiado tiempo que se considera al poeta de Guatemala como "raro" nada más; ahora el poeta se hace pensador, y sus pensamientos tienen importancia.\textsuperscript{5}

The realistic portrait of the fishers in Por cuatrocientos dólares shows us still another Arévalo Martínez; for in this story we find out that he can have an "earthy" side.

The fiction of Rafael Arévalo Martínez shows us his many-sided personality and also his great variety of

\textsuperscript{4} Letter from Arévalo Martínez, July, 1948.

\textsuperscript{5} Barrett, "El viaje a Ippanda", Revista Ibero- Americana III, Febr., 1941, p. 201.
interests, his originality, his lively imagination.

When Arévalo Martínez was asked how or why he became a writer his reply was: "Naci escritor." However being born a writer does not account for the way he writes nor the kind of works he writes. His peculiar lonely childhood during which he developed a taste for reading that has lasted all his life stimulated his imagination and thinking and gave him a wide acquaintance with many literatures. Erickson tells us that Arévalo Martínez has a keen understanding of the literature of the United States and is a student of German, French, and English literature as well.

Arévalo Martínez' own literary idols, though, are Rubén Darío and Poe. He frequently refers to Darío in his prose works, has written several poems about him and a little sketch entitled El Rubén poseído por el dios that is included in his books of poems, Llama.

Arévalo Martínez' ability to evoke mystery and to create the proper atmosphere is very Poe-like. In both Las fieras del trópico and Nuestra señora de los locos there is an element of suspense that recalls Poe. His technique of the short story he borrowed from Poe, to whom, as we have seen above, he acknowledges his debt. Englekirk, who made a study of Poe's influence in Hispanic Literature,

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states in speaking of Martínez:

There is no base imitation of Poe's subject matter or plot in the prose of Arévalo Martínez. It is rather in the style and technique of the short story, and particularly in the endeavor to render a more intelligible and more expressive analysis of the mysteries of the human mind, wherein the similarities to Poe's genius lie. Arévalo Martínez is too personal an artist, too individual and thoroughly original in every phase of his writings to subject his own theories and principles to those of any author, whether past or present.

Arévalo Martínez' style is fluid and simple which makes for easy and enjoyable reading. Pertinent and important words and phrases are italicized or repeated. In El hombre que parecía un caballo, all the following phrases, showing Mr. Aretal's resemblance to the horse are italicized: "el señor de Aretal estiraba el cuello como un caballo, el señor de Aretal caía como un caballo, el señor de Aretal veía como un caballo, etc." These short emphatic sentences are effective without being unduly choppy or staccato; for they are sufficiently spaced.

In addition to its simplicity, other qualities of his style are spontaneity without artifice, and the personal element throughout. All his stories are in the first person. His vocabulary is very refined and is the distinctive feature of the Guatemalan's best work, according to Erickson.

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7 John Eugene Englekirk, Edgar Allan Poe in Hispanic Literature, p. 376.
8 Arévalo Martínez, El hombre que parecía un caballo, pp. 12-8.
9 Erickson, cp. cit., p. 103.
Some critics believe that it is as a poet that Arévalo Martínez will be best known. Madaline W. Nichols, in speaking of his prose works, has said: "But despite the excellence of these works in prose, it is as a poet that Rafael Arévalo Martínez will be remembered, for he has drawn inspiration from his own distinctive depth of emotion."¹⁰

Following is Arévalo Martínez' own rating of his works. "Aprecio mis obras en el siguiente orden: ¹¹

1. El hombre que parecía un caballo.
2. Por cuatrocientos dólares.
3. Nietzsche el conquistador
4. El viaje a Ipanda.
5. Mis poemas.
6. Honduras."

Evidently he does not consider himself as a poet first and foremost.

Again, Erickson has said: "Arévalo Martínez, Wyld Ospina, and Flavio Herrera, the foremost writers in Guatemala today, abandoned poetry for prose and their literary reputations now rest principally on their prose works."¹²

It is a matter of great importance that the American writer should make us feel ashamed of our pretension, and according to his sense-chosen taste of apple.

Why the same is not greater in North America is that—

among the greatest.

The greatest admiration, enough to make both the poet and the prose reader savor his fame as he does of the countrymen envy to the position of the great man in Spanish America.

I am deeply disturbed.

For all humanity, the gentle writer does not ordain nor the prose writer. His sense of temperament has a feeling those at the same time. The poet cannot be separated from the poet, philosopher, mystic, pedagogue, he is all of
Arévalo Martínez es ante todo poeta y, por lo tanto, purísimo intérprete de la belleza real y metafísica; su sensibilidad, sana como una cuerda de violín, vibra al menor roce de los impulsos internos o externos; su intuición le hace ver significados ocultos en los gestos, en las palabras, en los movimientos de los seres, a los cuales ve con esa enorme simpatía de los espíritus que han trepado a las cumbres del cristianismo. ....

Arévalo Martínez es desconocido fuera de su patria y su gloria pequeña le ha de ruborizar un poco; ....

El autor de El hombre que parecía un caballo vivirá siempre pobre e ignorado en su ciudad natal, muerto para los grandes públicos, pero un día tendría su verdadera, su eterna resurrección.14

14 Torres-Ríosco, Grandes Novelistas de la América Española, pp. 16-7
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