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Picaresque elements in the Criollista literature

John B. Darling

The University of Montana

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THE
PICARESQUE ELEMENTS
IN THE
ORIOLISTA LITERATURE

by

John B. Darling
B. A., Northern State Teachers College, Aberdeen, South Dakota 1922

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. EXPLANATION OF THE GENRE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. LAZARILLO DE TORMES</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE INFLUENCE OF THE PICARESQUE NOVEL HAS SPREAD</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. PERTINENT PICARESQUE NOVELS OF SPAIN</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. DON SEGUNDO SOMBRA</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. FACUNDO</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. DONA BARBARA</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. MARTIN FIERRO</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. LOS DE ABAJO (THE UNDERDOG)</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. TIERRA</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI. EL INDIO</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII. PEREQUILLO SARNIENTO</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIII. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In planning this study of "The Picaresque Elements in the Criollista Literature", the outstanding picaresque novels of Spain were chosen as a basis and their salient features were applied as a pattern to the Criollista Literature of Mexico and South America.

Of course, due to the strong factor of environment, many of the original elements of the picaresque novel have undergone some changes after being transplanted to entirely new surroundings; for example, the gaucho of many of the Criollista novels, appears, at first glance, quite different from his early forerunner, Lazarillo, but, after removing his new adaptations, we still have a character of low origin; one who has to make shifts for his very own existence; one who, by virtue of these shifts is able to see life about him and to philosophize concerning this very life; one who, when occasion demands, can take things into his own hands and carry them out to their conclusions unless, of course, whimsical Fate steps in too prominently. Yet again, he is very similar to his early ancestor, in that he has become the embodiment of a cause or purpose, for in Argentina, he is the embodiment of barbarism struggling against the influence of civilization such as: industries, railways, machinery and factories; his forerunner was the personification of the vices, shame,
suffering and injustices of an economically decadent society, a voice calling attention to these conditions in a purposeful manner.

The service of masters of the picaresque novel is considerably changed; it seems to have been absorbed by the protagonist, for through him with numerous contacts, one is able to discern the thesis of the narrating author. However, the service of masters does not entirely disappear, for there are the large hacienda owners with their laborers and the civil and governmental officials as examples of the higher-ups, even though they have been strongly subordinated.

The loosely constructed and frequently almost-absent-plot construction of the picaresque novel, offered a fertile field for the writers of the Oriollista literature. Seizing this device, the Oriollista writers are able much more vividly to portray the various shiftings and episodes in the lives of their protagonists than they would have been able, had they been hampered by plot structures; this lack of plot structure seems to tie in very smoothly with the careless and take-what-may-come attitude in the lives of their heroes.

Life on the pampas and in the isolated sections of Mexico, lends itself very appropriately to story telling for its form of entertainment and from these narratives of exploits and encounters, it is not a very far cry to the biographical and autobiographical narratives of the Oriollista literature. These two picaresque elements have
been very commonly used by the writers of the above
tioned genre.

Our neighbors to the south of us have always had a
Criollista or Crilló literature. However, the name should
not be confused with color as our creoles of the south; a
criollo is one born in America or the West Indies of
European parents and he has nothing to do with color.
This particular type of literature focuses its interest
on the landscape, on the regional customs, and on the
types--it smacks of the soil without renouncing its
literary dependence upon the mother country. These Spanish
neighbors of ours really declared their literary indepen-
dence by means of the criollo or criollista genre.

Criollismo is not the only literary type employed
by our Spanish neighbors, for there are writers whose works
have a universal quality and bear evidence of the influence
of Modernismo, but as this study deals exclusively with the
criollo genre, the remarks are confined to this particular
type.

From the criollismo movement, dealing with frontier
adventures, social and land problems, and Spanish American
life, has evolved the cuento criollo, a short-story, which
depicts types with their colloquialisms and their customs.
In the criollo story of Mexico, the predominating theme is
the social problem; this is also true in varying degrees of
many South American countries. Stiff play in the industrial,
economic, and social conditions in Mexico has brought out powerfully satirical protests on the part of the writers against these social injustices, and, as a result, the criollo story with its realism has been an important medium through which these protests have been effected.
Chapter I

Explanation of the Genre

The Picaresque Novel

The word picaresque comes from the Spanish word picaro which means: 'knavish, roguish, vile, low, mischievous, malicious, crafty, sly'.¹ Then, when the word is applied to literature, we have knavish, roguish, vile, low, mischievous, crafty, sly characters—characters of adventure. The character, Gil Blas,² is an example.

These characters of adventure are not limited to men. There are women characters of adventure, such as: Celestina;³ again the protagonist might be an animal, as in El Coloquio de los Perros,⁴ where two dogs are endowed with the ability to converse and to relate their adventures.

Very often the picaros did the most menial of tasks, such as those done by scullions, esportilleros,⁵ and ganapanes,⁶ and, while working at these tasks, they were able to put on a more innocent appearance in order to carry out their acts of trickery.

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¹ Appleton—New Spanish-English Dictionary, p. 426
² Padre Isla—Gil Blas de Santillana.
³ Fernando de Rojas—Celestina.
⁴ Cervantes—El Coloquio de los Perros.
⁵ Bearers of light loads.
⁶ Bearers of heavy loads.
The picaro is neither hero nor villain like the protagonist of a novel. Professor Chandler has invented the term, "anti-hero", as a fitting name for him. Since the picaro refuses to accept useful employment he deserves condemnation, but he also deserves sympathy, for he is the victim of a vicious social structure.

After the discovery of America, and during Spain's Colonial expansion, wealth poured into the mother country's lap. As the typical Spaniard of the day was not interested in manual labor of any variety, he clustered about the returned soldier who was scattering his wealth to the four winds. Soon this crafty Spaniard discovered he could live very satisfactorily by his wits alone in this rather turbulent society. Even though Spain was still powerful, she was beginning to show evidences of decline; economically she was unsound, and, as a result, beggars and parasites were plentiful. A large number of the people were at the point of starvation. In contrasting Spain economically with England, she was extremely slow; land was neglected; forests were destroyed by war; labor was despised and war had taken its quota of artisans.

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7 Frank Wadleigh Chandler, Professor of English in the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn; sometimes lecturer in Comparative Literatures in Columbia University; author of Romances of Roguery and the Literature of Roguery.

8 Northup—An introduction to Spanish Literature p. 168. I am indebted to Mr. Northup for the generalization in the above paragraph.
Spain's best craftsmen and her very best agriculturists, the Granadan Moors, were very much dissatisfied. Spain had more vagabonds than farmers and more soldiers than laborers; her nobleman outnumbered her tradesmen and merchants. From this chaotic state evolves the picaro.

He is the exemplification of the typical Spaniard of the lower class; he is restless, unruly, lusty, and even an outlaw, he is the result of Spain's social structure, and reacts against it. Being a part of this social structure, he is able to accomplish in a better manner the purposes of his origin, for when he comes to satirize the governmental policies, he meets opposition in the form of suppression.

The medical profession, being in a chaotic state of efficiency, attracts his interest, and he straightway lays bare this profession. Nor is the church to escape his scrutiny; he scatters to the winds his knowledge of many of their corrupt practices, particularly that of the indulgence sellers. He throws his darts at the nobility as well, especially at their pride. At times he dwells on the seamy side of life, not for the purpose of subjectivity but of objectivity.
At times, he is to divert only, as, for example, Lazarillo's trick of getting wine from the old, blind man by means of a straw. His purposes, then, are to divert, satirize, and lay bare the entire panorama of Spanish life, and his workshop is Spain. He, being an adventurer, and a part of adventuring Spain, is able to give us almost a photographic copy of the society of Spain. He arrives in 1554 in the form of Lazarillo de Tormes.

Very often the literature of this genre is biographical or autobiographical, as for instance, Lazarillo de Tormes tells the story of his life in the first person, and again in Celestina, we have a biographical sketch in the third person.

9 Lazarillo de Tormes--The blind man gave Lazarillo only a crust of very dry bread and no wine at meal time. Lazarillo wanted wine with which to wash down the bread. The old man would sit down before the fire with the wine jug between his knees. Lazarillo decided to take matters into his own hands; he bored a small hole through the jug, inserted a straw, and drank his fill. After finishing his drink, he closed the hole with a small piece of wax. The old gentleman appeared suspicious; he would shake the jug and listen to it. Lazarillo would repeat his trick. One day the old man permitted Lazarillo to get in his accustomed position, ready to drink the wine, whereupon he seized the jug and crashed it down on Lazarillo's head. The boy now knew he'd been discovered; he then began to make plans of revenge upon the old man.

10 Fernando de Rojas--Celestina. She is the anti-hero in this novel. Her trickery lies in the deceits she practices against her lovers.
Phases of crime literature come under the category of the picaresque, but only as long as we are concerned with the trickery of the criminals. When we become involved with the solving of crime, this literature obviously drops its picaresque element, for then the adventurous element holds its interest no longer.

The fact that the picaro has numerous and various shifts of labor, gives him an opportunity to satirize most realistically the trades of his masters as well as the society in which he moves. The medical society comes in for its share of satire; the church is not forgotten, particularly the custom of the selling of indulgences; fictional literature of chivalry, the government are all included in this realistic, satiric panorama of society. Sometimes the satire is humorous, hard, or cynical, and often the seamy side of life is vividly portrayed, but it is done only to offer a stronger protest.

As is seen in the Preface, the structure of this literary genre is loose; the only unifying element is the anti-hero. Characters are picked up and dropped at random; the anti-hero alone remains to the close of the story. The plot is also loose, there being very little development. In this particular literary form, there really is no definite need for a plot, as we are concerned only with a series of adventures, and one may pick the story up almost at any place
and still get a complete sequence, as these sequences form the
episodes of adventures of the picaros life.

It seems as though the picaresque novel of Spain
offered a challenge to the world in its elements, also in
its adaptability, for France was not slow in recognizing
the adaptability of its elements to conditions in that
country, as is evidenced by Le Sage's *Gil Blas*, as well as
by numerous other French writers. England made use of the
picaresque elements in her early pamphlet literature. Henry
Fielding, steeped in servandism, made use of the picaresque
in his *Joseph Andrews*, and many others of his writings.

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11 *Fielding, Henry—Joseph Andrews*. Joseph is of
low origin. He acts as a serving man, but main-
tains his virtues despite all traps set for him.
The novel swarms with men and women, highwaymen,
inkeepers and their wives, chambermaids, country
squires, parsons, doctors, lawyers, constables,
prudes and jesters. The character of Parson
Adams is typically roguish. He studied ancient
classics to the exclusion of everything else. He
was as innocent of the ways of the modern world
as a new born babe. Parson Adams sets out for
London to sell his sermons. He then encounters
all kinds of adventures. Parson Adams is the
counterpart of Don Quixote.
Picaresque elements are noted in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, two parts, in the character of Falstaff; in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*; in Scott's *Kenilworth*; in Dickens' *Oliver Twist*.

12 Shakespeare, *William, Henry IV*, Parts I and II. The roguish character, Falstaff, is typically adventurous. In Act II, part I, Falstaff and some low companions of his robbed the travellers at Gadshill; then they are attacked and put to ridiculous flight by Prince Hal and Red Poina who are masked and disguised in buckram. At Doar’s-head Tavern Falstaff tells an exaggerated story of his valiant exploits against eleven men in buckram. The Prince's disclosure of the joke upon Falstaff does not bother him and adds to the entertainment. In Act III, part I, Falstaff sets off for war and more adventure. In Act I, part II Falstaff is carousing at Doar’s-Head Inn, preparatory to leaving for the north to enlist soldiers. Act II, part II, opens with dire troubles for Falstaff; he is nearly arrested for debts owed to the mistress of the inn. His "hasty employment in the King's affairs" helps to save him and it ends by his borrowing still more money from the mistress. His fun then continues until he is summoned north by the king. In Act III, part II, Falstaff allows likely recruits to buy themselves off while he enlists a group of scarecrows.

13 Defoe, *Daniel, Robinson Crusoe*. The story is episodical; it is a realistic story of adventure and its protagonist has to maintain his sustenance by exercise of his wit and ingenuity; it is to some extent autobiographical.

14 There are rogue elements in this novel in the characters of Alasco, Mike Lembourne, Varney, the Puritan hypocrite Foster; milder roguery in Dickie Judge and his friend Wayland Smith; again in the crowds of lower classes and the things they did.
In American Literature, is seen the adventurous spirit of the rogue exemplified in such stories as Aldrich's *Story of a Bad Boy*, *Peck's Bad Boy* and *his Pa*; in *Pickwick Papers* there is humorous satire of the middle class; in *Oliver Twist*, the Poor Law and the workhouse system are satirized and the character of Fagin reverts back to the picaresque forerunners.

The character of Becky Sharp, an adventuress, is picaresque. There is satire of early nineteenth century British society; Becky is in the "service of masters", first, as an instructor of French in a school, and second, as a governess.

Adventurous, boyish rogery. Tom Bailey slipped out of the upstairs window to attend the annual bonfire held at midnight before the Fourth. There were many boys present. After a while, they decided to get an old, abandoned stage-coach which was stored in a nearby barn. They got it, burned it, and were locked up in jail for their trouble. One boy thought he would play a little joke, so he hid in the coach as the boys were rolling it down the hill. When the coach landed in the fire and started burning, he came lunging out with burned eyebrows and singed hair. pp. 75-81.

Adventurous, boyish rogery. The bad boy empties the white syrup out of the pitcher and replaces it with cod liver oil. His *Pa*, *Ma*, and the two hired girls are all victims. pp. 106-107.
Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*. In the Mexican and South American literatures, the rogue element is present in the development of the gaucho character, a character so common in many of the criollista novels.

This challenge, mentioned before, seems to be to those literatures in the formative periods, and, again, to those literatures which concern themselves with the frontiers as evidenced by Mark Twain's stories of the Mississippi frontier; Sarmiento's *Facundo*, the pampas frontier; Azuela's *Los de Abajo*, the interior frontier; and in England, in the formative period before the advent of the novel, there is the flood of pamphleteer literature.

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19 Boyish mischievousness and roguery. Tom's pranks upon his Aunt Polly, his escapades at school, his masquerade as Robin Hood, his Black Avenger of the Spanish Main are all picareque, but the roguery extends no farther than inducing others to do his whitewashing. He and Huck Finn have numerous adventures. Even though Huck is ready in lies, deceipts and disguises, and is a petty thief, he is sound at heart. He has misgivings at helping to steal a "Nigger"; he refuses to join a group of professional rogues in a swindle; he protects the weak, he is loyal to his friends. There are true picaros in the king and the duke. At a camp meeting, the king is converted and fills his pockets with the collection; impersonates Juliet despite his beard; the duke runs a printing office during the owner's absence. The duke also enacts the deaf-mute in another of the pair's tricks.
THE CRIOLLISTA NOVEL

The word criollo is applied to one, born of Spanish parents in America, and having qualities, due to his new environment, that differ from his peninsular ancestors. Then again are present the mestizo, (white and Indian); the pelado of Mexico; the cholo of Peru; the roto of Chile; the llanero of Venezuela; the gauchito of Argentina—all these differ from one another, but have varying roles to perform in the criollista literature.

Mexico and particularly the South American countries, were strongly influenced by European civilization, and naturally, they were dependent upon it for many things, not least of which were literary forms.

The rogue of the picaresque novel and many other of the picaresque elements were transplanted to this new world into a new environment. The role of the rogue of the picaresque novel became the gauchito of Argentina, the pelado of Mexico, the cholo of Peru or the roto of Chile and his diction was essentially Spanish, but enriched with colloquialisms and many other words, all characteristic of this new environment. The little lesson of the Treatise of Lazarillo de Tormes became often a thesis for the Criollista novel, the complete narrative very often furnished the thesis.
Realism, so prominent in the picaresque novel, appeared in the Criollista novel. One can fairly hear the señoras patting the dough in their hands as they flatten it into tortillas²⁰ to be eaten at the evening meal, or even see them out before their huts grinding corn or weaving, in such stories as Azuela's Los de Abajo and Lopez y Fuentes' El Indio, and, again, where is there more vivid, realistic portrayal than in the fishing scene of El Indio; any fisherman would be interested in trying this unique method. In Sarmiento's Facundo, a fine bit of realism is exhibited in the portrayal of the psychological effect that Quiroga's appearance always had on the oft times hungry and disgruntled followers, and of the almost fanatic respect these followers had for him, due to the atrocities he had committed—one is reminded somewhat of the leaders of the super-race now struggling in Europe, to maintain the respect they have established by similar methods.

The Criollista novel is earthy; it depicts land questions, frontier trouble, social problems, customs, colloquial speech, and, in a word, it is a complete microscopic panorama of Spanish life in the new world, and, in

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²⁰Tortillas—Round, flat, pan-cakes made of cornmeal and other ingredients and used as we do bread.
addition, appear landscapes, local color, types, and legends.

In Mexico, many of the Criollista novels concerned themselves with land questions as: Lopez y Fuentes's Tierra and Azuela's Los de Abajo; in Argentina, the question was Spanish and European civilization versus the barbarous, American indigenous society as evidenced in Facundo. Facundo is a historical novel, describing conditions in Argentina during the early part of the nineteenth century. Another Criollista work containing strongly picaresque elements is Hernandez's Martin Fierro, an epic, recounting the adventures of an outlaw.

After a lull in Criollista interest, due to repressive influences, a renewed interest, on the part of the public, appeared, about 1920, in customs, regionalism, native subjects, and types. Novels advocating this renewed interest were: Reardo Guiralde's Don Segundo Sombra (1926) and Dona Barbara (1929) by Tomulo Gallegos.
CHAPTER II

LAZARILLO DE TORMES

The first picaresque novel was Lazarillo de Tormes. The author is unknown, and, considering the satiric attacks in it upon the different phases of society, it is not to be wondered at.

Lazarillo de Tormes is a short story, yet it has exercised a tremendous power. It consists of seven chapters or tratados of varying length. However, the book presents a complete unity. It is purely a portrait of the adventures of Lazarillo in the service of a series of masters, and the only thing that ties it together is the character of Lazarillo. Other characters come and go, just as they are needed. The story is autobiographical. The hunger motif is developed in the first three chapters of the story, coming to a climax in the third. The fourth chapter introduces a different angle in Lazarillo's adventures; here Lazarillo is more of an observer and we have rather an expose of the indulgences seller with its accompanying satire. The false miracle takes up most of the fifth chapter, and in the sixth chapter, Lazarillo is in the service of his last master in the series; this master is a painter in whose service Lazarillo suffered much. He has wanted to get some kind of a governmental job, and the last chapter has to do with his job as "m crier, a lowly job indeed, but he has accomplished
his goal. The archpriest, his protector, has him married to his mistress and Lazarillo is a model husband, for it is to his interest to be no other way.

Since the author of *Lazarillo de Tormes* kept his identity unknown, it was, no doubt, because of the Inquisition; then, too, perhaps because of the criticism and satire of society. The lot of common man is made vivid because of his poverty and, as a result, he would become a beggar, nothing else is left open to him. Hunger is everywhere present. There also appears the emphasis placed on the sense of honor of the nobility. All phases of life appeared or were satirized in a realistic manner, but, of course, this novel portrays only the realistic side of rascality.
CHAPTER III

The Influence of the Picaresque Novel has Spread

The picaresque and profounder worlds are quickly merged. However, the picaresque plays its part in Cervantes' Don Quixote. The rogue, preying on and revealing society, is now portrayed by minds more analytical than creative. With Quevedo, the rogue becomes an image of pessimism. In France, Le Sage and Marivaux stress the physical and intellectual movements of the rogue. Smollett, Fielding, and Sterne, in England, stress animal joyousness, social revelation, and a bitterness turned sentimental. 1

Later in the new world the rogue develops as the gaucho in Criollista novels. He is the symbol of the society of which he is a member; an embodiment of the good and of the ills of this society. These gauchos would gather at the country stores where they would swap yarns, drink, draw their knives at a moment's notice, gamble away the last coin, and plan their forays. This new gaucho character had a pleasant side also, as is evidenced in Guiraldes' Don Segundo Sombra. Here we see this gaucho character, Don Segundo Sombra, championing the case of his little new friend, assuming first the role of a protector, later that of a father teaching this young aspiring gaucho all the intricacies of the

1 I am indebted for this summary to W. K. Rank--"First Rogue; Lazarillo de Tormes", Saturday Review of Literature, 2:561, February 13, 1926.
trade, how to ride herds, how to break colts, and how to lasso properly, and also all the necessary skills about living and in the open what to do in cases of accident.

Then there is the gaúcho malo in this Criollista genre. He is as his name signifies—bad cowboy. He is unaffected by the sight of carnage. His philosophy seems to be an eye for an eye and he very seldom gives quarter, in an encounter unless it be to his own personal interest. This particular type is common in many of the Mexican revolutionary novels, and there are numerous additional evidences of this particular type in Sarmiento's Facundo.
CHAPTER IV

Pertinent Picaresque Novels of Spain

One of Lazarillo's followers is Mateo Alemán's Guzman de Alfarache (1599), though Guzman lacks the winning simplicity of Lazarillo; his story is drawn out and filled with moral disquisition. However, it met with instant success, but Guzman's adventures, unlike those of Lazarillo, were not confined to Spain.

He runs away from home; we then follow him in his adventures of the road and of the inn. His adventures are numerous and they give him the opportunity to see the frailty of man. He goes to Madrid, joins a group of professional beggars because they have a well-fed appearance. Through them, he learns the tricks of the trade. He is full of proverbs, yet his gambling leads him to fraud and theft.

The love element, lacking in Lazarillo, is present in Guzman de Alfarache. He goes to Italy, begs, and then enters the services of a cardinal and of the Spanish Ambassador. These services offer excellent opportunities for exposes. With his stock of experience ever at hand, it has served him very successfully, for without it, he could never have been able to hold his own.

The success of Guzman de Alfarache brought forth a number of imitations, a few of which are: La Picaro Justina, a monk who, obviously, concealed his name of Perez under the
pseudonym, Lopez de Ubeda; The Life of Marcos de Obregon, by
Vicente Espinel, was published by Lopez de Ubeda in 1605; El
Gran Tacano, by Quevedo, the embittered satirist, in 1627.

The genuine picaresque appears in Cervantes' Rinconete,
the sharper, and in Cortadillo, the pickpocket, as members
of Monipodio's gang in Novelas Ejemplares.¹ In this story
two youths from the north of Spain travel to Seville where
they soon learn the life of the trickster. The narrative
is a faithful delineation of Sevillian life.

Vicente Espinel, an adventurer by nature, was well
qualified to write his The Life of the Squire Marcos de
Obregon, for he was poet, priest, musician, soldier, and
picaro. Long moral dissertations are omitted in this auto-
biographical narrative and for them have been substituted
witticisms and stories.

Francisco Gomez de Quevedo y Villegas, the author of
History of the Life of the Sharper, Don Pablos, was a wit,
cynic, satirist, and philosopher. Because of his use of
free speech, he suffered many indignities, among which was
an imprisonment of four years which broke his health. Because
of these indignities he became embittered, and he did not
hesitate to lash out with steel edged satire on the chaotic
state of society as he found it. At times he dwelled so

¹ For the above generalization, I am indebted to
G. Douglas--"Rogues and Roguery", Living Age,
long on the seamy side of society that he gave offense, but it seems that he thought by so doing, society would better by the shock of it. He disliked humanity and had not a faith in it. Quevedo developed a character in his History of the Life of the Sharper, Don Fablos, whom he calls Domine Cabra, keeper of a Salamanca student boardinghouse, and from whom it is thought that Dickens obtained an idea for his Squeers.

Quevedo's The Dreams is less repulsive than his The Life of the Sharper. Quevedo imagines in his The Dreams that he has paid a visit to the lower regions where he sees all kinds of tradesmen and classes of society who are doing penance for their transgressions. He bitterly indicts this society he here sees represented. The influence of his The Dreams has been great and many imitations followed, but his strong satire of society places this novel in the picaresque genre also.
CHAPTER V

Don Segundo Sombra

The author of this story, born in Buenos Aires, on February 8, 1886, came of the large ranch-owning class that ruled the country until a short time ago, but in a benevolent, democratic way which it is hard for us to picture, whose notions about landlords have been gleaned mainly from Irish and Russian books. At the age of two, he was taken to Europe, and on his return, four years later, he spoke both French and German as fluently as he did Spanish. He traveled extensively, having made two trips around the world, but he always returned to his beloved Argentina.

Guiraldes received his first recognition from Paris in 1920. In 1924, he and a group of Argentinian writers founded a magazine called Proa, the policy of which was to give expression to the national life with the aid of all the technical literary discoveries of post-war Paris.

In 1925, Guiraldes retired to his father's ranch, La Portena. All his life he had known and loved a certain gaucho on his father's ranch and whom he was to immortalize as Don Segundo Sombra. Near the main house was a great ombu; so far as it is known, this tree grows only on the pampa. Everyday Guiraldes climbed into this tree, and it was here that he wrote the story of Don Segundo Sombra. It was published in 1926, and made its author famous. By the
time it was finished, Guiraldes' health broke; he returned to Paris to procure medical advice, but he died there October 8, 1927.¹

Don Segundo Sombra, (1920) the scene of which is the pampa, opens with the waif's unhappy lot with his aunts. He is not wanted; he is left to shift for himself. He seeks entertainment in the saloons and becomes very skillful in card tricks and drinking. One evening, while returning from a fishing trip, he sees at dusk a tall shadow on horseback. The waif is immensely impressed and decides he would like to know more about the shadow. Later on in a conversation, he learns who the shadow is and what his work is. The boy decides to run away and to follow this shadow, Don Segundo Sombra. He accomplishes his desire and learns the life of the gaucho on the vast pampa. He breaks colts, rides with the herds, brands, and soon learns very readily all of the manners of the gaucho life. He has become a part of this gaucho life on the pampa—he has become a gaucho, a hard earned title, but an extremely coveted one.

One day a friend appears, bringing him the news that his father had died and left him heir. The boy is very bitter. He struggles with himself as to whether he should

¹ I have briefly summarized the above biography from Waldo Frank—Introduction; this is an Introduction written by Mr. Frank for the edition translated by Harriet de Onis.
accept this new life or not, now that he has carved out a niche for himself. Don Segundo Sombra persuades him, but the waif will not leave until Don Segundo Sombra promises to go with him. Don Segundo Sombra remains with the boy in his new life until he sees that the heir is somewhat accustomed to it, then, as that life is not for him, he explains to his protégé that he will have to leave—the call of the great pampa is too strong. The parting is a severe blow to the boy and he stands, looking, watching his beloved Don Segundo Sombra ride into the sunset.

This fascinating novel is truly picaresque; its protagonist has an obscure origin; the novel is episodical in style as it is a series of vignettes of pampa life; it is autobiographical, for the narration is in the first person; the hero is the only connecting link in the novel although Don Segundo Sombra appears and reappears, but toward the close of the story, he, too, disappears. There is practically no plot, or at least it is of very minor consequence. The tale is purposeful, for there seems to me to be a subtle plea for illegitimates—the rearing of children should not be left to the children themselves.

This turned out not so badly for our protagonist, but will they all? Did his parents give him a chance?

The lad has been riding along when suddenly, he becomes aware of someone riding beside Don Segundo. It seems to be someone he knows and he feels that they have been
talking about him. He discovers that the newcomer is his friend Pedro Barrales. He trots over to greet his friend.

The following quotation from the novel shows the boy's bitterness. He thinks his life is to be changed now that he has made a place for himself. He resents it all; he thinks he will refuse the inheritance. Why should he acknowledge a father who couldn't acknowledge him and give him a name? He has now won the name of gaucho for himself. This name and life that he has won for himself through hard effort, he is loath to lose.

As our hero greets his friend, he is received with

"How are you?"

'What's the matter, brother?' I said, hurt and confused. 'If you've got something against me, out with it! But don't go around pouting like a woman.'

Pedro turned questioning to my godfather. Don Segundo Sombra spoke up:

'To begin with, hold your horses and don't run wild, for you'll be needing a cool head. Pedro has some news for you. Here's a paper that will give it straighter than a lot of talk. Thank God you're no woman, and you've not been brought up so delicate that a shock will kill you. Here, now you're prepared, take it.'

The envelope read: Senor Fabio Caceres.

'What's this got to do with me?' I almost shouted.

'Open it,' said my godfather. The letter was signed
by Don Leandro Galvan, and it read:

Dear Young Friend:

I doubt not the contents of this note will come as a surprise to you. I am afraid the shock may be rather sudden but the truth is I have no other way of communicating with you. Your father, Fabio Caceres, is dead, and has left....

Of a sudden I saw many things: my trips to the ranch, my ponies, my aunts...then they really were my aunts! I looked around. Pedro and my godfather had moved on ahead. So had the herd. A strange loneliness gripped my heart, as if it had suddenly been shut in a cell, a small cell...I got off my horse, leaned against a wire fence, and went on reading:

Your father, Fabio Caceres, is dead and has left to me the difficult thankless duty of carrying out what he always intended to do...

I skipped a few lines:

...so I am your guardian until you come of age.

I got back on my horse. The country, everything, was changed. I was looking at the world from inside somebody else! A herd of feelings, unknown to me before, milled in my head: tenderness, sadness. And suddenly a blind rage, as if I had been humiliated and wantonly insulted. The devil! I must attack someone, anything. There had to be body blood drawn for this soul blood I felt bubbling within me.
...I caught up with Don Segundo and Pedro...

For God's sake, Don Segundo, tell me this paper is a joke. I'm nobody's son and I don't have to take advice or money or even a name, from anyone.' I had a momentary vision of Don Fabio. 'This damned dead father of mine, what was he like, playing round so high and shameless with the ranch girls!' 'And that means I'll not be a gaucho?'

'What difference does that make?' he (his godfather) asked.

'That's it! What difference does it make? I'll tell you. I'd rather the vultures had picked my flesh to shreds, I'd rather have left my bones, like a beast's, to God along some water hole, I'd rather be an outlaw on the pampa! Before these pretty things fate has blessed me with today, I should have died in the law that I have lived by; for I'm not a snake to be changing my skin or improving my dress!'"

The above quotation shows the bitterness that can grow in children when they are left to shift for themselves. Our present wave of delinquency in modern youth again shows the result of children rearing themselves; also, when they are approached with anything that might be for the betterment of their condition, the bitterness and resentfulness with which they respond to any change that might be made in their behalf is appalling.

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2 Recardo Guiralde. Don Segundo Sombra. pp.245-252
Home life for children, living with relatives, is satirized in the tale; their unhappy lot; their search for entertainment with the accompanying results. Surely the tricks learned by the protagonist in saloons were of no special value to him.

Another picaresque element in this story is its decided lack of a predominating love story. There are only two evidences of the love element; one, an affair with a part Indian girl at the edge of a corn field, and another one with a chinita, Paula, a sister of Patrocinio, the protagonist's friend; these are merely related in passing.

The service of masters is not forgotten, for the hero takes several jobs, such as breaking colts, work at the round-up, and as rider when a herd was to be moved.

Don Segundo Sombra can well be compared with our own Adventures of Huckleberry Finn of our boy roguery literature in that they both deal with the adventures of the hero; the hero in both cases is a waif and the setting of both stories is the frontier.

The characters mentioned in Don Segundo Sombra are picaresque, i.e., they are sketchy, not clearly and definitely drawn. The narrator lives and is real, but your image of of him and mine would vary greatly, due to this picaresque element. Don Segundo is not the carefully drawn character he would have been had Charles Dickens, that lover of the picaresque, drawn him. But hasn't the author shown good
choice in using this technique to portray this highly idealized character, Don Segundo, this almost vision, this second shadow?

The novel we are presently considering varies somewhat the picaresque elements. Satire is at a very minimum; the character of Don Segundo remains in the story for a longer period than is customary in the picaresque genre; customs and traditions are rather idealized, but the author has given us a canvas, teeming with vitality and color, and has so deftly manipulated each string of the picaresque manikins that we are presented with a very purposeful whole--life, the very vitals of the picaresque genre.
CHAPTER VI

Facundo

Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1811-88) had little early school training; that which he had was in a primary school, but he used every opportunity available to improve himself educationally. At an early age, he became the possessor of Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography and from then on Franklin became his model.

At about sixteen years of age, he was notified by the governor of his province to attend military drill; he refused and soon joined an uprising against the party then in power. He scarcely escaped with his life and was exiled to Chile.

A peculiarity of Sarmiento's politics was that he was a provincial partisan of the citizens of Buenos Aires, who demanded strongly centralized power with Buenos Aires at the head. After his exile, he became a member of a branch of Echeverría's Asociacion de Mayo. Bosas represented the federalistic theory which gave practically freedom to the provinces; each was ruled by a governor, supposedly appointed by the government at Buenos Aires, but who were really local political bosses or candillos. They were able to maintain their posts through personal strength only. As a result of this governmental setup, uprisings were numerous and the results of which were usually decisive, for the de-
feated were slaughtered or exiled. Sarmiento lived in the province of San Juan, just below the Andes mountains through whose passes these exiles had to pass to go to Chile, and through which he passed several times into exile.

In his efforts to earn a living, Sarmiento taught school and wrote for the papers, both of which were going to have their results on his subsequent life. His ability and readiness to enter a controversy and his biting satire made him many enemies, but Manuel Montt, later president of Chile, made use of his journalistic ability and befriended him to the last.

He was given a place in the faculty of philosophy and humanities at the University of Chile. Partly due to Sarmiento's initiative as well as to Bello's (first rector of the university) scholarship is due the fact that Chile has the credit of introducing reforms in Spelling. Sarmiento introduced reforms in the teaching of reading in the primary schools. By 1845 the political situation claimed all his time for the editing of El Progreso, supporting his patron Montt.

Sarmiento visited Europe to study the school systems, also those of North America. He studied the schools in Boston, particularly where he made the acquaintance of Horace Mann.
In 1867 he was elected president of Argentina. He retired from the presidency in 1874 but not from public life.\(^1\)

The setting of Facundo is Argentina at about the time of the early part of the nineteenth century. Facundo Quiroga comes of humble parents. He is sent away to obtain what limited education there was available and that consisted of learning to read and write. In school he was rather morose and did not fraternize with the other boys except to take part in some of their pranks or to give some one of them a beating. In these engagements, he began to show that leadership which later was to make him the most feared man of Argentina. His rise to power was rapid and extremely ruthless. He could order a man to be executed as calmly as one might inquire the time of day. This healthful respect through fear for him aided him in putting himself at the head of bands of men to espouse the cause of the interior (la barbarie) against the influences and culture of Europe in some of the cities, particularly Buenos Aires. From now on his life was filled with series of skirmishes and ruthless plunderings. He did not hesitate to collect from the coffers of the places he visited, and these funds supplied him with the money needed to gamble which had become a fetish for him. Facundo's outlawry, however, was really purposeful, for through his efforts, the roots of the present Argentine Republic were established. Facundo continued his encounters until he was shot to death in an ambush.

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\(^1\) I am indebted for the above summarized biography to Alfred Colster—**The Literary History of Spanish America** pp. 125-135
There are numerous picaresque elements in this interesting historical narrative of adventure. The hero comes of obscure origin. His education is extremely meager, not much beyond the reading and writing stage. He is on his own and has to make his place by himself. His character is not too clearly depicted, but, we come to see him through his exploits and adventures. He is a type of primitive barbarism; he knows no subjection of any kind; his anger is that of wild beasts. His life is that of a knight errant, championing causes.

The picaresque rogue we have already mentioned, but in order to get a little clearer picture of his counterpart in the gaúcho malo, we quote:

"Dominated by anger, he used to kill with his fists, dashing to bits the brains of some friend in a gambling game; he tore away both ears of his beloved because she asked him once for thirty pesos to celebrate a wedding consented to by him; and he split open his son John's head because there wasn't any other way to make him keep still; he slapped the ears of a pretty maid of Lucuman whom he could neither seduce or force...Incapable of becoming admired and esteemed, he liked to be feared; but this pleasure was exclusive, dominating, up to the point of regulating all his actions of life in producing terror for its own sake, over the towns and victim that was going to be executed, as well as over his wife and children. In the incapacity of managing the civil government, he imposed terror as expedient to
supplant patriotism and abnegation; ignorant, surrounding himself with mysteries and making himself impenetrable, he, making use of a natural sagacity not common, a capacity if unusual observation, the credulity of the commoner, pretended a foreknowledge of events which gave him prestige and reputation among the common people."

As I have mentioned before, the gaucho is a product of his environment as the following translation from the novel concerning el rastreador, the print-follower, shows:

"The print-follower is a grave, prudent character whose assertions are taken as fact in the lower tribunals. The consciousness of the knowledge he possesses gives him a certain reserved and mysterious dignity. Everyone treats him with consideration: the poor man, because of the harm he can do him by calumny or denunciation; the landlord, because he may need his testimony. A robbery has been committed at night; no sooner is it noticed than they run to look for a footprint of the thief, and when it is found, it is covered up with something so that the wind may not blow it away. Next the print-follower is called who looks at the impression, then follows the trail with glancing only now and then at the ground, as if his eyes could see in bold relief this footstep which for others is imperceptible. He follows the trail through streets, across gardens, and into a house, and pointing out a man whom he finds there, says coldly 'This is

2 Domingo Faustino Sarmiento---Faundo. A translation. p. 95
the one.' The crime is proved and rare is the criminal who resists this accusation." 3

The tale is biographical; the life of the hero is laid before us from his humble birth to his death in an ambush. The story is one of a series of adventures. The plot is almost lacking and the only thing that ties the whole together is the presence of the anti-hero. He, alone, is the motivating force in such novels of adventure.

The satirical element of the picaresque novel is not lacking in this story. Life on the pampa is so realistically satirized that at times one feels as though he must cry out, "Why can't education or some humanizing element be brought or enforced on these people?" In these people are potentialities that, under proper guidance, could be made assets to society. Imagine for a moment the benefits to society of a Funoundo whose boundless energies and natural aptitudes had had proper training and guidance! On this stage of pampa-life where Funoundo played the role of champion, think of how much more quickly the cultural civilization of the cities would have been united with the barbarous frontier life of the pampa with the subsequent benefits of how many lives that would have been spared, of how much suffering that might have been prevented!

The series of masters element of the picaresque genre is not entirely forgotten in this novel, for we have Funoundo

3 Ibid p. 51
the master of his vast group, and, working under his
domination, we have smaller groups, each with its master or
leader. There is yet the large land owner with his group of
workers and his will being the law to be obeyed by the
workers.

The hunger element as so deftly worked out in Lazarillo
de Torremes is not allowed to go unnoticed in Facundo. If the
gaucho finds hunger overtaking him while he is on the pampa
he kills the first steer that he espies. If he feels he has
a taste for tongue, he carefully chooses a beef, plucks out
the tasty morsel and leaves the carcass to the wild beasts.

I believe to see in Facundo's unbridled passions, a
plea for the humanizing elements of education. With Quiroga's
natural ability as a leader, how much greater a service could
he have given his country, had he been educated.
CHAPTER VII

Dona Barbara

Romulo Gallegos (1884 - ), the Venezuelan and author of Dona Barbara, was a well known educator of his country. He had a brief but unsuccessful political career, and then entered the field of literature for which he had had a fondness since early manhood. He started his labor as a journalist and short story writer. But it is in the novel that Gallegos has achieved his success, for today he ranks as one of the greatest Spanish American novelists.¹

The setting of Dona Barbara at about the early part of the nineteenth century, is the upper plains (selvas) of the Orinoco. Barbarita, of whose origin little is known, is a cook on a boat making the trip up the river. Asdrubal, whose wishes passage, is hired as a helper so Barbarita may get a little rest. He teaches her to read and write. They become enamoured and because of this, he is sent on a perilous errand from which he doesn't return.

The next we hear of Barbarita is that she is a notorious character known as Dona Barbara who lures men out on the plains into her snares only to throw them over. She is becoming rich by her thievery in cattle and anything else that she wants. She preserves a mystic atmosphere about her through her connections with witchery. Men hold her in awe. She rules her peones with an iron hand. She does not

¹ I am indebted for the above summarized biography to Arturo Torres - Rioseco---The Epic of Latin American Literature, p. 181
hesitate at murder if she so desires. If it will further her ends, she will order her peones to murder. She has an affair with a Lorenzo Barquero whose property she has acquired and, after a child is born, she throws him over together with the child. This wrecks his life. He and their daughter live in a hovel under the worst of conditions—she being drunk most of the time.

Santos Luzardo, the last of his family, returns to his ranch lands, inherited from his parents, from Caracas where he has been studying. He has returned to reclaim his livestock and property, stolen by Dona Barbara and to set things in order generally. He discovers Lorenzo, his old friend, and Mariisela, and learns that a Mr. Danger, an undesirable and unscrupulous character, has designs on Mariisela. He takes her and her father to his home where he sets about to teach Mariisela how to be a lady. He is idealistic in his plans to set things aright and out of the chaotic state in which they have been allowed to run. He appeals to the law but the unscrupulous barristers are on Dona Barbara's side, so he takes things into his own hands.

Dona Barbara has fallen in love with Santos, not knowing that her cast-off daughter, Mariisela, has also. Santos gives her no encouragement and this makes her want him all the more, for she has been accustomed to having her wishes fulfilled. Murders are committed and thievery continues but things are beginning to come out victoriously
for Santos and not so well for Dona Barbara. She begins to have a change of heart. She returns home from a trip to the city to return to Santos some money for feathers which one of her men has stolen from Santos. She goes to his home. Through the window she sees him and her daughter sitting at the dining room table. Through interpreting the look on her daughter's face, she understands immediately her daughter's feelings toward Santos. She raises her revolver, takes a slow, steady, deliberate aim, but then changes her mind. She returns home, sends a letter to Santos, telling him that her daughter is her sole heir to her estate. She then disappears.

In this novel there is more of a plot than is customary in the usual picaresque novels. However, this is not the well-knit plot of the average novel, for it is loosely constructed, allowing episodes to occupy the interest rather than the development. For example: the coming and going of Dona Barbara, the fence repairing by Santos so as to get his own land back, stolen by Dona Barbara, the alligator hunts, the appearances of the "familiar", the rodeo, all are interesting episodes, very prominent, and feebly do enough to carry a thin thread of plot. However, the plot is of not too much importance in this highly fascinating novel.

Another slight variation in this novel from the picaresque genre, is that many of the characters are carried
throughout the narrative. This does not hold fast completely, for a few do not do this even; for example, Lorenzo is picked up and finally dropped as also happens with some of the minor characters, as workers, helpers at the branding, and riders. The character, Doña Barbara, is truly repulsive. One sees in her a resemblance to Celestina in her handling of her lovers. She seems, like Celestina, utterly devoid of any conscience; her absolute disregard for her daughter's welfare who lives like a wild animal, illustrate this point.

The picaresque element of hunger appears in this narrative. The employees of the haciendas do not hesitate to steal if they are hungry. When they are out on the plains and it is time to eat, they steal the best beef that they can find and the only thing of consequence is that they are to eat. Again, they will steal for personal gain other than eating. One of Doña Barbara's men had been stealing feathers from Santos and concealing them, waiting for an opportunity to smuggle them into town so as to get money to gamble.

The life on the plains is satirized, particularly that fascinating magnetism it holds for any one who has once lived on them. The bitterness of satire is not lacking in the characterization of Doña Barbara, for in her girlhood, she has been deprived of her lover by man, and the remainder of her career is spent in deceiving man for her revenge.
The picaresque novel gives us a portrayal of life as it is found. Where can one find more realism than in the portrayal of the hunting of the alligators; a man concealing himself in the severed head of an alligator in order to float nearer them in the water; in the care Marisela gives her father in his last drunken debaucheries; in the pictures of the fly infested hovels; in the round-ups for branding the cattle, or those of Dona Barbara holding one of her mystic seances with her "socio".

_Dona Barbara_ is biographical. We have a life history of her from the time we first become acquainted with her on the boat in the river until she disappears. We see her rise as a powerful, revengeful, unscrupulous cacique. She is a hard, unrelenting character, unforgettable, and the only softening of her will is at the very close of the narrative where she could have shot her daughter, and where she turns her estate over to Marisela.

There is service of masters present in _Dona Barbara_, but only on the part of the poconos, not on the part of the principal characters. _Dona Barbara_ has her estates with _all_ the laborers, Santos has his.

Superstition, so typical of primitive people, is everywhere present in this narrative. _Dona Barbara_ never undertakes an enterprise of any importance without first holding one of her seances; she omits no detail to add mysticism even to the proper placing of the candles. The
drying of the mud along the edge of the quagmire had its significance. The flock of buzzards hovering near the herd was a warning to the drivers of the herd. The sudden appearance of the "familiar" was no small omen; the origin of this "familiar" is shown from the following translation from the novel:

"According to an ancient custom, of mysterious origin, somewhat generalized thereabout, whenever a new estate was established, a live animal was buried between the jambs of the first corral constructed, so that its spirit, a prisoner of the land which the estate included, might watch over the estate and its owners. From this came to it the name of familiar and its apparitions were considered as omens of advantageous events. The Altamira familiar was a water bull which, according to tradition, son Evaristo Luzardo buried at the gate of the sheepfold."

Dona Barbara has a thesis like that of Acuando—that of the struggle between civilizing and barbaric forces. Santos, educated in Caracas, returns to his ancestral estates to set them aright; he is met on all sides by the barbaric opposition.

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CHAPTER VIII

Martin Fierro

Jose Hernandez (1834-86), the author, was a politician and a member of the Federalist party. He was an opponent of Mitre, the first constitutional President of a united Argentina, and of Sarmiento, the great educator. He established himself in Buenos Aires where he solicited men and money for a rebellion. Being always on the side of the gaucho, Hernandez took part in the uprising of the last gaucho insurrectionist, Lopez Jordan.

The story tells of Martin Fierro's (1872) experiences and adventures. He is taken from his small farm, wife, and child by a recruiting officer. He becomes a member of an organization that is fighting the Indians. Being dissatisfied, he deserts and returns home, only to find everything destroyed and his family fled. He joins up with Cruz and they become bad gauchos. Martin renounces his bonds to the white race by destroying his guitar and goes to join the Indians.

In the second part, The Return of Martin Fierro (1875) Fierro returns to civilization after leaving his companion, dead from smallpox, in a small Indian village.

1 Arturo Torres - Rioseco---The Epic of Latin American Literature p. 146
2 Jose Hernandez---Martin Fierro.
He kills an Indian chief, rescues a white woman whom the Indians had captured, and starts on his trek back. After reaching civilization, he goes from farm to farm, searching for his old friends. Here he learns that the law is no longer searching for him. He meets his two sons. They tell him their stories; the elder boy has been unjustly imprisoned, and the younger one has endured hardships and suffering at the hands of old Vizoacha. He also meets Picardia who is the son of Cruz. After this meeting, the four decide to separate, as they decide the four couldn't earn their living together. He closes his poem with these lines:

"And if life fails me
All will certainly know
That the gaucó, even in the desert,
Will feel on such an occasion
Sadness in his heart
Upon learning that I am dead...

But may nobody be offended,
For to no one an offense;
And if I sing in this manner,
it is not for the harm of anyone,
But for the good of all."3

At times Martin has the qualities of the rogue in some of his more ruthless acts, but he is the rogue at all times in his light-hearted, carefree adventures. Of course in him again, we have the embodiment of the "barbarie", but it is not with the bitterness of Facundo, nor with the same ruthlessness. However, two rogues with all the tricks and

3 José Fernandez... my translation.
philosophy of the peninsular forebear, appear in the characters of Vizcaha and Picardia. Picardia lost his mother at a very early age. He was cared for by a man who kept him just long enough to get him ready to shift for himself. He stole "like the birds" in order to get something to eat; worked as a shepherd, a dancer; some religious women took him in, but they were so religiously hypocritical that he soon left them. Next he became a gamester, and at cards, he seemed to be in his element. His adventures are numerous, and, in these adventures, he has opportunities to satirize society and to philosophize on the waywardness of mankind. To show some of the bitterness Picardia feels toward society, he says:

"And I decide thus, in conclusion,
In the midst of my ignorance,
That being born here on an estate
Is like a curse.

And I say, even though it may
not benefit me
To say what nobody has said
The Province is a mother
Who does not defend her children."4

Vizcaha, the tutor of Fierro's younger son, was an old rascal. He was sharp and full of tricks. Always surrounded by a host of dogs, he killed any cow that came his way in order to keep them. He killed cattle at night in order to get the hides so that he might sell them at the pulperias to buy yerba mate, tobacco, and liquor. He would first change any

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marks of identification before selling them. If Vizcacha were caught in any of his escapades and were whipped or punished, it didn't cause him to desist but just made him the more wary. "He killed his wife because she had given him cold mate and he never married again because he couldn't find anyone who might want him and all feared the fate of his first wife." His hut was a wretched affair in a cave. He never allowed his protege to enter it; he slept outside while Vizcacha occupied the hovel. Vizcacha fell ill, and his protege had to care for him in his wild deliriums. At his death, the alcalde arrived; after taking what things of value he wanted, he announced that the heir was the protege. The heir was so frightened to be left alone with this old, dead sinner that he escaped. In the way he lived, his craftiness, even cruelty, thievery for food, his philosophizing after an adventure very often quite against him, Vizcacha is the true picaresque rogue.

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5 Ibid. p. 122 By summarized translation.
CHAPTER IX

Los De Abajo (The Underdogs)

Mariano Azuela (1873-?) was born in Lagos de Moreno. Azuela was violently anti-Porfirio Diaz, and after Madera was successful in his revolution, Azuela became the political leader of his home town. He served in the revolutionary armies against Victoriano Huerta. He was at one time Director of Public Education for the State of Jalisco. When Carranza triumphed, Azuela fled to El Paso. Later he returned to Mexico City, but took no further part in politics. He followed the profession of medicine quite devotedly.  

The setting of Los De Abajo is Mexico about the time of Huerta. Demetrio is at home with his wife. He is having a quick lunch and both he and his wife seem very alert. The dog barks a warning. A shot is heard and Demetrio hides. The dog has been shot. Federalists enter the house and ask for food. As Demetrio's wife prepares it, they ask for a bottle of tequila.

During the conversation, Demetrio appears. One of the federales recognizes Demetrio. He says that he always respects the house of his friend. Demetrio then tells his wife to take their baby and to her father's. He sets out to join his revolutionary comrades. These comrades represent various specimens of humanity. Among this motley group, is

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a Luis Cervantes of education much above the rest of the group. He later becomes secretary to Demetrio when Demetrio promotes himself to Colonel. From here on, the story is a series of the encounters of the revolutionists with the federalists. The lands have been taken from the commoners and they have organized guerrilla bands, trying to get them back. Life is cheap. In the story we follow these bands all over the northern part of Mexico. They are poorly equipped and the source of their supplies is plunder. There are cantina scenes of drinking, gaming, dancing, and love making. Even married Demetrio is not exempt, for he has his Camila.

Finally after two years of absence from his home, he returns, only to be killed in a surprise attack.

The story is biographical. We trace Demetrio's life from his humble home to his death. He starts out with only a handful of followers, but more and more are added until he is at the head of rather a formidable band.

Azuela shows in the following translation how futile he thinks all these revolutions are. Luis Cervantes has been urging his jefe to join with the people of Hatera, but his jefe refuses. Luis is speaking first:

"But you, with only a few men here, will pass for a leader of minor importance. The revolution wins regardlessly; as soon as it is finished, they say to you, as Madero said to those who aided him: 'Friends, many thanks, you may now return home.'"...
"I want nothing else but to be allowed to return home in peace."

"There I'm done..."

"I have not ended: 'You, who have raised me up to the President of the Republic, risking your lives and leaving widows and orphans in immediate danger of wretchedness, now that I have obtained my goal, may now gather up your pick and shovel, live your wretched life, hungry and scantily clad as before, while we, the high-ups, make a few million pesos???'"

Demetrio, smiling, nodded, and scratched his head...

"As I was saying," continued Luis Cervantes, "the revolution is concluded, and everything is finished. It is a shame that so many lives have been lost, that there are so many widows and orphans, that so much blood has been shed. Why? In order that a few unscrupulous ones may become rich, and everything remain as it was or worse than before. You are unhampered or free, and say, 'I have no more ambition than to return to my land.' But is it justice to deprive a wife and children of the fortune or opportunity that Divine Providence now places in your hands? Will it be just to abandon the Patria in these solemn times in which she is going to need all the self denial of her humble children for them to save her, in order that they may not permit her to fall again into the hands of her eternal tempters, hangmen, and leaders?"

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2 Mariano Azuela. *Los De Abajo* pp. 76-8 my translation.
Again, Luis Cervantes gives his reasons for the revolution:

"The revolution benefits the poor, the ignorant, the one who all his life has been a slave, the unhappy who do not even know that if they are, it is because the rich convert into gold the tears, the sweat, and the blood of the poor...I have desired to struggle in behalf of the sacred cause of the unfortunates."\(^3\)

The satirical element predominates in such a way that the futility of the guerrilla warfare is everywhere apparent but even in this apparent futility, groundwork is being laid for a better freedom.

The service of masters is portrayed by the followers of Demetrio, but it is manipulated in a manner differently from that of Lazarillo. It is not here present for the sake of satirizing the classes, but only for presenting silhouettes, of the different members of Demetrio's motley crew.

Throughout the novel, there is a subtle plea for education. There is an interesting contrast between the character of Luis Cervantes and that of his fellow associates which bears out the above observation. Another point related to the above is that the ignorance or primitiveness and fighting, both enemies of education, are closely related, and the story is replete with both.

\(^3\) Ibíd. p. 46. My translation.
The hunger motif of the picaresque novel is quite in evidence in this narrative. The story opens with some federalist officers in Demetrio's house in search of food and surely all through the adventures of Demetrio and his men this search for food is never forgotten.

Surely Demetrio is the picaresque rogue, but I'm inclined to feel that he is more sinned against than sinning. Cruel oppression had caused him to seize primitive man's only weapon--fighting. His ignorance didn't help him to see the futility of it---it was his only means to show his dissatisfaction.
CHAPTER X

Tierra

Gregorio Lopez y Fuentes, author of *Tierra*, was born November 17, 1395. He spent a great deal of his youth on his father's hacienda, much beloved by him. His father wanted him to study for the teaching profession, so he was sent to Mexico City for that purpose.

While he was in this city, he published his first literary work, a collection of poems. Later he taught in the Normal school here.

Next he took up Journalism, first as a reporter and columnist, then later as an editor.

As a result of his life on his father's ranch, his novels portray the life he knows best—rural life.¹

The setting of this tale, *Tierra*, is in Mexico during the years 1910-1920 inclusive.

A group of workmen, under the supervision of Procopio Arez, foreman for Don Bernardo, is working at clearing up some forest land. The men are driven and worked like slaves. A young boy worker is bitten on the finger by a snake; aid is sought, but it is of no avail. The lad's finger is chopped off, but, even then, he dies.

Antonio Hernandez is betrothed to Maria Petra, daughter of another workman, Francisco, son of the administrator, de-

sides he wants to marry Maria Petra, and his father brings it about, that, despite antonio and Maria's betrothal arrangements, the marriage is to take place. Francisco and Maria are married, and as soon as this takes place, Antonio leaves to join the revolutionists.

Don Bernardo is tyrannical, holding the workers as slaves. Their wage is scarcely sufficient to keep them alive; their little patches of ground have been taken from them; they are completely dependent upon Bernardo for their food, and deeper into debt to him; the debts of the father are handed down from father to son, so as to keep the workmen in a constant state of subjection.

The curate pays the laborers a visit and there are marriages and baptisms performed in a wholesale manner. The curate seems to have lost his interest in the sanctity of his mission.

There are organized bands of revolutionists without number throughout the country, fighting to get back their bands—just enough of their lands so that they may raise sufficient food to live.

The revolutionists receive rumors that officials of the government are to come to locate the lost boundaries and to restore to the rightful owners the stolen lands. Officials appear, but nothing definite is ever done.

The revolutionists continue their destruction of property and their slaughter of humans; leaders replace those killed;
families are broken up, and disorganization continues; chaos reigns supremely.

Things get too difficult for Don Bernardo, so he escapes into Europe to spend at least part of his ill-gotten gains.

The remainder of the story is taken up with incidences of the revolutionists. Antonio is reported killed and his body is reported to have been secretly buried. Francisco has been killed also.

There is a story told that Maria Petra, old now, sees a kinsman horseman who, she declares, is Antonio coming back to see his betrothed whom he loved so devotedly. As Maria is known for her veracity, credence is given the story. People don't seem to know where he is buried; they have sought vainly to locate his grave, but:

"Maria Petra has also looked for it, more than anyone. She goes out early in the morning; traverses the mountains and returns at nightfall. She cuts flowers and lays them under some one evergreen oak, near some one brook. She remains there for hours at a time, looking at her flowers and speaking as if she were conversing with Antonio. For her, he is in all the places where she leaves her offering. People say she is mad. Poor thing! One sees how much she loved him."  

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Both *Los De Abajo* and *Tierra* are picaresque in that the plot is almost entirely lacking and, of course, they are stories of adventure. There is a slight resemblance to plot in *Tierra* in that Antonio's life is vaguely traced. However, both novels are definitely satirical, for they satirize the social conditions of Mexico, particularly the land question; nor does the church escape, for there are satirical portrayals of group marriages and baptisms performed by the curate with an attitude of "hurry it up", and again in his very apparent disinterestedness in the spiritual needs of the people, especially when he is in the presence of Don Bernardo who represents wealth and power.

Realizing the forcefulness of the underdog as a character, both Asuela and Lopez y Fuentes have used him as a means to drive home vividly their thesis, the crying need of a definite social reform. The deft portrayals of customs and manners in the two above mentioned novels are direct descendants of the picaresque genre.

Realism is perfected throughout intimate glances at daily life. One can scarcely fail to hear the crunch of the corn in the stone receptacles as it is being ground by the senoras who squat on the ground before their hovels attending to this very necessary need, or to hear the spat-spat of the senoras as they prepare tortillas, slapping them back and forth in their hands in order to flatten them. The realism is so strong and vivid that at times, in witnessing the
preparations of a meal, our knowledge of hygiene takes away completely any idea of hunger that we might have had.

Again colloquialisms predominate; sometimes it is next to impossible to find equivalents for them. These colloquialisms all show the effect Spanish culture has had on regionalism.

The service of masters is present as in the Spanish picaresque forerunners. However, the viewpoint is somewhat different from the Spanish parent as we see these masters from the side lines as interested spectators and not through the eyes of the narrator as is the case in *Lazarillo de Tormes*. The masters are the estate owners, the government officials, the overseers, and the caciques, or leaders of the revolutionists often, again just leaders of groups banded together for some vital purpose.

The biographical element is again present in *Tierra*, but it fragmentary and sketchy; for example, there is the life of Antonio Hernandez, recorded from ten years of age until his death, but during the time he is a member of the revolutionary bands, little is known about him.

The hunger motif is present in the struggle the peones have to procure food. They have no lands of their own upon which to grow crops and what meager patches of earth they might obtain through the generosity of their jefe or boss have all been plundered by the revolutionists. Food is scarce; hunger is ever present.
The tale is episodical throughout: there are the laborers at work; the forming and departing of guerrilla bands; the cantina scenes after payday and the fiestas; the arrival of the curate and so on; all are so arranged so as to bear out the thesis, the need of social reform as regards land particularly.
CHAPTER XI

El Indio

Inasmuch as the author, Gregorio Lopez y Fuentes, of El Indio, is also the author of Tierra, I've included the short biographical sketch of him in Chapter X.

The setting of El Indio is in Mexico. "It is a history of Mexico from the conquistadores to Cardenas. It is really a history that has no fixed point in time or space."

Three travellers stop at a small settlement. The people are very primitive; they hide. Through an interpreter, the travellers explain their reason for being there. They are on a search for the government for certain medicinal herbs, but in reality, they are trying to locate the gold mines that the Indians once possessed. The searchers spend the night at the village and the next morning one of the members of the party outrages one of the Indian maidens.

This event causes the villagers to be still more reticent about any newly formed friendship or trust, but after much persuasions they agree to give a guide to the party for a trip to the mountains. They search in the mountains for the gold mines, but are not successful.

After their failure to find the mines, the travellers try to force the Indian to disclose the location of his Ancestors' mines by torturing him. He tells them nothing.

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and when they cease their torturing him, he escapes.

Due to too much pressure and interference on the part of the whites, the Indians of the village leave their homes to go to the mountains. Their huts and lands fall into ruins. Land owners and officials finally get them to come out of the mountains and to return to their homes; but they return only on the condition that the whites stay away.

The food is scarce as there have been no crops, so the Indians try their luck at a community fishing. They have poor luck until they try dynamiting the river, then there are plenty of fish. While the Indians are fishing, a child falls over the falls, and when he is rescued, his mother punishes him for his carelessness. The Indians were all excited at the child's misfortune because they thought the river had not been properly appeased for their fishing.

During illnesses the natives call in male witch doctors. They would carry on with tricks, incantations, charms, and curses until they amazed all.

The young Indian guide previously mentioned, had been found, but in a badly crippled condition. His father had called in one of these witch doctors to see what could be done for him and also to find out what could be done about the girl, now widowed, who had been betrothed to his son. The son had not been able to work because of his condition and it had preyed upon his mind—filling it with strange ideas of hatred, even against his father. The witch doctor
soon discovered who was doing the damage and after weird ceremonies, the witch was able to make all things right and to dispell all fears.

Civil officers had ordered the Indians to work two days a week upon a highway that was to open up their lands, so as to do away with the Indians' isolated lands. Then, too, the curate had ordered them to build churches for two days a week. This didn't leave much time for them to raise a little food for themselves. This caused unhappiness and distrust of the whites.

Schools were ordered to be built, but the teachers were not trained for rural teaching. The teachers wanted all the Indians to learn the Spanish language first. It didn't work out satisfactorily. Then a native, who had been trained, undertook the task, but soon the attendance dropped off to such an extent that his work soon dropped out.

Finally a revolution broke out but there was nothing much accomplished except the natives' receipt of more vague promises on the part of the whites.

The novel has very little, if any, plot. There is very little to bind the story together and some, I fear, would hesitate to call it a novel. About the only thing to knit it together is the fact that it keeps its eye strictly upon the thesis and uses the Indians as subject material by which to bind it. Then, in this story, instead of a single protagonist, we have the Indians.
The complete story is episodical. All these elements, of course, are typically picaresque. The thesis, social reform, is carefully worked out—this need of land reform, education of the lower classes, common decent treatment of the Indians and less exploitation of them, and, perhaps, a hint at official reform, including the clergy.

There are hints at service of masters; for example, the leaders of their particular revolutionary groups; jefes or bosses over the laboring groups; and, again, all the Indians were virtually vassals of the corrupt governmental officials and of the government. However, the service of masters is handled differently in this novel from what it is in Lazarillo de Tormes, for here it is subordinated and subdued, but never-the-less it is constantly present. In Lazarillo de Tormes this kind of service is given a prominent place so as to bring about a wider range of shifts of masters in order to present a larger panorama for the purpose of satire.

Realism is almost photographic in this tale. What could be more realistic than the fiesta in which the voladores participated; their selecting of the long, slender, strong pole at the top of which they are to perform; their care in planting it upright and firmly in the ground; the dance executed by one of the performers on a space scarcely large enough for his two feet on the top of the pole; the agility with which the performers ascended the pole by means of an interlaced rope, devised for a ladder? The scene in which
the Indians go fishing is graphically portrayed, and, again, the epidemic of smallpox among the Indians is typically reminiscent of the scourges of that dread disease among our own American Indians.

The biographical element of the picaresque novel is strongly subordinated in El Indio; the short sketches that are given are very fragmentary. The characters are picked up, used, and dropped at will; very few reappear. However, El Indio, differs in this respect somewhat from the picaresque forerunners, for characters reappear after once having been used. This, no doubt, is due to the fact that there is no single protagonist to bind the episodical story together—the characters have to reappear for the sake of knitting the story together.

In the picaresque genre, the protagonist is a character of low or obscure origin, but in El Indio, as mentioned above, we do not have one character as the protagonist but many, all, however, of Indian origin with their primitive beliefs, their superstitions, their isolation, their extremely low standards of living, their fear and distrust of the white man's ways, their resentment at the manner in which they have been treated by the white man.

The satire of the novel is bitter, a true element of the picaresque forerunners. When the white man's ways and trickery become unbearable, the Indians move off to the mountains to remain until the civil officials think up some new device of trickery by which they can entice the Indians
back to their labors in the fields. The white man's superior attitude toward the Indian is depicted in the case of the outraged maid, mentioned before, but even though the Indians resented the attack upon her, what could they do? It all was futile. They resented the treatment of their Indian guide by the whites, but what did it bring them? They resented the white man's sign that had an announcement printed on one side that permitted fishing and on the other an announcement that forbade fishing. They couldn't understand the white man's idea of justice and honesty; these certainly didn't coincide with their simple ideas of justice and honesty.

It seems to me that El Indio, despite its thesis of land reform and social improvement, is a plea, a cry for help, that education and light be brought these Indians, that just officials as representatives of the government be placed over them, and, with the enlightenment that comes from education, they be placed side by side with their Spanish brothers, for the betterment of the great Mexican Republic, for after all, they are really the great naturales of the republic.
CHAPTER XII

Perequillo Sarniento

One writer who lived during the Mexican revolutionary period at about the time of the revolution in Spain, was José Joaquin Fernández de Lizardi (1774-1827). He championed the cause of the revolution as a writer of pamphlets from 1812 to 1826 under the name of "El Pensador Mexicano". (The Mexican Meditative one or Thinker,) He defended the ecclesiastics who had supported the revolution by bearing arms. For his utterances, he was imprisoned, despite the constitution's guaranteeing liberty of press. Being released soon, he published his ideas of the condition and needs of Mexico in a picaresque novel Perequillo Sarniento (1816).

The protagonists name "Pedro has been turned into Perequillo by his schoolmates because of a green jacket that he wore together with yellow trousers. It seemed to remind them of the Mexican parrot. The name Sarniento attached to it was because of a disease that he was suffering, hence the Mangy Little Parrot.

Perequillo's parents see to it that he has as good an education as it was possible to obtain in that time.

After he has completed his schooling, Perequillo is invited to a ranch. Being interested in horses, he decides he wants to learn to ride, but he is thrown from the

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1 I am indebted for the above summary to Alfred Coester...Op. Cit. p. 87
horse very violently and lies on the ground senseless.

Then, when he has recovered sufficiently from this adventure, his father urges him to take up a trade of some kind, but as he doesn't want to do this, he enters a convent and becomes a fraile in order to avoid it. He is in the convent a little over six months when his father dies; then his mother.

An old friend of Perequillo's, Juan, instructs him in cards for various purposes. Perequillo is to invest or put at chance the money a man has obtained from selling his horse. He loses the money in the transaction and the man beats him unmercifully. As a result, Perequillo spends some time in the hospital recuperating.

Previous to this misfortune, Perequillo was to have a date with a girl whom he admired. Juan was to fix it up for him but showed treachery. Perequillo was to enter her room after she had retired and awaken her. Juan had arranged to have the mother in the bed. When Perequillo taps on the pillow, the old lady beats him with a slipper and chases him out, making a great deal of noise with her shouting that she didn't want any picaro in her house. He is thrown into prison and later released.

He next enters a house as escribano or notory public, but he gets into trouble with the servant girl and the cook and has to leave this position.

Then he becomes an apprentice to a barber and while
the barber is out, he decides to practice on a dog. After tying the dog's feet and mouth, he puts him into the chair and starts the ordeal. The dog howled at each cut of the razor and after Perequillo had completed the operation, he untied the dog, and the dog, finding himself free, bounded into the street and set off as fast as he could, like a soul being pursued by the devils. While Perequillo was recovering from his adventure with the dog, and Indian entered the shop, wishing to be shaved. Perequillo sets about his task with dispatch, but after much scraping and cutting, the Indian told him that he didn't like his hand, got up from the chair, gave him a half real, and departed hurriedly into the street. Perequillo also tries extracting a tooth for an old lady who was suffering terribly. After cutting away most of her gums, and pulling the wrong tooth, he is left without a customer, for she jumps up from the chair and leaves the shop, cursing him most vehemently. Perequillo works for the barber for four and one half months and then seeks new employment.

His new work is as an apprentice to a druggist. He mixes by mistake arsenic instead of magnesia into a laxative and nearly causes the death of the patient. His master has to take the punishment as Perequillo is only an apprentice. After his master has been hauled away to answer the charges, Perequillo decides it is time for him to leave, so he is again out in the world.

Next he is apprenticed to a doctor. After learning
the tricks of this trade and after learning that the doctor
has been collecting considerable money, Perequillo steals
some of the doctor's money, a mule and some books of his and
sets out again. He goes to Tula. Here he pretends he is a
doctor and with dire results. People see he is a fake and
he has to leave the town.

He wanders about for some time and finally starts to
gambling. He wins considerable money. He falls in love
with Mariana and they are married. She soon learns that his
money is getting scarce and they quarrel and are very unhappy.
Mariana dies upon giving birth to her child.

Perequillo then goes to see Luisa, a former servant
of his. He seduces her and her husband stabs Perequillo in
the ensuing fight.

After his recovery, Perequillo goes to work for a
sacristan. Soon after he has worked here for a time, he and
another apprentice decide to exhume the body of a woman who
had recently died to rob her of her valuables. They are
discovered after a horrible orgy in church with the body.
Perequillo is dismissed.

Perequillo's next adventure is that of joining a
group of professional beggars. He is to be blind. He is
very successful and collects fairly large sums of money.
Anita, a servant at the beggars' club, earns money on the
side by pinching her baby to make him cry and then telling
the passers-by that the baby cries because of hunger.
Perequillo falls in with a man who takes him to his home. By means of some money, he persuades Perequillo to tell him where the beggars' club is. Perequillo does so and the group is exposed, arrested, and sent to prison, while he is to go away with another master.

While Perequillo is working with an unscrupulous master, a subdelegado, he is sent to prison with his master who has gotten into trouble. Perequillo is sentenced to eight years of military service. He soon becomes an assistant to the colonel.

As Perequillo gets along very well with the colonel, he sets sail with him for Manila. On the trip the ship strikes a sand bar while the pilot is asleep. After they throw the silver and their clothes overboard to lighten the load, they continue on their way. After their arrival in Manila, Perequillo sees a duel between an Englishman and a negro. While they are here, the colonel dies, and Perequillo is left some money.

He then sets sail for an island, but is shipwrecked and nearly drowns.

After his escape from drowning and subsequent recovery Perequillo meets an Asiatic, and they have a long discussion about things he pretends to know. The Chinaman and Perequillo become good friends and the latter passes himself off as a count and receives many benefits as a result.

Then the two go to Mexico—El Chino to travel and
Perequillo to return home. The Chinaman finds out that his friend is not a count and then he has him as a servant. El Chino is very generous with his new servant and, as a result, the servant lives in style. Perequillo thinks that a capellan (a chaplain) is necessary in a so luxurious house. One is employed. The capellan is given charge. El Chino asks Perequillo for the keys to the coffers. They are handed over. The Chinaman decides he wants the services of three pretty Spanish girls. Perequillo gets them and they arrive at a time when the capellan is present. The capellan dismisses them and also Perequillo. The servant had planned to get El Chino to turn against el capellan, but it didn't work out that way.

All three mistresses see Perequillo on the street and a battle ensues in which Perequillo comes out the worse for wear and tear.

As a result of this beating at the hands of the three dismissed Spanish mistresses, Perequillo decides to go to the country as a safer retreat from his persecutors. While he is here, he confesses his crimes and decides to reform. His confessor turns out to be an old friend who aids him in getting a job as manager of a store. This time Perequillo keeps faith and becomes successful. He marries again, and meets many of his old friends who are leading better lives; he raises a family and at his death he is able to pass on to his children his experiences from which they may profit.
Until his death, he now leads a very exemplary life.

This novel follows very much more closely the Spanish picaresque forerunners than any other novel studied in this group for this survey. The story is episodical throughout with a very loose plot construction; the protagonist, Perequillo, is the only unifying element that holds the thread of the narrative together.

The service of masters is present from the first chapter of the first volume to the last chapter of the second volume. His shifts of masters gives him a superb opportunity to satirize their trades and professions, and very few escape his observation. He satirizes the barbers, the doctors, the druggists, the clergy, and the church. He satirizes the carelessness he observes in the business world and the decided lack of training everywhere apparent. If the barber had not been neglectful of his work, Perequillo would not have shaved the dog and the Indian, nor would he have pulled the old lady's tooth; if the druggist had not been careless, he would not have mixed arsenic for magnesia for the laxative; if the pilot had not gone to sleep on the trip to Manila, the ship would not have gone on a sand bar; if the doctor had been less careless about his finances, he would not have known so much about the money part of the doctor's business and thus, perhaps, the robbery might have been prevented. The, again, the apprenticeships are attacked. The masters take the boys in for an apprenticeship and have them do nothing but light
fires, carry in wood, run errands, and sweep floors until about the last year of their apprenticeship and then try to teach them the trade in that short time with the apparent results. Neither are the schools exempted from his satire, nor education, nor hospitals, nor convents.

The hunger element of the picaresque genre is portrayed in this novel in practically the same manner in which it is portrayed in *Lazarillo deormes*. After each shift of masters, there is a period of hunger before a new place is found where food and clothing may be obtained. The hunger element has been the cause of much thievery and trickery in this novel as well as, in many of the others of this same genre.

The story is completely biographical. We have a complete picture from his early schooling until his death. His life is laid realistically before us with all its vicissitudes.

The love element, strongly subdued in the picaresque forerunners, is subordinated in this novel. It crops up now and then but only for a moment, as a glance in passing.

Realism is everywhere present—in fact, too much so, as for example, when Perequillo is preparing the old lady for her extraction, he cuts enough of her gums away "to make a good lunch for the house cat." The prison scene that Perequillo describes with its different types: some sewing,

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some chatting, some badly tangled up in their chains, some singing, some playing cards, all trying for some form of entertainment to while away the time, all pale with anxiety and sadness in their sunken faces, some decent, some half dressed, some white, some dark, is a fine example of realistic description.
CHAPTER XIII

Conclusion

The elements of the picaresque novel in the criollista literature are legion.

The picaro of the picaresque genre becomes the gauchol in the criollista novel under his new environment. True, he has acquired new accoutrements of appearance and of colloquialisms, due to this new environment, but, by slightly divesting him of the thinnest veneer of this new acquisition, he stands before us as the typical rogue of old with all his philosophizing, thievery, trickery, and even humaneness. That devil-may-care and rollicking, happy-go-lucky attitude of the picaro and of the gaucho are the same. He philosophizes and complains of his lot in Martin Fierro2, Facundo3, Pescuido Sarmiento4 Don Segundo Sombra5 and so on, and again when we see him at a baile (dance) or at the pulpería (store), he is the happy-go-lucky fellow of adventure and out for adventure. The criollista novel uses the gaucho as the unifying element just as the picaresque novel. He is the only thing that binds the novel together in its maze of episodes, for characters come and go as the episodes change. He has become in the criollista novel, El Indio excepted, the embodiment of la barbarie (barbarism) in its struggle against the civilizing

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1 See Chapter I under "The Criollista Novel"
2 See Chapter VIII
3 See Chapter VII
4 See Chapter XI
5 See Chapter X
influences of European culture. It is because of him that a gaucho or a picaro in these episodic novels that we are able to have written these biographical or autobiographical novels. Much of our own biographical literature is picar-esque. We have the protagonist of course, the episodes, or we call them adventures, even the hunger element, for why does a man work if it isn't to exist, service of masters, varied at times of course, but nevertheless existing, very often the protagonist is of obscure origin and he may be of good repute or bad. A biography of Jesse James, the notorious character of American fame, would be picar-esque; the life of Daniel Boone surely is picar-esque of a person, of course, of repute.

The hunger element of the criollista novel is handled in very much the same manner as in the picar-esque novels. The desire to exist is the cause directly or indirectly of most of the adventures. At first glance, perhaps, one wonders about the hunger element in the adventures of the revolutionists, but these adventures are for the purpose of bringing about a social result that will bring about the ability to exist; for example, Los De Abajo, Tierra, El Indio, and the

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6 For a discussion of autobiographical novels see:
  Chapter V Don Segundo Sombra
  Chapter XI Pereaquito Barniento
For a discussion of biographical novels see:
  Chapter VI Faundo
  Chapter VIII Martin Fierro

7 Chapter II Lazarillo de Tormes
picaresque novel *Perequillo Sarmiento*. In the picaresque novel, the desire to exist causes thievery, gambling and drinking.

The loose construction and almost absence of plot of the picaresque novel have a counterpart in all of the criollista novels, read for this study. Characters come and go, but there is a slight change in the criollista novel from the picaresque in that a few characters after having once appeared, appear again as in *El Indio*. The last named novel differs from the forerunners in that there is no one protagonist, but the plot structure is loose like that of the forerunners. Also in these forerunners, the only binding unit is the protagonist as has been mentioned above.

The superstition of the picaresque novel is present also in the criollista novel: in the witch doctors of *El Indio*; and in *Dona Barbara* the familiar and its apparitions, the seances held by *Dona Barbara*, the drying of the mud as a warning to the herders, also the hovering buzzards; the story of Maria Petra's seeing her dead lover.

It is the lower class of society in both novel genres that furnishes the protagonists. They are always of obscure
or very humble origin, thus this fast thus gives them an opportunity for different kinds of services, and while they are accomplishing these, they have contacts that afford them numerous opportunities for their satire of society in general.

The picaresque forerunners were all episodical in the narration, so, also, are the criollista novels, read for this study. They merely relate these different adventures, in the lives of the different protagonists. In *Jona Bárbara*, the protagonist is a woman, a slight change from the usual male protagonist, but she has counterparts in *La Picaresca Justina* and *Celestina*.

In the *tratado* of *Lazarillo de Tormes* is developed the thesis; each tratado has a different thesis, but in the criollista genre the complete novel is used to develop the problem, that is the sum total of all the adventures presents the complete problem.

The picaresque satire is not at all omitted in the criollista genre. In *Perequillo Sarmiento* all trades and professions, the church, and the hospitals are satirized.

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12 See Chapter IV Pertinent Picaresque Novels of Spain
13 See Chapter I Explanation of the Genre
14 Ibid.
15 See Ibid.
16 See Chapter XII
In *Don Segundo Sombra* the home life of children is satirized; in *Segundo*, life on the pampas is satirized; in *Dona Barbara* life on the plains and the bitterness of Barbara in deceiving men for her revenge; in *Martin Fierro*, society in general; in *Los De Abajo* the futility of guerrilla warfare; in *Tierra*, it is the life and condition of the lower classes; in *El Indio* it is the life and condition of the Indians and their treatment at the hands of the white man.

The love element of the picaresque forerunners was subdued and subordinated; it did not occupy a prominent place at all. It is portrayed in the criollista novels in the same manner. In *Dona Barbara*, her short love affairs are to seek revenge on man only; *Segundo's* are temporary affairs as he stops in a village or at a pulpería; in *Don Segundo Sombra* there are mentioned only two very short lived affairs on the part of the narrator; in *Los De Abajo*
Demetrio, even though married, breaks the rules of the marriage vows but only in passing; Tierra had a short romance between Antonio Hernandez and Maria Petra; in El Indio the Indian guide has a romance that is very much subordinated in the story; in Ferequillo Sarmiento there are numerous references to temporary attacks of amour, but they, too, are strongly subordinated and are given only in passing.

It is commonly conceded that the reason for Lazarillo de Torre being written anonymously was to the tyrannical government of Spain, that its deletions were also due to that same government, for the satire against the government is lacking; it is also known that the tale was suppressed until these deletions were made, but in Facundo, the barbarie rises up against this government trying to suppress it; it Tierra, Los de Abajo, and El Indio, arms are borne against the governmental tyranny.

In the picar-esque novels, education was for the upper wealthy classes to the neglect of the middle and poor classes and, as a result, the picares came from these two latter classes; in the criollista novels the same condition exists—the protagonists of these novels all come from these same two classes. There is, however, one slight exception, for

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28 See Chapter X
29 See Chapter XI
30 See Chapter XII
Perequito of Perequito Sarmiento had an education. The criollista novels are novels of adventure. They satisfy that desire on the part of a reader for an adventure story which leaves something to think about. They parallel practically all the elements of the picaresque forerunners, even with the strong factor of environment interceding. If England, France, and America could find elements of the picaresque genre worthy to be used, how much more should it be true of Mexico and South America, direct descendants of Spain, also to find elements worthy to adapt to their newly acquired countries.

What interesting reading would a criollista or picaresque novel make if it were written about things in our own America. The time seems ripe and the field large with political intrigues, child delinquency, even education, labor disquietudes, strikes, liquor hijacking, racketeers, and, not to mention as least, the black market.

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31 See Chapter I
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