Garcia Lorca's Rejection of Mechanical Civilization.

Charles Lloyd Halliburton

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/gradschool_disstheses/1781
HALLIBURTON, Charles Lloyd, 1934-
GARCIA LORCA'S REJECTION OF MECHANICAL CIVILIZATION. [ Portions of Text in Spanish ].

The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, Ph.D., 1970 Language and Literature, modern

University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan
GARCIA LORCA'S REJECTION OF MECHANICAL CIVILIZATION

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Foreign Languages

by

Charles Lloyd Halliburton
A.B., Centenary College, 1955
M.A., Louisiana State University, 1961
May, 1970
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer is grateful to his major professor, Dr. Martin E. Erickson, for the direction of this work, and for his kindness and cooperation through many difficulties too numerous to mention. He also wishes to express his thanks to several members of the Department of Foreign Languages, Louisiana State University, particularly, the late Dr. Elliot D. Healy, Professor Wyatt A. Pickens, and Dr. Harry Kirby. Dr. E. L. Marilla of the Department of English also offered suggestions.

For services rendered, the writer is indebted to the library staff members of Louisiana State University, the University of Notre Dame, Western Reserve University, Centenary College, Stanford University, and the University of Virginia.

To his wife, Donna Lee, and to his sons, Robert Ashley, Richard Lloyd, and William Cavanagh de Tuite, the writer owes a special gratitude; they were able to endure him through the difficult times that comprised the preparation of the manuscript.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. MECHANICAL CIVILIZATION: ITS BIRTH AND GROWTH IN THE UNITED STATES</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE POETS' DILEMMA</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE MAJOR THEMES IN <strong>POETA EN NUEVA YORK</strong></td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. <strong>POETA EN NUEVA YORK</strong></td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

Federico García Lorca was an established poet when he came to New York in 1929. The purpose of his visit was to pursue studies at Columbia University, but due to an impatience with any language other than Spanish, he soon abandoned the idea of formal study and settled back into his customary rôle of poet.

The year that he spent in and about New York was a posthumous fortune. The fruits of his pen were revealed in the 1940 Séneca edition of Poeta en Nueva York which appeared in Mexico City.

Interest in the book continues yearly; unfortunately, no critic has given the volume detailed attention until the present study.


It is Lorca's voice in Poeta en Nueva York which warns man that (1) the mechanized civilization and the immediate past are separated; (2) that man has become dehumanized and has lost his identity; (3) that until man achieves a
spiritual regeneration through Love, he will live in a void; and (4) that man, under these circumstances, is incapable of adapting to mechanical civilization.
INTRODUCTION

The individual finds it increasingly difficult to stabilize his life in a culture which is being continually revolutionized by economic and social change. Yet the tension is likely to increase for there seems to be little indication of a reversal of the trend toward acceleration, toward the further mechanization of life.¹

An inchoate feeling of essential injustice, a growing urge towards self-expression, without the least notion of how it can be satisfied, a nervous tension leading to a neurosis comparable with that recognized in the cases of mass murders² or the destructive behavior exhibited by the "Former Marrieds"; this is directly attributable to the ever-increasing physical and mental rush of the modern world. Above all, the chronic instability and never-ending change, the utter insecurity of persons, of institutions, of habits; in a word, the delinquescence of all that should be solid and substantial in life; these influences create a mass of

¹A consumer's attempt to free himself from the mechanical vise of a computer error is a frustrating example of our environment.

²See Truman Capote's In Cold Blood; the murder of eight nurses by Richard Speck; the "University of Texas Sniper," Charles J. Whitman.
mental misery, a corroding worry and despair, an intellectual and emotional hell, whose sufferings, though different in kind, are probably far more acute than those experienced a century ago through the physical want of a less sensitive generation.

The effect of our modern tempo of living is devastating not only upon the individual, but equally so upon our whole culture. As the individual more and more is deprived of the practical exercise of his free will, we develop a very different sort of culture from the democratic culture we idealize. All the values built up by human society through many thousands of years are jettisoned when men are reduced to the level of ants, when the framework of their culture becomes such that no chance remains for a voluntary choice on their part, when they must go ahead blindly, forced on by powers beyond their control to a goal no one is able to envisage. Freedom, democracy, independence, all are meaningless unless man retains not only his free will but also the opportunity of exercising it in such a way that he can to some extent control his destiny.

A culture which produces neurotics, which fills the beds of our hospitals with the insane, and which prevents the security necessary for contentment and happiness, is a monstrosity.

But who or what shall record this chaos? History, to a certain extent, will contain the chronology of events, the facts. It is left to poetry to record the emotions. Is
poetry capable of accomplishing this objective? Yes. To stay abreast of science, it was necessary that poets explore, experiment, and write in a manner as bold as the "New Science" itself. If poetry were to continue to function as an expression of man's emotions, the result had to emerge in words, phrases, and ideas comparable to the progress of man and the environment which surrounds him. Modern man is complex. Modern poetry is equally so.

In his quest for advancement, man has tended to shed ethical values, to purge his conscience of humanistic details which would, perhaps, retard his material progress. This very element of man's nature, conscience, which in a large sense distinguishes him from lesser beings, has become increasingly less and less important in the helter-skelter, mach-speedometered, rocket-propelled civilization in which he exists today.

Poets living forty years ago foresaw the road on which man was traveling. They saw the despiritualization that a disregard for human values and the ever-increasing preoccupation with the material would bring.

Federico García Lorca was one of these poets; he wrote his interpretation of the chaos of a civilization absorbed in technocracy and machinery in Poeta en Nueva York. Lorca was appalled by the plight of man; he loathed the present civilization and warned of even worse future conditions.

The purpose of this dissertation, then, is to explore
in detail the most difficult poetical work of Federico García Lorca, *Poeta en Nueva York*, in order to interpret the meaning of his work, the images and symbols which he employed to express man's rejection of mechanical civilization. It is intended that this aim shall be accomplished by an analysis of what mechanical civilization is and how it developed; by a treatise of the poets' dilemma, that is, the problems of poets and poetry and García Lorca's relationship with them, together with a study of his technique and its application toward a solution; by a thematic analysis of *Poeta en Nueva York*; and through minute explication of the poems which comprise the volume.

It must be acknowledged that an exhaustive explication of this book has never before been attempted. Therefore, the interpretations, with minor exceptions, are this writer's own, and open to question and debate. But the certain recurring themes, clues, and hints throughout the poems offer some substance which prevents this investigation from being a mere surrealistic companion to the poems themselves. Extant letters will be quoted whenever possible in order to supply the poet's direct intention and meaning. Angel del Río and Richard Saez have done groundwork on Lorca's New York book which has been most helpful in unraveling Lorca's poetic intent and implication.\(^3\)

\(^3\)Angel del Río has written a number of articles on Lorca's work. Of particular help to the author was his introduction to the Ben Belitt edition published by Grove
It is the writer's fervent hope that the results of this study will achieve an understanding and appreciation of Lorca's New York poems that previously have escaped notice.

Press of New York in 1955 under the title Poet in New York. A long article by Saez concerning Lorca's indebtedness to T. S. Eliot was included in the collection of essays published by Manuel Durán. References to this article will be cited in Chapter IV.
CHAPTER I

MECHANICAL CIVILIZATION: ITS BIRTH AND GROWTH
IN THE UNITED STATES

With the termination of the Civil War in April, 1865, the United States was left in a pitifully disrupted condition. The nation was divided; the restoration of unity was a long and painful process. What had been a flourishing agrarian society was to become a progressive, advanced civilization governed by materialism and science.

American social and economic life changed radically and rapidly during the years 1865 through 1914. With this change came the inevitable problems of expansion. An example which exerted a powerful influence on economics and social change in America can be seen through the development of the railroad. In 1865 there were only thirty-five thousand miles of track in the United States;\(^1\) by 1900 this mileage had increased to nearly two hundred thousand.\(^2\) Enormous land grants by the government financed the building of the transcontinental lines: the Union Pacific, the Northern


\(^2\)Ibid.
Pacific, and the Santa Fe, all of which had reached the Pacific Coast by 1884. The cost in land grants was high, but the railroads made substantial returns by populating and developing the vast region west of the Mississippi. The roads, however, often abused their great power, and the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887 marked the beginning of federal regulation.

The railroad was only one factor in the economic revolution which followed the Civil War. A great transportation system presupposed commodities, and these were supplied by an expanding industry and an expanding agriculture.

Industrial expansion was stimulated by a variety of factors: the exploitation of iron, coal, and oil resources; the development of improved machinery; the procurement of cheap labor through immigration; and the protection afforded infant industry by means of the government's high tariff policy.

Furthermore, there were many scientific inventions: by 1875 Andrew Carnegie was using the improved Bessemer process in the manufacture of steel; in 1876 Alexander

---

3Ibid., pp. 32-33.


5Cochran, op. cit., p. 45.
Graham Bell demonstrated the telephone at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition; in 1893 Thomas A. Edison and others made possible the dynamo, which was exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Expanding industry required an abundance of labor, and this was supplied by a growing stream of immigrants who, at the turn of the century, came in large numbers from all of Europe. They were motivated in part by hardships at home, but even more by inducements proffered by agents of American factories and transportation lines. Immigration continued without drastic reduction until 1921.

Under these favorable conditions, America's rapidly expanding industry soon got out of hand, and toward the end of the nineteenth century it became increasingly apparent that some form of government regulation was necessary. Trusts and monopolies exceeded reasonable bounds. The railroads of the entire country were controlled by only a half-dozen small groups of men. A disproportionate part of the wealth of the nation became concentrated in the pockets of a relatively few people. Big business had formed a corrupt alliance with politics. Abuses were rampant.

---


7 Cochran, *op. cit.*, p. 31.


Agriculture also underwent a "revolution" during the post-Civil War years. Vast new lands in the West were opened to farming. New machines—reapers, binders, threshers—and new scientific devices—fertilizers, insecticides, improved strains—greatly increased the yield of the land. The methods of big business invaded the farm: the cash crop supplanted subsistence farming. But fewer people were needed to do the work because of the improved machinery; the image of man was being engulfed by that of the machine; the financial returns were precarious; and migration from farms to the cities grew steadily.10

The growth of cities was one of the most conspicuous changes and, perhaps, a formidable reason for the rise of mechanical civilization. In 1860, one-sixth of the population in America was urban;11 in 1900, one-third.12 In the twenty years between 1880 and 1900, the population of Chicago grew from a half million to a million and a half.13 American cities with a population of one hundred thousand or more increased in number from nineteen to thirty-six during the same period.14 Evidently, it was supposed by thousands

---

10Mead, op. cit., p. 584.
11Ibid., p. 195.
13Ibid., p. 12.
14Mead, op. cit., p. 584.
of young Americans that a better life, somehow, could be lived in the city than in the country, and the bigger the city, the better the life. Theodore Dreiser attacked this myth with novels such as *Sister Carrie*, *Jennie Gerhardt*, *The Financier*, and *The Titan*. The sudden creation of great urban centers of "transplanted" Europeans and rural Americans conceived new social and economic problems, and municipal government broke down under the strain. The evils of the slums appeared for the first time in American life.

The "new industry" exploited labor; and it was inevitable that labor would organize to combat it. This resulted in strikes and disputes which littered the horizons of society.¹⁵

There are those who are ready for every occasion or who can explain any situation with a passage from the Bible. If a passage were apropos, none could describe what was happening in America better than St. Paul's statement: "For the love of money is the root of all evil."¹⁶ This was the lema of the period when America gave birth to mechanical civilization. Perhaps never before was a nation so engrossed in the business of making money. Perhaps never before was materialism so rampant, or so much pride taken in material achievements.


¹⁶I. Timothy:VI:10.
Walt Whitman in *Democratic Vistas* warned mankind that material wealth alone was not enough:

I say that our New World democracy, however great a success in uplifting the masses out of their sloughs, in materialistic development, products, and in a certain highly-deceptive superficial popular intellectuality, is, so far, an almost complete failure in its social aspects, and in really grand religious, moral, literary, and esthetic results.17

... I say we had best look our times and lands searchingly in the face, like a physician diagnosing some deep disease. Never was there, perhaps, more hollowness at heart than at present, and here in the United States. Genuine belief seems to have left us. The underlying principles of the states are not honestly believ'd in, (for all this hectic glow, and these melo-dramatic screamings) nor is humanity itself believ'd in. What penetrating eye does not everywhere see through the mask? The spectacle is appalling. We live in an atmosphere of hypocrisy throughout.18

Sidney Lanier, in his poem *The Symphony*, indicts "Trade," by which he means not only industrialism and the factory system, but all competitive business:

But who said once, in the lordly tone,  
*Man shall not live by bread alone*  
*But all that cometh from the Throne?*  
Hath God said so?  
But Trade saith No:  
And the kilns and the curt-tongued mills say Go!  
There's plenty that can, if you can't: we know.  
Move out, if you think you're underpaid.  
The poor are prolific; we're not afraid;  
Trade is trade.19


Mark Twain in The Gilded Age, Henry Adams in Democracy, and others ridiculed the get-rich-quick schemes and censured materialism and political corruption. The moral was not well learned as millions of Americans demonstrated in 1929, the year Federico Garcia Lorca arrived in New York.

Apart from the masses, the most prominent and commanding figure in the new industrial scene was the "captain" of industry. The years following the Civil War saw the amassing of unprecedented private fortunes. Financiers like Jay Cooke, the first American banker; John D. Rockefeller, the Oil King; Andrew Carnegie, monopolist of iron and steel; and Jay Gould, Commodore Vanderbilt, and Collis P. Huntington, railroad magnates, became the real rulers of America. The reputations of these great entrepreneurs are now tarnished; they have been called, with a good deal of justice, the "robber barons."

Other factors sprouted from the rise of mechanical civilization. The march of science in the nineteenth century profoundly affected religious thought. Geology established the antiquity of the earth, thus discrediting the chronology of Genesis. Evolution, as set forth in Darwin's The Origin of the Species, saw man as the result of a slow development from simpler forms of animal life, thus challenging the Christian belief in his special creation. Astronomical

science seemed to point to an infinite universe, in the face of which man appeared insignificant. Before the end of the period from the great Civil War to the beginning of World War I, sociological, biological, and psychological investigations still further reduced man's importance and autonomy. It seemed human behavior, then, was largely determined by forces of one's own environment. Biology emphasized the determining influence of physical inheritance, of glandular secretions; psychology, the determining influence of automatic responses to stimuli. So effective was the combined onslaught of the sciences that by the end of the period (1865-1914), man appeared to be--from the scientific viewpoint--little more than an ingenious mechanism. Modern science seemed to leave no room for the soul, or God, or the transcendental perception of truth--for those religious beliefs, in short, which had motivated most Americans for nearly three centuries and which had found eloquent expression in the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Walt Whitman. We might well ask ourselves:

What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

This bible reference must seem little short of absurd to the


22 Psalms VIII:4-5.
scientific mind. All phenomena, we were to suppose, were naturalistic phenomena, and were explicable on purely naturalistic, as opposed to spiritual or transcendental, grounds.

Could there be a reconciliation of religion and science? This was a possible solution, but such a reconciliation would entail a diminution of Christian doctrine. In liberalism, there lurked an insidious and fatal danger to religion. Religion was being watered down to the point of insipidity. And what is man without a soul? Only an animal!

The biological struggle for survival and the astronomical immensity of the universe implied that man is unimportant.23 Everywhere, the indifference of Nature and Nature's God was seen: earthquakes, fires, tempests, wars, destruction. Was it prayer to an invisible God which would comfort man, or was salvation in the hands of the God of Science? It seems ironical that the discoverer of the universe should be dwarfed by his discovery, that the chief spiritual result of man's scientific achievements should be the conviction of his own insignificance—and the result was a growing pessimism. Despite dissenting voices, it appeared likely that the determinism of mechanistic science would continue to grow, would continue to gain in popular acceptance.

Throughout the nineteenth century, expansionist

23Gamow, op. cit., p. 139.
doctrines had been urged sporadically. Certain prominent Americans had advocated the desirability of annexing the entire North American continent.\(^{24}\) Out of this agitation had come the war with Mexico and the acquisition of large territories in the Southwest in 1845-1853 and the purchase of Alaska in 1867.\(^{25}\)

The Cuban Revolution of 1895 afforded a plausible excuse for American intervention, and the quick victory over Spain in 1898 stimulated imperialistic sentiments.\(^{26}\) The spectacular and exciting events of war—Dewey's victory in Manila Bay,\(^{27}\) the crushing defeat of Cervera's squadron as it attempted to escape from Santiago,\(^{28}\) the charge of Roosevelt's Rough Riders up San Juan Hill\(^{29}\)—evoked a dubious mixture of emotions. Many thoughtful Americans were alarmed at the new imperialistic policy upon which their nation seemed to be embarking.

The United States emerged from the war with Spain a world power. National pride soared to an unprecedented degree. Could the mechanistic society, after all, lead to


\(^{26}\)*Ibid.*, pp. 334-38. \(^{27}\)May 1, 1898.


\(^{29}\)*Ibid.*, pp. 244-47.
world superiority? Perhaps the scientists were correct.

Civilization must be following the right path. The victories over Spain raised still other questions with America's surge as a naval power. Theodore Roosevelt dramatized the role of the "big stick" by sending the huge floating machines of the fleet around the world in 1907. But the great majority of Americans were not imperialists at heart, and pacificism seemed to be gathering strength. The national temperament preferred peace with isolation.

But what America preferred it did not obtain. The war clouds cast dark shadows over Europe, and America, the world power, was drawn into still another war. President Woodrow Wilson justified the embarkation as necessary "to make the world safe for democracy," and the failure of that high mission produced a cynical reaction in many minds. Possibly the United States was hardly qualified to play such an exalted role. American eyes took a critical view of the plight of mechanical civilization and saw much more to condemn than to admire.

Not only the wreckage of war and the mounting criticism of American economic and social life, but science, too,
contributed to the dominant mood of pessimism between the wars. Perhaps it would be more correct to say "popular science," for the reference is not to science as such, but to its easily susceptible misconstruction and falsification. In any case, the scientist is not to blame completely. It is regrettable that some of his discoveries had unfortunate results.

The "new" physics gave the impression to the lay mind that the universe was somehow doomed. Historians and interpreters of science had much to say in the twenties and thirties about the second law of thermodynamics or the law of entropy, which seemed to mean that energy was deteriorating or becoming less available, that the universe was cooling off and running down, and that the earth would someday be unfit for human habitation. The ultimate destination of man on this planet appeared to be the "heat death."35

Many signs, in short, seemed to point to the growing helplessness of the individual. There appeared no longer to be any such thing as an autonomous and morally responsible person. In actual life, of course, there continued to be many such persons, but the species well-nigh disappeared from books written in the spirit of the age. This spirit found its best philosophical statement in Joseph Wood Krutch's *The Modern Temper*. Modern civilization, to Krutch,

---

34Ibid., p. 402.

35Gamow, op. cit., p. 53.
was decadent, for thought itself is a mark of decadence. The future belongs, as always, to the barbarians, "absorbed in the processes of life for their own sake, eating without asking if it is worth while to eat, begetting children without asking why they should beget them, and conquering without asking for what purpose they conquer."36

In addition to the above display of the helplessness of the thinking man, entangled in the toils of thought, there was another kind of helplessness in the masses of men—a helplessness obviously not explicable by intellectualism, but by biological and social determinism. The Nobel Prize winner John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath abundantly illustrates the tyranny of social and economic pressure and the impotence of the individual in the face of overwhelming circumstance. But, a more complete illustration is that of John Dos Passos's U.S.A. (1930-1936), which is, indeed, the largest and most comprehensive fictional gallery of human automatons. It is difficult, if not impossible, to take an interest in its people as persons. The twenty-odd people in U.S.A. exhibit the mechanical behavior, the unawareness, the moral irresponsibility, of robots, as they are pushed about over the continents by irrational force.

The years between 1914 and the thirties seemed to fall into a series of periods each of which profoundly affected

---

the lives of all Americans: World War I, reluctantly entered by the United States in 1917; the period of peace-making, which ended with general disillusionment about the value of the war; the boom-time era, which, after several portents had been unnoted, ended with the stock-market crash of 1929; the period of depression, followed by slow recovery; and finally, the period during which the world drifted toward another great war.

This, then, is mechanical civilization. Man, dominated by the machine, seeing it more important than he, loses his identity. He is a number in the masses, pushed about by forces lacking spirituality, morality, integrity. He encounters doom wherever he looks, either at the hands of a suppressed society or one suppressing by war, burdened by an overpowerful government which cuts liberty and freedom with every tick of the clock. Man melts into this pot and leaves his identity in the residue. The organized chaos, made by man and his science, is not for man. The result of this long process, begun after the Civil War, is what Federico García Lorca saw upon his arrival on the concrete "earth" of New York in 1929, the epitome of advancement in a mechanized culture. He abhorred it. He could make no synthesis of what he saw, of what he felt. But he did expose and indict it in Poeta en Nueva York. Let us hope that we do not continue to ignore his warning.
CHAPTER II

THE POETS' DILEMMA

Modern poetry is a complex product, the heir of many schools and traditions. There may be disagreement concerning the influence of the Provençal Troubadours or of Chinese and Japanese idiograms, but there are few who object strongly to the proposition that the modern idiom in poetry depends primarily on two traditions—the metaphysical, the non-generic term applied to the poetry of John Donne and his period, and the symbolist, the style identified with Stephan Mallarmé. The mental climate of our time is such that nearly all of its worthy poetry has been influenced to some degree, either directly or indirectly, by these two periods and their tributaries. Poets writing in the modern idiom exhibit tendencies weighted by metaphysical and symbolist techniques which express the highest endeavor of our age—an endeavor, it should now be more generally admitted, which has produced poetry comparable to the best in literary history. The use of metaphysical and symbolist devices has grown out of the modern poet's search for a mythology which might replace that of the disintegrating Christian culture, and which might offer him some concrete body of belief for metaphor and metaphysic. This is not to say that every modern poet has
been deliberately concerned with the problem. Yet, all have
to some degree been touched by an urgent need which is basic
to the great transitional age in which we live.

Myths are projected dreams of the deep subconscious
of a race, expressing the needs, fears, wishes, and aspira-
tions of a people. Although symbols may differ, all myths
are representations of the same basic compulsions. When
they are most complete, myths define the relationship of man
to himself and to God in such a way that there is no distinc-
tion between symbol and meaning. A poet, then, may use the
mythology of his age to present, in concrete symbols
embodying a metaphysic, the most complete expression of his
time. As a civilization declines, the chasm between symbols
and their meaning widens until symbols become decorative
form and their meaning becomes abstracted into philosophy.
Before the separation becomes too great, mythologies may be
used by layman and artist alike to express their profoundest
resolutions concerning man's place in the universe. In this
sense, a mythology may serve as a guide, explaining conduct
and regulating ethics on both material and spiritual planes.

Homer could write of his culture as an integrity of
heroes, demigods, and divinities whose communication with
men expressed those actions and maxims of conduct which sum-
marized his culture and became guides not only to the later
Periclean Greeks, but also to the entire occidental civiliza-
tion which followed. It is necessary but to recall the
various attributes which his gods symbolized, or, rather,
which they were, to become familiar with the motivations of the Greek race and the ideals to which they aspired. These ideals and motivations were not abstractions but the dramatic characters of a struggle expressing the integration of the individual and society. The lack of such integrity, the dislocation between myth and religious metaphysic, and the consequent disparity of fact and spirit are the central problems of the modern artist, whether he try to gather all modern ideologies into an epical summation, or sing the briefest and most personal lyric.

Virgil, the natural heir of Hellenistic ideologies, created a hero, Aeneas, who, in contrast to the free vitality of Odysseus, carries with him the remoteness of a priest in quest of answers, and the detachment of a hero free from passions of love and war. Thus, Virgil, whose Fourth Eclogue reread by Christian eyes is messianic, becomes the true transitional guide of Dante to the threshold of the Christian paradise. Dante occupies the same position in relation to Christian culture that Homer did to Greek culture. Thomas Aquinas had already synthesized the Platonic and Aristotelian usages of the Christian Fathers into a theology which gave hierarchical position to all material and spiritual properties of the medieval cosmos.¹ Thus, Dante was freed by the belief of his society and the genius of Aquinas from any

¹See the *Summa Theologica*.
necessity of diverting his genius into the creation of critical or philosophical systems, and could, therefore, use and transform given symbols and systems of his culture into the concrete embodiment of a poem, the Commedia, within whose aesthetic structure he could create his own world, yet make it the unique but multiple blossom of medieval vision.

The belief of Milton, as that of most Christian poets who follow, was not the immediate faith of Dante, but an argumentative belief expounding the historic Catholic tradition as modified by Reformation thinkers. Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained are not the clear reflections of an ordered theocracy, but the embattled fields of celestial Adam and Eve. Since Dante's time, the crevice between myth and metaphysics had widened to such an extent that Milton found it necessary to "justifie the wayes of God to men," a concept unthinkable to such a mind as Dante's.

When Goethe, as a man of the world, sought to summarize European culture, he used Christian mythology with sophisticated consciousness, more in terms of philosophical symbols than as sacraments of faith. His Faust was, perhaps, the last great epic in which the mythology of Christianity could be used with structural validity. Since Goethe, the severance between the metaphysics and myth of Christianity

---

2 Paradise Lost, I.26.

3 Henry Hatfield, Goethe: A Critical Introduction (Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions, 1963), pp. 132-76.
has become so great that artists have been unable to use its myth, alone, as an objective correlative with which to systematize the diversity of the modern world. For most modern poets, the Christian myth is no longer consubstantial with its ideals, although some have attempted to invoke through it what no longer breathes in it. For others, the Christian way of life has become a philosophic mode of conduct. To many more, both the ethos and myth of Christianity are illusions to be destroyed. Almost all find themselves and their world without some unifying way of life under which may be harmonized the conflicting interpretations brought on by religious, scientific, industrial, and, more recently, political revolutions. Life is nowhere seen steadily and whole, but under a number of perspectives relative to nothing central. Never has the interpenetration of cultures been so world-wide, or disintegration so universal.

It was inevitable that a compilation of all myths, such as Sir George Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* should appear to give poets hope, for a time, of extracting a composite myth and metaphysic, but the book soon became not a bible of belief but, rather, a museum to be pilfered. Mythology had become anthropology.

Unable to identify the myths and precepts of Christianity with an integral faith, T. S. Eliot, like many whom

---

4See T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land*. 
he has influenced,\textsuperscript{5} has submitted himself to Christian dogma and ideology, as if by humility and patient dedication to faiths and myths no longer consubstantial, he might invoke a lost unity and receive, if only for a brief moment, the grace of revelation.

Eliot may have, with some success, rehabilitated Christian mythology and metaphysic in an evaluation of modern culture. "It is a terrific problem that faces the poet of today . . ." Hart Crane wrote in 1925, "a world that is so in transition from a decayed culture toward a reorganization of human evaluations that there are few common terms, general denominators of speech that are solid enough or that ring with any vibration of spiritual convictions. The great mythologies of the past (including the Church) are deprived of enough façade to even launch good raillery against."\textsuperscript{6} Partly in revolt against what he considered to be the nihilism of The Waste Land and of James Joyce's Ulysses, Crane sought to find materials and myths which would sustain his mystical faith in the destiny of mankind as exemplified in American tradition.

"What I am really handling, you see," he wrote Otto

\textsuperscript{5}Angel del Río believes that Lorca definitely was influenced during his stay at Colombia University by the Flores translation of T. S. Eliot's The Waste Land, Tierra baldía.

Kahn in exposition of *The Bridge*, "is the Myth of America." In another letter he calls the poem "a synthesis of America and its structural identity," and later writes of his search for materials which might be "organic and active factors in the experience and perceptions of our common race, time, and belief. The very idea of a bridge, of course, is a form peculiarly dependent on spiritual convictions. It is an act of faith beside being a communication," he states in yet another letter. Deeply religious, yet, lacking a religion, Crane sought to span the duality between man and nature by putting "positive and glowing spiritual content into Machinery," and, as he concludes in the proem of his epic, "of the curveship lend a myth to God." A bridge, however, is not a myth, but one symbol of a possible mythology. It may symbolize a unity, oneness, resolution between dualities, but it still remains a static mathematical curve and not a series of personifications which embody the ego-ideals of a culture. Crane made an important contribution when he turned for further embodiments of his vision to the green beginnings of an American cultural tradition, to Columbus, Pocahantas,

---


8 Ibid., p. 127.

9 Ibid., p. 261.

10 Horton, op. cit., p. 311.

Rip Van Winkle, and Whitman, yet, turned to them not as Eliot might, for literary reference, but for historical figures representative of cultural ideals. He planned to make each section of The Bridge a different vista of the historical and cultural past of America, but all to be seen with the eye of the present, vitalized by the spirit of the poet himself as actor and evaluator. The "Inferno" of the subway, the "Paradiso" of the bridge, the Dantesque peregrinations of the poet, however, are informed by no mature vision of life, but by a revivalist mysticism fed by no doctrine of knowledgeable values, and eventually starved by personal maladjustments. To study the parallel disintegrations of Hart Crane's life and the fabric of his poem is to see, as in few other poems of modern times, how inextricably mingled are an artist's private life, his craft, and his milieu.

Instead of seeking for objective correlatives in the masterpieces of many literatures, some poets have tried to use some one literary masterpiece as myth. This method was brought to epical proportions by James Joyce in Ulysses by overlaying the activities of a single day in Dublin\(^{12}\) on the single literary unity of Homer's Odyssey.\(^{13}\) If in Ulysses

\(^{12}\)June 16, 1904.

\(^{13}\)"The publication of 'Ulysses' was heralded by a lecture, in which Valery Larbaud confided to the public the main intentions of the book, very much as Joyce had confided them to him. In particular, he pointed out that the title was a key, that the contours of the story would be clear to readers who kept the Odyssey in mind, and that an epic conception
the hero is the common man, in *Finnegans Wake* the hero is all mankind, and part of nature, too.\textsuperscript{14} Furthermore, the structural ideology of *Finnegans Wake* is a theory of history. Joyce based his ideas on those of the eighteenth-century Italian philosopher, Giambattista Vico, in which civilizations are seen to pass through four cyclical movements: (1) a theocracy when people imagine gods; (2) an aristocracy when they create myths about their heroes; (3) a democracy when they see themselves in terms of materiality; and (4) a chaotic period in which democracy disintegrates in thunder and a new theocracy is formed.\textsuperscript{15}

A myth through which might be expressed a personal vision related to communal culture was a more conscious preoccupation for William Butler Yeats than for any of the poets thus far discussed.

It drove him from one attempt to another––from attempts to formulate systems of mythological reference out of the literature of French symbolists, from Celtic mythology––until he combined most of these in the aesthetic which he expounds in *A Vision*,\textsuperscript{16} first published in 1925, would impress its form upon the confusing substance of modern life." [Harry Levin, *James Joyce* (Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions, 1960), p. 65.]

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 149. \textsuperscript{15}Ibid., pp. 142-49.

then revised and republished in 1937. As early as 1897, when the necessity for such structure became apparent to him, he wrote a commentary on William Blake which expressed his own need: "he spoke confusedly and obscurely because he spoke of things for whose speaking he could find no models in the world about him. He was a symbolist who was trying to invent his symbols... He was a man crying out for mythology, and trying to make one because he could not find one to his hand."^17

In the dedication to the 1925 edition Yeats wrote:

I wished for a system of thought that would leave my imagination free to create as it chose and yet make all that it created, or could create, part of one history, and that the soul's. The Greeks certainly had such a system, and Dante... and I think no man since... I am the first to substitute for Biblical or mythological figures, historical movements and actual men and women... and I am longing to put it [A Vision] out of reach that I may write the poetry it seems to have made possible. I can now, if I have the energy, find the simplicity I have sought in vain.

Of all modern poets who have sought for some system of evaluation to replace the dying religious mythology of Christianity, it is ironic that the poet who comes closest to the solution is one who has been indicted (but not convicted due to his "mental" condition) for treason: Ezra Pound. Since an epic poet is concerned with the interpretation of a nation's destiny,^18 it is inevitable, by the very

---


18In modern times, the destiny of one world.
nature of his task, that he become personally involved in political thought and action, and bring to proof George Sorel's statement that political ideologies are the modern variants of myth.

"An epic," Pound has written, "is a poem containing history,"¹⁹ and in the Cantos he has tried to show in what way the natural and not the supernatural history of mankind has conditioned its present political and spiritual dilemmas. He has tried to make judgments and to postulate the form of a new society. The objective correlative of his mythology is the body of world history and its flesh-and-blood heroes and villains; his ideology is based on an economic interpretation of history, and his ethics are derived from such economic evaluation.²⁰ In the Cantos, there may be discerned a Dantesque division into the Inferno, Purgatorio, and Paradiso, but not the narrative or the progressive ascensions with which the Commedia proceeds in time. These, according to Louis Zukovsky, are not so much physical places as mental states of "hate, comprehension and worship,"²¹ simultaneously present and spatially juxtaposed under the economic determinism with which Pound brings them toward an ethical evaluation.

It may be said of Ezra Pound, however, that he sees


²⁰Ibid., pp. 345-51. ²¹Ibid., p. 306.
better than he thinks. His perceptions are again and again provocative, illuminating, brilliant, but his thinking is illogical and disorderly. This is why it has often been remarked that his translations are his own best poetry, for the original poet supplied him with an aesthetic and logical structure on which he could creatively improvise.

Ezra Pound must, in reality, face a jury of his peers (if there are any to be found) and be judged by community standards like any other responsible citizen. In his dilemma, we see a paradoxical and inevitably tragic conclusion. The very causes which brought him to be indicted for treason also made it possible for him to see that political ideologies are the modern variants of myth. Neither anthropology, the physical and social sciences, comparative religions, world or national literatures may become the heirs of religious mythologies, because none of these are the vehicles of a way of life for the people. In our modern world, it seems that only a political faith, like a religious faith, is a force powerful enough to permeate every stratum of society and bind the lowest with the highest, to reach into its deepest spiritual aspirations and its least economic needs. Neither the abstract theories behind any economic or political appraisal, nor any other abstract philosophical system may become persuasive forces unless they are directly embodied in political action as part of the constitutional or statutory law and environment of a people, much as the Platonic, Aristotelian, and Hebraic
tenets of Christianity were embodied in church ritual. Practical fascism, nazism, and the political religion of Shinto are examples of secular faiths to whose myths and metaphysics peoples have dedicated themselves with a zeal and unity of purpose usually bestowed upon sacred belief.

The underlying motif of mankind has been the search for God, for the Father, for something or someone who is omniscient and omnipresent and in whose infinite perfectability the dualities of mankind might be resolved. Out of its evolving historical nightmare, out of its suffering and consequent wishfulfillments, mankind has dreamed of a Being who would be able to solve the dualities of good and evil, of matter and spirit as posed in the theories of consubstantiation and the immaculate conception, of choice as indicated in the relationship between predestination and freedom of the will, in the guilt and anxiety complexes of original sin. Psychoanalysis has revealed that the image of the Father is later transferred to Society itself, and to its Authority, to the possibilities for good and evil which it extends to its subjects. The son's search for the spiritual father, then, may find its final rest in the identification of the individual with a society which offers him an economic and spiritual order. In such a society, man

---

22 This transferrence is from a personalized, individual identification to a depersonalized, multiple or massed collective identification which de-emphasizes the human element and is in agreement with the overall concept of mechanical civilization.
need not direct his actions and his spirit toward a preordained and religious goal, but may create his own destiny out of given conditions and projected ideals. The dreams which he may then conceive out of his natural and spiritual development are limitless, more miraculous, and more mysterious than any which he has hitherto conceived for himself in religious mythologies. In such a society, the poet may truly be the "maker," a creating god.

Federico García Lorca found such a society in Spain and encountered its antithesis in the United States. Since his poetry has been constructed within certain basic coordinates of permanent character, generally, we can determine the following characteristics: the emersion of man in the cosmos, anthropomorphism, ritualism, somnambulism, ecstatic rapture, the use of archetypal figures, dynamism, magic, and emotional energy. Several critics have called particular attention to Lorca's poetic problem in Poeta en Nueva York, for although the previously mentioned characteristics are found to be present in his work and constitute a specific vision of the world characterized by the presence of myth, it required a special effort on his part to find a system to

23 See especially Romancero gitano, Bodas de sangre, and Yerma.

24 Expressed in Poeta en Nueva York.

give expression to his feelings. Edwin Honig notes that the "intricate imagistic and metaphoric terminology of *Poeta en Nueva York* proceeds from a vision of the world which, finding no expressive instrument in the traditions of any communicative medium, demands of the poet a new imaginative invention."\(^{26}\) Jaroslaw M. Flys writes that a surprise awaits us in *Poeta en Nueva York*: "Parece que los emblemas usados por el poeta en España, no podían utilizarse en el nuevo mundo. . . . Pertenecen a una creación nueva: el estilo del siglo XX."\(^{27}\) María Teresa Babin says that Lorca's poetry in *Poeta en Nueva York* shows "la renovación de la metáfora y la imagen, no como recurso estilístico de expresar emociones, sino como pura y concreta cristalización de una manera nueva y subjetiva de ver y sentir el mundo circundante."\(^{28}\)

Angel del Río suggests that Lorca's search for his myth could have been indirectly influenced by a Spanish translation of *Manhattan Transfer* by Dos Passos.\(^{29}\) Indirect it must have been, for this writer has found only three

---


parallels in the two books. Compare the line from "Ciudad
sin sueño"—"hay que llevarlos al muro donde iguanas y
sierpes esperan"\textsuperscript{30}—with the following passage from \textit{Man­-
hattan Transfer}: "Big snake appears on Fifth Avenue. . . .
Ladies screamed and ran in all directions this morning at
eleven thirty when a big snake crawled out of a crack in the
masonry of the retaining wall of the reservoir at Fifth
Avenue and Fortysecond Street and started to cross the
sidewalk. . . ."\textsuperscript{31}

In "Iglesia abandonada" the \textit{hijo} suddenly becomes a
little girl: "Yo tenía una niña."\textsuperscript{32} The passage in
\textit{Manhattan Transfer} is just the reverse:

"Oh daddy I want to be a boy."

Crying quietly she dropped her head on his
shoulder. Then she started jumping up and
down, chanting to herself, "Ellie's going
to be a boy, Ellie's going to be a boy."\textsuperscript{33}

There is a parody of the Lord's Prayer in both works.
Lorca's appears in "Grito hacia Roma" when he says: "porque
queremos el pan nuestro de cada día,/flor de aliso y perenne
ternura desgranada,/porque queremos que se cumpla la
voluntad de la Tierra/que da sus frutos para todos."\textsuperscript{34} The

\textsuperscript{30}Lorca, \textit{Obras completas} (Madrid: Aguilar, 1960),
p. 422.

\textsuperscript{31}Dos Passos, \textit{Manhattan Transfer} (Boston: Houghton

\textsuperscript{32}Lorca, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 411.

\textsuperscript{33}Dos Passos, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 23.

\textsuperscript{34}Lorca, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 450.
Dos Passos version concerns Bud who is sitting on the edge of his cot, his arms stretched out, yawning. He says:

O God I want to go to sleep. Sweet Jesus I want to go to sleep. He pressed his knees together against his clasped hands to keep them from trembling. Our father which art in Heaven I want to go to sleep.35

From the few examples of specific similarities that could be found in the two books, it is assumed that Professor del Río meant that the temper of Manhattan Transfer was an indirect source of influence on Lorca when he was writing Poeta en Nueva York. With this problem disposed of, let us proceed to define more precisely the range and projections of Lorca's peculiar technique of perception.

Professor Gustavo Correa has written an exhaustive study of García Lorca's use of myth. It is to his volume that we shall now turn for reference.

Based on the concept of the mythic conscience,36 the sensation of man's continuity with nature and his total emersion in the cosmos is, undoubtably, the most outstanding element in the poetry of García Lorca.37 This can be seen in the form of a mutual collaboration maintained between man

---

35Dos Passos, op. cit., p. 121.

36For a complete study of the mythic conscience, see Ernst Cassirer's An Essay on Man and Mythical Thinking, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, II (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944).

37Correa, op. cit., pp. 155-56.
and the cosmos, in the vital rhythm of natural vegetation, and in the virtual identification of both planes of reality in regard to certain symbols and metaphors. In Lorca, we can see his use of árbol and flor as examples of this identification, and in the most vague archetypal symbols of caballo and pez.

Professor Correa points out that anthropomorphic dynamism is one of the essential characteristics of Lorca's poetry; together with the idea of the "marvelous," we see the result of his technique in a special way in certain metaphors. In the romance "Preciosa y el aire" we have such a metaphor in which there is a dazzling, phantasmogoric, aggressive, anthropomorphic vision of the wind in the image of a "sátiro de estrellas bajas/con sus lenguas relucientes" that pursues the terrified Gypsy.

Another characteristic of Lorca's poetry consists in assigning the quality of the real and objective to the attributes of substance. The tonality in green, from the poem "Romance sonámbulo," offers the quality of something substantial in the line "Verde que te quiero verde," which

38 See Romancero gitano.
40 Ibid.
41 Lorca, op. cit., p. 355.
42 Correa, op. cit., p. 158.
43 Lorca, op. cit., p. 358.
is communicated in a material and physical form to persons and things.\textsuperscript{44} Other examples can be found in \textit{Bodas de sangre} when the moon leaves a knife abandoned in the air ("la luna deja un cuchillo abandonado en el aire")\textsuperscript{45} or in "Romance de la luna, luna." In this poem we see the moon as "polisón de nardos,"\textsuperscript{46} in other words, a flower; as metal ("senos de duro estano")\textsuperscript{47} or nails ("clavos de luna nos funden").\textsuperscript{48}

Often, there is no distinction between life and death in Lorca's poetry. Let us recall the child in "Romance de la luna, luna" who dies at the sight of the Gypsies and who, later, walks with the moon: "Por el cielo va la luna/con un niño de la mano."\textsuperscript{49}

In general, we see Lorca's use of the moon as a sinister presence, establishing a relationship of mythic causality between itself and the death of man. In the same vein, we see the relationship of cause and effect in the use of magic when Yerma contemplates such measures in her desperate attempt to conceive a child. Closely allied to magic is Lorca's use of ritual. In \textit{Yerma}, we find her going to the altar of the Saint and praying: "Señor, que florezca la rosa,/no me la dejéis en sombra."\textsuperscript{50} In the same play,

\textsuperscript{44}Correa, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 158.
\textsuperscript{45}Lorca, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 1159.
\textsuperscript{46}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 353. \textsuperscript{47}\textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{48}\textit{Ibid.} (\textit{Bodas de sangre}), p. 1170.
\textsuperscript{49}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 354. \textsuperscript{50}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 1248.
the dance of "Macho and Hembra" is related to ritual, as is the dance of the nuptial guests in Bodas de sangre. There is further use of the dance in Poeta en Nueva York in the poem "Danza de la muerte" and the Mascarón who comes from Africa in the form of a wheel. He or it gyrates as a symbol of destructive forces associated with mechanical civilization.

Another quality in Lorca's use of myth is found in the use of archetypes which run rampant throughout his work. Some of these are the mother, father, child, bride, and groom, all of which are to be found in the rural tragedies Bodas de sangre and Yerma. They appear under their generic names: Madre, Padre, Niño, Novia, and Novio. The Madre of Bodas de sangre gains particular significance as an archetypal figure, being identified as Mother Nature or the primordial Mother.

Lorca's uses of "luna" and "toro" are extensive, and especially interesting is the fact that they are derived from the same archetype, the "crescent" moon and the horns of the bull being of similar shape. The most climactic

51Ibid., p. 1253.  52Ibid., p. 1141.
53Ibid., pp. 413-14.
54Correa, op. cit., p. 163.
56Correa, op. cit., p. 164.
use of these archetypes is reached, undoubtedly, in Llanto por Ignacio Sánchez Mejías. Lorca was well aware of the bull in Spanish culture. His lecture "Teoría y juego del duende" reveals the religious intensity he attached to the faena: "Allí estaban los Floridas que la gente cree carniceros, pero que en realidad son sacerdotes milenarios que siguen sacrificando toros a Gerión, y en un ángulo el imponente ganadero don Pablo Murube con aire de máscara cretense." Linked with Llanto por Ignacio Sánchez Mejías is the religious significance Lorca attaches to the corrida itself:

En España (como en los pueblos de Oriente, donde la danza es expresión religiosa) tiene el duende un campo sin límites sobre los cuerpos de las bailarinas de Cádiz, elogiadas por Marcial, sobre los pechos de los que cantan, elogiados por Juvenal, y en toda la liturgia de los toros, auténtico drama religioso donde, de la misma manera que en la misa, se adora y se sacrifica a un Dios.

Señor Correa mentions other symbols which express archetypal moods or feelings, and therefore should be considered as archetypes. Among them are the caballo, seen so often in Romancero gitano and Bodas de sangre (and which Correa dismisses as anti-mythic in Poeta en Nueva York), pez in Romancero gitano, the laberinto and the espiral in Poema

57Ibid., p. 167.
58Lorca, op. cit., p. 40.
59Ibid., p. 45.
del cante jondo, the "furrow" and the "seed" in Bodas de sangre, "fire" in Yerma, and the "serpent," also found in Poeta en Nueva York as well as other works of Lorca.

Professor Correa's estimate of Poeta en Nueva York, though, is contradictory. He has stated previously that the work is anti-mythic. In his discussion of symbols used by Lorca, he mentions that Poeta en Nueva York "constituye en sí mismo un símbolo de contextura arquetípica al revelarnos un mundo abismal, oscuro y frío, lleno de animales de significación hostil y negativa." Lorca obviously struggled with a system of myth that he could use effectively in his New York poems. The impact of the work was powerful enough to get Professor Correa to admit that the whole book was archetypal and, therefore, related to myth. This writer is not satisfied with Professor Correa's dismissal of Poeta en Nueva York as being anti-mythic. If Lorca could produce an archetypal effect through the book, then it is certainly in the realm of probability that he found the myth for which he was searching, or at least a substitute for it.

Perhaps, Professor Correa was looking too hard for myth in Poeta en Nueva York. It is this writer's opinion that Lorca relied on man's emotions as a substitute for myth in the "anti-mythic" poems. It has already been confirmed that Lorca was a universal poet:

61 Ibid., pp. 114-54.

62 Ibid., p. 170.
What could be more universal than the use of man's emotions as a mythic system? Like Homer, no gap or lack of immediacy in communication would be apparent, or, for the matter of that, exist between the poet and the reader.

Lorca's use of the themes of Death, Love, and Primitivism (Negro), through which he communicates the anguish and frustration upon finding himself submerged in the concrete jungle of New York, is the mythic system he created for *Poeta en Nueva York*.

It is ironic that the death-in-life of mechanical civilization which he feared would engulf him, and from which he sought refuge, first in Cuba, and later in Spain, did not succeed, and that he met his end in the beloved country of *Romancero gitano*.

---

CHAPTER III

THE MAJOR THEMES IN POETA EN NUEVA YORK

In exploring such a poem as Poeta en Nueva York, one encounters many thematic ideas; it is inevitable that some are not, in the main, themes, but sub-themes. I have chosen three principal topics: Death, Love, and Negro. These topics should, I believe, assist in explaining the mythic system which the poet employs in the book.

It will be evident that one or two of the themes will, frequently, overlap. To his credit, this observation should result in plaudits for the poet; essentially, this overlapping will be seen to strengthen the organic unity of the poem. Unless this occurred, the already difficult, somnambulistic technique which threatens to engulf the reader would be aided immeasurably and might succeed in leaving the reader stranded in a state of irretrievable confusion. Therefore, the three main themes which I have mentioned will tend to simplify a discussion of the poem by encompassing various sub-aspects of themselves.

A reading of the poem causes one to sense the awareness of death as the most powerful single entity throughout the book. For this reason, the theme of Death shall be discussed first, followed by Love, and thirdly by the Negro theme.
A history of literature usually devotes more space to character analysis of evil persons than it does to "good" characters. In tracing the development of a literature, we can see how much more of it has been devoted to evil than to good. The Bible is no exception; it is, indeed, an example of mankind's interest in evil as well as an expression of human nature. It is acknowledged that the purpose of the "Good Book" is to contrast good with evil; but how effective would it be if the evil which should be avoided, despised, overcome, is not in sufficient detail to make it abhorrible? Lorca has followed this line of reasoning as so many great men of letters have done before him, e.g., Milton, Arcipreste de Hita, Juan Manuel, Lope de Vega, Ruiz de Alarcón, and many, many others ad nauseam.

Death, as seen by Lorca, is a termination of every form of existence, a cessation of all vital functions, a spiritual fall, alienation from God, a deafness to the appeal of spiritual ideals, annihilation of the spirit as a result of sin, irredeemable damnation or exile, and loss of identity and capacity for further development. We should be careful to keep these ideas in mind as the theme unfolds, just as we would attempt to hold all of the pieces of a fused metaphor before our eyes.

As the book opens, we are given the announcement that the poet has been killed as a result of cosmic assassination. He finds himself in a limbo of neither life nor death. Worst of all, he cannot determine who he is. This is not a result
of amnesia from a simple blow on the head. It is the poet's inability to orient himself to others or to God in this alien world.

Wandering aimlessly through the chaos, he observes and describes the deaths of three friends in "Fábula y rueda de los tres amigos." Since he is already "dead," lacking identity, "they," the murderers, never apprehend him. He is at least free to roam and watch as he pleases.

In "1910 (Intermedio)," Lorca is aware of an abnormality within him—sterility, sexual impotence. The poem implies that this problem may be the cause of his frustration and inability to act. He will be unable to create, to make love. He will be alone, utterly isolated from others. In other words, this affliction is another form of death—a death in life over which he is powerless to function as a complete or total human being.

Loss of identity is extended through a series of metamorphoses of various forms of life. In "Iglesia abandonada," the son undergoes such experiences. As each new form evolves from the old, the former is "dead," never to return again. As Edwin Honig says of the work, "everything falsely believed is Death: a thing created by a tradition of incomprehension and blindness." ¹

In "Danza de la muerte," Death takes the form of a

¹Edwin Honig, García Lorca (Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions, 1944), p. 88.
mask and goes about the city acting out his medieval ritual. All recollection of creation is forgotten, by machines as well as by primitive urges. It is as if the reproductive process is entirely nonexistent. Such a situation threatens to annihilate all life from the planet for, without the sexual urge, soon all things will die or wear out without replacing themselves.

Death also takes the form of economic depression. The crash of Wall Street means millions of jobless citizens and starvation in abundance. Even the despair of New York is imperfect.

The metamorphosis continues with Death depicted as the "fat lady" in "Paisaje de la multitud que vomita." She ravishes the countryside, destroying the vegetation by pulling up roots and attacking animal life and turning fish inside out, leaving them to perish in agony. From the outskirts, the fat lady returns to the city, where she races through ghetto streets now empty, depositing the skulls of dead doves like business cards dropped in doorways by one soliciting clients. Ducking underground, the fat lady visits the subways which now function as the new graveyards. There she encounters other forms of death: sterile women who give birth to wax children, vomit, whores, and rotting, putrid food. Even the poet's glance dies. His observation is preserved in alcohol like any animal or organ placed into a jar for study at a later date. The power of Death, i.e., the fat lady, has not only caused the poet's vision to
disintegrate into paralysis, but he loses his arms, thereby causing his second death: physical death by drowning in the seas of vomit. Dogs arrive to pick the carrion as dawn is unable to breathe life into the fat lady's domain.

Vomit, one form of waste, is replaced by urine as the poet leads us to the "Paisaje de la multitud que orina." This new landscape is one of utter sterility. Men and women are separated here in the "Paisaje," the world of the dead. As the poet scans the heap of rubble, he sees legs sprawled on terraces, gutters stopped up with wreckage, the presence of the moon (the poet's recurrent symbol of death), and the silence of fountains, dried up and no longer life giving. The entire description is a wasteland far more terrifying than T. S. Eliot's: graveyards spawn fruits of death (apples), cobras lurk and hiss in shock, and the torch waits to put everything to the flame.

From the landscape of urine, the poet walks on into the night. He observes a murder on Riverside Drive in the poem "Asesinato." It is a common, everyday New York murder. A passerby is apparently mugged, for no reason except robbery, perhaps, and dies on the sidewalk. The poet is helpless to assist the victim. He is capable only of observing the act passively before moving on toward the Hudson River and the poem "Navidad en el Hudson."

As he views the Hudson River, the poet is engulfed by a grayness emanating from the River itself. His companions are beheaded sailors who wrestle a planet in the lonely sky.
He stands in endless night, never again to see dawn break through the void, for dawn has become a fable. As the wind rises around him, the poet sees his own neck bereft of a head and knows that he, too, is one of the dead.

The poet leaves the river and walks toward Brooklyn Bridge in "Ciudad sin sueño." He paints a picture of massive insomnia. Along the way, he observes that there is no sleep in the sky, that everyone lies awake awaiting the inevitable death from the spawn of the moon and the living iguanas. Those inhabitants of the city who escape this fate, who flee from their bedrooms, may meet an even worse fate. Lying in wait on the street corners are mute crocodiles. The stars blink timid reproaches from their perches in the heavens, but do little else to prevent the slaughter of mankind. The poet, recovering somewhat from his paralysis, shouts out a warning to the victims, but is incapable of giving any real assistance.

There is a shift to a Nativity scene where the poet, together with a shepherd, white dogs, a wolf, a mule, a bull, and St. Joseph look upon the birth of the Child Jesus in "Nacimiento de Cristo." It is not an ordinary manger representation that the group witnesses, for the poet lambasts the hypocrisy of religion in this mechanical world and condemns the fraudulent priests who carry the Word of the gospels. Religion, in its orthodox sense, is dead. Man can no longer communicate with God. To a Christian, this represents the ultimate form of death, for it implies the loss of
the immortal soul and damnation for eternity.

Leaving the manger scene, the poet bears witness to the "new" dawn that appears over New York in "La aurora." This dawn gives no promise of light or release from the darkness. It is, rather, a continuation of night and the death which has been associated with it. The "new" phase of the day is ushered in by a flight of black doves who drink of putrid water, offering neither morning nor promise.

After a bucolic interlude which will be discussed under the theme of Love, the poet, in "Vaca," examines Death in another species of life. Here we see, not man, but the death of a cow, reminiscent of the slaughter house which is so much a part of mechanical civilization. As the poet himself did in "Ciudad sin sueño," the cow bawls out a warning to others who will eventually meet the same fate. Death is still too powerful and is not to be deterred from her rampage.

The poet, still in the country around Newburg, New York, returns to Death and human beings. This time the victim is a little girl who has drowned in a well. In this poem, "Niña ahogada en el pozo," her death by drowning is equated with the fate of mankind in an estribillo: "¡Agua que no desemboca!" Stringless violins "play" a sterile scale to empty buildings, completing the void depicted by the child's lonely departure.

Lorca is now overcome with the triumph of Death. Perhaps the vision of the innocent child strangling in agony
at the bottom of the dark well has pushed the poet's mind into a feverish pitch of imagination. Death, in the poem "Muerte," is now completely dehumanized. There appear a series of metamorphoses as all creatures flee from the inevitable doom: horse becomes dog becomes swallow becomes wasp becomes horse. But the poet merely reports these events to us, remaining relatively calm in spite of his attempt to flee from his earthly bounds into the element of the seraph.

Later, alone, the poet tries to arouse an "amigo" from sleep in the poem "Paisaje con dos tumbas y un perro asirio," in order to warn him of the howling of a dog (announcing the presence of Death). The moon, a feminine symbol, has somehow suffered an injury to the vagina. She is, thus, incapable of procreation and still within the bounds of the poet's use of the moon as a symbol of Death. Pouring forth from her vagina are blood and ashes which smother the graveyards, drowning the already dead. Again, the poet tries unsuccessfully to arouse his "amigo," while the poem closes on a note of doom for the sleeping victim.

Returning to the city in "Vuelta a la ciudad," Lorca reexamines Death in the mechanical world. Everywhere he sees evidence of slaughter: duck's blood under the multiplications, sailor's blood under the divisions; under the sums of figures, an entire river of blood. In the counterfeit dawn of New York, he knows that there is life, though hidden somewhere, but he reaffirms his mission. He has
come to see the butchers, the strop of the razor, the blood trains, the manacled roses; he has come to accuse all of the living for allowing the murderous situation to develop. In a last desperate outcry, the poet offers himself as a sacrifice if it will appease the gods who look with pleasure on the chaos of the mechanical world stretched out before him in the Valley of the Hudson.

From the bloody landscape, the poet pushes on in his vision toward a Jewish cemetery. Here, in "Cementerio judío," Lorca shows us the death of the spirit of man, manifested in the terrible glare of "another" moon and reflected in usury, a practice which, whether true or false, has been associated with the Jews over the centuries.

And so it came to pass, that in order to stop the slaughter which mankind has brought upon himself, Lorca takes us to "Crucifixión" and the traumatic event of Christ's sacrifice. The poet, having already offered himself in vain, seeks the light of spiritual regeneration in a reenactment of the greatest offering that Christian eyes have ever seen: the murder of Christ. If, the poet seems to say, mankind will not listen to the disintegrated voice of Jesus, somehow, the sacrifice will have to be done again. The freshness of the event, perhaps, will once again awaken the basic instincts of humanity and initiate the advent of a better time.

In the poet's journey, he has also touched on the theme of Love. Like Death, Love to Lorca is multifaceted. He sees Love as an expression of childhood innocence, of God
or the ultimate power of the cosmos, and the physical and platonic relationship between men and women as well as in the perverse or unnatural variety between homosexuals. But the most powerful single presentation that Lorca gives to Love is in the anguished search of the poet through the mechanical chaos for "evasive" Love, the form of Love which this present civilization is without, and without which the poet fears this civilization cannot survive. It is this form of "brotherly" Love which occupies the poet's most frustrated moments, for he seems always to be one step behind her fleeing presence. It is also this form of Love which he weaves into the Negro theme and which will be given additional examination in the section of this chapter devoted to that subject.

In the poem "1910 (Intermedio)" Lorca retreats to a time which saw no dead men or ashes or mourners for the dawn; he lived in a world dominated by the love found in the days of his childhood in which the only chaos consisted of games and moments of fun, poking into attics for the treasures to be found in old chests, while Love's fingers built a sheltering roof between the child and the cares of the adult world.

Later, in "Tu infancia en Menton," the poet introduces "evasive" Love: "Alma extraña de mi hueco de venas,/ te he de buscar pequeña y sin raíces." The poet compares Love to a running deer. It is like childhood, now a fable for fountains.

In "Iglesia abandonada," the poet alludes to the
Eucharist's gift, symbol of the greatest act of Love mankind has known and in which he can participate. God gave His Son in sacrifice to redeem all mankind and permit man to share the happiness of eternity with Him. In the same poem, the poet contrasts God's Love with the state to which Love has disintegrated in the mechanical chaos: the product of Love is wormy fruit and nibbled spring wheat. In "Navidad en el Hudson," he paints a picture of total emptiness. Love has abandoned the poet and left only a "filo de mi amor" to wound him.

Little swallows on crutches hobble out of mechanical civilization in "Panorama ciego de Nueva York" to confront the poet with the only word they can utter: love. Even in the depths of the chaos, the poet can see the eternal gates ahead of him, and he gathers strength to continue his journey toward the flush of the fruit.

As in a dream, the poet again seeks refuge in the cloak of childhood in the poem "Poema doble del Lago Edem," where "another time's voice" can sooth his neryes and where he can run his tongue with roses and walk on grass that the horse's tooth has not known. Amid the pleasant country scenes of Vermont, the poet forgets the anguish within him brought about by his search for "evasive" Love; he rises on the air and does not complain in "Cielo vivo," and, refreshed, he sees a vision of "amor visible" which sustains him for a while.

Leaving Vermont, the poet journeys to the Catskills
where he continues the pleasures of childhood memories in "El niño Stanton." He urges the boy Stanton to retain Love, for he warns, as time passes, that the innocence of childhood will vanish. There is a note of hope, though, since Stanton has not yet been corrupted and, for the present, he remains a visible symbol of Love surrounded by the chaos of mechanical civilization.

Still in the Vermont solitude, the poet finds himself in total emptiness as he begins "Nocturno del hueco." He calls out to his lost love to give him the glove of moonlight, the other glove lost in the grass; he asks for the hush of Love's emptiness. But Love has taken flight and does not hear him. Undaunted, he cries out again, begging Love to give him her laurel-leaf fingers and not to run away, leaving him the emptiness caused by her absence. Love does not answer. Helpless, he prays to her anyway, beseeching Love to pity them—himself, Love, and the wind.

In yet another poem from the Vermont section entitled "Ruina," the poet, sitting in the grass beneath a hollow heaven, demonstrates courage in the face of denial: he again entreats Love to take his hand and rescue him from the chaos. But Love has deaf ears and refuses to enter the world populated by horses' skulls and shadowy apples. The protagonist is left alone and helpless as in "Nocturno del hueco."

Perhaps Love's last rejection has drained the poet from further action, as the next poem, "Luna y panorama de los insectos (Poema de amor)," suggests. Since Love does
not seem to be capable of regeneration in the mechanical world, the poet appears to suffer dejection and feelings of doom at the hands of the moon. It is the moon he blames for the conditions of mechanical civilization. Thus, he is doubly humiliated when the moon retires, leaving the poet without even an enemy to keep him company.

The poet, in his loneliness, returns to the city and its chaos in "Nueva York (Oficina y denuncia)." Although the poem echoes heavily the theme of Death, and has already been discussed under that section, it also expresses the epitome of Love. The poet, utterly aghast at the blood covering the city, cries out that he will offer himself to be eaten by the cattle and rabble as a propitiatory offering of appeasement.

He is not acceptable, however, and the chaos continues to flow around him. He climbs to the tower of the Chrysler Building in "Grito hacia Roma." There he recalls the accumulations of frustration experienced on his journey and begins to hurl invectives toward the Church in Rome. Among other dissatisfactions, he feels that the Church is impotent, incapable of perserving Christ's love for mankind. Under the images, Love has no place; Love must wait in hovels, in ditches filled with serpents or in desolate oceans, while the Pope mouths "love" for all. His words, void of meaning, fall on millions of the perishing rabble. Thus, Love is more evasive than ever. The "Christ on earth," the Pope, is part of the conspiracy!
Descending from the tower, the poet seeks a spiritual communion with Walt Whitman. The "Oda a Walt Whitman" contains a homosexual motif. Lorca recognizes that, notwithstanding the perverseness of homosexuals, their form of love does not necessarily alter the validity of their love. He separates the perverts from the "other" homosexuals, consigning the former's attempts at love to the degeneration of lust. Also included in his invective are pimps and whores, while the shy lover and the transvestite are excused. Except for these latter, he feels the others distort the intention of Love, turning it into the same chaos that Wall Street has inflicted on the rest of the city.

The poet, now thoroughly disgusted with New York, prepares to leave the city. He pauses to sing two waltzes. The first, "Pequeño vals vienes," depicts him in a happier mood, stating over and over again: "I love you my darling." It is almost as if he has found his evasive Love or is having an affair with his lover. The second waltz, "Vals en las ramas," continues the song of hope which he expressed in the previous poem.

From Lorca's solution to the problem of an evasive, frustrated, unrequited search for Love in the spiritual vacuum of mechanical civilization, we now turn to the third and last of the major themes in Poeta en Nueva York: the Negro.

The poet begins the Negro theme with "Norma y paraíso de los negros." One should keep in mind that Lorca saw
similarities between the Gypsy of Andalucía and the Negro in America. These blacks were uncultured in a formal sense, but the heirs to an African heritage of art, music, syncopated rhythms, ritual, fantasy, magic, and, above all, removed from mechanical civilization by a society which would not let them enter. They are introduced as primitives, close to the earth, and untainted by the chaos which has engulfed white people on Wall Street, in the suburbs, the subways, and throughout the countryside.

The next poem is, perhaps, the most powerful and well-known of the group that Lorca devoted to the black race: "El rey de Harlem." The King is a ridiculous figure, waving his spoon as a sword or, perhaps, a sceptre, going about the streets of his kingdom gouging out the eyes of crocodiles and beating monkeys on their buttocks. And he is also pathetic—a King with slaves for subjects. But he, too, is a slave and not really a King. He is forced to work with dusters, polishing furniture, or graters or pots and pans in the humid heat of kitchens. Lorca admires the spunk of the blacks in the midst of their humiliation because they keep a stoic attitude. The poet sees strength in these primitive men and predicts that they will be the only hope for a civilization which has become too much engrossed in materialism and has lost the values possessed by those untouched by the civilization's sophistication. Those untouched, of course, are the Negroes.

The theme rests for most of the book until "Oda a
Walt Whitman." There, Lorca's communion with the older poet has produced mystical vision, for he states that a Negro boy will be the new messiah, bearing the new truth in the form of a tassel of corn.

The book closes with "Son de negros en Cuba." The poet's quest is completed. He leaves mechanical civilization and its chaos behind in his flight to Cuba, where he finds relief among the Negroes and in primitivism.

Thus, the three major themes in the book collide in a hopeful conclusion. Death and evasive Love disintegrate in the music of the Negroes, leaving the poet restored, renewed, and on the threshold of that which is más allá.
CHAPTER IV

POETA EN NUEVA YORK

During the first days of June, 1929, García Lorca wrote a letter to Carlos Morla Lynch advising him of a proposed journey: "... he estado muy preocupado con mi viaje. Carlos: el sábado por la noche salgo de Granada para estar en Madrid el domingo en la mañana."\(^1\)

At first, Lynch must have attached no importance to the letter, for a trip from Granada to Madrid was certainly not unusual. Lorca was known to be an habitual traveler and the trip to the capital indicated that he was merely continuing his routine. In the second paragraph of the letter, however, Lorca tells more of this proposed journey. And, he seems to have purposely phrased the letter for surprise effect.

Estoy en Madrid dos días para ultimar unas cosas y en seguida salgo para París, Londres, y allí embarcaré a New York. ¿Te sorprende? A mí también me sorprende... Pero me conviene y es importante en mi vida. Pararé en América seis o siete meses y regresaré a París para estar el resto del año.\(^2\)

Did Lorca have special reasons for going to New York?

\(^1\)García Lorca, Obras completas (Madrid: Aguilar, 1960), p. 1639.

\(^2\)Ibid.
In this letter, he reveals at least one of them while he indicts the city even before arriving. The book which he writes there seems to be an extension of his preconceived notion: lack of love, identity, myth, communication, and a presence of death.

New York me parece horrible, pero por eso mismo me voy allí. Creo que lo pasaré muy bien. El viaje lo hago con mi gran amigo Fernando de los Ríos, viejo maestro mío y persona encantadora en extremo que me allanará las primeras dificultades, ya que, como tú sabes, yo soy un inútil y un tontito en la vida práctica. 3

Oddly enough, in another letter to Lynch, Lorca is contradictory in an appraisal of his condition and mental outlook. The letter is dated only Nueva York, 1929.

Yo vivo en la Universidad de Columbia, en el centro de Nueva York, en un sitio espléndido junto al río Hudson. Tengo cinco clases y paso el día divertidísimo y como en un sueño. Pasé el verano en el Canadá con unos amigos y ahora estoy en Nueva York, que es una ciudad de alegría insospechada. . . . Estoy sereno y alegre. 4

This rather happy and pleasant atmosphere is a rare occasion which Lorca attributes to New York. After his return to Spain, he says in an interview: "La ciudad, interpretación personal, abstracción impersonal, sin lugar ni tiempo dentro de aquella ciudad mundo. Un símbolo patético: Sufrimiento." 5 He has praise only for the Negro who is "tan cerca de la naturaleza humana pura y de la otra naturaleza. ¡Ese negro que se saca música hasta de los

3Ibid.  
4Ibid., p. 1640.  
5Ibid., p. 1657.
bolsillos! Fuera del arte negro, no queda en los Estados Unidos más que mecánica y automatismo."\(^6\)

In a conversation with L. Méndez Domínguez in 1933, Lorca has not lost the bitter memories of the city which seemed so foreign to him. The transcription of this conversation recalls the language of Poeta en Nueva York; one could easily have difficulty in distinguishing between his eloquent choice of words which voice his denunciation and the poems comprising the book. Of New York he says:

—La influencia de Estados Unidos en el mundo se cifra en los rascacielos, en el jazz y en los cock-tails. Eso es todo. Nada más que eso. Y en cock-tails, allá en Cuba, en nuestra América, hacen cosas mucho mejores que los yanquis. En Cuba, sí, donde precisamente cree tener más potencialidad el espíritu norteamericano.\(^7\)

It is not unusual that Lorca would feel as he did about Cuba. First, Spanish is the official language of the island, and Edwin Honig says that Lorca was a poor linguist, so poor, in fact, that he was unable to grasp even the barest facility with the use of the English language. Whatever fear or hate he held for New York was undoubtably increased by his inability to communicate with anyone except those who spoke his language. This in itself would cause him to feel a strong kinship with the island to the south. Further, Lorca saw in the Negro, a resemblance to the gitano of Andalucía. The Negro population, speaking his own language strengthened his feeling of affection for Cuba and

\(^6\)Ibid., p. 1658. \(^7\)Ibid., p. 1672.
helped to explain his thoughts concerning these two countries: the highly civilized New York and the more primitive civilization of Cuba.

Lorca continues his description of New York and its society. It is here that he contradicts himself, or indicates a change of opinion from that expressed in the letter to Lynch.

Arquitectura extrahumana y ritmo furioso, geometría y angustia. Sin embargo, no hay alegría, pese al ritmo. Hombre y máquina viven la esclavitud del momento. Las aristas suben al cielo sin voluntad de nube ni voluntad de gloria. Nada más poético y terrible que la lucha de los rascacielos con el cielo que los cubre.8

Above all, the skyscrapers of New York seem to bother him most. He devotes more words to the vituperative outburst, perhaps thinking of his poem shouted "desde la torre de Crysler Building."

Nieves, lluvias y nieblas subrayan, mojan, tapan las inmensas torres; pero éstas, ciegas a todo juego, expresan su intención fría, enemiga de misterio, y cortan los cabellos a la lluvia o hacen visibles sus tres mil espadas a través del cisne suave de la niebla.9

The invective has now become a prose poem:

Ejército de ventanas, donde ni una sola persona tiene tiempo de mirar una nube o dialogar con una de las delicadas brisas que tercamente envía el mar, sin tener jamás respuesta. . . . Pero ¡hay que salir a la ciudad! Hay que vencerla, no se puede uno entregar a las avenidas y con la baraja de hombres de todo el mundo. Y me lancé a la calle.10

And as the poet tells his friend Méndez more about

8Ibid., p. 1673. 9Ibid. 10Ibid.
New York, he reveals the source of one of the poems in *Poeta en Nueva York* which he entitled "Asesinato (Dos voces de madrugada en Riverside Drive)"

---Una noche, en el agónico barrio armenio, oí detrás de la pared estas voces, que esperaban un asesinato:
---¿Cómo fue? ---Una grieta en la mejilla. ---Eso es todo. ---Una uña que aprieta el tallo. ---Un alfiler que busca hasta encontrar las raízillas del grito.
---Y el mar deja de moverse. ---¿Cómo fue? ---¡Así!
---¿Así? ---¡Sí!"

Lorca did not speak English well enough to follow this conversation in that language and one might well speculate how much of the event just related was fiction and what, if any, was fact. He was known to have confused reality and fantasy on more than one occasion. His brother Francisco relates that he could identify many events or allusions to events with actual life, but, concerning others, "only the poet could point out, but the greater part perhaps not even the poet himself could identify . . . sometimes he assimilated these elements out of reality until he made them his own flesh."12 Francisco mentions an image which Dolores, their sister, concocted and which Federico used in the *Romancero gitano*. Another occasion of the poet's confusion of reality and imagination occurs, according to Francisco, in the poem "La casada infiel" from the same book. The opening lines of the poem, "Y que yo me la llevé al río/creyendo que era mozuela,/...


"pero tenía marido," were actually part of a song which a mule driver sang to himself during an excursion to the Sierra Nevada. At a later date, the two brothers were discussing the poem when Francisco reminded Federico of the mule driver's song. "To my enormous surprise," says Francisco, "he had completely forgotten it. He thought the first three lines of the ballad were as much his as the rest of the poem. More than that, I thought I could tell that he did not like my insistence for he continued to believe that I was mistaken." These incidents illustrate that Lorca could not be relied upon to indicate the sources of his work in all cases. It is for this reason that the conversation behind the wall in the Armenian district might have been a figment of his imagination which became so transfixed in his mind that it was converted into reality. We will never be certain.

We might not agree with Lorca's interpretation of New York, for he is telling us what is bad and does not mention what is good, but there are many foreigners who echo the next portion of his conversation to his friend Méndez:

En Nueva York se dan citas las razas de toda la Tierra: pero chinos, armenios, rusos, alemanes, siguen siendo extranjeros.

And as he continues, what he said forty years ago cannot be easily refuted today if one reflects on the spring and summer of 1963:

\[\text{13} \text{Ibid., p. 17.} \quad \text{14Lorca, loc. cit.}\]
Todos, menos los negros. Es indudable que ellos emergen enorme influencia en Norteamérica, y, pese a quién pese, son lo más espiritual y lo más delicado que tienen una exquisita pereza religiosa que los salva de todos sus peligrosos afanes actuales.\textsuperscript{15}

Lorca expresses a love for the Negro and an understanding of their plight. He feels that they are still slaves of the inventions of the white man and his machines, and that one day they will rebel and rise up to combat the contrary world in which they find themselves because the inventions are not theirs. He sees in them a symbolic expression of all men who toil at the mercy of the mechanistic society.

While Lorca tightens his tie and rearranges his handkerchief in the breast pocket of his suit, he begins again, slowly:

Y, sin embargo, lo verdaderamente salvaje y frenético de Nueva York no es Harlem. Hay vaho humano y gritos infantiles, y hay hogares, y hay hierbas, y hay dolor que tiene consuelo y herida que tiene dulce vendaje.\textsuperscript{16}

Méndez asks where and Lorca replies, perhaps remembering the days of the early depression, aiming his tongue of condemnation at the center of materialism and finance:

A Wall Street. Impresionante por frío y por cruel. Llega el oro en ríos de todas las partes de la tierra, y la muerte llega con él. En ninguna parte del mundo se siente como allí la ausencia total del espíritu; manadas de hombres que no pueden pasar del tres, y manadas de hombres que no pueden pasar del seis; desprecio de la ciencia pura y valor demoníaco del presente. Espectáculo de suicidas, de gentes histéricas y

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{Ibid.} \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{16}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 1675.
grupos desmayados. Espectáculo terrible, pero sin grandeza.17

Lorca says that the entire experience was horrible. Either this statement is false or he disguised his feelings in his letter to Lynch.

Horrible. Nadie puede darse idea de la soledad que siente allí un español, y más todavía un hombre del Sur. Porque si te caes—por ejemplo—, serás atropellado, y si resbalas al agua arrojarán sobre ti los papeles de sus meriendas. Esas son las gentes du Nueva York, las multitudes que se apoyan sobre las barandillas de los embarcaderos.18

Again he pauses. He places his right hand to his forehead in the manner of one checking to see if he had a fever. He seems to be searching for a way to end what he has been talking about.

Arista y ritmo, forma y angustia, se los va tragando el cielo. Ya no hay lucha de torre y nube, ni los enjambres de ventanas se comen más de la mitad de la noche. Peces voladores tejen húmedas guirnaldas, y el cielo, como la terrible mujerona azul de Picasso, corre con los brazos abiertos a lo largo del mar. El cielo ha triunfado del rascacielos, pero Nueva York es ahora, a lo lejos, algo fantástico. Llega a conmover como un espectáculo natural de montañas o desierto. . . .19

Lorca, states Méndez, stops at this point, and brings his mind back from the trip of four years before, saying:

. . . Pero ¿qué es esto? ¿Otra vez España? ¿Otra vez la Andalucía mundial? Es el amarillo de Cádiz con un grado más, el rosa de Sevilla tirando a carmín y el verde de Granada con una leve fosforescencia de pez: La Habana surge entre cañaverales. Llegan, palma y canela, los perfumes de América con raíces, la América de Dios, la América española. . . .20

17Ibid. 18Ibid. 19Ibid., p. 1676. 20Ibid.
These expressions were of course voiced by Lorca before the book was published. There were lectures in Buenos Aires by the poet before the "Amigos del Arte" and even an article reviewing the work in a Barcelona newspaper. For a book to receive criticism before its publication is, really, an extraordinary phenomenon. Lorca explained that "Este libro sobre Neuva York que traje de mi viaje a los Estados Unidos no he querido darlo a ninguno de los editores que me lo han pedido. Después lo publicaré; pero primero quiero darlo a conocer en la forma de una conferencia. Leeré versos y explicaré cómo han surgido."22

In May, 1936, just three months before he was killed, he was planning a new project, a second trip to New York, and while waiting for a cable from Margarita Xirgu, he voiced his last denunciation against the city that provided him with the poetic inspiration to write the book that ranks along side his famous Romancero gitano and gave him the opportunity to put into practice his theories of metaphor and verbal freedom which have impressed poets who were at that time, too young to write.23 Lorca says: "Neuva York..."

21Ibid., p. 1686. 22Ibid.

23The American poet, John William Corrington, winner of the Charioteer Prize in 1961, told the author during a conversation at the 1963 Festival of Arts sponsored by the University of Chicago that Lorca had been an inspiration to him and, in particular, he had learned "verbal freedom" from Poeta en Neuva York. John Logan, American poet and editor of Chicago Choice, also revealed to the author that from Lorca he saw for the first time in Poeta en Nueva York new dimensions in the extensions to which metaphor could be
es terrible. Algo monstruoso. A mí me gusta andar por las calles, perdido; pero reconozco que Nueva York es el Senegal con máquinas."24 And he makes a final jab at the skyscrapers before criticizing the state of American letters: "Los ingleses han llevado allí una civilización sin raíces. Han levantado casas y casas; pero no han ahondado en la tierra. Se vive para arriba, para arriba. . . . Pero así como en la América de abajo nosotros dejamos a Cervantes, los ingleses en la América de arriba no han dejado su Shakespeare."25 But, it was not the civilization he knew in New York which he should have feared but that of Spain, for in three months from the time that he uttered his last indictment against mechanical civilization, he was murdered in the city where his cradle had rocked, one of the first casualties of the Spanish Civil War.

Now let us turn to the book of poems of which Lorca was speaking. Although the prose transcriptions of his comments have given us an idea of his rejection of a mechanized civilization, he is even more vituperative in his poetry. Explications of these poems will follow in the order published in his Obras completas.

employed. See also the author's comments in "La poesía testimonial del poeta colombiano Ramiro Lagos," Boletín cultural y bibliográfico, V (1962), 1668-74.

24Lorca, op. cit., p. 1759.

25Ibid., pp. 1759-60.
"Vuelta de paseo"

The protagonist has ventured into the vortex of the mechanical community for a stroll. Like his illustrious ancestors in Spanish letters such as Mariano José de Larra and Pérez Galdós, Lorca walks through the streets of a great city watching and observing as they had done before him in Madrid. In this first poem, he relates the death in life which he has observed and sets the stage for the drama of debasement, wickedness, and decay which even fate condones. The poem appropriately begins with an epigraph taken from Luis Cernuda which acts as a backdrop of mood and tone.

Love, one of the major themes in Poeta en Nueva York is shown in two unusual characteristics: (1) as rage and (2) as oblivion.

Furia color de amor,
amor color de olvido.

Luis Cernuda.

Lorca insists throughout the book that Love does not exist in mechanical civilization; that Love is elusive. Therefore, the epigraph easily can be read into the overall context of the poem as Love is furious in not being able to conquer the frigidity of the mechanized culture nor can she be remembered in its chaos. Love has been forgotten completely.
Asesinado por el cielo,
entre las formas que van hacia la sierpe
y las formas que buscan el cristal,
dejaré caer mis cabellos.

The protagonist states or, perhaps, he feels that he has been "murdered," at least symbolically, by heaven. Man, without Love, placed into a world without Love, is definitely "Asesinado," for Love is the source of life. Without Love, man can neither procreate nor exist for he is a creature who depends upon Love and its counterparts: God, Beauty, and Truth. To take this undefinable quality from man is to make him a man no longer. To leave him in a world without Love is surely to kill him.

The protagonist also finds himself among two types of "formas," undefined figures who are not clearly delineated. One group turns toward "la sierpe," symbolizing blind earthly impulses, seeking evil or death, while the second group seeks "cristal," symbol of truth, light, or knowledge. On the literal level, Lorca provides a description of the throngs dashing for the subway while another group, running from the exits of the underground "snake," hurry toward office buildings and their flashing windows. These two opposing currents of humanity are impossible to identify because of the confusion and congestion. The protagonist decides to let his hair grow long as an outward symbol of nonconformity, rejecting the dictates of mechanical society, refusing to join the mob of anonyms, preferring to permit even a chance physical resemblance to mechanical culture under the guise of primitivism.
The poet has the problem of a double vision of reality; (1) concrete symbols and images, and (2) symbols lacking any apparent perspective. Among other thoughts, the poet has mused over the once beautiful land that was taken from its natural appearance and was turned into a community of robots. Tree stumps mark the outlines of even more "progress" and he registers his dissatisfaction by perhaps recalling his own native land, untouched and still natural in its beauty where breezes blow through leaves and branches and produce a rustling sound like singing. The children, too, are white, described in terms demonstrative of death, lacking the room in which to play, bearing on their faces the unhealthy pallor of those who must stay indoors. Nature and children on whom we depend for future generations offer no hope; and animals are depicted with broken heads. Even water, symbol of hope and life, is "dry-footed" and drained of its restorative powers.

Con el árbol\textsuperscript{26} de muñones que no canta y el niño con el blanco\textsuperscript{27} rostro de huevo.

Con los animalitos\textsuperscript{28} de cabeza rota y el agua\textsuperscript{29} harapienta de los pies secos.

\textsuperscript{26}Árbol: symbolizes man. Lorca has used this symbolism in his rural tragedies \textit{Bodas de sangre} and \textit{Yerma} very clearly. Gustavo Correa says: "El tema del árbol aparece en variedad multiplicada para referirse al hombre." (Federico García Lorca [Eugene, Oregon: University of Oregon Press, 1957], p. 63).

\textsuperscript{27}The opposite in color but associated with death nonetheless.

\textsuperscript{28}Lorca uses the diminutive form to indicate fragility.

\textsuperscript{29}The symbol of árbol sometimes is mixed with the symbol of río as an obscure identification of man in \textit{Bodas de sangre} and \textit{Yerma}. Using this symbolization, Lorca describes man as dry and unable to propagate in technological jungle.
Con todo lo que tiene cansancio sordomudo
y mariposa ahogada en el tintero.30

Trying to find some method of identifying himself with
this world out-of-joint, the protagonist ambles through the
concrete jungle wearing a different face each day—but in
vain. He resigns himself to his first observation:
"¡Asesinado por el cielo!"

Tropezando con mi rostro distinto31 de cada día.
¡Asesinado por el cielo!

1910
(Intermedio)

The walk through mechanical civilization has confronted
the protagonist with two worlds: positive symbols and nega-
tive symbols. The experience has caused him to slip back
into memories of childhood where its cloak of innocence pro-
tected him from the confusion. He tells us negatively what
he saw, using a funeral motif. Dawns heralded rebirth, not
death, and the heart in childhood was strong and quick, not
weak and indecisive.

Aquellos ojos míos de mil novecientos diez
no vieron enterrar a los muertos,
ni la feria de ceniza del que llora por la
madrugada,

30tintero: symbolizes darkness, and is an object
associated with the offices of mechanical civilization.

31The protagonist wears a different face each day
because he has lost his identity. He wears a different face
each day because he is, in a sense, no person at all.
The next stanza continues the daydream as the protagonist mentions unimportant but nostalgic objects which he witnessed as a child in Granada.

Aquellos ojos míos de mil novecientos diez vieron la blanca pared donde orinaban las niñas, el hocico del toro, la seta venenosa y una luna incompresible que iluminaba por los rincones los pedazos de limón seco bajo el negro duro de las botellas.

He mixes many thoughts, both positive and negative symbols, recreating his past days; and it should be noted that Lorca has carefully captured the illogical, seemingly unconnected avalanche of images just as they appear in a dream.

Aquellos ojos míos en el cuello de la jaca, en el seno traspasado de Santa Rosa dormida, en los tejados del amor, con gemidos y frescas manos, en un jardín donde los gatos se comían a las ranas.

The dream is a troubled dream, offering very little satisfaction. Love is remembered; Love is found but in a twisted set of circumstances, in a garden inhabited by cats feasting on frogs. He gets little pleasure from the reminiscence, the dream falters, and he is returned to the reality of the chaos of mechanized culture.

Desván donde el polvo viejo congrega estatuas y musgos, cajas que guardan silencio de cangrejos devorados

32 Again, notice the use of the diminutive to indicate fragility.
en el sitio donde el sueño tropezaba con su realidad.
Allí mis pequeños ojos.

Now, shocked from the shield of the dream, the protagonist tells his subconscious mind to cease tormenting him. At times, it is better not to compare less pleasant experiences with pleasant moments of the past for this succeeds in increasing the misery of the situation at hand. At times, only distortion of the past can be accomplished, as with the dream. He is again faced with his emptiness and loss of being and identity as he shouts for his lost Love in vain.

No preguntarme nada. He visto que las cosas cuando buscan su curso encuentran su vacío. Hay un dolor de huecos por el aire sin gente y en mis ojos criaturas vestidas ¡sin desnudo!

"Fábula y rueda\textsuperscript{33} de los tres amigos"

The previous reminiscences into childhood have left the poet in a bitter mood; he is now, more than ever, aware of his surroundings and proceeds to recount the experiences of three friends in the world of blind impulses. They could not cope with the disorder and were ultimately destroyed. Their deaths leave the poet confronted with himself, in a state of emotional insecurity, alone, identified only with Death.

\textsuperscript{33}rueda: symbolizes eternity, the bridge between birth, death, and resurrection. Also the wheel was one of the most important discoveries toward the advancement of mechanical and industrial civilization. The wheel, whirling in all directions, constitutes a conflict symbolism: destiny itself.
Enrique,
Emilio,
Lorenzo,

Estaban los tres helados:
Enrique por el mundo de las camas; 34
Emilio por el mundo de los ojos y las heridas de las manos, 35
Lorenzo por el mundo de las universidades sin tejados. 36

The poet continues painting the sordid world in which these three friends have placed themselves:

Lorenzo,
Emilio,
Enrique,

Estaban los tres quemados; 37
Lorenzo por el mundo de las hojas y las bolas de billar;
Emilio por el mundo de la sangre y los alfileres blancos,
Enrique por el mundo de los muertos y los periódicos abandonados. 38

The three friends are buried under the chaos of the

34 Lorca refers to the vice of lust and destruction due to uncontrolled passions.

35 Again, he refers to a vice: greed.

36 Lorca implies self-esteem or false pride through lack of control of knowledge.

37 There is a strong suggestion here of hell, a hell on earth and located in the concrete jungle.

38 The most striking of the three images, Lorca cleverly makes an association between love, turned to its lowest common denominator lust, and abandoned newspapers. One need but recall how quickly newspapers are grabbed and devoured, then discarded when the passion of curiosity has been quenched, in order to make the association. Although an apparent dissimilarity, after the passions have been satisfied, the body which drained them is as meaningless as a once-read newspaper. Lorca has subtly achieved another method of emphasizing that Love does not exist in the world of technocracy.
industrial society and the poet makes this fact monotonously clear by constant repetition.

Lorenzo,
Emilio,
Enrique,
Estaban los tres enterrados:39

The vices change victims. Now Lorenzo is captured by lust, Emilio by the void of forgetfulness stimulated by alcohol, and Enrique loses his identity in a surrealistic metaphor transporting him into the insect world, the sea (symbolic of birth, death, and resurrection), and finally into the eyes of birds, creatures as reflective of the chaos as the three friends.

Lorenzo en su seno de Flora;40
Emilio en la yerta ginebra que se olvida en el vaso,41
Enrique en la hormiga, en el mar y en los ojos vacíos de los pájaros.

The protagonist enters into a somnambulistic sequence of unintelligible descriptions whose only key lies in his use of the ominous symbols: caballo, sombras, and luna, always for Lorca imminent or pending death.

39 They are symbolically dead in life, "Asesinado por el cielo," equating with the first poem, "Vuelta de paseo," the fate of the protagonist, himself.

40 Symbolic of the short life resplendency of lust, bursting into bloom in one instant, and dead the next.

41 Only a momentary release can be obtained from the false heights of an alcoholic stimulation.
Lorenzo,

Emilio,

Enrique,

Fueron los tres en mis manos
tres montañas chinas, 42
tres sombras de caballo,
tres paisajes de nieve43 y una cabaña de azucenas44
por los palomares45 donde la luna se pone plana bajo el gallo.46

Death strikes all three; it is inevitable.

Uno

y uno
y uno.

Estaban los tres momificados,
con las moscas del invierno,47
con los tinteros48 que orina el perro y desprecia el vilano,

42 Symbolizes distant, beyond reach of aid.

43 Symbol of immensity which is unconquered.

44 Usually of a white color and equating with the symbol of the snow.

45 Continuing the white color symbolism, begun with nieve and the concept of immensity which is unconquered, the dovecotes create the image of a place where many palomas, generally of a white color, can gather.

46 The gallo is a symbol of an evil spirit in Galicia and other parts of Spain. See Frazer, The Golden Bough, p. 451. The cock is usually associated with the light of the sun, heralding the dawn, and not with the light of the moon. The forces of Nature, itself, are twisted in mechanical civilization.

47 This line symbolizes that the world is out of order, for flies usually die in the fall and are not seen in winter.

48 Again, Lorca uses the symbol of tinteros to signify darkness and the presence of Death with an object closely associated with offices and industrial civilization.
con la brisa que hiela el corazón de todas las madres,49
por los blancos derribos de Júpiter50 donde meriendan muerte de los borrachos.

The protagonist reiterates the futility of their deaths. Misguided, having lost their sense of values, they destroyed themselves amid the confusion of tears and song for a night stripped bare, displaying the nothingness which it had to give, for the pleasure to be found in the automated culture: only the reward of the wheel—the stinging lash of a whip, and the false pursuit of a passerby—Love. But they were mistaken. They did not find Love, for she is elusive in the involuntary society.

Tres
y dos
y uno.
Los vi perderse llorando y cantando por un huevo de gallina,51

49The breeze carries with it the icy coldness of death. See Romancero gitano, "Preciosa y el aire," Obras completas, p. 355. Lorca attaches an association of death with the wind or breeze several times in this poem: particularly, "El viento-hombre la persigue/con una espada caliente." . . . "¡Preciosa, corre, Preciosa,/ que te coge el viento verde!" . . . Y mientras cuenta, llorando,/su aventura a aquella gente,/en las tejas de pizarra/el viento, furioso, muerde."

50The supreme god of the Romans, the god of the heavens, manifesting himself, especially in atmospheric phenomena. Lorca again equates the plight of the three friends to fate or the forces of heaven over which they have no control. Also, Jupiter was the mate of Diana, the goddess mentioned by Lorca later in the poem. See Frazer, op. cit., p. 164.

51Reminiscent of the "golden egg." Those who let greed influence them usually end up with ruin.
por la noche que enseñaba su esqueleto de tabaco,
por mi dolor lleno de rostros y punzantes esquirlas de luna,
por mi alegría de ruedas dentadas y látigos,
por mi pecho turbado por las palomas,
por mi muerte desierta con un solo paseante equivocado.

Lorca returns in the next strophe to moon symbolism. He uses a strange metaphoric figure, "la quinta luna." If one studies the Phases of the Moon, it is possible to determine or, at least, conjecture what Lorca was trying to say with this figure. We have the following phases: (1) New Moon; (2) Waxing Crescent; (3) First Quarter (half moon); (4) Gibbous; (5) Full Moon; (6) Gibbous, (7) Last Quarter; and (8) Waning Moon. If Lorca had this table in mind, let us assume, then, that he "killed" the fifth or Full Moon, when it was in the stage that gives off the highest intensity of illumination. He has associated the moon as an assistant of Death in other works, notably in Bodas de sangre. By destroying its light, he would, of course, darken or extinguish Death's lantern, thus preventing Death from being able to find its victims. Unless this assumption is taken, no

---

52 This image, already encountered in "Vuelta de paseo," symbolizes loss of identity.

53 The symbolic association of Death and the moon.

54 Doves, usually associated with peace and hope, are twisted into the opposite symbolic inference.

55 Symbol of mistaken identity and is equated with "lleno de rostros."
other explanation can be read into the poem which will suffice. He symbolically saves, for awhile, the newly born from Death's gaze.

Yo había matado la quinta luna
y bebían agua por las fuentes los abanicos y
los aplausos.
Tibia leche encerrada de las recién paridas
agitaba las rosas con un largo dolor blanco.

The poem has previously introduced a series of "cold" symbols ("moscas del invierno," "brisa de hielo," etc.). The mood has been death-like, and the protagonist sees that Diana, the goddess of fertility is hard, perhaps as hard as Death itself. The color image "white" is continued in the form of "pechos nublados" and "piedra blanca," extending the ominous image of snow.

Enrique,
Emilio,
Lorenzo.
Diana es dura,
pero a veces tiene los pechos nublados.
Puede la piedra blanca latir en la sangre
der el ciervo
y el ciervo puede soñar por los ojos de un caballo.

The "hundimiento" of the "formas puras" (the three friends) in the extension of the snow ("bajo el cri cri de las margaritas") is his own death. The three "esqueletos"

56Symbolizes children, the fruit of the womb.
57The snow.
58Diana herself.
are his own skeleton which was not saved from the final wreck:

Cuando se hundieron las formas puras
bajo el cri cri de las margaritas,
comprendí que me habían asesinado.
Recorrieron los cafés y los cementerios
y las iglesias,
abrieron los toneles y los armarios,
destrozaron tres esqueletos para arrancar
sus dientes de oro.
Ya no me encontraron.
¿No me encontraron?
No. No me encontraron.59
Pero se supo que la sexta luna60 huyó
torrente arriba,
y que el mar recordó ¡de pronto!
los nombres de todos sus ahogados.

The entire poem permits the poet to observe the
vision of his own death objectively and creates the moods of
nonexistence and death in the mechanized culture.

"Tu infancia en Mentón"

The final poem in the first section reverts to the
theme of Love and childhood as we first saw in "1910
(Intermedio)." Lorca begins the poem with an epigraph from
the well-known poet Jorge Guillén and which he uses through­
out "Tu infancia en Mentón" as an estribillo:

59He was not found because he had already lost his
identity. Further association of the poet's death linked
with that of the three friends can be observed in the
repetition of the statement-question, "no me encontraron"
three consecutive times.

60The sixth moon fled in order not to meet the fate
of the fifth.
Si, tu niñez ya fábula de fuentes.
JORGE GUÍLLEN

He enters into a painstaking and anguished search for Love which was promised in a childhood untouched by the confusion of mechanical civilization. Now Love is evasive and alone in hotels and trains with a "pure mask of another sign."
The protagonist offered himself but Love is ignorant of his whereabouts. He encounters only ruin.

---

61 Love has become only a legend as so many other stories heard in childhood.
62 Love rides in the heavens, far from the reach of man who is in the mechanical jungle.
63 Love has no home in this society but hides in hotels as an itinerant.
64 The sign of other times when Love was known and accepted.
65 Love is submerged and her voice has been silenced. She is unable to communicate.
66 The mirrors are broken and now no one can see. Mankind is blind.
Es tu yerta ignorancia donde estuvo
mi torso limitado por el fuego.
Norma de amor te di, hombre de Apolo,
luego con ruisenor enajenado,
pero, pasto de ruina, te afilabas
para los breves sueños indecisos.
Pensamiento de enfrente, luz de ayer,
indices y señales del acaso.

Love's track is elusive, planted in restless sand that will not show a print for long. And, the tracks do not lead to "la mujer que llena el cielo."

Tu cintura de arena sin sosiego
atiende sólo rastros que no escalan.

The protagonist does not despair in the search for this "alma tibia sin ti que no te entiende" and runs to every corner with the belief that his very anguish is capable of breaking through the mask which covers the face of his Love.

67In a desperation born of anguish he accuses Love of being ignorant of his condition. In other words, Love should seek out the protagonist.

68The protagonist excuses himself as being only a man and limited in his battle against the chaos.

69Apolo was the god of light, healing, music, poetry, prophecy, youthful manly beauty, etc.; many of the qualities associated with love.

70The male nightingale is noted for song and especially during the breeding season. Lorca's "ruiseñor" sings only a lament for the plight of Love in the technological world.

71This is the state of Love in the involuntary society: only the "light of yesterday."

72Of Love, nothing is sure or certain within the vortex, only the improbable laws of chance.
Pero yo he de buscar por los rincones
tu alma tibia sin ti que no te entiende,
con el dolor de Apolo detenido
con que he roto la máscara que llevas.

For a moment, the protagonist appears to feel the
cosmic pulsation of an affirmative Love, but he is met by a
legion of negative symbols which obstruct his path which is
reaching for the pristine essences of long ago, and he
reverts to the estribillo of childhood.

Allí, león, allí furia del cielo,
te dejaré pacer en mis mejillas;
allí, caballo azul de mi locura,
pulso de nebulosa y minutero,
he de buscar las piedras de alacranes
y los vestidos de tu madre niña,
llanto de media noche y paño roto
que quitó la luna de la sien del muerto.
Sí, tu niñez ya fábula de fuentes.

Love is a stranger to his emptiness. He will con­
tinue the search but it will be a difficult one, for Love
has no roots, is not bound by his limitations, and, to make
it even more difficult, Love is small and inconspicuous. In
an ecstasy of frustration, the protagonist shouts a descrip­
tion that encompasses the inestimable lack of comprehen­sion
which man feels about love: that it is eternal and non­
existent omnipresently. Then, in complete frustration, he
orders her to leave him, perhaps the ultimate clue to the
poet's frustration, for she is not with him, and has not
been.

73 Masks are also "different faces" manifesting another identity.
Alma extraña de mi hueco de venas,  
te he de buscar pequeña y sin raíces.  
¡Amor de siempre, amor, amor de nunca!  
¡Oh, sí! Yo quiero. ¡Amor, amor! Dejadme.

Then, his attempt to find "espigas" in the snow is useless and he becomes further frustrated at the castration of mythical animals.

No me tapen la boca los que buscan espigas de Saturno por la nieve o castran animales por un cielo, clínica y selva de la anatomía.

The section and the poem close with the fugacious "vuelo de la corza" through the immense expanse of snow, leaving behind a mood of nonexistence of all things. The poet in his frustration repeats the first lines of the poem, having accomplished nothing in his search. Love remains a legend.

Amor, amor, amor. Niñez del mar.  
Tu alma tibia, sin ti que no te entiende.75  
Amor, amor, un vuelo de la corza por el pecho sin fin de la blancura.77  
Y tu niñez, amor, y tu niñez.  
El tren y la mujer que lleva el cielo.  
Ni tú, ni yo, ni el aire, ni las hojas.  
Sí, tu niñez ya fábula de fuentes.

74In Roman Mythology Saturn was the god of agriculture and vegetation, whose reign was characterized by happiness and virtue, a marked contrast to the conditions existing in this robot-like culture.

75See 1.15.  
76An illusion of Revived Love.  
77A negative symbol of immensity which cannot be conquered.
The second section of *Poeta en Nueva York* is, in one sense, dedicated to both Angel del Río and to the Negroses of America. "Los Negros" consists of three poems: "Norma y paraíso de los negros," the famous "El rey de Harlem," and "Iglesia abandonada (balada de la gran guerra)." Lorca, in his *Romancero gitano*, displayed the maltreatment and persecution of the *gitano*, marked with overtones of the inevitable presence of death. In the chaos which he could not quite understand, García Lorca, perhaps, saw in the Negro an indentifiable link with the world that he loved so dearly and that he had left so far behind across a vast ocean. He managed to make the Negro much more dramatic and intense in his poetic world than he had done with the Gypsy. In this respect, Gil Benumeya in an article, "Estampa de Garcia Lorca" published in *La gaceta literaria* on January 15, 1931, recalls a conversation he had with the poet after his return to Spain. Lorca said: "¡Sobre todo los negros! Con su tristeza se ha hecho el eje espiritual de aquella América."\(^{78}\)

"Norma y paraíso de los negros"

*Para Angel del Río*

The first poem creates a mood of pain, spiritual

vacuity and primitive passion which broils in the mechanized jungle. Two evident religious, medieval motifs are noticed: Paradise Lost and the Dance of Death. The Negro, snatched from the real jungle becomes the symbol of confused humanity in Pandemonium. He is the victim of civilization, while at the same time he preserves intact the impulses and strength of man unmarred by Original Sin.

The theme of the "Dance" appears first in this poem. All the elements of this poem are brought together to identify the essence of the Negro with his capacity for expression in the "Dance" itself. In other words, the manner and communicable form of the Negro's essence or personality is the "Dance." With an attitude of hate toward the white race and conscious of his impotence to aim a blow of retaliation, he spends his energy in searching for the "Dance" which exists on the seashore in the midst of a cosmos void.

Odian la sombra del pájaro\textsuperscript{79}
sobre el pleamar de la blanca mejilla\textsuperscript{80}
y el conflicto de luz y viento
en el salón de la nieva fría.\textsuperscript{81}

Odian la flecha sin cuerpo,\textsuperscript{82}

\textsuperscript{79}The flight of the bird is a symbol of the freedom which they do not have but to which they aspire.

\textsuperscript{80}Symbolizes the white people.

\textsuperscript{81}The unconquerable, oppressive force and also a reference to white people in a world which prohibits their participation.

\textsuperscript{82}Symbolizes the attitude which pinions them in their station.
el pañuelo exacto de la despedida
la aguja que mantiene presión y rosa
en el gramíneo rubor de la sonrisa.83

Aman el azul desierto,84
las vacilantes expresiones bovinas,85
la mentirosa luna de los polos,86
la danza curva del agua en la orilla.

The dance which surges forth with lewd passion from
the intimidations of his being is the millenary inheritance
which the Negro carries in his veins and which leaves a
definite footprint in the water, sand, and clay.

Con la ciencia del tronco y del rastro87
llenan de nervios luminosos la arcilla
y patinan lúbricos por agua y arenas
gustando la amarga frescura de su milenaria
saliva.88

83 The conditioned instinct of the Negro but not
necessarily expressive of his true feelings.

84 Either sky or sea, symbolizing the freedom of great
space.

85 Symbolizes the freedom in Nature.

86 The mysterious, mythic source of power which
attracts the primitive mind. (See Chapter II.)

87 Symbolizes the love of primitive people.

88 Lorca obviously makes reference to the magical
powers attributed by primitive peoples to spittle, especially
as part of the rite to seal a covenant: "The magical use to
which spittle may be put marks it out, like blood or nail-
parings, as a suitable material basis for a covenant, since
by exchanging their saliva the covenanting parties give each
other a guarantee of good faith. If either of them after-
wards foreswears himself, the other can punish his perfidy
by a magical treatment of the purjurer's spittle which he has
in his custody. Thus when the Wajagga of East Africa desire
to make a covenant, the two parties will sometimes sit down
Upon returning to the "azul crujiente" of his origin, and protected by the exuberance of the tropic atmosphere, the Negro happily escapes from his boiling blood in a turbulent ecstasy that reaches the proportions of a cosmic impulse heightened by the continued use of the color image "azul."

Es por el azul crujiente,\(^{89}\) azul sin un gusano ni una huella dormida,\(^{90}\) donde los huevos de avestruz quedan eternos\(^{91}\) y deambulan intactas las lluvias bailarinas.\(^{92}\)

Es por el azul sin historia,\(^{93}\) azul de una noche sin temor de día,\(^{94}\) azul donde el desnudo\(^{95}\) del viento va quebrando los camellos\(^{96}\) sonámbulos de las nubes vacías.

with a bowl of milk or beer between them, and after uttering an incantation over the beverage they each take a mouthful of the milk or beer and spit it into the other's mouth. In urgent cases, when there is no time to spend on ceremony, the two will simply spit into each other's mouth, which seals the covenant just as well" (Frazer, The Golden Bough, pp. 237-38).

\(^{89}\)Symbolizes Africa.

\(^{90}\)Like the confusion of the mechanical community which may awaken and surprise them at any moment.

\(^{91}\)Another reference to Africa.

\(^{92}\)Symbol of hope and life, and a direct reference to the dance.

\(^{93}\)Primitive, not written.

\(^{94}\)The dawn which beckons the sleeper to the chaos of the technological jungle. Escape lies only in sleep and dreams.

\(^{95}\)Symbolizes freedom.

\(^{96}\)An animal synonymous with Africa.
Es allí donde sueñan los torsos bajo la gula de la hierba.
Allí los corales empapan la desesperación de la tinta, los durmientes borran sus perfiles bajo la madeja de los caracoles y queda el hueco de la danza sobre las últimas cenizas.

"El rey de Harlem"

The essence of the "Negro" motif is found in the second of the three poems. The protagonist discovers the Negro in Harlem to be in a slow, almost torpid, attitude of ritual. The cry of the Negro, the sound of his blood, and the emotion of his prison-like life, pursued by the infamy of racial prejudice, is converted into egregious symbols of oppression. The blood of the Negro "no tiene puertas," is "furiosa por debajo de las pieles," and seeks the white man's death along a thousand paths.

In retrospect, one should recall that the Negro theme was very much a part of the times as a result of the neoprimitivism in art and poetry and as a result of the literary Africanism of writers such as Vachel Lindsey and Paul Morand. Lorca was easily drawn to the Negro, naturally and temperamentally, for the same reasons which had made him the voice of the gypsies: his feeling, as a poet and a dramatist, for primitive, earthly passions; his feeling, as an artist, for traditional music and rhythm along with movement, gesture,

97Symbolizes blood and, by color, refers to the Negro's blood.
and color. Negro literature and poetry, either by Negro authors or as a theme for others to imitate, had at the moment, great success and was beginning to take shape as a movement in such Spanish-speaking countries as Cuba and Puerto Rico. Lorca undoubtedly was familiar with it and felt the attractive texture of Negro spirituals along the streets of Harlem, bringing back folkloric memories even though he could not understand the meaning of the songs. Obviously, this Negro motif, occupying a dominant place in Poeta en Nueva York was inspired from direct impression and contact. The "King" is, of course, only a product of the poet's imagination.

The entire poem carries a peculiar, almost, prophetic sense of victory over the mechanical civilization of the whites. As "El rey de Harlem" opens, we see the king already in action, whipping up enthusiasm among his subjects:

Con una cuchara^98
arrancaba los ojos a los cocodrilos^99

^98The Negro King's scepter which is equated with other kitchen utensils and images mentioned later in the poem.

^99A destructive symbol, probably of the white man. "Accordingly the savage makes it a rule to spare the life of those animals which he has no pressing motive for killing, at least such fierce and dangerous animals as are likely to exact a bloody vengeance for the slaughter of one of their kind. Crocodiles are animals of this sort. . . . Hence it is a custom with some savages to spare crocodiles, or rather only to kill them in obedience to the law of blood feud, that is, as a retaliation for the slaughter of men by crocodiles" (Frazer, ibid., p. 518). It is not, therefore, stretching the imagination too far to conclude that Lorca, in following
y golpeaba el trasero de los monos. 100
Con una cuchara.

Fuego de siempre dormía en los pedernales 101
y los escarabajos borrachos de anís
olvidaban el musgo de las aldeas. 102

Aquel viejo cubierto de setas 103
iba al sitio donde lloraban los negros
mientras crujía la cuchara del rey
y llegaban los tanques de agua podrida. 104

Las rosas huían por los filos
de las últimas curvas del aire,
y en los montones de azafrán
los niños machacaban pequeñas ardillas
con un rubor de frenesi manchado. 105

The next two stanzas shift to a plea and course of action. The Negro must arise and leave his area, cross the bridge into the world of the whites and come to grips with his oppression. The King, like Moses, must lead them to the theme of primitivism in the Negro, would represent the Negro's vindication against the white man in this symbolic form of blinding a crocodile (white man).

100 Negros which the King is spurring to action or punishing for their laxity or cowardice.

101 The latent power of the flint can be revived by a spark; so too, the power of primitivism within the Negro blood.

102 "y ... aldeas." The two lines mean that it is not difficult to lure the primitive by the temporal wonders of technocracy.

103 The King of Harlem.

104 Destructive symbols.

105 "los ... manchado." Lorca is describing the frustration of the Negros who are spending this pent-up emotion on small, helpless animals instead of directing their energy toward improving their condition.
Promised Land, and the crocodiles (white men) must sleep, exposed to the rays of the moon. No longer should there be doubt of the true worth of the black man.

Es preciso cruzar los puentes y llegar al rubor negro para que el perfume de pulmón nos golpee las sienes con su vestido de caliente piña.

Es preciso matar al rubio vendedor de aguardiente, a todos los amigos de la manzana y de la arena, y es necesario dar con los puños cerrados a las pequeñas judías que tiemblan llenas de burbujas, para que el rey de Harlem cante con su muchedumbre, para que los cocodrilos duerman en largas filas bajo el amianto de la luna, y para que nadie dude de la infinita belleza de los plumeros, los ralladores, los cobres y las cacerolas de las cocinas.

Blood, always for Lorca the image of vital force and tragedy, flushes furiously without finding an outlet, and the protagonist shouts:

¡Ay, Harlem! ¡Ay, Harlem! ¡Ay, Harlem! No hay angustia comparable a tus rojos oprimidos, a tu sangre estremecida dentro del eclipse oscuro.

---

106Words of encouragement.
107Again, another reference to a hot, tropical climate where fruit such as the piña grow: perhaps, Africa.
108Those who sell brandy to the Negroes in exchange for his weekly paycheck.
109Symbols of the Negro's menial jobs.
110Symbolizes the Negro's blood.
111Symbolizes the Negro's skin.
a tu violencia granate sordomuda en la penumbra,¹¹²
a tu gran rey prisionero, con un traje de conserje.

The poet then lashes out at the mechanized world employing a volcano symbolism, beginning with "hendidura," growing to "volcanes," and then cooling to "heladas montañas."

Tenía la noche una hendidura y quietas salamandras de marfil.¹¹³
Las muchachas americanas llevaban niños y monedas en el vientre¹¹⁴
y los muchachos se desmayaban en la cruz del desprecio.

Ellos son.
Ellos son los que beben el whisky de plata junto a los volcanes
y tragan pedacitos de corazón por las heladas montañas del oso.¹¹⁵

We return to the opening lines of the poem as the King again sets his spoon to work. The strophe closes with an allusion to the dance.

Aquella noche el rey de Harlem,
con una durísima cucharilla¹¹⁶
arrancaba los ojos a los cocodrilos

¹¹²Equating with the "eclipse oscuro" and continuing the series of cosmic images.
¹¹³Symbolizes white people.
¹¹⁴Lorca introduces a prostitution theme which will be seen to reoccur later in the book. Not an exclusive product of the automated society, the reference is to the degenerated condition of Love, its lowest common denominator: Lust.
¹¹⁵The civilization which strikes down anyone within its reach like the slashing claws of the bear.
¹¹⁶A "primitive" weapon or one of desperation.
y golpeaba el trasero de los monos. Con una cuchara.
Los negros lloraban confundidos entre paraguas y soles de oro,117
los mulatos estiraban gomas,118 ansiosos de llegar al torso blanco,119
y el viento empañaba espejos y quebraba las venas de los bailarines.120

The poet now begins a description of the bloodthirsty
revenges which the Negroes harbor deep within the recesses of their veins; the years of frustration developed under their servitude has reached the stage of nonrestraint.

Negros, Negros, Negros, Negros.

La sangre no tiene puertas en vuestra noche boca arriba.
No hay rubor. Sangre furiosa por debajo de las pieles, viva en la espina del puñal y en el pecho de los paisajes, bajo las pinzas y las retamas de la celeste luna121 de cáncer.

Sangre que busca por mil caminos muertes enharinadas y ceniza de nardo,

117 Between two extremes.

118 This action symbolizes frustration, the release of tension and nothing more, as it accomplishes nothing.

119 Or the equality with the white man which the Negro desires.

120 "y ... bailarinos"; the visions of the Negroes were destroyed by the dominance of the "wind," symbol of the white man.

121 Lorca's ever-present symbol of death.
cielos yertos en declive,122 donde las colonias de planetas rueden por las playas con los objetos abandonados.

Sangre que mira lenta con el rabo del ojo, hecha de espartos exprimidos, néctares de subterráneos. Sangre que oxida el alisio descuidado en una huella y disuelve a las mariposas en los cristales de la ventana.

Es la sangre que viene, que vendrá por los tejados y azoteas, por todas partes, para quemar la clorofila de las mujeres rubias, para gemir al pie de las camas ante el insomnio de los lavabos y estrellarse en una aurora de tabaco y bajo amarillo.

The protagonist's vision comes to an abrupt halt. He has seen only violent destruction and the spilling of blood as the answer to the concrete jungle, terminating in the ultimate: the automated world, which holds the primitive, unspoiled Negro as captive, will fill with chaos until it explodes one morning before it keeps them prisoner another disheartening day. He cannot resist a warning to the downtrodden people:

Hay que huir, huir por las esquinas y encerrarse en los últimos pisos, porque el tuétano del bosque penetrará por las rendijas para dejar en vuestra carne una leve huella de eclipse y una falsa tristeza de guante desteñido y rosa química.

---

122 Nature is again showing her displeasure at the industrial civilization. Even the sky is "out of order."
All of the images of the preceding strophe offer only false security. The places for hiding are those of a child whose fear causes him to run from himself rather than face the problem. Leadership is wanting. The next two strophes demonstrate the search for a "king." The "wind" symbol appears again bearing a drowned storage-cell.

Es por el silencio sapientísimo
cuando los camareros y los cocineros y los que limpian con la lengua
las heridas de los millonarios
buscan al rey por las calles o en los ángulos del salitre.

Un viento sur de madera, oblicuo en el negro fango,
escape a las barcas rotas y se clava puntillas en los hombros;
un viento sur que lleva colmillos, girasoles, alfabetos
y una pila de Volta con avispas ahogadas.

Lost Love, seen as an invisible face, the fruit of a rock, reminiscent of the symbolism of T. S. Eliot, returns to haunt the protagonist. Certainly, a world with Love could not have become the hell on earth that is mechanical civilization.

El olvido estaba expresado por tres gotas de tinta sobre el monóculo,
el amor por un solo rostro invisible a flor de piedra.
Médulas y corolas componían sobre las nubes un desierto de tallos sin una sola rosa.

The protagonist revives and gives advice to the Negro. The wall is impassible only for the mole and the water-jet. The Negro should not seek the mask but the sun.
A la izquierda, a la derecha, por el Sur y por el Norte, se levanta el muro imposible para el topo, la aguja del agua. No busquéis, negros, su grieta para hallar la máscara infinita. Buscad el gran sol del centro hechos una piña zumbadora. El sol que se desliza por los bosques seguro de no encontrar una ninfa, el sol que destruye números y no ha cruzado nunca un sueño, el tatuado sol que baja por el río y muge seguido de caimanes.

He warns further that the Negro be patient, that his time will come even though it may seem eons away.

Negros, Negros, Negros, Negros, Negros.

Jamás sierpe, ni cebra, ni mula palidecieron al morir. El leñador no sabe cuándo expiran los clamorosos árboles que corta. Aguardad bajo la sombra vegetal de vuestro rey a que cicutas y cardos y ortigas tumben postreras azoteas.

Entonces, negros, entonces, entonces, podréis besar con frenesí las ruedas de las bicicletas, poner parejas de microscopios en las cuevas de las ardillas y danzar al fin, sin duda, mientras las flores erizadas

123Point of orientation.
124Death's assistant. See Bodas de sangre.
125,126Notice the use of plant symbolism. In Bodas de sangre and Yerma Lorca uses these symbols as myth to identify man's relationship to himself and to God.
asesinan a nuestro Moisés casi en los juncos del cielo.

The poem closes on a note of empathy with the protagonist showing deep sympathy for the plight of the Negro and their King, surrounded by symbols of death and mutilation.

¡Ay, Harlem disfrazada!
¡Ay, Harlem, amenazada por un gentío de trajes sin cabeza!
Me llega tu rumor,
me llega tu rumor atravesando troncos y ascensores,
a través de láminas grises,
donde flotan sus automóviles cubiertos de dientes,
a través de los caballos muertos y los crímenes diminutos,
a través de tu gran rey desesperado,
cuyas barbas llegan al mar.

IGLESIA ABANDONADA

(Balada de la Gran Guerra)

The second and last poem of "Los Negros" does not treat the Negro theme in any manner or form. The title, though, may have some bearing on the theme, but only a cursory one. The Negro is a source of folklore in America; his

127 After a near brush with death, Moses led his people out of chaos to the Promised Land. The poet hints that the Rey de Harlem could do the same.

128 Headless suits or symbolizing loss of man's identity in the mechanical community.

129 Seen as ships imprisoned by destructive symbols.

130 They have been waiting for such a long time to be delivered.
spirituals make up an original contribution to American music in the category of "jazz," at times, more commonly known as the blues. "Iglesia abandonada," although not directly indicating a jazz-type rhythm or general Negro theme is a mother's lament for a dead son, lost, perhaps, in "La Gran Guerra." A spiritual significance can be read into the poem which does fit one of the general themes of the book, that of the ineffectiveness of Christianity in the modern world, or, better still, the loss of Christ and the evasiveness of Love in mechanical civilization. The poem begins with the mother announcing:

Yo tenía un hijo que se llamaba Juan.  
Yo tenía un hijo.  
Se perdió por los arcos un viernes de todos los muertos.  
Le vi jugar en las últimas escaleras de la misa y echaba un cubito de hojalata en el corazón del sacerdote.  
He golpeado los atadíes. ¡Mi hijo! ¡Mi hijo! ¡Mi hijo!

A metamorphosis takes place as the mother traverses

---


132 Lorca identifies with Juan. It is well known that he used to play at saying Mass as a boy in Granada.
the moon to pluck a chicken-claw which tells her that she had a daughter. The dream becomes more surrealistic with a progression from son to fish—daughter—dead fish. Lorca has equated all of these objects as symbols of the son.

La madre saca una pata de gallina por detrás de la luna y luego, comprendí que mi niña era un pez por donde se alejan las carretas.

Yo tenía una niña.

Yo tenía un pez muerto bajo la ceniza de los incensarios.

The son (daughter—fish—ashes) has now become an ocean, the universal womb symbol of birth, death, and resurrection. The mother figure ascends an imaginary belfry to ring out in joy the second coming but discovers that the fruit, the product of love in mechanical civilization is wormy and decayed, already dead before the rejuvenating force of life could strengthen the weak spirit of fallen man. Nature is equally effected, not only in the fruit symbol but also the spring wheat has been consumed by smothering matches.

A voodoo symbol associated with the mysterious rites or practices prevalent among Negroes of the West Indies and the Southern United States.

The fish has been used since the time of the early Christians as a symbol of the Eucharist, a further spiritual indication of the son as a sacrificial victim.

Closely resembles the "Phoenix" symbol of purgation before regeneration.
Yo tenía un mar. ¿De qué? ¡Dios mío! ¡Un mar!
Subí a tocar las campanas, pero las frutas
tenían gusanos
y las cerillas apagadas
se comían los trigos de la primavera.

Further disorder and despair are described in the
next few lines: an alcohol stork, normally associated as a
symbol of birth, is at work performing a task opposite to
its usually pleasant mission of bearing children, new life,
into the world. It flies about as Death's assistant in the
topsy-turvey world of technocracy where houses are made of
rubber and surrounded by tears.

Yo vi las transparente cigüeña de alcohol
mandar las negras cabezas de los soldados
angonzantes
y vi las cabañas de goma
donde giraban las copas llenas de lágrimas.

The following three lines are a chaotic consecration
of the Body and Blood of Christ in a somnambulistic Mass
where the priest offers a sacrifice of mule and ox instead
of bread and wine.

En las anémonas del ofertorio te encontraré,
¡corazón mío!,
cuando el sacerdote levante la mula y el buey
con sus fuertes brazos
para espantar los sapos nocturnos136 que rondan
los helados paisajes del cáli.

The mother figure shouts out in God the Father-like
wrath. The speech ends in the church being compared to a

136Also associated with voodoo rituals.
ship. To smash the rudder-post, that which guides the ship, on the Mass itself, the sacrificial ritual of the Church, is a symbolic destruction of the Church in the modern world. Thus, mechanical civilization is a world without Christ.

Yo tenía un hijo que era un gigante, pero los muertos son más fuertes y saben devorar pedazos de cielo.
Si mi niño hubiera sido un oso, yo no temería el sigilo de los caimanes, ni hubiese visto al mar amarrado a los árboles para ser fornicado y herido por el tropel de los regimientos.
¡Si mi niño hubiera sido un oso!
Me envolveré sobre esta lona dura para no sentir el frío de los musgos.
Sé muy bien que me darán una manga o la corbata; pero en el centro de la misa yo romperé el timón y entonces vendrá a la piedra la locura de pingüinos y gaviotas que harán decir a los que duermen y a los que cantan por las esquinas:

The witnesses will say of the modern crucifixion:

el tenía un hijo
¡Un hijo! ¡Un hijo! Un hijo que no era más que suyo, porque era su hijo!
¡Su hijo! ¡Su hijo! ¡Su hijo!

137Modern relics.

138The desire to save oneself from the wreck with the search for the bank.

139The valediction of the "son" is said three times, initiating a trinity image.

140The trinity estribillo fittingly closes the poem.
Leaving the Negro section, the protagonist dives deeply into the perplexing abyss of New York itself beginning with "Danza de la muerte" and proceeding through eight other poems which comprise this section. There is no portion of automated life that the poet does not investigate. From the streets, through the financial center, into Coney Island, to the Battery Place, Riverside Drive, the Hudson River, Brooklyn Bridge, he spreads the whole panorama of New York before us with the sensitive touch of the blind. The section closes with a poem entitled "La aurora" which, instead of order and hope, offers no relief from the previously described chaos.

Lorca provides a key to the intent of the section with the following lines from Vicente Aleixandre:

Un pájaro de papel en el pecho
dice que el tiempo de los besos no ha llegado.

VICENTE ALEIXANDRE

The image of the "pájaro de papel" undoubtedly refers to don Miguel de Unamuno and his fondness for constructing paper birds. With this identification we may conclude that the section is to be an anguished search, which it is, as man struggles through the mechanical jungle looking for the door to immortality. The last portion of the epigraph basically states the conclusion which "La aurora" heralds: "it is not
the season of kisses," signifying that without the capture of evasive Love, man will not have reached his goal and that the agonized search must continue, for no satisfactory solution has yet been found.

Lorca begins the poem with a line that is to reappear three times and acts as a divisionary device to separate the four major sections of "Danza de la muerte": (1) The unreal world; (2) Wall Street; (3) the living-dead; and (4) New York's despair.

El mascarón. ¡Mírad el mascarón! 141
¡Cómo viene del Africa a New York! 142

The poet now moves into the first division of the poem, that of the unreal world where silence is definitive, cats are laminated, and the animal dead assemble on the planet composed of one-half sand and the other of mercury and sleepy sun.

Se fueron los árboles de la pimienta, los pequeños botones de fósforo. Se fueron los camellos de carne desgarrada y los valles de luz que el cisne levantaba con el pico.

141 In the prologue to the edition of Bodas de sangre, Yerma y la Casa de Bernarda Alba (New Directions, 1947) the poet's brother Francisco says: "Make believe, disguises and masks charmed Federico the boy. They were like an unbreakable spell for even then he had begun to transform the world of fiction into a living reality and to identify all of reality with a fantastic dream." (Babin, op. cit., p. 104.)

142 Africa, source of Negro culture and primitivism, unspoiled by mechanical chaos.
Era el momento de las cosas secas,\textsuperscript{143} de la espiga en el ojo y el gato laminado, del óxido de hierro de los grandes puentes y el definitivo silencio del corcho.

Era la gran reunión de los animales muertos, traspasados por las espadas de la luz;\textsuperscript{144} la alegría eterna del hipopótamo con las pezuñas de ceniza y de la gacela con una siempreviva en la garganta.

En la marchita soledad sin onda el abollado mascarón danzaba. Medio lado del mundo era de arena, mercurio y sol dormido el otro medio.

The mask reappears and introduces part two of the poem, the vituperative denunciation of the financial center of New York: Wall Street, where human flesh is bought and sold, where money is totaled by dehumanized gages, where children are sacrificed for the lust for gold, where the wheel symbolizing mechanical society, the twentieth century, could offer an acceptable solution if it could only become nonconformist. Alas, it cannot. The poet howls the extinction of light and lost truth buried under the concrete, savage, and shameless America.

\textsuperscript{143}Symbolizes the time for death for the "cosas" are dry, without water, the symbol of life and growth.

\textsuperscript{144}Also symbolizes death; the light in Bodas de sangre is a symbol of death. In the drama, it emanates from the moon. Here, too, perhaps, the "luz" is that of the oft-used Lorquian symbol of "la luz de la luna." See Obras completas, p. 1159: "La luna deja un cuchillo/abandonado en el aire."
El mascarón. ¡Mirad el mascarón!
¡Arena, caimán y miedo sobre Nueva York!\textsuperscript{145}

Desfiladeros de cal aprisionaban un cielo vacío donde sonaban las voces de los que mueren bajo el guano.
Un cielo mondado y puro, idéntico a sí mismo, con el bozo y lirio agudo de sus montañas invisibles,

acabó con los más leves tallitos del canto y se fue al diluvio empaquetado de la savia, a través del descanso de los últimos desfiles, levantando con el rabo pedazos de espejo.

Cuando el chino lloraba en el tejado sin encontrar el desnudo de su mujer y el director del banco observaba el manómetro que mide el cruel silencio de la moneda, el mascarón llegaba al Wall Street.\textsuperscript{146}

No es extraño para la danza este columbario que pone los ojos amarillos.\textsuperscript{147}
De la esfinge a la caja de caudales hay un hilo tenso que atraviesa el corazón de todos los niños pobres.
El impetu primitivo baila con el impetu mecánico.\textsuperscript{148}

\textsuperscript{145}Lorca first uses the anglesized form New York, but reverts to "Nueva York" in this and the two succeeding divisions, apparently without explanation. No logical significance, if there is one, can be attached to his choice, at least from the context of the poem.

\textsuperscript{146}Symbol of materialism.

\textsuperscript{147}A sepulchral vault or other such structure with recesses in the walls to receive the ashes of the dead, derived from the Latin columba, dove. In other words, Wall Street is a columbarium and the "ojos amarillos" are the gold coins associated with the financial center.

\textsuperscript{148}The poet curiously joins the two foes, that of hope (impetu primitivo) and of despair (impetu mecánico).
ignorantes en su frenesí de la luz original.\textsuperscript{149}
Porque si la rueda olvida su fórmula,
yá puede cantar desnuda con las manadas de caballos;
y si una llama quema los helados proyectos,
el cielo tendrá que huir ante el tumulto de las ventanas.\textsuperscript{150}

No es extraño este sitio para la danza, yo lo digo.
El mascarón bailara entre columnas de sangre y de números,\textsuperscript{151}
entre huracanes de oro y gemidos de obreros parados\textsuperscript{152}
que aullarán, noche oscura, por tu tiempo sin luces\textsuperscript{153}
¡oh salvaje Norteamérica! ¡oh impúdica! ¡oh salvaje,
tendida en la frontera de la nieve!

The mask now announces the world of the Living-Dead.
After a profusion of nightmarish symbols we see that the dead do not dance; only the living can participate. And those comprising the "living" are drunkards, passionless men, lustful ones, adulterers, pimps, and unscrupulous business men.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{149}The poet implies that the two opposing forces spring from the same creative source but are not aware of their common denominator.
\item \textsuperscript{150}Symbolizes the skyscrapers.
\item \textsuperscript{151}Sangre is associated with the \textit{impetu primitivo} and \textit{números} with the \textit{impetu mecánico}.
\item \textsuperscript{152}They groan their plight due to being forced out of gainful employment by automation, one of the "benefits" of the advancement of mechanical civilization.
\item \textsuperscript{153}A strange allusion to San Juan de la Cruz's \textit{Noche oscura del alma} and the soul's search for its beloved, equating with the search of the protagonist for lost Love replaced by lust in the artificial jungle. (Lorca was very familiar with the work of San Juan, as direct reference to it and to the mystic is found in his \textit{conferencia} entitled "Teoría y juego del duende," \textit{Obras completas}, pp. 39, 46, 47.)
\end{itemize}
El mascarón. ¡Mirad el mascarón!
¡Qué ola de fango y luciérnaga sobre Nueva York!

Yo estaba en la terraza luchando con la luna. Enjambres de ventanas acribillaban un muslo de la noche. En mis ojos bebían las dulces vacas de los cielos. Y las brisas de largos remos golpeaban los cenicientos cristales de Broadway.

La gota de sangre buscaba la luz de la yema del astro para fingir una muerta semilla de manzana.
El aire de la llanura, empujando por los pastores, temblaba con un miedo de molusco sin concha.

Pero no son los muertos los que bailan, estoy seguro.
Los muertos están embebidos, devorando sus propias manos.
Son los otros los que bailan con el mascarón y su vihuela;
son los otros, los borrachos de plata, los hombres fríos, los que crecen en el cruce de los muslos y llamas duras,
los que buscan la lombriz en el paisaje de las escaleras,
los que beben en el banco lágrimas de niña muerta o los que comen por las esquinas diminutas pirámides del alba.

There is no element of the spiritual allowed to participate in the dance with the Mask. The Pope, Christ's representative on earth is prohibited from joining, nor can

---

154 The protagonist actively fights death, symbolized by the moon.
155 Drunk on their lust for money.
156 Hard-hearted, compassionless.
157 The sexually frustrated.
158 Pimps depositing their money gained from prostitution, a primitive business but completely absorbed into the advanced culture of their century.
"el Rey," perhaps a reference to the King of Harlem or to Christ the King. Into this company of excluded and unwanted dancers come a blue-dentured millionaire, stale temple dancers, contractors, emeralds, lunatics, and sodomites. The Mask, wishing only to dance alone, steps out into a solo number. Strangely enough, like Poe's "Masque of the Red Death," Lorca's Mask is now of "vieja escarlatina."

¡Que no baile el Papa!
¡No, que no baile el Papa!
Ni el Rey,
ni el millonario de dientes azules,
ni las bailarinas secas de las catedrales,
ni constructores, ni esmeraldas, ni locos, ni sodomitas.
Sólo este mascarón,
este mascarón de vieja escarlatina,
¡sólo este mascarón!

The protagonist abruptly changes from the "momento de las cosas secas" to that of "las cobras," and warns of the impending doom of Wall Street: the Stock Market Crash and the Great Depression of the 1930's.

 Que ya las cobras silbarán por los últimos pisos,
que ya las ortigas estremecerán patios y terrazas,
que ya la Bolsa será una pirámide de musgo,
que ya vendrán lianas después de los fusiles
y muy pronto, muy pronto, muy pronto.
¡Ay, Wall Street! 159

159 Not as prophetic as some critics would lead us to believe. Lorca finished this poem in December of 1929, more than a month after the Crash which brought on the Great Depression. It is possible that the idea came to him before the Crash took place. Unfortunately, we cannot determine the time with sufficient exactitude.
Following the warning to Wall Street, we enter the fourth phase of the poem. The Mask metamorphoses into a snake and spits venom over New York, ending the poem and leaving the symbol of industrial civilization in an atmosphere of anguish and despair.

El mascarón. ¡Mirad al mascarón!  
¡Cómo escupe veneno de bosque  
por la angustia imperfecta de Nueva York!

"Paisaje de la Multitud que Vomita"

(Anochecer de Coney Island)

The mask, the primitive and depersonalized impulse of the Negro race, has been left behind as the poet journeys to Coney Island where, in another surrealistic dream, a freak, the fat lady, performs a sideshow act which the poet follows in a mad chase through New York. She encounters hostile symbols and tangles with death, the moon, trying in vain to rest the established order from the grasp of turmoil. Lorca has probably disguised his "lost" Love in the person of the sideshow fat lady, and it is actually Love who tries to filter light, his symbol of truth and hope, into the underground tunnels, the subways.

La mujer gorda venía delante  
arrancando las raíces y mojando el pergamino  
de los tambores;  
la mujer gorda  
que vuelve del revés los pulpos agonizantes.
La mujer gorda, enemiga de la luna,\textsuperscript{160} corría por las calles y los pisos deshabitados\textsuperscript{161} y dejaba por los rincones pequeñas calaveras de paloma\textsuperscript{162} y levantaba las furias de los banquetes de los siglos últimos y llamaba al demonio del pan\textsuperscript{163} por las colinas del cielo barrido y filtraba un ansia de luz en las circulaciones subterráneas.\textsuperscript{164}

Son los cementerios, lo sé, son los cementerios y el dolor de las cocinas enterradas bajo la arena,\textsuperscript{165} son los muertos, los faisanes y las manzanas de otra hora los que nos empujan en la garganta.\textsuperscript{166}

Love now tries to regurgitate the poison of confusion from the system of mankind by urging all to vomit, as one would apply an antidote.

\textsuperscript{160}Death has been identified as the enemy of Love throughout the book, hence the identification of Love disguised as the fat lady.

\textsuperscript{161}Solitude: the loneliness without love.

\textsuperscript{162}Love (the fat lady) fights carefully, leaving no place untouched as she attacks chaos even in the remotest places.

\textsuperscript{163}She challenges the enemy of the bread, symbolizing the foe of Christ and spirituality in mechanical civilization.

\textsuperscript{164}Even the city is personalized, having taken on human form. The subways are part of the circulatory system of the "human" city of chaos.

\textsuperscript{165}Where the Negro is held prisoner, suffocating from lack of pure air.

\textsuperscript{166}Other symbols of choking and death by suffocation.
Llegaban los rumores de la selva del vomito con las mujeres vacías, con niños de cera caliente con árboles fermentados y camareros incansables que sirven platos de sal bajo las arpas de la saliva. Sin remedio, hijo mío, ¡vomita! No hay remedio. No es el vomito de los húsares sobre los pechos de la prostituta, ni el vomito del gato que se tragó una rana por descuido. Son los muertos que arañan con sus manos de tierra las puertas de pedernal donde se pudren nublos y postres.

Death and solitude are one. The fat lady continues the battle as chaos (niñas de sangre) seeks the protection of Death (luna). The poet is lost, perplexed; his own gaze is no longer his own as he experiences the double vision of an alcoholic struggling to see reality. He becomes a shipwrecked sailor, adrift on the sea of vomit, aimless, helpless. He is now without arms, incapable of paddling or swimming to the shore and safety.

La mujer gorda venía delante con las gentes de los barcos, de las tabernas y de los jardines. El vomito agitaba delicadamente sus tambores entre algunas niñas de sangre que pedían protección a la luna.

---

167 Sterile women.
168 The children, the hope for the new generation are not real but only imitations.
169 But the vomit of chaos.
170 Searching for the spark of love which exists in the flint. One has but to strike it if it can be found.
The poet submits to resignation and sighs in self-pity.

The resulting hallucinations of the alcohol-infused dream.

His only defense is release through alcohol, which, of course, exhibits only weakness and temporary relief from the vortex.
Sólo cuando izaron la bandera y llegaron los primeros canes
la ciudad entera se agolpó en las barandillas del embarcadero.

"Paisaje de la Multitud que Orina"

(Nocturno de Battery Place)

A complement to the previous poem, the poet continues his description of the multitude. A desolate picture is painted; urine is heaped on the vomit which lies on the other "landscape." The land is but a recepticle for both undigested food and human waste. Ironically both waste forms are liquid, but incapable of nourishing the land as would water. We again see a theme which was treated in "Iglesia abandonada": La muerte de un niño or the death of a son-Christ image. The ever-present symbol of Death hangs gloomily overhead supervising the multitude, directing yet another "wreck" also reminiscent of the sea and sailor images of "Iglesia abandonada." The poem opens in an atmosphere of sterility where man keeps to himself and where woman keeps to herself, the separation providing a physical impossibility for union and the chance for the "lost" or "evasive" Love to penetrate the chaos of the vengeful moon. A mood of solitude persists which equates with lack of communication and death, seen frequently from the poem of the collection and throughout the book. The poet is again confronted with a double vision of reality: (1) concrete symbols and images and (2) symbols lacking apparent perspective.
Se quedaron solos:174
aguardaban la velocidad de las últimas bicicletas.175
Se quedaron solas:176
esperaban la muerte de un niño177 en el velero japonés.
Se quedaron solos y solas
soñando con los picos abiertos de los pájaros agonizantes178
con el agudo quitasol que pincha al sapo recién aplastado,
bajo un silencio con mil orejas179
y diminutas bocas de agua180
en los desfiladeros que resisten el ataque violento de la luna.181

The son-Christ image awaits Death in the Japanese "velero" as all things in the artificial culture look on and bear witness to the new crucifixion, reminiscent of the New Testament where the multitude watched the spectacle but did nothing to prevent it.182

174,176 Note the gender agreement of "solos" and "solas" definitely showing the aloneless and separation of the sexes.

175 Wheel image, already associated with Death. See "Danza de la muerte."

177 The son-Christ image.

178 Is equated with the epigraph introducing this section.

179 Nonfunctioning since there is nothing for these 1,000 organs to hear.

180 Fragile defenses against Death.

181 The symbol of Death is again seen.

182 Luke XXIII:49. "His friends had all been standing at a distance; the women who had accompanied him from Galilee stood with them and watched it all."
Lloraba el niño 83 del velero y se quebraban los corazones 84 angustiados por el testigo y la vigilia 85 de todas las cosas y porque todavía en el suelo celeste de negras huellas 86 gritaban nombres oscuros, 87 salivas y radios de níquel.

The poet comments on the effect upon the multitude of the "new" crucifixion:

No importa que el niño calle cuando le clavan el último alfiler, no importa la derrota de la brisa en la corola del algodón, porque hay un mundo de la muerte 88 con marineros definitivos 89 que se asomarán a los arcos y os helarán por detrás de los árboles.

---

83 Mark XV:34. "... and at three Jesus cried out aloud, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani'!"

84 Luke XXIII:48. "And all the multitudes who assembled to see the sight, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts."

85 John XIX:31. "Because it was the eve of Passover, the Jews were anxious that the bodies should not remain on the cross for the coming Sabbath, since that Sabbath was a day of great solemnity."

86 negras huellas used ambivalently: (1) footprints of the Negro and (2) the continuing description of the crucifixion of Christ, although spotted with mechanical images: "radios de níquel." See Luke XXIII:44. "It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun's light failed."

87 Symbolizes the saints who went into the holy city after their tombs opened following the crucifixion. See Matthew XXVII:52, "the tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised."

88 The world of the urinating multitude.

89 Symbolizes Death's assistants.
It is useless to try. Nothing can be done to alleviate the situation.

In desperation, the poet cries out,

¡La luna! Los policías. ¡Las sirenas de los transalánticos!

---

190 The Word unspoken.

191 The tunic which Jesús had worn was not torn. See John XX:23-24: "When the soldiers had crucified Jesus they took his garments and made four parts, one for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was without seam, woven from top to bottom; so they said to one another, 'Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.'"

192 Matthew XXVII:51. "And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom; and the earth shook, and the rocks were split."

193 Used ambivalently: (1) alluding to the Negro and (2) lost souls.

194 The countryside has even gone mad, like the urinating multitude and, like a berserk animal, feasts on its own tail.

195 Desire cannot be fulfilled without Love.
but no one hears him or heeds the anguished shout. The "paisaje" is a wreck, a mass of ruin where even the fountains, symbolizing the source of life, are silenced. The search must continue through a maze of symbols describing the madness of the mechanistic world: "ojos de idiotas," "mansas cobras," tombs that give birth to tempting apples. The poem closes as the poet beseeches flames to engulf the urinating multitudes.

Fachada de crin, de humo; anémonas, guantes de goma. Todo está roto por la noche, abierta de piernas sobre las terrazas. Todo está roto por los tibios caños de una terrible fuente silenciosa. ¡Oh gentes! ¡Oh mujercillas! ¡Oh soldados! Será preciso viajar por los ojos de los idiotas, campos libres donde silban mansas cobras deslumbradas, paisajes llenos de sepulcros que producen fresquisimas manzanas,196 para que venga la luz desmedida que temen los ricos detrás de sus lupas, el olor de un solo cuerpo con la doble vertiente de lis y rata y para que se quemen estas gentes197 que pueden orinar alrededor de un gemido o en los cristales donde se comprenden las olas nunca repetidas.

196 An allusion to Genesis: the apple, so-called, was the fruit responsible for the fall of man. Here, in the world of the urinating multitude, tombs, sepulchers, resting places for the dead, breeds the symbol for the "new" fall: death out of death.

197 Or to the punishment of everlasting hell-fire.
"Asesinato"

(Dos Voces de Madrugada en Riverside Drive)

The next poem in "Calles y sueños" apparently is the transcription of an event from real life, according to an interview which Lorca gave to L. Méndez Domínguez in 1933. As the two men talked, Lorca, pensive and looking at the sky, spoke slowly as if recalling something almost forgotten:

--Una noche, en el agónico barrio armenio, oí detrás de la pared estas voces, que esperaban un asesinato: —¿Cómo fue? —Una grieta en la mejilla. —Eso es todo. —Una uña que aprieta el tallo. —Un alfiler que busca hasta encontrar las raicillas del grito. —Y el mar deja de moverse. —¿Cómo fue? —¡Así! —¿Así?

The above conversation follows the poem, "Asesinato," almost verbatim, omitting but a few words. The poem is a digression on the "mechanical" fashion in which the loss of human life is treated in the chaos of automated civilization. No emotion is exhibited for the lost soul—simply a "by the numbers" expression of the facts.

Whatever the "facts," we cannot be certain that Lorca actually overheard such a conversation. The imagination of the poet has already been attested to, and this poem is probably a combination of experience plus his highly imaginative mind.199

198Lorca, op. cit., p. 1674.
199See Footnote 12, this chapter.
¡Cómo fue?
---Una grieta en la mejilla.
¡Eso es todo!
Una una que aprieta el tallo.
Un alfiler que bucea
hasta encontrar las raicillas del grito. 200
Y el mar deja de moverse.
---¿Cómo, cómo fue?
---Así.
---Déjame! ¿De esa manera?
---Sí
El corazón salió solo.
---Ay, ay de mí!

"Navidad en el Hudson"

Continuing the trip through New York, the poet stops at the Hudson River. He sees it as a gray sponge. Standing alone along its banks, amid the solitude, the River symbolizes the planet Earth, abandoned by the rest of the universe to the chaotic plight of mechanical culture. The "death of the son theme," first seen in "Iglesia abandonada," has an appropriate parallel in this poem: the poet first sees the Hudson River as the son (with a severed neck) metamorphosizing into the poet's neck. The spiritual significance of the poem

200 The poem has an underlying motif found in his rural tragedy Bodas de sangre. Compare the last line of the drama, "la oscura raíz del grito," with "hasta . . . grito." They are similar except for the diminutive ending of "raíz," and that the word is plural. The symbolic pattern of the knife, a death image in Bodas de sangre, is also seen in the poem: the victim is slashed to death. The "root" symbol is Lorca's identification of man in the cosmos and his relationship to woman (earth). The cry is the ebbing of life and the inability to leave sons, representative of man's legacy and immortality. We also see a continuation of the "death of the son" theme, already treated in this section.
is evident: the poet again becomes a sacrificial victim.

¡Esa esponja gris!\textsuperscript{201} 
Ese marinero recién degollado.\textsuperscript{202} 
Ese río grande. 
Esa brisa de límites oscuros.\textsuperscript{203} 
Ese filo, amor, ese filo.\textsuperscript{204}

The poem is now filled with sea imagery, equating with the poet's first association of the River as a gray sponge. Four sailors fight with the world. This number is reduced to one sailor who multiplies into one hundred, then one thousand sailors. The "sailor" image has been used in the book, thus far, as an assistant of Death. This poem is no exception, but it should be noted that the "marinero recién degollado" does not appear to be loyal to that group. He has been attacked and beheaded, perhaps in retaliation for deserting Death's camp and for being converted to Love's cause. The other planets have disappeared from their accustomed positions, leaving the Earth alone and with no expectation of aid.

\textsuperscript{201} The Hudson River is of a foreboding color, symbolizing death and decay. In the rural tragedies, Lorca uses "río" to symbolize man, \textit{ergo}, mankind is dead and decayed.

\textsuperscript{202} The River takes on a more personalized identity: a decapitated sailor.

\textsuperscript{203} The breeze is also associated with death in \textit{Bodas de sangre}: "La luna deja un cuchillo/abandonado en el aire" (\textit{Obras completas}, p. 1159).

\textsuperscript{204} Love is identified with the "knife" imagery, thereby becoming associated with death in this unreal world.
Estaban los cuatro marineros luchando con el mundo, con el mundo de aristas que ven todos los ojos, con el mundo que no se puede recorrer sin caballos.205 Estaban uno, cien, mil marineros, luchando con el mundo de las agudas velocidades,206 sin enterarse de que el mundo estaba solo por el cielo.

The next stanza repeats the isolation and desolation of the world seen in the last line of the previous stanza, and closes as the poet warns of the dangerous symbol of doom, "el aire," lurking at the outskirts of all the villages.

El mundo solo por el cielo solo.
Son las colinas de martillos207 y el triunfo de la hierba espesa.
Son los vivísimos hormigueros y las monedas en el fango.208 El mundo solo por el cielo solo y el aire a la salida de todas las aldeas.

The "lombriz," already seen in the previous poems, again takes prominence to be opposed by another previously used symbol of the involuntary society: "la rueda." In an ironic outburst, a choir composed of the "lombriz" and the "marinero degollado" chant the Biblically-associated utterance of joy: Alleluja!

205 Caballos are another Lorquian symbol of Death. See its frequent use in Bodas de sangre.

206 Refers to the helter-skelter, rapid pace of industrial civilization.

207 A tool, although primitive, still very necessary in mechanical civilization.

208 The mire of chaos.
Cantaba la lombriz el terror de la rueda
y el marinero degollado
cantaba el oso de agua que lo había de estrechar;
y todos cantaban aleluya,
aleluya. Cielo desierto.

The protagonist works through the night, assisting
other sailors to gather tattered canvas, reminiscent of
seafarers taking in sail at the outburst of a tempest.
There is only one thing which matters: the emptiness he
feels in a world so alien from his own. In vain he looks
for a harbor offering him escape from the vortex.

He pasado toda la noche en los andamios
de los arrabales
dejándome la sangre por la escayola de los
proyectos,
ayudando a los marineros a recoger las velas
desgarradas.

---

209 Lorca himself. "El vocablo cielo, con diversas
connotaciones, es uno de los conceptos más frecuentes
en sus obras de poesía, sobre todo en el Libro de Poemas y
en Poeta en Nueva York. El dramatismo incipiente de este
primer cielo [Libro de Poemas] culmina en Poeta en Nueva York.
García Lorca se halla separado por la distancia del cielo
español y de la tierra española; está por vez primera en un
país extranjero, de proporciones gigantescas. La vida
trágica de la urbe neoyorquina produce en su sensibilidad un
choque violento." (Babin, op. cit., pp. 66-67.)

210 "En la naturaleza lorquiana prevalece la noche
sobre el día. Se vale del vocablo 'noche' para fines
muy diversos en su mundo poético, convirtiéndolo en símbolo
de tiempo, de hora o de lugar, símbolo de presentimiento y
misterio y clave de un acopio considerable de imágenes.
García Lorca es, pues, poeta de la noche." (Ibid., pp. 67-68.)
"El oro me parece fuego, y yo soy poeta de la noche."
("Retablillo de don Cristobal," Obras completas, p. 931.)
Y estoy con las manos vacías en el rumor de la desembocadura.
No importa que cada minuto
un niño nuevo\textsuperscript{211} agita sus ramitos de venas,
ni que el parto de la víbora, desatado bajo de las ramas,
calme la sed de sangre de los que miran el desnudo.
Lo que importa es esto: hueco. Mundo solo.
Desembocadura.

In agony, amid his loneliness, the poet cries out:

Alba no.\textsuperscript{212} Fábula inerte.\textsuperscript{213}
Sólo esto: Desembocadura.
¡Oh esponja mía gris!\textsuperscript{214}
¡Oh cuello mío recién degollado!\textsuperscript{215}
¡Oh río\textsuperscript{216} grande mío!

\textsuperscript{211}There is no new Messiah.

\textsuperscript{212}A reawakening does not come nor does a spiritual regeneration.

\textsuperscript{213}Ironically said. The poet means: Was there ever a dawn which offered a release from the darkness (chaos)?

\textsuperscript{214}The Hudson River.

\textsuperscript{215}The decapitated sailor is identified with the protagonist.

\textsuperscript{216}"El mar, el río y la lluvia están relacionados con un paisaje preciso casi siempre y determinan los estados de ánimo y la acción del ser humano sujeto a su circunstancia. Con esa virtud..., enriquece con valores nuevos al significado corriente de 'mar', 'río', 'lluvia', y 'agua' al trasponer a un plano de irrealidad su contenido poético, descubriendo siempre un matiz inédito e insospechado. ... García Lorca nombra los ríos que circundan la naturaleza y los paisajes de su mundo poético. En Nueva York el Hudson 'se emborracha con aceite'; ... está envuelto en un atmósfera de añoranza y rodeado de mágico misterio." (Babin, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 70.)
The protagonist leaves the Hudson River and continues his trek through the night to Brooklyn Bridge. He stops to consider that New York, the symbol of technological culture, offers no release from the disorder through restful sleep. The poet, no doubt, is motivated by a feeling of alienation, a feeling of isolation which his sensitive nature produces within his soul. He is far away from his beloved Granada and is about walking at night because thoughts of home and family race through his mind, preventing rest and sleep. He associates all people with him as he bursts forth in anguish:

No duerme nadie por el cielo. Nadie, nadie.
No duerme nadie.
Las criaturas de la luna huelen y rondan sus cabañas.
Vendrán las iguanas vivas la moder a los hombres que no sueñan

217 "El viento, la brisa y el aire llenan la naturaleza en el rico mundo poético de García Lorca. . . . Predomina en el concepto de la brisa una intención clara de representar lo espiritual, lo delicado y lo etéreo." (Ibid., p. 69.)

218 The poet is wounded, cut by his lost Love.

219 Unknown or unnamed assistants of Death.

220 Iguanas are associated with the jungle and give rise to the allusion which Lorca has previously created in the book that the protagonist is trapped in a mechanical jungle.
y el que huye con el corazón roto\textsuperscript{221} encontrará
por las esquinas
al increíble cocodrilo quieto bajo la tierna
protesta de los astros.

From this point, the protagonist shouts again that no
one sleeps. He includes the whole world.

No duerme nadie por el mundo. Nadie, nadie.
No duerme nadie.
Hay un muerto en el cementerio más lejano
que se queja tres años
porque tiene un paisaje seco en la rodilla;\textsuperscript{222}
y el niño\textsuperscript{223} que enterraron esta mañana lloraba
tanto
que hubo necesidad de llamar a los perros para
que callase.

In the midst of a series of images which results in
one word, "Death," Lorca parodies the seventeenth-century
dramatist, Calderón de la Barca's famous play, \textit{La vida es}
sueño.

No es sueño la vida. ¡Alerta! ¡Alerta! ¡Alerta!
Nos caemos de las escaleras para comer la tierra
húmeda
o subimos al filo de la nieve con el coro de las
dalias muertas.
Pero no hay olvido, ni sueño;
carne viva.\textsuperscript{224} Los besos atan las bocas
en una maraña de venas recientes\textsuperscript{225}

\textsuperscript{221}Perhaps, more specifically, the protagonist himself.
\textsuperscript{222}The earth is dry, symbolizing Death above as well
as below ground.
\textsuperscript{223}The child-Christ symbol already seen in the previous poems.
\textsuperscript{224}There is no release. The chaos is reality.
\textsuperscript{225}Symbolizes fresh slaughter or recent death.
y al que le duele su dolor de dolerá sin descanso
y al que teme la muerte la llevará sobre sus hombros.226

Almost, as if driven mad, the poet describes the retribution which will be sent to this world out of joint. There will be a resurrection, not of the new Messiah but of the dead butterflies.

Un día
los caballos vivirán en las tabernas
y las hormigas furiosas
atacarán los cielos amarillos que se refugian en los ojos de las vacas.

Otro día
veremos la resurrección de las mariposas disecadas
y aún andando por un paisaje de esponjas grises227
y barcos mudos228
veremos brillar nuestro anillo229 y manar rosas230 de nuestra lengua.

The irrational description continues and the poet warns mankind of the inevitable deluge of chaos because he has not learned how to interpret nor adjust to the automation: "no

226There is death in life in the mechanized world. Those who live in it carry Death on their shoulders in addition to the other burdens of life, unable to find release either in sleep or in dreams.

227The symbol of the Hudson River seen in the previous poem.

228One should recall this symbol of the Church in "Iglesia abandonada."

229Symbolizes marriage or slavery, used ambivalently.

230Symbolizes children or new life.
sabe la invención del puente." In other words, Lorca sees man as did the poet Dante, lost in a dark wood. A bridge connects two opposites, for example, one bank with another, or symbolically, by means of a tension, two ideas with each other. Here, the poet uses the "puente" metaphorically to suggest infinity through the curve of the structure. Man cannot accept this nor can he understand it because of human limitation.

¡Alerta! ¡Alerta! ¡Alerta!
A los que guardan todavía huellas de zarpa y aguacero,
a aquel muchacho que llora porque no sabe la invención del puente
o aquel muerto que ya no tiene más que la cabeza y un zapato, 231
hay que llevarlos al muro donde iguanas y sierpes esperan,
donde espera la dentadura del oso,
donde espera la mano momificada del niño 232
y la piel del camello se eriza con un violento escalofrío azul.

The last strophe of the poem sees a return to the opening lines. The protagonist again cautions man of his fate, should anyone close his eyes or relax his vigil against the destructive forces of mechanized civilization. His only recourse is to hide himself under the protective covers of trapdoors.

231 Destructive symbols.

232 Symbol of the son-Christ figure.
No duerme nadie por el cielo. Nadie, nadie.
No duerme nadie.
Pero si alguien cierra los ojos,
¡azotadlo, hijos míos, azotadlo! 233
Haya un panorama de ojos abiertos 234
y amargas llagas encendidas.
No duerme nadie por el mundo. Nadie, nadie.

Ya lo he dicho.
No duerme nadie.
Pero si alguien tiene por la noche exceso de musgo
en las sienes,
abrid los escotillones para que vea bajo la luna 235
las copas falsas, el veneno y la calavera de los
teatros. 236

"Panorama ciego de Nueva York"

The poet examines New York as a whole. His excursion
into the night has come to an end; he contemplates the air,
the sounds of the city, the vastness of the vortex which is
foreign, alien to his spirit in a blind, fantasmogoric
panorama of pain.

Si no son los pájaros
cubiertos de ceniza, 237
si no son los gemidos que golpean las ventanas
de la boda 238
serán las delicadas criaturas del aire

233 It is curious that Lorca inserts a most primitive
instrument for punishment and torture: the whip.

234 A vivid description of the frightening landscape
of chaos.

235, 236 Symbols of Death.

237 The Phoenix symbol again: purgation and regeneration.

238 Negative symbol: lack of conception, fresh
creation, and regeneration.
que manan la sangre nueva por la oscuridad inextinguible.239
Pero no, no son los pájaros,
porque los pájaros están a punto de ser bueyes;240
pueden ser rocas blancas241 con la ayuda de la luna242
y son siempre muchachos heridos
antes de que los jueces levanten la tela.

In a very reflective mood, the protagonist examines man's plight on earth. Even in the mechanical chaos, the poet strengthens his spirit to endure the unendurable, for absolute grief is not of this world but the next. Man is immortal; temporal suffering will pass.

Todos comprenden el dolor que se relaciona con la muerte,
pero el verdadero dolor no está presente en el espíritu.
No está en el aire ni en nuestra vida,
ni en estas terrazas llenas de humo.
El verdadero dolor que mantiene despiertas las cosas
es una pequeña quemadura infinita
en los ojos inocentes de los otros sistemas.243

Evasive Love, which the poet has pursued in a fruitless quest, is still one step ahead of him. He returns to this theme but, as in a previous poem from the first section,

239 The new blood will be spiritual in the vastness of the confusion.

240 Metamorphosis from light creatures of the ambient into heavy, clumsy beasts of burden.

241 The inanimate, the actual "spirit" of technocracy.

242 The inanimate is accomplished by the "white" light of the moon shining upon them.

243 The systems of mechanical culture.
"1910 Intermedio," Love is known only to innocent children.

Again the protagonist analyzes the vast chaos of blind impulses. He uses the "bird" image which was first seen in the opening lines. Man, a creature normally chained to the earth, has imagined at various times throughout the centuries that if he could only fly like a bird, he would have great power. Of course, this fact has been realized, and beyond these dreams mechanical civilization has carried man, not only into the sky but even into the outermost reaches of space. At the time this poem was written, however, flying was still in its infancy. Lorca, himself, had arrived in New York by ship. Therefore, the metaphor of the bird not being able to escape the turbulence of mechanical society was a forceful illustration of the power of that chaos.

*No, no son los pájaros.*
*No es un pájaro el que expresa la turbia de laguna*  
*ni el ansia de asesinato que nos oprime cada momento,*

---

244*protection from Death.*
ni el metálico rumor de suicidio que nos anima cada madrugada.
Es una cápsula de aire donde nos duele todo el mundo,
es un pequeño espacio vivo al loco unión de la luz, 245
es una escala indefinible donde las nubes y rosas 246
olvidan el griterio chino que bulle por el desembarcadero de la sangre.

Without an apparent break in his stream of consciousness,
the poet begins to speak of his personal condition and senses
with regard to the absolute pain found only in infinity.
The symbols of the "marineros" and "la nieve" return.

Yo muchas veces me he perdido para buscar la quemadura que mantiene despiertas las cosas 247
y sólo he encontrado marineros echados sobre las barandillas
y pequeñas criaturas del cielo enterradas bajo la nieve. 248
Pero el verdadero dolor estaba en otras plazas 249
donde los peces cristalizados agonizaban dentro de los troncos,
plazas del cielo extraño para las antiguas estatuas ilesas
y para la tierna intimidad de los volcanes.

On a note of hope, the poem closes with determination
for a regeneration, a release from the vortex and ultimate

245 Sun and moon.
246 Cosmic symbols: sky or infinity, and earth.
247 The dawn which returns man to the chaos of mechanical civilization.
248 Symbol of destruction.
249 Man has the peculiar tendency to feel that catastrophe is always going to strike elsewhere.
victory for man, together with the perpetuation of the Earth.

No hay dolor en la voz. Sólo existen los dientes, pero dientes que callarán aislados por el raso negro. No hay dolor en la voz. Aquí sólo existe la Tierra. La tierra con sus puertas de siempre que llevan al rubor de los frutos.

"Nacimiento de Cristo"

In this third section of Poeta en Nueva York, we encounter a second poem dedicated to the Christmas season. Earlier, the poet touched on the joyous holiday period in the poem entitled "Navidad en el Hudson." From what we saw of Lorca's interpretation of a New York Christmas in the first of the two poems, it must be stated that December 25 was a day radically different from that to which the poet was accustomed. Luis Felipe Vivanco says:

La Navidad para muchos consiste en que uno está solo y no hay comunicación posible con los demás. Y en vez de alba o amanecer de un nuevo día se ha convertido en una leyenda inerte y sin sentido.250

Lorca bases the structure of the poem on the Biblical parallel, including the usual pastoral characters associated with the manger, etc.: shepherd, mule, bull, St. Joseph, swaddling "clothes," and cherubim. Here, the similarity ends, however; there is as much resemblance between the twentieth-century version of Christ's birth as between a cardoid and a hyperbolic parabola. Lorca actually captures

the two-thousand year span and capably portrays the chasm which the gulf of time has spread between the myth and the immediacy which is no longer felt in mechanically civilized Christianity. The opening lines depict the meaning of Christ in the modern world: a little clay figure.

Un pastor pide teta por la nieve que ondula blancos perros tendidos entre linternas sordas. El Cristito de barro se ha perdido los dedos en los filos eternos de la madera rota.

One actually perceives that Lorca is describing a typical manger scene under a Christmas tree. The false snow, the shepherd, the white dogs (probably sheep), and the somewhat worn lights cast their glow over the principal character, Christ, who lies desecrated with broken fingers. He is now merely the symbol of materialistic treasure for the young, future generations. It is no longer a time for celebrating the birthday of the Savior, but time for the "ants" and "demons."

¡Ya vienen las hormigas y los pies ateridos! Dos hilillos de sangre quiebran el cielo duro. Los vientres del demonio resuenan por los valles golpes y resonancias de carne de molusco.

Lobos y sapos cantan en las hogueras verdes coronadas por vivos hormigueros del alba. La mula tiene un sueño de grandes abanicos y el toro sueña un toro de agujeros y de agua.

In the nightmarish setting, the Christ is born. The protagonist departs from the usual portrayal as discords of zither music accompany voices of decapitated people in the
El niño llora y mira con un tres en la frente.\textsuperscript{251} San José ve en el heno tres espinas de bronce.\textsuperscript{252} Los pañales exhalan un rumor de desierto con cítaras sin cuerdas y degolladas voces.

Amid the "merry" scene, the snow falls for a white Christmas. All is well in mechanical civilization: corrupted clergy and meaningless doctrine move on after Luther.

La nieve de Manhattan empuja los anuncios y lleva gracia pura por las falsas ojivas.\textsuperscript{253} Sacerdotes idiotas y querubes de pluma van detrás de Lutero por las altas esquinas.

"La aurora"

The "paseo" through "Streets and Dreams" comes to an end. Returning to the city proper, the protagonist expects to find a spiritual regeneration after the birth of Christ; nothing could be more disillusioning. The city is as before: filled with debasement and wickedness which the poet describes by means of a series of images decrying Death: slime, black doves, and stagnant, dead water. Instead of a dawn, a resurrection, there is no welcoming sunrise but a continuation of

\textsuperscript{251} Symbol of the Trinity.
\textsuperscript{252} Not gold, incense or myrrh, but cheap imitations.
\textsuperscript{253} Symbolizes the falseness of modern religion. The apparent gothic arches are merely habitual, now, representative of nothing. Even the outward appearances of Christianity have no true meaning in the concrete jungle.
the "Dark Night of the Soul." Vivanco says, "En el último poema de esta parte, 'Aurora,' ésta llega una vez más a la ciudad, pero también va a ser otra cosa." 254

La aurora de Nueva York tiene cuatro columnas de cieno y un huracán de negras palomas que chapotean las aguas podridas. 257

The light of dawn searches, like the protagonist, but finds no reward:

La aurora de Nueva York gime por las inmensas escaleras buscando entre las aristas nardos de angustia dibujada.

Later, Vivanco adds another comment: "Las palabras van siendo cada vez más enterizas y llegan a su colmo de alucinación sin renunciar a su sentido realista, sino al contrario, potenciándolo hasta el límite." 261

254 Vivanco, op. cit., p. 448.
255 In all areas of the city there is chaos.
256 The dove, usually a symbol of peace and spiritual regeneration, takes on a reverse image of Death.
257 The life-giving water is unfit for human consumption and therefore useless.
258 In desperation, disappointment, and agony.
259 Skyscrapers.
260 The varying heights and levels of the buildings through which the light of dawn streams.
261 Vivanco, loc. cit.
does not take place. There is no mouth at the rail to receive Christ, only the occasional rattle of coins which come from materialistic pursuits to devour children who have been dispossessed or, in a spiritual motif, the betrayal of Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.

La aurora llega y nadie la recibe en su boca porque allí no hay mañana ni esperanza posible. A veces las monedas en enjambres furiosos taladran y devoran abandonados niños.

Explaining further, Vivanco says, "Nadie comulga con la aurora, recibiendo la en su boca, porque es la aurora de los que salen de sus casas para un trabajo sin esperanza."262 Dawn brings not a welcome of hope but only a return from the blessedness of sleep to the hell of automation.

Los primeros que salen comprenden con sus huesos que no habrá paraíso ni amores deshojados; saben que van al cieno de números y leyes,263 a los juegos sin arte, a sudores sin fruto.264

Vivanco provides a final observation on the poem. He writes, "Enjambres furiosos de monedas, cieno de números y leyes, sudores sin frutos, ¡y esos hombres que comprenden

262Ibid., p. 449.
263Anonymous jobs performed by anonymous clerks. In this advanced society there is total loss of identity and individuality.
264The jobs require no creative thought; all is predetermined and routine. Mankind works but only the "boss" gets wealthy.
con sus huesos! Pero algo faltaba, todavía": 265

La luz es sepultada por cadenas y ruidos en impúdico reto de ciencia sin raíces. Por los barrios hay gentes que vacilan insomnes 266 como recién salidas de un naufragio de sangre.

IV

POEMAS DEL LAGO EDEM MILLS

In some general statements on the next two sections of Poeta en Nueva York, Vivanco tells us:

Después de esta parte dedicada a la ciudad vienen otras dos más idílicas dedicadas a su estancia en el campo. El poeta ha vuelto a quedarse a solas contigo mismo y se da cuenta de que después de todas las multitudes le sigue doliendo la vida. Los poemas de estas dos partes son poemas del campo y de la naturaleza pero también de un corazón y una mirada recuperados. Las realidades americanas pasan a segundo término. Las dos partes, cuarta y quinta del libro, se llaman 'Poemas del lago Edem Mills,' y 'En la cabaña del farmer,' y sus poemas 'Poema doble del lago Edem' y 'Cielo vivo' en la cuarta parte y 'El niño Stanton,' 'Vaca' y 'Niña ahogada en el pozo,' en la quinta. 267

In a letter to Angel del Rio, Lorca reveals intimate details of his personal feelings and his mood while writing the poems of this section in the tranquility of the Vermont countryside. The letter is as follows:

265 Ibid.

266 Some cannot receive even the short release from mechanical chaos which sleep affords.

Queridísimo Angel: Te escribo desde Eden Mills. Muy divertido. Es un paisaje prodigioso, pero de una melancolía infinita.

Una buena experiencia para mí. Ya te contaré. Hoy sólo quiero que me digas la manera que tengo de encontrarte para marchar con vosotros dentro de unos días.

No cesa de llover. Esta familia es muy simpática y llena de un encanto suave, pero los bosques y el lago me sumen en un estado de desesperación poética muy difícil de sostener. Escribo todo el día y a la noche me siento agotado.

Angel: escribe a vuelta de correo cómo podré encontrarte. Cuando pienso que puedo beber en la casa donde vives me pongo muy alegre.

Ahora cae la noche. Han encendido las luces de petróleo y toda mi infancia viene a mi memoria envuelta en una gloria de amapolas y cereales. He encontrado entre los helechos una rueca cubierta de arañas y en el lago no canta ni una rana.

Urgente el coñac para mi pobre corazón. Escríbeme y yo iré a buscarte.

Muchas cosas para Amelia. Besos al niño (en los pies) y tú recibe un abrazo de tu amigo

FEDERICO.

(Perseguido en Eden Mills por el licor del romanticismo.)

(A la vuelta.)

268 The family of Philip H. Cummings, a poet of sorts whom Lorca met while the former was visiting Spain and staying at the Residencia de Estudiantes. Cummings runs a dairy farm in Vermont at the present time. He mentioned to this writer that he kept a journal covering Lorca's visit during the summer of 1929, but was unwilling to permit its contents to be examined. Cummings also told the author that he and Lorca translated into English the early book of poems entitled canciones, but was also unwilling to send the manuscript to the University of Texas Press after this writer arranged a reading.
Me indicas la ruta del viaje. Si te es más cómodo pónme un telegrama largo indicándomelo.

Mis señas para el telégrafo son estas [sic] que escribe Cummings a máquina.

Es preferible para mí que me pongas un telegrama.

De todas maneras yo tendré que pasar por New York. Es probable que marche el jueves. Esto es acogedor para mí, pero me ahogo en esta niebla y esta tranquilidad que hacen surgir mis recuerdos de una manera que me queman.

¡Addio, mio caro!

Agosto, 1929.269

"Poema doble del Lago Edem270 Mills"

The poem begins with an epigram from Garcilaso which is appropriate to the pastoral setting of this section:

Nuestro ganado pace, el viento espira.

We shall see that the "viento" plays a symbolically important part in this poem.

As the poet writes in his letter to Angel del Río, "Es un paisaje prodigioso, pero de una melancolía infinita." We see that he begins the poem in another time indeed. "... mi infancia viene a mi memoria envuelta en una gloria de amapolas y cereales."

269 Obras completas, pp. 1634-35.

270 The correct spelling of the local is Eden.
Era mi voz antigua
ignorante de los densos juegos amargos.
La adivino lamiendo mis pies
bajo los frágiles helechos mojados.

¡Ay voz antigua de mi amor,
ay voz de mi verdad,
ay voz de mi abierto costado,
cuando todas las rosas manaban de mi lengua
y el césped no conocía la impasible dentadura
del caballo!

Next, the protagonist addresses the devil, asking that he allow him to pass into the happy denseness of a wood where he may escape the ravishings of the unpleasant society outside. He must cross the bridge where Eve, the archetypal mother symbol, busies herself eating ants while Adam, the archetypal father figure, is lusting after fish. Although the metaphor may appear to be unclear at first, it is really quite expressive. The preoccupations of Adam and Eve, instead of following God's orders to "earn thy bread by the sweat of thy brow," and "to bear children in torment," are not only disobeying God again, but are engaging in unnatural tasks. Their desires symbolize the disorder of the world and bear witness to the inability of man to adapt to the environment of the robot-like world.

271 Compare with the first line of the poem "1910 (Intermedio)."

272 A reference to the innocence of childhood.

273 The continued return to the theme of lost or evasive Love in mechanical civilization. The frequent use of "voz" in this passage should remind us of the epigram, "viento," which is also a type of "voz."
Estás aquí bebiendo mi sangre, 
bebiendo mi humor de niño pesado, 
mientras mis ojos se quiebran el viento 
con el aluminio y las voces de los borrachos.

Déjame pasar la puerta 
donde Eva come hormigas 
y Adán fecunda peces deslumbrados. 
Déjame pasar, hombrecillo de los cuernos, 274 
al bosque de los desperezos 
y los alegrísimos saltos.

The poet reveals in ironic language his anguished 
knowledge and experience gained by his ordeal he has suffered:

Yo sé el uso más secreto 
que tiene un viejo alfiler oxidado 
y sé del horror de unos ojos despiertos 
sobre la superficie concreta del plato.

But, the poet wants nothing of material value. This 
he despises. He wants Love, the object of his search through- 
out the labyrinth.

Pero no quiero mundo ni sueño, voz divina, 
quiero mi libertad, mi amor humano 
en el rincón más oscuro de la brisa275 que 
nadie quiera. 
¡Mi amor humano!

As the wind lies in wait ready to spring out and 
destroy, the protagonist cries again for the voice of the 
past to come to the rescue.

274 The devil. His presence also symbolizes the utter 
evil of mechanical civilization.

275 It should be noted that "brisa" is only another 
form or type of "viento," not as powerful, but nonetheless 
an extension of the basic image of this poem.
Esos perros marinos se persiguen
y el viento acecha troncos descuidados.
¡Oh voz antigua, quema con tu lengua
esta voz de hojalata y de talco!

In despair, the protagonist cries out again, denying
existence to himself, save only the faintness of a wounded
heartbeat.

Quiero llorar porque me da la gana
como lloran los niños del último banco,
porque yo no soy un hombre, ni un poeta, ni
una hoja,
pero sí un pulso herido que sonda las cosas
del otro lado.

Continuing in the same manner, the poet who, having
just denied he is a poet, wants to cry out his name, but he
does not know it.

Quiero llorar diciendo mi nombre,
rosa, niño y abeto a la orilla de este lago,
para decir mi verdad de hombre de sangre
matando en mí la burla y la sugestión del
vocablo.

He again seeks his voice of old, his poetic voice
which was at home in Romancero gitano, among the land and
its familiar marks and culture of Granada. But here, in the
sordid world of technocracy, he is at the mercy of the asso­
ciate of Death, the moon.

No, no, yo no pregunto, yo deseo,
voz mia libertada que me lames las manos.
En el laberinto de biombos es mi desnudo el que
recibe
la luna de castigo y el reloj encenizado.276

276 The clock, man's instrument for measurement of time,
has been covered with ashes, and is now a symbol of Death and
The poem ends amid a series of incomprehensible metaphors indicative of the tohubohu. The poet, himself, can go no further. He is suspended in a never-never vacuum of time and space.

Así hablaba yo.
Así hablaba yo cuando Saturno277 detuvo los trenes
y la bruma y el sueño y la Muerte me estaban buscando.
Me estaban buscando
allí donde mugen las vacas que tienen patitas de paje
y allí donde flota mi cuerpo entre los equilibrios contrarios.

"Cielo vivo"

While the poet lies suspended, his thoughts become more rational and more tranquil. Providential inspiration descends upon him in this second and last poem of Section IV. It is as if the poet's prayer for his voice of old has been answered, and now he takes stock of himself, renewing his strength for the continuation of his task, the search for lost Love. He begins:

Yo no podrá quejarme
si no encontré lo que buscaba.
Cerca de las piedras sin jugo y los insectos vacíos
no veré el duelo del sol con las criaturas en carne viva.

waste. Mechanical chaos has obliterated time itself to the protagonist. Reality to him now exists only in the past.

277God of cruelty and truculence.
Collecting his thoughts, thanks to his newly-found peace, the protagonist ponders how he may best approach what he has been searching.

Pero me iré al primer paisaje de choques, líquidos y rumores que transmina a niño recién nacido y donde toda superficie es evitada, para entender que lo que busco tendrá su blanco de alegría cuando yo vuelo mezclado con el amor y las arenas.

Once in the "primer paisaje," a Garden of Eden allusion, the poet sees that chaos cannot enter to disturb and frustrate him as it has done thus far. There he will be safe to pursue his "rehabilitation."

Allí no llega la escarcha de los ojos apagados ni el mugido del árbol asesinado por la oruga. Allí todas las formas guardan entrelazadas una sola expresión frenética de avance.

In the next two stanzas, he reiterates the horrible consequences of annihilation awaiting chaos if it tries to follow him:

No puedes avanzar por los enjambres de corolas porque el aire disuelve tus dientes de azúcar, ni puedes acariciar la fugaz hoja del helecho sin sentir el asombro definitivo del marfil.

Allí bajo las raíces y en la médula del aire se comprende la verdad de las cosas equivocadas, el nadador de niquel que acecha la onda más fina y el rebaño de vacas nocturnas con rojas patitas de mujer.

278 Heretofore, used as a symbol of destruction.
The last two stanzas bring the poet to the heights of ecstasy, restating his firm conviction that he will not become weak in his search, but that it will culminate in the eventual realization of his goal: the visible resurrection of Love.

Yo no podré quejarme
si no encontré lo que buscaba;
pero me iré al primer paisaje de humedades
y latidos
para entender que lo que busco tendrá su blanco
de alegría
cuando yo vuele mezclado con el amor y las arenas.

Vuelo fresco de siempre sobre lechos vacíos,
sobre grupos de brisas y barcos encallados.
Tropiezo vacilante por la dura eternidad fija
y amor al fin sin alba. Amor. ¡Amor visible!

V

EN LA CABANÁ DEL FARMER

(Campo de Newburg)

Following the bucolic interlude, we continue with poems written during the vacation between the end of summer school and the beginning of the fall semester at Columbia. Lorca was visiting Angel del Río at a modest farm in the Catskills near Shandaken. Professor del Río says:

At the farm, he spent part of his time writing. He read to us, in addition to his new poems, the play Don Perlimplín, which he had revised in New York, and fragments of The Shoemaker's Prodigious Wife, When Five Years Passed and The Public—the last two of a surrealist character with themes and language close
to those of *Poet in New York*. He spent many hours with the farmer's two children—the boy, Stanton of the poem which bears his name, and a girl who inspired his "Girl Drowned in a Well." How he communicated with the children was a miracle of inventiveness. They were fascinated by Federico, especially when he sang or improvised folk songs on a dilapidated and out-of-tune piano or when he told them stories in an incredible Spanish, often acting the parts of the characters and dramatizing the action. From Shandaken he went for the rest of the vacation to the house of Professor Federico de Onís near Newburg.279

This section comprised three poems: "El niño Stanton" (already mentioned), "Vaca," and "Niña ahogada en el pozo." The becalmed mood of the previous section persists but we begin to feel a transition toward a presence of death filtering through subdued allusions: cancer, horses that are blind, dark water doors, diminutive fevers, and guests who are dying of contagion. Death, then, is a subtle presence which, in another section, will develop to prominence.

"El niño Stanton"

The poem begins with a dialogue in English, probably between the farmer's son, Stanton, and the protagonist.

Do you like me?
--Yes, and you?
--Yes, yes.

Following the affirmation of friendship, the poem continues as a monologue.

Cuando me quedo solo
me quedan todavía tus diez años,
los tres caballos ciegos,
tus quince rostros con el rostro de la
pedrada
y las fiebres pequeñas heladas sobre las
hojas del maíz.

The monologue becomes a warning to the "niño" of the
dangers of the outside world. The first danger is chaos,
disguised as a cancer, ready to devour whomever it may find.

Stanton, hijo mío, Stanton.
A las doce de la noche el cáncer salía por los
pasillos
y hablaba con los caracoles vacíos de los
documentos,
el vivisimo cáncer lleno de nubes y termómetros
con su casto afán de manzana para que lo piquen
los ruiseñores.

There is confusion other than that represented by the
cancer:

En la casa donde no hay un cáncer
se quiebran las blancas paredes en el delirio
de la astronomía
y por los establos más pequeños y en las cruces
de los bosques
brilla por muchos años el fulgor de la quemadura.

---

280 Reminiscent of the opening poem of the book, dealing with lack of identity.
281 Lacking true life.
282 Even fevers do not have their usual characteristics. These behave opposite to their natures, perhaps iced in the presence of Death and freezing the crop, a further devastation of life.
283 Warning against sexual perversion in mechanical civilization.
Apparently, as if in a dream, the protagonist relates the fate of the child Stanton. Innocent, without fear, Stanton arrives at "the door of dark water," a symbol of destruction and turmoil.

Mi dolor sangraba por las tardes cuando tus ojos eran dos muros, cuando tus manos eran dos países y mi cuerpo rumor de hierba.\textsuperscript{284} Mi agonía buscaba su traje, polvorienta, mordida por los perros, y tú la acompañaste sin temblar hasta la puerta del agua oscura.

The poet shouts out in agony at the stupidity-innocence of the boy Stanton. Evidently, unaware of the death of his mother ("fracturada por los herreros"), or of two brothers ("bajo los arcos,/otro comido por los hormigueros"), or of the cancer, the poet implores the boy to awaken to the chaos, to "go to the bosque," to use his eyes and observe and see and learn what his people have obviously forgotten.

¡Oh mi Stanton, idiota y bello entre los pequeños animalitos, con tu madre fracturada por los herreros de las aldeas, con un hermano bajo los arcos, otro comido por los hormigueros, y el cáncer sin alambradas latiendo por las habitaciones! Hay nodrizas que dan a los niños ríos de musgo y amargura de pie y algunas negras suben a los pisos para repartir filtro de rata. Porque es verdad que la gente quiere echar las palomas a las alcantarillas y yo sé lo que esperan los que por la calle

\textsuperscript{284}Symbolizes the persistence of life.
nos oprimen de pronto las yemas de los dedos.

Tu ignorancia\textsuperscript{285} es un monte de leones, Stanton.
El día que el cáncer te dió una paliza
y te escupió en el dormitorio donde murieron los
huéspedes en la epidemia
y abrió su quebrada rosa de vidrios secos y manos
blandas
para salpicar de lodo las pupilas de los que navegan,
tú buscaste en la hierba mi agonia,
mi agonia con flores de terror,
mientras que el agrio cáncer muido que quiere
acostarse contigo\textsuperscript{286}
pulverizaba rojos paisajes\textsuperscript{287} por las sábanas de
amargura,
y ponía sobre los atadíes
helados arbolitos de ácido bórico.
Stanton, vete al bosque con tus arpas judías
vete para aprender celestiales palabras\textsuperscript{288}
que duermen en los troncos, en nubes, en tortugas,
en los perros dormidos, en el plomo, en el viento,
en lirios que no duermen, en aguas que no copian,
para que aprendas, hijo lo que tu pueblo olvida.

Following the lengthy warning to Stanton, the protagonist
bids farewell and moves on alone in his search.

Cuando empiece el tumulto de la guerra
dejaré un pedazo de queso para tu perro en la
oficina.
Tus diez años serán las hojas
que vuelan en los trajes de los muertos,
diez rosas de azufre débil
en el hombro de mi madrugada.
Y yo, Stanton, yo solo, en olvido,
con tus caras marchitas sobre mi boca,
iré penetrando a voces las verdes estatuas de
la Malaria.

\textsuperscript{285}Innocence.

\textsuperscript{286}To kill, murder.

\textsuperscript{287}Symbolizes bloody, another association with Death.

\textsuperscript{288}The wood is equated with heaven, free from the
vortex.
"Vaca"

The second poem of this section progresses toward the theme of total Death of which the first poem warned us. Human life, however, is not Death's target; animal life is. Several Lorquian symbols associated with Death appear in this poem: "navaja," "luna," and the color "amarillo." The scene opens with a wounded cow bleeding in the sky while others, some still alive, some dead, alert the morning with their tortured crying.

Se tendió la vaca herida;
árboles y arroyos trepaban por sus cuernos.
Su hocico sangraba en el cielo.

Su hocico de abejas
bajo el bigote lento de la baba.
Un alarido blanco puso en pie la mañana.

Las vacas muertas y las vivas,
rubor de luz o miel de establo,
balaban con los ojos entornados.

Que se enteren las raíces
y aquel niño que afila su navaja289
de que ya se pueden comer la vaca.

The cow seems to take on the aura of a sacrificial victim to the god chaos as the moon is informed that the animal is now turned to ash. One cannot help but recall the Phoenix myth here in the face of the cow. However, the regeneration of the cow from the embers serves only to revive her for another bout with chaos, as she moves again into the

289 Compare with the knife, a symbol of Death in Bodas de sangre and in Romancero gitano.
sky and runs a gamet of drunkards eating on Death.

Arriba palidecen
luces y yugulares.
Cuatro pezuñas tiemblan en el aire.

Que se entere la luna
y esa noche de rocas amarillas:
que ya se fue la vaca de ceniza.

Que ya se fue balando
por el derribo de los cielos yertos
donde meriendan muerte los borrachos.

"Nina ahogada en el poza"

(Granada y Newburg)

The title of the third and last poem of this section bears no apparent resemblance to its content. A close reading, however, does allow the reader to perceive the significance of what Lorca is trying to express. Water is usually associated, symbolically in poetry, with "life" or as a "life-giving source." In an automated society, as Lorca has interpreted it, we find man, animals, their functions, nature, and even heaven out of proportion, existing in and acting rôles to which they are not accustomed. Hence, "water" which normally gives life, destroys life through drowning, thus preparing the way for spiritual regeneration through

290Compare the moon's appearance in the death scene of Bodas de sangre and its use as a symbol of Death in the Romancero gitano.

resurrection and entrance to immortality. Water fails to complete its "expected" cycle in this poem. The estribillo "... que no desemboca," is clear. In Lorca's mechanized civilization, the little girl lies drowned in the well, but the water will not release her to infinity. She, like mankind, remains the prisoner of chaos and technocracy. Lorca begins by describing the effect of this chaos, calling attention to "el agua que no desemboca."

Las estatuas sufren por los ojos con la oscuridad de los ataúdes, pero sufren mucho más por el agua que no desemboca.

From inanimate blocks of stone statues which suffer at the hands of disorder, the protagonist turns his attention to the people who, in their mad rush, break fishing poles, signifying their mania to destroy anything offering a connection to the "agua que no desemboca."

El pueblo corría por las almenas rompiendo las cañas de los pescadores. ¡Pronto! ¡Los bordes! ¡De prisa! Y croaban las estrellas tiernas...

In the confusion there is one, calm voice, that of the protagonist. He watches the stampede—and waits.
Tranquila en mi recuerdo, astro, círculo, meta, lloras por las orillas de un ojo de caballo. . . . que no desemboca.

There is no guide to direct and help the scattered masses. They run helter-skelter, eventually arriving at the well housing the drowned girl.

Pero nadie en lo oscuro podrá darte distancias, sin afilado límite, porvenir de diamante. . . . que no desemboca.

Mientras la gente busca silencios de almohada tú lates para siempre definida en tu anillo. . . . que no desemboca.

Eterna en los finales de unas ondas que aceptan combate de raíces y soledad prevista. . . . que no desemboca.

¡Ya vienen por las rampas! ¡Levántate del agua! ¡Cada punto de luz te dará una cadena! . . . que no desemboca.

But the people are ignorant of their dangerous position. The well claims them and will not disgorge them.

Pero el pozo te alarga manecitas de musgo, insospechada ondina de su casta ignorancia. . . . que no desemboca.

---

292 It is always memory and the past into which the protagonist retreats to escape the reality of mechanical civilization.

293 A symbol of brilliance, of light, and a way out of the vortex. There is none, however.
No, que no desemboca. Agua fija en un punto, respirando con todos sus violines sin cuerdas en la escala de las heridas y los edificios deshabitados.

¡Agua que no desemboca!

VI

INTRODUCCION A LA MUERTE

(Poemas de la soledad en Vermont)

This section is composed of five poems. Angel del Río in describing them says:

This subtle presence of death, as if emerging surreptitiously from nowhere, becomes the dominant theme which undoubtedly forms the axis of the whole book. But now the mood has completely changed. The poet has probably by this time conquered the emotional crisis which made him respond so earnestly to the disquieting signs of confusion. His solitude is now more meditative than emotional; his language becomes clearer, his thought more meaningful. What he sees and expresses is still the triumph of death, of emptiness—although no more in a tragic masquerade but rather as a universal, moving, depersonalized force.

As in the first lines of the first poem, where he saw shapes or forms losing their sense, so now it is not only the forms but the essence of things that is being lost. As in a new chaos, every being strives to be something else. Death, totally dehumanized, is expressed in a general mutation of everything that exists, fleeing its own essence. The poet is not free

\[294\] Violins, usually associated with the great music and culture of the past, are now mere pieces of wood. They are without strings or voices and are exiled to "play" music from a scale of wounds instead of the musical scale. Lorca achieves a vivid picture of disorder and confusion through this metaphor.
from this sense of transmutation. Once more he appears as a witness of the upheaval. A further step and we find ourselves in total emptiness: "Nocturne of the Void." And further on in "Ruin," even the most immaterial, incorporeal things disappear into Nothing.

The recurrent motif of primeval creation is still present. The moon (death) presides over total dissolution, but grass and insects represent the persistence of life.

"Muerte"

A metamorphosis is described by the poet-observer: through sheer force, a horse becomes a dog, a dog becomes a swallow, the swallow becomes a bee, and ultimately the bee a horse. Next, a rose houses an arrow, and in its stem is a concourse of lights and alarms. The world is in total disorder. It is Death itself.

¡Qué esfuerzo!  
¡Qué esfuerzo del caballo por ser perro!  
¡Qué esfuerzo del perro por ser golondrina!  
¡Qué esfuerzo de la golondrina por ser abeja!  
¡Qué esfuerzo de la abeja por ser caballo!  
Y el caballo,  
¡qué flecha aguda exprime de la rosa!  
¡qué rosa gris levanta de su belfo!  
Y la rosa,  
¡qué rebaño de luces y alaridos  
ata en el vivo azúcar de su tronco!  


296 Note the vicious circle of metamorphosis: the horse emerges from the bee as it originally was prior to the series of transformations. The process is almost a providential transubstantiation.

297 The color of ashes or Death.

298 The stem of a rose is usually associated with thorns. Hence, even vegetal life is out of perspective before the "force" of mechanical chaos.
"Nocturno del hueco"

I

Throughout the book, it has become evident that the protagonist is pursuing a mission. His quest for identity and assimilation into the world of technocracy is obscured by the more powerful motif of his search for lost or evasive Love. The title of this poem is an important link in this search. By its very nature, the "nocturno" is a musical piece, usually a dreamy and pensive, instrumental composition

299The "puñalitos," or thorns of the rose's stem, have been "inherited" by the sugar in the poet's world of the unreal.

300The moon (Death) has no stables, and by extension, has lost the regenerating force of Christ (the manger). The concrete jungle is spiritually void.

301The protagonist, searching for spiritual aid, discovers that he, himself, is the only spiritual being amidst the chaos.

302Filled with contradictions: nothing can be big and small at the same time; yet, being big or small, to have any measured size, a thing must be visible. The world, then, is in a continuing state of metamorphosis.
which becomes a type of serenade. The selection is usually associated with "courting" or "wooing" a lady. Although there is no "lady" in Poeta en Nueva York, Lorca is and has been addressing a "spiritual" or abstract lady. He has been addressing the Spirit of Love.

The protagonist, in résumé, opens the poem by recounting his isolation and loneliness. He might well be asking for Love's hand but, in the context of the book, we should imagine that Love has been figuratively "stripped" of her clothing. Lorca can only beseech her for she is not visible among the grass, the symbol of life's seed.

Para ver que todo se ha ido,
para ver los huecos y los vestidos,
¡dame tu guante de luna,
tu otro guante perdido en la hierba,
amor mío!

The air, Love's voice, can give back life to the dead worms and snails. Love is the answer to the spiritual regeneration of this industrially oriented culture.

Puede el aire arrancar los caracoles
muertos sobre el pulmón del elefante
y soplar los gusanos ateridos
de las yemas de luz o las manzanas.

But Love does not come and chaos rules. In the once populated squares where people gathered, filled with joy and laughter, only the decapitated head of a cow bawls, as shapes, like those of the first poem, "Vuelta de paseo," seek the trail of the serpent.
Los rostros bogan imposibles
bajo el diminuto griterio de las yerbas
y en el rincón está el pechito de la rana
turbio de corazón y mandolina.

En la gran plaza desierta
mugía la bovina cabeza recién cortada
y eran duro cristal definitivo
las formas que buscan el giro de la sierpe.

Returning to the opening line, the protagonist again
entreats Love as if wanting to act as guide, in the style of
Virgil, through the void and sterility of the wasteland. He
is nostalgic for his youth and the Andalusian sky.

Para ver que todo se ha ido
dame tu mudo hueco, ¡amor mío!
Nostalgia de academia y cielo triste.
¡Para ver que todo se ha ido!

He again intones his anguished frustration toward
Love. But he is helpless, impotent, without release. As a
man, he wants the physical concept of Love, but she does not
appear. There is only the sterile silence of aloneness.

Dentro de ti, amor mío, por tu carne,
¡qué silencio de trenes bocarriba!
¡cuánto brazo de momia florecido!
¡qué cielo sin salida, amor, qué cielo!

Thinking aloud, the poet, in his frustration, feels
that if Love could appear for only an instant, a fruitful
union could be accomplished.
Es la piedra\[^{303}\] en el agua y es la voz en la brisa\[^{304}\]
borde de amor que escapan de su tronco sangrante.
Basta tocar el pulso de nuestro amor presente
para que broten flores\[^{305}\] sobre los otros niños.

Returning to the estribillo-type strophe, Lorca again
calls out to Love:

\begin{verbatim}
Para ver que todo se ha ido.
Para ver los huecos de nubes y ríos.\[^{306}\]
Dame tus manos de laurel,\[^{307}\] amor.
¡Para ver que todo se ha ido!
\end{verbatim}

Now the mood becomes hostile. The "void" has become
a crescendo of threats, preserving bloody footprints in the branches while the moon, always lurking ominously, reveals
dagger wounds in the dawn. Ironically, the dawn, usually a promise of light and relief from the "dark night," offers none of this solace in the automated society.

Ruedan los huecos puros, por mí, por ti,
en el alba
conservando las huellas de las ramas de sangre
y algún perfil de yeso tranquilo que dibuja
instantáneo dolor de luna apuntillada.


\[^{304}\]Symbolizes sexual evasiveness.

\[^{305}\]In Lorca, symbolizes children. For an extensive use of this symbolic concept, see Bodas de sangre and Yerma.

\[^{306}\]Clouds (as well as rivers) are filled with water. But the poet sees only emptiness, no life-giving water—only Death and nonfruition.

\[^{307}\]Symbol of fertility.
Nowhere and in nothing can solace and peace and tranquility be found: the earth is a void.

Mira formas concretas que buscan su vacío.
Perros equivocados y manzanas mordidas.
Mira el ansia, la angustia de un triste mundo fósil
que no encuentra el acento de su primer sollozo.

Throughout the search, Love, too, is on a pilgrimage for the "lost" poet. When he reaches his bed, he finds Love has already been there and it is too late.

Cuando busco en la cama los rumores del hilo
has venido, amor mío, a cubrir mi tejado.
El hueco de una hormiga puede llenar el aire,
pero tú vas gimiendo sin norte\textsuperscript{308} por mis ojos.\textsuperscript{309}

No, por mis ojos no, que ahora me enseñas
cuatro ríos ceñidos\textsuperscript{310} en tu brazo,
en la dura barraca donde la luna prisionera
devora a un marinero delante de los niños.

In desperation, the protagonist cries out to Love for mercy. He not only asks mercy for himself, but mercy for Love and the breeze as well.

Para ver que todo se ha ido
¡amor inexpugnable, amor huido!
No, no me des tu hueco,
¡que va va por el aire el mío!
¡Ay de ti, ay de mí, de la brisa!
Para ver que todo se ha ido.

\textsuperscript{308}Without known direction.

\textsuperscript{309}"Eyes are a frequent symbol for Lorca's lost identity." (Saez, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 110.)

\textsuperscript{310}Water, polluted with ashes, is another negative symbol, not the life-giving source.
The poem, divided into two parts, now picks up rapidly in tempo. The protagonist, knowing that he has again missed evasive Love, describes the sterile environment in which he is and re-contemplates the utter failure and fruitlessness of what is left to him: a dawn that is not a dawn. The nocturne is finished but not the void.

Yo.
Con el hueco blanquísimo de un caballo,
crines de ceniza. Plaza pura y doblada.

Yo
Mi hueco traspasado con las axilas rotas.
Piel seca de uva neutra y amianto de madrugada.

As in the passion of Our Lord, a cock crowed thrice to signal the dawn, and Peter denied Him. Here, in the protagonist's mechanized world, no one is present to deny Him--there is only emptiness.

Toda la luz del mundo cabe dentro de un ojo. Canta el gallo y su canto dura más que sus alas.

311 Even the horse's mane is ashen, the color of Death.
312 Lacking freshness and life. The grape is described as in the stage of decay, rotting.
313 Sexless.
314 The light of the world or vision of the absolute is so lacking, so negative, that all of it fits into the tiny space of an eye.
There is no hope of salvation, apparently, in this world engulfed in chaos. The poem ends on a dismal note of despair.

Yo.
Con el hueco blanquisimo de un caballo.
Rodeado de espectadores que tienen hormigas en las palabras.

En el circo del frio\textsuperscript{315} sin perfil mutilado.  
Por los capiteles rotos de las mejillas desangradas.\textsuperscript{316}

Yo.
Mi hueco sin ti, ciudad, sin tus muertos que comen.\textsuperscript{317}
Ecuestre por mi vida definitivamente anclada.

Yo.
\textit{No hay siglo nuevo ni luz reciente.  
Sólo un caballo azul y una madrugada.}

"Paisaje con dos tumbas y un perro asirio"

Angel del Río says of this poem:

\ldots{} it was the atmosphere of Sandaken, in the Catskills, that inspired "Paisaje con dos tumbas y un perro asirio." On the farm was an enormous dog, old and half-blind, which frequently slept in the corridor outside the door of Lorca's room. The terror this produced in him and his obsession with the disease of the farmer—a cancerous sore—appear unconsciously transformed into oneiric images.\textsuperscript{318}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{315}The chill of Death.
  \item \textsuperscript{316}Pale, the palid color of Death.
  \item \textsuperscript{317}Death in life. Those living in the mechanical society are for all practical purposes considered as the dead, not the living.
  \item \textsuperscript{318}Del Río, \textit{op. cit.}, p. xxxvii.
\end{itemize}
The Argentine poet José González Carvalho recalls a conversation with Lorca about the farm saying,

In the farmhouse . . . there was a man who was gravely ill, and a blind horse that drew water from the draw well. For Federico, the blind horse had the significance of horror.\(^{319}\)

Professor del Río also adds that

Near the farm, where everything seemed abandoned, there were several great pits that had once been quarries. The place, with its bleeding earth and skeletal rocks, had a desolate grandeur. It was, Federico used to say, like a lunar landscape. The water in the pits could not be seen; but one could hear its murmuring crash at the bottom.\(^{320}\)

As the poem opens, we see the protagonist warning a friend (the man with the cancer) that chaos is near and that he should get up in order not to be caught unprepared.

Amigo,
levántate para que oigas aullar
al perro asirio.
Las tres ninfas del cáncer\(^{321}\) han estado bailando,
hijo mío.
Trajeron unas montañas de lacre rojo\(^{322}\)
y unas sábanas duras donde estaba el cáncer dormido.

\(^{319}\)Ibid., p. xxxvi.  \(^{320}\)Ibid., p. xxxvii.

\(^{321}\)Lorca uses the word "cáncer" ambivalently in this poem: the first reference is undoubtedly cosmic, i.e., the sign of the zodiac. Cancer, astrologically, was thought to be "the only mansion of the moon," and from this it can be concluded that this relationship to the moon fits into the general context of the book, and as a specific symbol of Death, for which the moon has stood in all of Lorca's poetry.

\(^{322}\)Blood or outward vestage of violence.
El caballo tenía un ojo en el cuello
y la luna estaba en un cielo tan frío
que tuvo que desgarrarse su monte de Venus
y ahogar en sangre y ceniza los cementerios antiguos.

In the next strophe, the poet continues his warning. The howling of the dogs becomes a leitmotif and the danger approaches, closer and closer. The friend does not awaken, and is unable to see the occasion as other than a dream. To the poet, however, it is all very real.

Amigo, despierta, que los montes todavía no respiran
y las hierbas de mi corazón están en otro sitio.
No importa que estés lleno de agua de mar.
Yo amé mucho tiempo a un niño
que tenía una plumilla en la lengua
y vivimos cien años dentro de un cuchillo.
El aullido es una larga lengua morada que deja hormigas de espanto y licor delirios.

---

323 As noted by González Carvalho, a symbol of terror. One is reminded of the cyclops.

324 An obvious reference to the vagina (and the moon); symbolizing the sterility and non-reproductivity of the wasteland.

325 To obliterate the memory of the past, even the cherished dead.

326 Even Nature is "dead" in mechanical civilization.

327 His human emotions and sensitivity.

328 Dead, apparently.

329 For a long time.

330 It appears that, literally, the poet is confessing a previous homosexual relationship. If this is not intended, one may at least interpret the passage as an "unnatural" experience.
Ya viene hacia la roca.  ¡No alargues tus raíces!  

The poem closes as it began, the poet having failed to make his warning understood:

¡Amigo!  
Levantate para que oigas alar al perro asirio.

"Ruina"

In this poem, the protagonist continues his search for Love. But, his quest is not fulfilled. Love does not come; Love does not comfort him; Love does not rescue him.

Richard Saez has some interesting comments about the imagery of the poem and its meaning. My interpretation of the "grass" imagery as evidence of the persistence of life does not fit here. Saez sees an ambivalence, a metamorphosis within this poem.

"The grasses" of "Ruina" have the ambiguous character of being the metamorphosis into Waste Land imagery of both the Furies and the Eumenides. Like the symbol of the moon in the whole of Lorca's work, "the grasses" are destructive, demanding sacrifice. But they are also symbols of purgation. The prevailing tone of [the poem] is resignation to a purgatorial death.  

331 Symbol of sterility.

332 Lorca has frequently used "raíces" as a symbol of man. See Bodas de sangre.

Saez continues his comments by comparing Lorca and T. S. Eliot:

The comparison with the resignation to a purgatorial death in the second section of *Ash-Wednesday*, making an analogy between "the grasses" and "the three white leopards" of Eliot's poem, as well as between Lorca's "skeleton" and the "chirping bones" of *Ash-Wednesday* is very instructive:

Lady, three white leopards sat under a juniper-tree
In the cool of the day, having fed to satiety
On my legs my heart my liver and that which had been contained
in the hollow round of my skull. And God said
Shall these bones live? Shall these bones live? And that which had been contained
in the bones (which were already dry) said chirping:
Because of the goodness of this Lady
And because of her loveliness, and because
She honours the Virgin in meditation,
We shine with brightness. And I who am here dissembled
Proffer my deeds to oblivion, and my love
To the posterity of the desert and the fruit of the gourd.
It is this which recovers
My guts the strings of my eyes and the indigestible portions
Which the leopards reject.334

In conclusion Saez explains further the link between Lorca and Eliot with Dante as a type of intermediary:

In ["Ruina"] the functions of the "juniper-tree" (a rebirth symbol) and the "white leopards" (purgatorial)--and to some extent "the goodness of this Lady"--are combined in "the grasses." With the added knowledge that devouring is a variant of the descent pattern (Dante discovers Satan devouring his victims at the bottom of Hell), the significance of "Ruin" in *Poet in New York* becomes quite clear. It is the purgatorial descent to be followed by the resurrection in "Office and Denunciation." The "insatiable grass" also has its place in the vision of the Negros' paradise. Since the Negros are both the victims of the multitudes, suffering purgatorial death for the

city, and the race on which the hope of resurrection
is laid, "the grasses" is properly their symbol.\textsuperscript{335}

Saez's explanation of the use of the "grass" and his
comparison with Eliot's work (which Lorca read in transla-
tion), may help to elucidate the meaning of the poem. The
opening lines echo "Nocturno del hueco," as even the most
incorporeal things disappear into nothing.

Sin encontrarse.
Viajero\textsuperscript{336} por su propio torso blanco.
Así iba el aire.

The moon undergoes a metamorphosis into a horse's
skull (Death) while the air is seen as an apple which is the
color of decay, already rotting into "ruin" and Death.

Pronto se vio que la luna
era una calavera de caballo
y el aire una manzana oscura.

The protagonist now describes two powerful forces of
nature in battle against each other—the continual "struggle"
of land resisting the threat of being engulfed and sub-
merged by water:

Detrás de la ventana,
con látigos y luces, se sentía
la lucha de la arena con el agua.

\textsuperscript{335}Ibid., pp. 115-16.

\textsuperscript{336}The image of the "viajero," the verb "encontrarse,"
and the verb "iba," preserve powerfully the continuity of
the "search" of the protagonist.
Then "the grasses" achieve their new rôle of "angry
gods" requiring appeasement. To satiate them, the protago-
nist appropriately throws a "sacrificial" lamb into their
midst,

Yo vi llegar las hierbas
y les eché un cordero que balaba
bajo sus dientecillos y lancetas.

while the "first dove," archetypal figure of peace, flew
about, captured by a drop of the evil water.

Volaba dentro de una gota
la cáscara de pluma y celuloide
de la primera paloma.

The protagonist also reports that dawn, which has
heretofore been faithless to its promise, is again sinking
to its level of chaos, and now engages in a duel with the
rocks, symbol of destruction.

Las nubes en manada,
se quedaron dormidas contemplando
el duelo de las rocas con el alba.

Then the protagonist, acting like a Paul Revere again,
shouts his warning that "the grasses" have arrived. He
offers his hand to Love, probably to take her from the chaos.

Viene las hierbas, hijo;
ya suenan sus espadas de saliva
por el cielo vacío.

Mi mano, amor. ¡Las hierbas!
Por los cristales rotos de la casa
la sangre desató sus cabelleras.
But, only the protagonist and Love survive. And they must continue their quest alone.

Tú solo y yo quedamos;  
prepara tu esqueleto para el aire.  
Yo solo y tú quedamos.

Prepara tu esqueleto;  
hay que buscar de prisa, amor, de prisa,  
muestro perfil sin sueño.

"Luna y panorama de los insectos"

(Poema de amor)

The last poem of Section VI begins with an epigram from Espronceda's "La canción del pirata."

La luna en el mar riela,  
en la lona gime el viento  
y alza en blando movimiento  
olas de plata y azul.

ESPRONCEDA

The passage describes the background for the "song" of the pirate who is only at peace away from the world. His ship, the moon, and the wind are his God, his liberty. As we shall see during the development of Lorca's poem, the prominent appearance which Espronceda's images play in "Luna y panorama" become evident and justifies the poet's choice. The moon and the wind will permeate the very structure of the "poema de amor," carrying the ironically twisted essence which Lorca assigned to them.

As the poem opens on a contrary to fact statement, the
protagonist introduces ships that are engaged in the quest for spiritual regeneration ("hundirse tranquilos") and release from the turmoil of industrial civilization:

Mi corazón tendría la forma de un zapato si cada aldea tuviera una sirena.  
Pero la noche es interminable cuando se apoya en las enfermos y hay barcos que buscan ser mirados para poder hundirse tranquilos.  
Si el aire sopla blandamente mi corazón tiene la forma de una niña.  
Si el aire se niega a salir de los cañaverales mi corazón tiene la forma de una milenaria boñiga de toro. 

But always hovering nearby is the ominous chaos, and lurking in the vicinity are the destructive symbols from which the protagonist must flee to continue his quest.

Bogar, bogar, bogar, bogar, hacia el batallón de puntas desiguales,  
hacia un paisaje de acechos pulverizados. 
Noche igual de la nieve, de los sistemas suspendidos.  
Y la luna.  
¡La luna!  
Pero no la luna.

337 In the sea-mood which frames the poem, one should not forget the sirens and their mission as voices of doom and destruction to ships and seamen.

338 Like voices crying in the wilderness.

339 Symbol of the voice of Love.

340 Symbolizes innocence.

341 He feels like waste if Love does not beckon to him.

342 Ironic that man power is the method of propulsion.
A dejected and doomed poet depicts the "nadaismo" of the situation. Love does not seem to penetrate and wipe out the technological disorder. There appears little chance for salvation.

No nos salvan las solitarias en los vidrios, ni los herbolarios donde el metafísico encuentra las otras vertientes del cielo.

Everything is a lie:

Son mentira las formas. Sólo existe el círculo de bocas del oxígeno.

Among all of the chaos in the description which follows, presided over by the moon, the insects, the world of microbes waiting to destroy us, and the poet's lost Love, although in exile, is not the apparent metamorphosized form of the "present." This Love does, after all, exist and will not be conquered by technocracy.

Y la luna. Pero no la luna. Los insectos, los muertos diminutos por las ribera,
dolor en longitud,\textsuperscript{345}
yodo en punto,
las muchedumbres en el alfiler,\textsuperscript{346}
el desnudo que amasa la sangre de todos,
y mi amor que no es un caballo ni una
quemadura,
criatura de pecho devorado.
¡Mi amor!

Amid an insanity of sounds, Love's face (symbolizing
fertility and spiritual regeneration) reflects the fruits of
heaven.

\textit{Ya cantan, gritan, gimen: Rostro. ¡Tu
rostro! Rostro.}
\textit{Las manzanas\textsuperscript{347} son unas,
las dalias\textsuperscript{348} son idénticas,
la luz tiene un sabor de metal acabado
y el campo de todo un lustro cabrá en la
mejilla de la moneda.}
\textit{Pero tu rostro cubre los cielos del banquete.}
\textit{¡Ya cantan!, ¡gritan!, ¡gimen!,
¡cubren!, ¡trepan!, ¡espantan!}

The protagonist, once again in his rôle of chief
scout or town crier gives the alarm to flee the "plague" of
destructive forces let loose in the mechanical jungle called
civilization:

\textit{Es necesario caminar, ¡de prisa!, por las
ondas, por las ramas,
por las calles deshabitadas de la edad media que
bajan al río,}

\textsuperscript{345}Like a plague.

\textsuperscript{346}The masses of people without identity.

\textsuperscript{347,348}Products associated with required harvesting
or picking prior to destruction by frost.
por las tiendas de las pieles donde suena un cuerno de vaca herida, 349
por las escalas, ¡sin miedo!, por las escalas 350
Hay un hombre descolorido que se está bañando en el mar;
es tan tierno que los reflectores le comieron jugando el corazón.
Y en el Perú viven mil mujeres, ¡oh insectos!,
que noche y día hacen nocturnos y desfiles entrecruzando sus propias venas.

The insect-dominated landscape has gone mad. Love is again cautioned by the protagonist.

Un diminuto guante corrosive me detiene. ¡Basta!
En mi pañuelo he sentido el tris
de la primera vena que se rompe.
Cuida tus pies, amor mío, ¡tus manos!,
y que yo tengo que entregar mi rostro, 351
mi rostro, ¡mi rostro!, ¡ay, mi comido rostro!

In the miserable, insect-infested chaos of mechanical civilization, the protagonist, in his attempt to escape being eaten by the hords, is driven into a purgatorial experience replete with "fuego casto." This is a necessity if the poet is ever to experience a complete spiritual regeneration.

---

349 A previously used symbol of chaos.

350 In the mad flight, the protagonist leads Love deeper into the labyrinth. Notice the verb "bajan" two lines before. The flight is definitely downward rather than an ascent, which would imply release, escape.

351 Rather ironic when one considers that the poet has never really found his face: "Tropezando con mi rostro distinto de cada día," ("Vuelta de paseo").
Este fuego casto para mi deseo,
esta confusión por anhelo de equilibrio,
este inocente dolor de pólvora en mis ojos,
aliviará la angustia de otro corazón
devorado por las nebulosas.

He again tries to hide in the tranquil memories of
the past, his childhood, when Love was a flower in bloom.

No nos salva la gente de las zapaterías,
ni los paisajes que se hacen música al encontrar
las llaves oxidadas.

Son mentira los aires. Sólo existe
una cunita en el desván
que recuerda todas las cosas.

Returning to the present, he blames the moon as the cause of
the chaos. Then he points an accusing finger at the insects
as the poem closes with the moon retiring to her abode,
surrounded by destruction and desecration.

Y la luna.
Pero no la luna.
Los insectos,
los insectos solos,
crepitantes, mordientes, estremecidos, agrupados,
y la luna
con un guante de humo sentada en la puerta de sus
derribos.
¡¡La luna!!

352 The voices have not been correct. He has been led
astray by lies and false hope.
VII

VUELTA A LA CIUDAD

The poet has emerged from a solitary vigil which has proved fruitful. He has seen things clearly. He has had time to reflect on his environment and, perhaps, the meaning of the vortex. Now, in this section, he returns to the city to raise his voice against the useless and meaningless massacre of a civilization that has submerged the spiritual meaning of life for a preference of materialism.

Section VII contains three poems: "New York (Oficina y denuncia)," "Cementerio judío," and "Crucifixión." The section, then, deals with the city proper which "appears drowned in an inundation of blood: all living things--ducks, hogs, lambs, man--are crushed by economic multiplications and furor,"353 "Cementerio judío" with materialism, and "Crucifixión" with the longed-for redemption.

"New York (Oficina y denuncia)"

Richard Saez's comments are, again, most helpful in understanding the opening poem of this section.

[The poem] . . . is, in terms of the power of imagery and symbolic merit as well as the centrality of the intellectual and emotional pattern of the volume, the most impressive poem in Poet in New York. In it we have both the culmination of Lorca's apocalyptic vision and the end of his agonizing search for meaning and

353 del Río, op. cit., p. xxiv.
identity are discovered in acting out a willed ritual self-sacrifice. The sacrifice links the poet with the cosmic order, identifying him as the sacrificial victim through whom the universe is also given significance and, indeed, preserved. In gaining his own identity, Lorca is now able to name also his surroundings. He is not in a nightmare Waste Land but in a real city filled with real objects and people. He is suddenly able to look at his surroundings objectively without having to annihilate his whole past. He realizes the necessity for a ritual sacrifice similar to the primitive King-gods of fertility, in order to absolve New York from the sins plaguing it and restore it to new life.354

As the poem opens, we see a mass of mathematical images: multiplications, divisions, sums, each associated with one overpowering realization—that mathematically, whether by addition, multiplication, or division, the answer is always the same: blood.

Debajo de las multiplicaciones
hay una gota de sangre de pato;
debajo de las divisiones
hay una gota de sangre de marinero;
debajo de las sumas, un río de sangre tierna.
Un río que viene cantando
por los dormitorios de los arrabales,
y es plata, cemento o brisa
en el alba mentida de New York.355

The protagonist is no longer confused. His mission is not quite clear. Chaos (New York) is equated with blood, and it leads man's soul to Death. It is almost a liturgical announcement, an advent.

354 Saez, op. cit., p. 121.

355 Again, the poet proclaims that dawn in mechanical civilization offers no hope or release from the confusion.
Existen las montañas. Lo sé
y los anteojos para la sabiduría
Lo sé. Pero yo no he venido a ver el cielo.
Yo he venido para ver la turbia sangre.
La sangre que lleva las máquinas a las cataratas
y el espíritu a la lengua de la cobra.

He watches the results of the slaughter, the blood-filled trains packed with slain ducks, hogs, doves, cows, lambs, roosters, which arrive daily in New York. The babel of terror reaches out into the valley while the Hudson River flows on, inebriated by oil from the ships.

Todos los días se matan en New York
cuatro millones de patos,
cinco millones de cerdOS,
dos mil palomas para el gusto de los agonizantes,
un millón de vacas,
un millón de corderos
y dos millones de gallos,
que dejan los cielos hechos añicos.
Más vale sollozar afilando la navaja
o asesinar a los perros
en las alucinantes cacerías,
que resistir en la madrugada
los interminables trenes de leche,
los interminables trenes de sangre
y los trenes de rosas356 maniatadas
por los comerciantes de perfumes.

In a vituperative outburst, he scathingly condemns the people who are blind to their sins of omission, the ones who ignore their neighbors; the indictment is in the tone apropos to those who deny that they are their brothers'

356 The protagonist implies that he would prefer seeing the "rosas" left to beautify the landscape, giving off the "perfume" of natural fragrance in their beds.
keepers. The ultimate indignity, the poetic insult, is reserved for those who have forgotten the meaning of caritas: "Os escupo en la cara."

Yo denuncio a toda la gente que ignora la otra mitad, la mitad irredimible que levanta sus montes de cemento donde laten los corazones de los animalitos que se olvidan y donde caeremos todos en la última fiesta de los taladros. Os escupo en la cara.

Continuing the indictment, he condemns those who are, in reality, hypocrites, the "Pharisees," stagnating in their own purity but yet, like the others, lacking caritas, the essence of Love.

La otra mitad me escucha devorando, orinando, volando, en su pureza como los niños de las porterías que llevan frágiles palitos a los huecos donde se oxidan las antenas de los insectos.

The graphic, word-picture of hell is denied. This chaotic, stricken world of mechanical civilization exists as does man's inability to adapt himself profitably into it. The poet faces the reality of his environment:

---

The diminutive form aptly implies weakness and helplessness here.

The drill, a tooth-like destructive symbol equating with "the grasses" in "Ruina."
No es el infierno, es la calle.  
No es la muerte, es la tienda de frutas.359

We have experienced a miracle, an incarnation,360 a descent from the ideal into the real or lo actual. For the first time, the protagonist has been free to act. Before, he was a passive victim of the chaos.

Hay un mundo de ríos361 quebrados y distancias inasibles en la patita362 de ese gato quebrada por el automóvil, y yo oigo el canto de la lombriz en el corazón de muchas niñas. Oxido, fermento, tierra estremecida. Tierra tú mismo que nadas por los números de la oficina.

The next three lines have an interesting parallel with Eliot's Waste Land according to Angel del Río. He says of Eliot's poem:

Even the phrase construction and the rhythm of many lines in the Flores translation remind us very frequently of Poet in New York, and here and there an almost exact verbal analogy can be found as when

359Symbolizes hope and spiritual regeneration.

360"In transposing the ritual slaying of the fertility god from its primitive setting to New York, Lorca accomplishes a subtle reading of what anthropologists have called homocopathic magic as a belief in the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation, i.e., that God has become man or that man is God." (Ibid., p. 122.)

361Also symbolizes spiritual regeneration.

362"The 'capsule of air' of 'Blind Panorama of New York,' a Platonic and nonincarnate ideal, is in this poem incarnated in the cat's paw and in the person of the poet himself." (Ibid.)
Lorca says in 'New York: Office and Denunciation': "What shall I do now? Align all the landscapes?" which immediately brings to mind two lines—widely separated, it is true—of The Waste Land:

What shall I do now? What shall I do now?  
Shall I at least set my lands in order? 363

Lorca also wonders what to do about Love. That problem is still at hand for the poet must continue his quest with the newly-found strength.

¿Qué voy a hacer? ¿Ordenar los paisajes?  
¿Ordenar los amores que luego son fotografías,  
que luego son pedazos de madera  
y bocanadas de sangre?

And what does the protagonist decide to do about Love? In "Cielo vivo," he mentioned that he would leave the "dry rocks" and journey to the rivers. This he has done. Now he will offer himself, no longer sexually inadequate, no longer spiritually impotent, as a propitiatory victim, a sacrifice, to the chaos which has brought destruction, anguish, and suffering to civilization. His virility is more than vindicated. Setting lands in order is much less of a task than giving meaning to all of the spilled blood running without purpose through the city. Now, martyring himself, the blood will be fructified and the poet may become pure and be permitted (by heaven) to accomplish his goal, the meeting with Love.

363 del Río, op. cit., p. xxxi.
No, no, no, no; yo denuncio.
Yo denuncio la conjura
de estas desiertas oficinas
que no radian las agonías,
que borran los programas de la selva, 364
y me ofrezco a ser comido 365
por las vacas estrujadas
cuando sus gritos llevan el valle
donde el Hudson se emborracha con aceite.

"Cementerio judío"

The second poem of this section is an extension of
the poet's realistic outlook on the automated world.
Although religion is a part of the story, it would be foolish,
indeed, to assert that this poem is a religious allegory.
For Lorca, Judaism is merely a symbol of materialism, usury.
Richard Saez says that "the peaceful slumber of Christ's
children and their affirmative dream vision are contrasted
with the frantic searching and preparation of the Jews." 366
The "frantic searching" which Saez attributes to the Jews
could be applied to the protagonist of Poeta en Nueva York
as well.

The opening lines are startling, extremely visual,
conveying the crisis and panic experienced by the Jews.

364 The asphalt-cement jumble of technocracy.

365 A sacrifice must be consumed before the offering,
which it represents, will be considered acceptable by the
deity to whom the act is intended.

366 Saez, op. cit., p. 123.
Las alegres fiebres huyeron a las maromas de los barcos
y el judío empujó la verja con el pudor helado del interior de la lechuga.

"Los niños de Cristo" are dreaming tranquilly. Their visions are represented by a series of somnambulistic metamorphoses.

Los niños de Cristo dormían,
y el agua era una paloma,
y la madera era una garza,
y el plomo era un colibrí,
y aun las vivas prisiones de fuego estaban consoladas por el salto de la langosta. 367

Actively, the "niños de Cristo" row, that is, they are described as performing an integral function of the "ship," the Church. The Jews, who had once been the chosen people, now have only memories of their glory. They can only hope.

Los niños de Cristo bogaban y los judíos llenaban los muros con un solo corazón de paloma 368 por el que todos querían escapar.

"Las niñas de Cristo" happily sing while the Jewesses have only Death to occupy their gazes.

367 In Aesop, the grasshopper is symbolic of merriment, lack of worry, happiness, irresponsibility, etc.

368 Symbolizes hope.
Las niñas de Cristo cantaban y las judías miraban la muerte con un solo ojo de faisán, vidriado por la angustia de un millón de paisajes.

Mechanical civilization has not yet relinquished her dead. They, though dead, fear yet another death, more terrible than the previous one—spiritual death.

Los médicos ponen en el níquel sus tijeras y guantes de goma cuando los cadáveres sienten en los pies la terrible claridad de otra luna enterrada.369 Pequeños dolores ílesos se acercan a los hospitales y los muertos se van quitando un traje de sangre cada día.

Chaos is, indeed, quite able to deal misery upon the unfortunate people; nature, itself, is not spared the ordeal: everywhere the chill of frost (symbol of destruction) and blackness (Death) are visible. The grass is still lurking ominously, the dew has flown to safer places, and the air is heavy and difficult.

Las arquitecturas de escarcha, las liras y gemidos que se escapan de las hojas diminutas en otoño,370 mojando las últimas vertientes, se apagaban en el negro de los sombreros de copa.

La hierba celeste y sola de la que huye con miedo el rocío

369 The threat of the second, final death.

370 The season just prior to winter, the total death of nature which makes way for the regeneration of spring.
The protagonist returns to the Jew's plight. Awaiting him are snow boats, destructive symbols, which can bring but one overpowering fear to the intended victims: Death.

While the children of Christ slept peacefully, oblivious to the turmoil, the Jews suffered more agony. Chaos was upon them; there appeared to be no escape.

371 The "barcas de nieve" are equated with the "barcas de los cementerios."

372 Normally associated with the severely injured or wounded.

373 Even their "hope" is diminishing.

374, 375 Worthless items which even this gifted race could not make into profit.
y otro la uña de un ruiseñor que estaba vivo;
y porque la media paloma gemía
derramando una sangre que no era la suya.

The poem closes in a phantasmagoric episode, again contrasting the peaceful slumber of the Christians with the ultimate agony of the Jews: the severing of hands.

Las alegres fiebres bailaban por las cúpulas humedecidas
y la luna\textsuperscript{376} copiaba en su mármol nombres viejos y cintas ajadas.
Llegó la gente que come por detrás de las yertas columnas
y los asnos de blancos dientes\textsuperscript{377} con los especialistas de las articulaciones.
Verdes girasoles temblaban por los páramos del crepúsculo
y todo el cementerio era una queja de bocas de cartón y trapo seco.
Ya los niños de Cristo se dormían cuando el judío, apretando los ojos, se cortó las manos en silencio al escuchar los primeros gemidos.

"Crucifixión"

The third and last poem of "Vuelta a la ciudad" was almost excluded from the book due to the dereliction of a friend, Miguel Benítez Inglott. Having received two letters from Lorca requesting the manuscript, Benítez did not forward it to the poet for reasons which he assigns in some introductory notes to a separate publishing of the poem by Imprenta Ortega, Las Palmas, in 1950. The background of the

\textsuperscript{376}Ever present to supervise Death and destruction.
\textsuperscript{377}Destructive symbol.
"missing poem" begins with a letter from García Lorca to don Miguel Benítez dated August, 1935:

[Madrid, Agosto, 1935.]

Sr. D. Miguel Benítez.

Queridísimo Miguel: Estoy poniendo a máquina mi libro de Nueva York para darlo a las prensas el próximo mes de octubre; te ruego encarecidamente me mandes a vuelta de correo el poema "Crucifixión" puesto que tú eres el único que lo tienes y yo me quedé sin copia. Desde luego irá en el libro dedicado a ti.

Por primera vez en mi vida dicto una carta que está escrita por mi secretario.


FEDERICO.

Contesta de verdad a Alcalá, 102.378

Lorca's letter did not receive a reply, and he was forced to write a second letter requesting the poem:

[Madrid, 14 de agosto de 1935.]

Querido Miguel: Hace unos días te escribí una carta rogándote me envíarés mi poema "Crucifixión," que guardas tú. Como no he recibido contestación, te lo vuelvo a recordar, suplicándote no dejes de hacerlo, pues es de los poemas más interesantes del libro y no quiero que se pierda.

Recibe un abrazo muy fuerte de

FEDERICO.

¿Tienes tú también un poema que se llama "Pequeño poema infinito"?379

For fifteen years editions of Poeta en Nueva York appeared without "Crucifixión" included, due either to the unavailability of the manuscript or through unawareness of its omission. Arturo del Hoyo of Editorial Aguilar states emphatically that Lorca did not intend the poem to be included in the book; he cites an extant letter which contradicts the two letters written to don Miguel Benitez, reserving the poem for inclusion in a subsequent work.\(^{380}\)

This decision seems to have been relegated not by choice on Lorca's part, however, as don Miguel's notes are quite clear:

> Federico made me a present of the original pencil-script, on the occasion of his stay in Barcelona. I kept it, according to my custom, in a copy of one of his books. When he asked me for the manuscript—as the letters reproduced here testify—I could find it nowhere. When the civil war was at an end, I resumed by search for it eagerly. I had moved to Madrid during the first days of August (1936), leaving all my books in Barcelona. Not until the May of 1939 did I have access to them again, and one day, between the pages of Romancero gitano, I discovered the manuscript, which is now a relic.

> Later, in the Canary Islands, I mislaid it again by some odd chance: until I began to believe—Heaven forgive me!—that someone had made off with it. And then, another fine day, between the leaves of the very same Romancero, I had the pleasure of finding the precious manuscript that, more recently, since I know my own days to be numbered, I have passed on to another fine poet who shares my veneration for the memory of Federico and my admiration for his work—Augustin Millares Sall.\(^{381}\)

As the third and final poem of Section VII, Angel del

---


\(^{381}\)Ibid., pp. 188-89.
Rio remarks of "Crucifixión," that "independently of the external reasons, . . . it is evident that it fits perfectly into the pattern of the book where it has been placed."382

As the poem begins, we are struck with the cessation of movement of the entire universe so that we may bear witness to an act of cosmic proportion: the crucifixion!

La luna pudo detenerse al fin por la curva blanquísim de los caballos.
Un rayo de luz violenta383 que se escapaba de la herida proyectó en el cielo el instante de la circuncisión de un niño muerto.384

The next twenty-one lines paint a vivid picture of the chaos after Christ's crucifixion, not in Biblical terms, however. The angels, with their chalices, try to catch the precious blood of the "redeemer," the sacrificial victim, but they remain empty; the blood must reach the earth in order that the sacrifice will not have been in vain.

La sangre bajaba por el monte y los ángeles la buscaban,
pero los cálices eran de viento y al fin llenaba los zapatos.385
Cojos perros fumaban sus pipas y un olor de cuero caliente ponía grises los labios redondos de los que vomitaban en las esquinas.

382 del Río, op. cit., p. xxiv.
383 The ray of light symbolizes redemption.
384 Spiritual purification.
385 The poet indicates that the sacrificial blood has, indeed, spread across the earth.
Y llegaban largos alaridos por el Sur de la noche seca.
Era que la luna quemaba con sus bujías el falo de los caballos.

Within this nihilistic scene, a tailor, specializing in purple, evokes the garments worn by statues ("las tres santas") during Lent and until midway during the service of Holy Saturday. The color not only symbolizes Christ's cloak, in which he was mocked at the trial, but also mourning and penance.

Un sastre especialista en púrpura había encerrado a las tres santas mujeres y les enseñaba una calavera por los vidrios de la ventana. Las tres en el arrabal rodeaban a un camello blanco que lloraba porque al alba tenía que pasar sin remedio por el ojo de una aguja.

Again, Saez's comments on the poem:

... the cross, the nails, and the thorns all seem to betoken a return to the nihilism of the earlier poems. However, although in the poem there is no mention of Christ, he appears metamorphosed in the cow, who effects his role of propitiatory sacrifice. The frightened horror of the Pharisees at the milk-filled dregs of the cow, gaining an affirmative significance when it wets the feet of the Pharisees, can be understood as horror at the reality of the Incarnation.386

Lorca's Spanish seems to be even more ecclesiastical when contrasted with Saez's English:

386Saez, _op. cit._, p. 124.
¡Oh cruz! ¡Oh clavos! ¡Oh espina!
¡Oh espina clavada en el hueso hasta que se oxiden los planetas!\(^{387}\)
Como nadie volvía la cabeza, el cielo pudo desnudarse. Entonces se oyó la gran voz\(^{388}\) los fariseos dijeron:
Esa maldita vaca tiene las tetas llenas de leche.
La muchedumbre cerraba las puertas y la lluvia bajaba por las calles decidida a mojar el corazón mientras la tarde se puso turbia\(^{389}\) de latidos y leñadores y la oscura ciudad agonizaba bajo el martillo\(^{390}\) de los carpinteros.

Completing his observations on the poem, Saez says:

The power to believe in the Incarnation is symbolic of the divine grace of the Incarnation itself, and immediately frees the poet from the inadequacies to which his disbelief had bound him. The moment at which the blood of Christ or the sacrificial cow is spilt, is known to be the moment of our salvation. The destructive gestures of the poem . . . are redeemed. The horses' burns are symbolically washed with water and the poem closes with the resurrection of the butterflies which was prophesied in "Unsleeping City."\(^{391}\)

Lorca's poetry again is more impressive than Saez's prose:

Esa maldita vaca tiene las tetas llenas de perdigones,

\(^{387}\)The act of crucifixion, the sacrifice, provides the chance for redemption and release from the "limbo" until time immemorial.

\(^{388}\)"Eli, eli, llama sabachtani," the words of Christ prior to giving up His Spirit.

\(^{389}\)According to the Bible, when Christ died on Calvary, the earth trembled and the sky darkened; people fled in terror, hiding behind locked doors, many now realizing that it was, indeed, the Son of God Who had been crucified.

\(^{390}\)Perhaps, lightening bolts.

\(^{391}\)Ibid.
dijeron los fariseos.
Pero la sangre mojó sus pies y los espíritus inmundos
estrellaban ampollas de laguna sobre las paredes del templo.
Se supo el momento preciso de la salvación de nuestra vida
porque la luna lavó con agua las quemaduras de los caballos
y no la niña viva que callaron en la arena.
Entonces salieron los fríos cantando sus canciones y las ranas encendieron sus lumbres en la doble orilla del río.
Esa maldita vaca, maldita, maldita no nos dejará dormir, dijeron los fariseos, y se alejaron a sus casas por el tumulto de la calle dando empujones a los borrachos y escupiendo sal de los sacrificios mientras la sangre los seguía con un balido de cordero.

Fue entonces y la tierra despertó arrojando temblorosos ríos de polilla.

VIII

DOS ODAS

Following the "redemption-crucifixion," we are led by the poet into still another labyrinth of his vision, the two "odas" which comprise Section VIII of the book. Both are powerful poems, packed with energy. The first, "Grito hacia Roma," unveils a résumé of the New York chaos, word by word, line by line, as a sort of dogma or theologie. Professor

392 Baptism.

393 The reawakening (rebirth) of the earth from the chaotic grasp of automation.

394 Symbolic of those seeking light, truth.
del Rio sees this section as containing the two most powerful poems in the book, the first in which "he . . . [the poet] climbs the highest tower so that his shouting may be heard, and . . . he hurls to the winds a potent indictment in which the betrayal of the spirit of Christianity is mixed with a prophetic vision of human slavery and war." The second ode "redefines the ambiguous nature of sacrifice" encountered in "Oficina y denuncia" in a tension between natural love and homosexuality.

"Grito hacia Roma"

(Desde la torre de Crysler Building)

The poem opens with images of the destruction and doom which have descended on the city and prophesies that the chaos will continue to descend in the future. We see essentially the same types of destructive symbols as were used in previous poems of the book: "tiburones," "agujas," "mundos enemigos"; and, an added attraction of what is to come: "amores cubiertos de gusanos," symbolizing perverted Love of the homosexuals. The mood is less fanatical than before, somewhat as if the protagonist were summarizing a medical diagnosis in the professional monotone used by those long used to the grim, broken world of a hospital emergency room.

395del Rio, loc. cit.  396Saez, loc. cit.
Manzanas levemente heridas
por los finos espadines de plata,
nubes rasgadas por una mano de coral
que lleva en el dorso una almendra de fuego,
peces de arsénico como tiburones,
tiburones como gotas de llanto para cegar una
multitud,
rosas que hieren
y agujas instaladas en los caños de la sangre,
mundos enemigos y amores cubiertos de gusanos
caerán sobre ti. Caerán sobre la gran cúpula
que untan de aceite las lenguas militares
donde un hombre se orina en una deslumbrante paloma
y escape carbón machacado
rodeado de miles de campanillas.

The protagonist now reminds us of the sacrificial
death of Christ (the bread and wine or act of transubstantia-
tion), the cow whose udders were filled with milk and pierced
with bird-shot, and the sacrifice in which the poet, himself,
was the propitiatory victim. Lacking, however, in the miles
of "civilization" which stretch out under the poet's view
from the tower, are any real avenues by which the dead may
approach their redeemed life.

Porque ya no hay quien reparta el pan ni el vino,
ni quien cultive hierbas en la boca del muerto,397
ni quien abra los linos del reposo,398

397 "A reference to primitive rituals, like those
described by Frazer, in which the straw effigy representing
the Spirit of Vegetation was watered after it had been sym-
bolically murdered, in order that new life spring from the
sacrificial victim. We are reminded particularly of Egyptian
ceremonies of sowing, in which an effigy of Osiris was buried
with the seed of corn, in order that at the time of harvest
the seed would seem to be sprouting from the body of Osiris." (Ibid., p. 127.)

398 "Again, a symbol of resurrection, associated with
Egyptian ceremonies of burial. The unwinding of the linen
cloths metaphorically represents the doors opening up into
resurrected life." (Ibid.)
There are only blacksmiths forging chains, symbols of incarceration and lack of freedom; carpenters who construct coffins without crosses (total death); all are simultaneously metaphorical representations of the chaotic society inhabiting the industrial community.

The dove ("la paloma"), a symbol of purity which is necessary for the attainment of spiritual regeneration and, as it were, sanctifying grace which the protagonist has so doggedly sought, will not be recognized unless a purgatorial experience is achieved; perhaps, forcing leprosy into the blood stream will be sufficient for this purpose and

399 "Fertility gods were slain because the mythical consciousness of primitive people regarded everything as divine, or animated, and when the corn or wheat was cut down with the scythe its spirit was rendered homeless and was believed to inhabit some human or animal. This divine animal or person, here the elephant, henceforth embodied the Spirit of Vegetation and had to be slain to release it for next year's crop." (Ibid.)

400 Without the cross, there is no chance for spiritual regeneration for those who know the truth and wilfully ignore it.

401 Those who, like Judas, have despaired: the "unforgivable" sin.
accomplish the destruction of materialism ("anillos y teléfonos de diamante") which blocks the protagonist's way.

El hombre que desprecia la paloma debía hablar, debía gritar desnudo entre las columnas, y ponerse una inyección para adquirir la lepra y llorar un llanto tan terrible que disolviera sus anillos y sus teléfonos de diamante.

But for the present, man ignores the "mystery," rebirth ("el gemido de la parturienta"), and the life-giving water (Baptism), and the sacrifice of the lamb, i.e., symbolic of the previous poem "Crucifixión."

Pero el hombre vestido de blanco ignora el misterio de la espiga, ignora el gemido de la parturienta, ignora que la moneda quema el beso de prodigio y da la sangre del cordero al pico idiota del faisán.

The masters show from where the "marvelous light" comes. However, the vision is defiled with a series of images which, by now, are quite familiar. We notice, too, that the protagonist tells us "love has no place" under these images. But, an old man with translucent hands (symbol of a purgatorial purification) tells us that in a later time, Love will be restored and mechanical civilization will be

402 See Section III, "La aurora,"": "La aurora de Nueva York tiene/cuatro columnas de cieno."

403 Judas betrayed Christ, identifying him to the soldiers by a kiss so that they could take him; thus, Judas earned his thirty pieces of silver.
no more. However, that time has not yet come.

Los maestros enseñan a los niños
una luz maravillosa que viene del monte; pero lo que llega es una reunión de cloacas donde gritan las oscuras ninjas del cólera. Los maestros señalan con devoción las enormes cúpulas sahumadas; pero debajo de las estatuas no hay amor, no hay amor bajo los ojos de cristal definitivo. El amor está en las carnes desgarradas por la sed, en la choza diminuta que lucha con la inundación; el amor está en los fosos donde luchan las sierpes del hambre, en el triste mar que mece los cadáveres de las gaviotas y en el oscurísimo beso punzante debajo de las almohadas. Pero el viejo de las manos traslúcidas dirá: Amor, amor, amor, aclamado por millones de moribundos; dirá: amor, amor, amor, entre el tísimo estremecido de ternura; dirá: paz, paz, paz, entre el tirite de cuchillos y melones de dinamita; dirá: amor, amor, amor, hasta que se le pongan de plata los labios.

When the old man is hushed, the protagonist, according to Saez,

... announces the trial which must be actively endured before the mystery of the sacrificial ritual and the mysteries alluded to in the second stanza are understood. The Negroes and the whole race of men enslaves by civilization, or by the perversions of their own psyche, must announce their protest. It is to be announced from the stakes of their martyrdom and in the misery of their defilement. It must be understood that the earth gives its life to all, because all participate in the divinity. Then the secrets of Rome, the mystery of the wheat and of communion, will be

---

404 In the Purgatorio, Dante had to ascend the mountain before entering Paradise.
understood as the continual self-sacrifice of God for the perpetuation of life. \(^{405}\)

Mientras tanto, mientras tanto, ¡ay!, mientras tanto, los negros que sacan las escupideras, los muchachos que tiemblan bajo el terror pálido de los directores, las mujeres ahogadas en aceites minerales, la muchedumbre de martillo, de violín o de nube, ha de gritar aunque le estrellen los sesos en el muro, ha de gritar frente a las cúpulas, ha de gritar loca de fuego, ha de gritar loca de nieve, \(^{406}\) ha de gritar con la cabeza llena de excremento, ha de gritar como todas las noches juntas, ha de gritar con voz tan desgarrada hasta que las ciudades tiemblen como niñas y rompan las prisiones del aceite y la música, porque queremos el pan nuestro de cada día, flor de aliso y perenne ternura desgranada, porque queremos que se cumpla la voluntad de la Tierra que da sus frutos para todos. \(^{407}\)

"Oda a Walt Whitman"

The protagonist seeks out Walt Whitman for inspiration. This is ironical since Whitman's prophecy of the "glory of America" has, sadly, not been fulfilled. Instead, the robot-like culture has triumphed, but not in glory. It has become a "Paradise Lost." The poem becomes preoccupied with the world of homosexuals. Professor Alfredo Lozada of Louisiana State University subtly feels that, perhaps, Lorca protests

\(^{405}\)Ibid., p. 128.

\(^{406}\)The destructive symbol of the snow again appears.

\(^{407}\)"porque queremos el pan ... frutos para todos": Parody on the Lord's Prayer like that of T. S. Eliot in Part I, "Ash Wednesday."
against this world too violently, leading one to wonder whether Lorca, himself, might have been afflicted with this ignominious tendency.

The "oda" introduces two types of homosexuals: those who flaunt themselves, apparently proud of the fact that they are what they are—fairies, Pájaros, Jotos, sarasas, Apios, Cancos, Floras, and Adelaidas; the second type, those suffering a meaningful agony as female souls housed in male bodies enduring the torture of the divine purpose which they cannot understand. These types are the "majestic towers of virility" which Lorca associates with the person of Walt Whitman. "On a superficial level, giving the poem little merit, the "Ode to Walt Whitman may be read as an evocation of the glorious virility of figures like Walt Whitman and their dream of a democratic Utopia and a lamentation of the perversion to which this dream has been subjected."408

It is Whitman's silent agony, his stoicism, which provides the strength to endure what is one of the dominant themes of the book, frustrated Love. This agony is described fully by Lorca in the figure of a boy writing a girl's name on his pillow, in a transvestite clothed in the regalia of a bride while hiding in a closet, and in the rather haunted look of men who love men. The protagonist definitely associates these creatures with Walt Whitman, but by implication. He is repeatedly insistent that Whitman is not one of the

408 Ibid., p. 125.
perverts. His agony and the sacrificial overtones of it are clearly revealed in the analogy of a bird who has had his sex crossed with a needle. Figuratively, Whitman is castrated; this act produces his Apollonian beauty.

The poem reminds Saez of the eunuch priests of Attis. He contrasts this association of Whitman's Apollonian grace with the frenzied state of affairs of the homosexuals who lie shivering between men's legs, crawling in groups out of the sewers, and practicing masochistic rituals, sustaining beatings for the pleasure which apparently is derived therefrom. As we saw in the poem "Oficina y denuncia," the hords usurped thoughtless millions of victims daily, who, in reality, were divinities. The perverts, too, partake of their pleasure, unaware of the ultimate cost. These erotic acts will be the cause of future annihilation; but, there is no need to eroticize the plight of the victims. The point which the poet makes is clear: there is unity in the homosexuals' desire for satisfaction and desire which fulfills itself in fruitful expression. It can be said that Lorca truly has sympathy for these unfortunate creatures who have become an increasingly noticeable group in American society.

The opening six stanzas take the protagonist along the East River and through the Bronx, where he notices the laborers working with the symbols of industry: wheels, oil,

\[409\text{Ibid.}\]
leather, hammer. Interspersed in the scenes are the scavengers, the Jews who operate shotgun stores, selling anything, even "la rosa circuncisión" for the almighty dollar. The sky is obscured by tall buildings, the structure of bridges, block and tackle, until night falls and these objects go silent until the following day. Lurking on the fringes of the hustle and bustle are the shadows of the jobless, whose numbers will increase each day because of the mounting Depression. The description closes as the poet asks, Who is there to speak the truths of the wheat?

Por el East River y el Bronx,
los muchachos cantaban enseñando sus cinturas,
con la rueda, el aceite, el cuero y el martillo.
Noventa mil mineros sacaban la plata de las rocas
y los niños dibujaban escaleras y perspectivas.

Pero ninguno se dormía,
ninguno quería ser el río,
ninguno amaba las hojas grandes,
ninguno la lengua azul de la playa.

Por el East River y el Queensborough
los muchachos luchaban con la industria,
y los judíos vendían al fauno del río
la rosa de la circuncisión
y el cielo desembocaba por los puentes y los tejados
manadas de bisontes empujadas por el viento.

Pero ninguno se detenía,
ninguno quería ser nube,
ninguno buscaba los helechos
ni la rueda amarilla del tamboril.

Cuando la luna salga
las poleas rodarán para tumbar el cielo;
un límite de agujas cercará la memoria
y los atadizos se llevarán a los que no trabajan.

Nueva York de cieno,
Nueva York de alambre y de muerte.
¿Qué ángel llevas oculto en la mejilla?
¿Qué voz perfecta dirá las verdades del trigo?
¿Quién el sueño terrible de tus anécdotas manchadas?

In answer to his questions, the protagonist introduces Walt Whitman's person into the poem. It will be he who answers as the "perfect voice."

Ni un solo momento, viejo hermoso Walt Whitman, he dejado de ver tu barba llena de mariposas, ni tus hombros de pana gastados por la luna, ni tus muslos de Apolo virginal,410 ni tu voz como una columna de ceniza;411 anciano hermoso como la niebla que gemías igual que un pájaro con el sexo atravesado por una aguja, enemigo del sátiro, enemigo de la vid y amante de los cuerpos bajo la burda tela.412 Ni un solo momento, hermosura viril que en montes de carbón, anuncios y ferrocarriles, soñabas ser un río y dormir como un río con aquel camarada que pondría leopardo.

The homosexuals are aware of Whitman's presence; although Lorca defends him as "macho," they come from the rooftops, or, huddled in bars or leaping out of the gutters, whirling giddily from the effects of absinthe,—they recognize Whitman and point accusingly toward him.

410It is extremely doubtful that the image is apropos due to Whitman's homosexual reputation.

411Whitman's faith in a strong, powerful, democratic America has been corrupted by modern man. That prophecy is now a column of ashes.

Ni un solo momento, Adán de sangre, macho, hombre solo en el mar, viejo hermoso Walt Whitman, porque por las azoteas, agrupados en los bares, saliendo en racimos de las alcantarillas, temblando entre las piernas de los chauffeurs o girando en las plataformas del ajenjo, los maricas, Walt Whitman, te soñaban.

The pack of perverts seem to fall upon Whitman as visible testimony to the failure of his dream, his prophecy, of the disintegrated Utopia which America was supposed to become.

¡También ése! ¡También! Y se despeñan sobre tu barba luminosa y casta, rubios del norte, negros de la arena, muchedumbres de gritos y ademanes, como gatos y como las serpientes, los maricas, Walt Whitman, los maricas turbios de lágrimas, carne para fusta, bota o mordisco de los domadores.

¡También ése! ¡También! Dedos teñidos apuntan a la orilla de tu sueño cuando el amigo come tu manzana con un leve sabor de gasolina y el sol canta por los ombligos de los muchachos que juegan bajo los puentes.

Since the perverts have sought out Walt Whitman, Lorca declares what Whitman had been seeking:

---

413 Probably a reference to Whitman's "As Adam Early in the Morning," from the "Children of Adam" section of Leaves of Grass.

414 The "taste" of mechanical civilization.
Philosophically the poet warns man not to seek his pleasure in erotic experiences. Heaven contains the rewards; there, no one needs to live the "double" life.

Porque es justo que el hombre no busque su deleite en la selva de sangre de la mañana próxima. El cielo tiene playas donde evitar la vida y hay cuerpos que no deben repetirse en la aurora.

Whitman's agony, unlike the fertility gods who are slain so that their spirits may be released in the next year's harvest, persists without this chance for awakening and rebirth. His purity, which is necessary to his resurrection, has been tainted by the homosexuals.

Agonía, agonía, sueño, fermento y sueño. Este es el mundo, amigo, agonía, agonía. Los muertos se descomponen bajo el reloj de las ciudades, la guerra pasa llorando con un millón de ratas grises,

415 Compare with Whitman's "A Woman Waits for Me," from *Leaves of Grass*: "through you I drain the pent-up rivers of myself."

416 Symbolizes the concrete.

417 Symbolizes the abstract.

418 Represents industry and mechanistic culture.

419 Represents nature; the line is the poet's hope for a union between the opposites, real and unreal, and industry and nature.
los ricos dan a sus queridas
pequeños moribundos iluminados,
y la vida no es noble, ni buena, ni sagrada. 420

But there might be a remedy:

Puede el hombre, si quiere, conducir su deseo
por vena de coral o celeste desnudo.
Mañana los amores serán rocas y el Tiempo
una brisa 421 que viene dormida por las ramas.

The protagonist cries out against the acts of abused
love which thwarts the essence and eventual discovery of Love
which is his quest.

Por eso no levanto mi voz, viejo Walt Whitman,
contra el niño que escribe
nombre de niña en su almohada,
ni contra el muchacho que se viste de novia
en la oscuridad del ropero,
ni contra los solitarios de los casinos
que beben con asco el agua de la prostitución,
ni contra los hombres de mirada verde
que aman al hombre y queman sus labios en
silencio. 422
Pero si contra vosotros, maricas de las
ciudades, 423
de carne tumefacta y pensamiento inmundo,
madres de lodo, arpiás, enemigos sin sueño
del Amor que reparte coronas de alegría.

His voice more powerful, his speech more vituperative,

420 An apt definition of the concrete jungle.

421 Symbolizes the voice of Love.

422 Against discreet homosexuality, Lorca appears to have no grievance. The ostentatious, publicly flaunted acts are the recipients of his crusade.

423 Notice that it is not New York City, alone, but against all cities that he raises his voice.
his indictment mounts in a crescendo until the invective closes with a supplication for the pure of heart to shut their doors on the orgy.

Contra vosotros siempre, que dais a los muchachos gotas de sucia muerte con amargo veneno. Contra vosotros siempre, Faeries de Norteamérica, Pájaros de la Habana, Jotos de México, Sarasas de Cádiz, Apios de Sevilla, Cancos de Madrid, Floras de Alicante, Adelaidas de Portugal.

¡Maricas de todo el mundo, asesinos de palomas!424 Esclavos de la mujer, perras de sus tocadores, abiertos en las plazas con fiebre de abanico o emboscados en yertos paisajes de cicuta.

¡No haya cuartel! La muerte mana de vuestros ojos y agrupa flores grises en la orilla del cieno. ¡No haya cuartel! ¡Alerta! Que los confundidos, los puros, los clásicos, los señalados, los suplicantes os cierren las puertas de la bacanal.

The poem ends with an appeal to a time when the wheat shall again be supreme. This "kingdom" will be announced by a Negro boy, at some future time, when the present chaos has been obliterated under its own machines.

Y tú, bello Walt Whitman, duerme a orillas del Hudson con la barba hacia el polo y las manos abiertas. Arcilla blanda o nieve, tu lengua está llamando camaradas425 que velen tu gacela sin cuerpo.

424Purity.

425A word frequently used in Leaves of Grass.
Duerme, no queda nada. 
Una danza de muros agita las praderas 
y América se anega de máquinas y llanto. 
Quiero que el aire fuerte de la noche más honda 
quite flores y letras del arco donde duermes 
y un niño negro anuncie a los blancos del oro 
la llegada del reino de la espiga.

IX

HUIDA DE NUEVA YORK

(Dos valses hacia la civilización)

Although the book is essentially completed with Section VIII, the poet still must leave New York "simply to express the end of the voyage." In Section IX, we encounter two poems, "Pequeño vals vienes," and Vals en las ramas." The subtitle of the section provides a clue to its meaning: the poet, who has now abandoned New York so that it can destroy itself with its own machines, intends to flee toward civilization.

"Pequeño vals vienes"

From the context of the poem, it is obvious that the poet is, still, very much involved in his journey toward civilization. Following his purgation, he does not encounter an instantaneous emergence into a "paraiso." In one sense, he has the "permission" to enter it, but he must actively

426 del Río, op. cit., p. xxv.
seek it. Therefore, we find him in Vienna, a city deeply connected with man's cultural heritage and Western civilization.

The protagonist realizes that the past is dead, but in his flight, he re-discovers its remnants live on, resisting the ravages of time and the chaos of mechanical society. True culture and civilization are classical. This he equates with his "lost" Love.

---

427 A particle of hope.
428 An edifice which houses things past.
429 Whose function is to emit light: affords gazing toward knowledge-civilization.
430 Associated with the cultural past of Vienna.
431 Without question.
432 Proffers hope for spiritual regeneration.
¡Ay, ay, ay, ay!  
Toma este vals de quebrada cintura.

En Viena hay cuatro espejos
donde juegan tu boca y los ecos.
Hay una muerte para piano
que pinta de azul a los muchachos.
Hay mendigos por los tejados.
Hay frescas guirnaldas de llanto.
¡Ay, ay, ay, ay!
Toma este vals que se muere en mis brazos.

Wrapped up in the music of the waltz, the protagonist again drifts toward the refuge of childhood.

Porque te quiero, te quiero, amor mío,
en el desván donde juegan los niños
soñando viejas luces de Hungría
por los rumores de la tarde tibia,

---

433This cry is ambivalent: associated with the ecstasy of (1) pleasure, and (2) pain.

434Signifying the four points of the compass: North, South, East, West—all parts of Vienna.

435Where the past becomes juxtaposed with the present, lo actual.

436Nostalgia.

437Those who have climbed to the roof tops to "beg" for spiritual communion with the evasive Love.

438One should recall the line from San Juan de la Cruz: "Muero porque no muero," symbolizing the death encountered in temporal life.

439The previous line takes on sexual significance with the cry expressed in this one.

440Another death: time past exists in the present only in relation to memory.

441Children are usually fascinated with an old-style attic and are known to play "make-believe" in it—an association of the present with the past.
viendo ovejas y lirios de nieve\textsuperscript{442}
por el silencio oscuro de tu frente.\textsuperscript{443}
¡Ay, ay, ay, ay!
Toma este vals del "Te quiero siempre".\textsuperscript{444}

The protagonist declares his intention to "dance" with his lost Love in Vienna, accompanied by the strains of the waltz. The poem closes in a hopeful tone, the protagonist now well on his way toward spiritual regeneration in Love after his purgation.

En Viena bailaré contigo\textsuperscript{445}
con un disfraz que tenga cabeza de río.\textsuperscript{446}
¡Mira qué orillas tengo de jacintos!\textsuperscript{447}
Dejaré mi boca entre tus piernas,\textsuperscript{448}
mi alma en fotografías y azucenas,\textsuperscript{449}
y en las ondas oscuras de tu andar

\textsuperscript{442}A tension linking the secular with the spiritual.
\textsuperscript{443}Contemplation and meditation.
\textsuperscript{444}The waltz is now unquestionably an extension of the way to Love.
\textsuperscript{445}The expressed confidence of the poet in the future.
\textsuperscript{446}Source, fount: see "Oda a Walt Whitman:" "Tú buscabas un desnudo que fuera como un río."
\textsuperscript{447}Definitely a sexual symbol. See T. S. Eliot's The Waste Land and "the hyacinth girl."
\textsuperscript{448}This line ominously points toward the homosexual motif suggested by Professor Lozada, mentioned in Section VIII.
\textsuperscript{449}The "fotografías" symbolize that which is held captive from the past, both in the present and for the future; the "azucenas" symbolize the purity hoped for in the future.
"Vals en las ramas"

The second waltz of the section continues to confirm the poet's flight toward civilization and the reawakening of Love. The poem begins with an autumnal-type setting.

Cayó una hoja
y dos
y tres.
Por la luna nadaba un pez.451
El agua duerme una hora
y el mar blanco duerme cien.
La dama452
estaba muerte en la rama.
La monja453
cantaba dentro de la toronja.
La niña
iba por el pino a la piña.454
Y el pino
buscaba la plumilla del trino.455

450 The ribbons connect the hope afforded by the music of the waltz produced by the "violín" and the ashes from which it comes: "sepulcro," out of the chaos is hope for spiritual regeneration.

451 For a fish to be able to swim through the moon constitutes a major victory over Death.

452 An allusion to the Love-figure for whom the poet has been searching.

453 The second woman figure. Now, both secular and spiritual aspects have been declared.

454 A sexual tone has been interjected into the poem.

455 We have a sort of metamorphic progression working toward the last image: nightingale.
Pero el ruiseñor\textsuperscript{456} lloraba sus heridas alrededor.

The protagonist weeps like the nightingale while the leaves drop off one by one.

Y yo también

And

porque cayó una hoja
y dos
y tres.
Y una cabeza de cristal
y un violín de papel
y la nieve podría con el mundo
una a una
dos a dos
y tres a tres.
¡Oh duro marfil de carnes invisibles!
¡Oh golfo sin hormigas del amanecer!

Then, in a chant-type rhythm, the protagonist utters four lines of mystical sounds.

Con el numen de las ramas,
con el ay de las damas,
con el croo de las ranas,
y el geo amarillo de la miel.

The poem closes on a note of satisfaction and hope for the world.

\textsuperscript{456} One is reminded of the Philomela myth and also T. S. Eliot's use of it in \textit{The Waste Land}.
Llegará un torso de sombra coronado de laurel. Será el cielo para el viento duro como una pared y las ramas desgajadas se irán bailando con él. Una a una alrededor de la luna, dos a dos alrededor del sol, y tres a tres para que los marfiles se duerman bien.

X

EL POETA LLEGA A LA HABANA

"Son de negros en Cuba"

In the spring of 1930, Lorca received an invitation from the Institución Hispano-Cubana de Cultura. He departed New York in response to this invitation for a series of lectures in Havana. It is here that he composed the concluding poem of Poeta en Nueva York.

For Lorca, he was now in civilization. He identified with the familiar speech and customs. Not Madrid or Granada, he was, at last, back among people who could understand his tongue because it was theirs.

The "son" is a popular Cuban dance. We notice that

457 An allusion to "un niño negro" from "Oda a Walt Whitman."

458 Lorca, op. cit., p. 1864.

459 Ibid. 460 Ibid.
the Negro theme is dominant, included in this last of poems. The texture is one of joy; the lines move with energy and spirit. Leaving behind the automated society of New York, it is as if the poet is going home.

Cuando llegue la luna llena,
iré a Santiago de Cuba,
iré a Santiago
en un coche de agua negra.
Iré a Santiago.
Cantarán los techos de palmera.
Iré a Santiago.

We still encounter metamorphoses but without dire consequences.

Cuando la palma quiere ser cigüeña.
Iré a Santiago.
Y cuando quiere ser medusa el plátano.
Iré a Santiago.
Con la rubia cabeza de Fonseca.\(^1\)
Iré a Santiago.
Y con el rosal de Romeo y Julieta.
Iré a Santiago.

He entreats Cuba:

¡Oh Cuba! ¡Oh ritmo de semillas secas!\(^2\)
Iré a Santiago.
¡Oh cintura caliente y gota de madera!
Iré a Santiago.
¡Arpa de troncos vivos, caimán, flor de tabaco!
Iré a Santiago.
Siempre dije que yo iría a Santiago
en un coche de agua negra.

---

\(^1\)Archbishop Juan Rodríguez de Fonseca, persecutor of Columbus.

\(^2\)Ancient or primitive.
Iré a Santiago.
Mi coral en la tiniebla.463
Iré a Santiago.
El mar ahogado en la arena.464

The estribillo which has figured throughout, expresses the sentiments of the protagonist: he will seek refuge in primitivism, in Santiago de Cuba, away from the chaos of mechanical civilization.

Iré a Santiago,
Calor blanco. Fruta muerta.
Iré a Santiago.
¡Oh bovino frescor de cañavera!
Iré a Santiago.

---

463 The Island of Cuba.
464 The Island, a pitiful speck in the immense ocean, has "conquered" it and managed to stay "afloat."
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Federico García Lorca's Poeta en Nueva York is a book that will continue to be written about, discussed, and, most of all, read. It is acknowledged that there are several possible interpretations of the book. The one chosen in this study, "Rejection of Mechanical Civilization," does, as the explications support, conform nearer to the impact of the entire book than any other critical possibility.

But perhaps more revealing than the various themes, images, leitmotifs, etc., is the fact that all the elements of the style of the book are systematized into a dynamic and, simultaneously apparent, dialectic tension. This fact is the result of seeing the world, as it were, torn apart by duality and conflict. Many forms are taken in this cleavage: natural, moral, religion, birth-death-resurrection, cosmic, emotional--in short, passion; man, constantly at war with his environment breeds, develops, sustains, maintains, produces his inability to establish his identity within and of his environment. All these observations point toward a single idea: a return to primitive, destructive instincts let loose by a mechanized society, devoid of Love and spiritual Grace--a rebellion against established moral norms. This results
in a cosmic contrast: (1) man without moral restraint, and (2) the perfection of technology. Thus, man, despiritualized in mechanical civilization returns to barbarity. This barbarity produces a self-destructive chaos which is necessary for the creation of a new life out of the rubble of the old, a new life where both nature and spirit, together with man, find peace and harmony.

Though this apocalyptic vision is too intensive to be contemplated for long by home-keeping souls, it enlarges our limited awareness by admonishing us: there is a world elsewhere. The most creative minds are those capable of keeping that other world in sight; and it is by no means easy, given the more-or-less comfortable provincialism of our usual worlds. Marcel Proust, in a sort of Platonic parable, offered the explanation that artists and saints, discoverers and prophets, seem like foreigners when they appear in our midst because they observe the higher laws of une patrie perdue. To some extent, the old Republic of Letters may still survive in this concept of a lost or broken world. "The Republic of Letters," noted Alfred de Vigny, "is the only one which can be composed of truly free citizens, for it is formed of isolated thinkers." Such isolation need not mean sheer withdrawal, as in the protagonist of Poeta en Nueva York, but that detachment of the one from the many is the necessary precondition of all original thought. The relation between the poet and multitude is a perpetual ostracism. That, as we have seen, is a hard lot, and Poeta
en Nueva York has been a sad chronicle; yet it is not a disheartening one. The result has proved to be a vocation, reinforcing other gifts with courage and looking forward to a final triumph of independence over conformity. Not so much an impression of New York, the book should be considered an indictment of modern civilization. A verdict of "Guilty" has been delivered; the sentence is being served. While this is happening, Poeta en Nueva York will continue to have its meaning—for today as well as tomorrow, and that its enduring value as a poetic document of a troubled epoch has become evident already.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Public Documents

Statutes of the United States of America. Vol. XXIV.
U. S. Statutes at Large. Vol. XLII.

Books


**Articles and Periodicals**


**Other Sources**


Cummings, Philip H. Correspondence. October, November, 1966.
VITA

Charles Lloyd Halliburton was born in Shreveport, Louisiana, the second of four sons, to Ralph Eloe and Mary Katherine Smith Halliburton on July 31, 1934. He was educated in the public and private schools of his native city, and was graduated from Centenary College in August, 1955, with the Bachelor of Arts degree.

He saw service as a Captain of Artillery in Panama, Puerto Rico, and several islands in the Pacific. Later, he entered the Graduate School of Louisiana State University and received the degree of Master of Arts in June, 1961.

Mr. Halliburton has been on the faculties of the University of Notre Dame, Centenary College, Virginia Military Institute, and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He is the author of Colombia en la poesía and various articles and fiction which have appeared in journals in the United States, Spain, and Colombia.

He is married to the former Donna Lee Cavanagh of Westbury, Long Island, New York; they are the parents of four sons.

Although a Visiting Professor at North Carolina, Mr. Halliburton is presently a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Foreign Languages, Louisiana State University.

224
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Charles Lloyd Halliburton

Major Field: Spanish

Title of Thesis: Garcia Lorca's Rejection of Mechanical Civilization.

Approved:

[Signature]
Major Professor and Chairman

[Signature]
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signature]
W. A. Pickens

[Signature]
LeRoy Pooley

[Signature]
Harry L. Rubey, Jr.

[Signature]
Peter J. Lunardini

Date of Examination:

April 2, 1970