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Definition and Contrast of Love in the 'Corte De Amor' and the 'Sonatas' of Ramon Del Valle-Inclan.

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DEFINITION AND CONTRAST OF LOVE IN
THE CORTE DE AMOR AND THE SONATAS
OF RAMÓN DEL VALLE-INCLÁN

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# Table of Contents

**Acknowledgment**  
11

**Abstract**  
iv

**Chapter**

1. A General View of Love in the Western World  
1

2. Corre De Amor  
16

3. Sonatas  
71

**Conclusions**  
155

**Selected Bibliography**  
168

**Vita**  
170
ABSTRACT

In the Middle Ages there arose in western Europe a conflict between two moral codes, feudalism and chivalry. Basing his observations upon evidence from the Tristan romance, Denis de Rougemont in Love in the Western World describes the evolution of the passion-myth concept of love from this conflict and the Manichaean heresy of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The passion myth, which emphasizes suffering and death, pervades every art medium today and directly opposes Christian ideals of marriage as a permanent, happy union.

The purpose of this study was to define and contrast the concepts of love in Ramón del Valle-Inclán's Corte de amor and the Sonatas. In doing this, it was discovered that the influence of the passion myth is extremely important in both works. The frustrated, domineering women in Corte de amor demonstrate quite well the struggle between the passion myth and marriage. These women, whose desires range from narcissistic to sensual to maternal, do not wish to marry because they fear losing their lovers. This reasoning is a basic tenet of the passion myth—the conscious obstruction of happiness and the desire to suffer. But the women
in the Sonatas represent religious symbols. They are younger than their counterparts in Corte de amor and they are all dominated by the Marqués de Bradomín. On the part of the women in the Sonatas there is a decreased emphasis on sensuality and an absence of maternal love toward Bradomín.

In the Sonatas the Marqués de Bradomín is a man obsessed with the search for love. But for him love becomes a mixture of sensuality, satanism, sadism, narcissism, and death. While Tristan's search had been directed toward a union with the supreme Good through suffering, Bradomín's quest becomes a means of nurturing his ego by overcoming obstacles that have no meaning other than the fact that they stand in the way of personal gratification. Bradomín's goal is heaven on earth, a temporal, physical heaven. Valle-Inclán, in changing the reason for Bradomín's love affairs, has fused the passion myth with the Christian concept of love and provided us with the portrait of a selfish man whose narcissism leads him to a cynical old age filled with empty memories and no sense of lasting happiness.
The emotion which we call "love"—and which is so loosely defined by the dictionary—is probably the most complex and contradictory feeling of which man is capable. The term "love" is applicable to a variety of relationships, each of which may be conceived and described differently by the partners of that relationship. That it is a powerful emotion there can be no doubt. In a sense, "love" initiates the history of man—at least in the Christian tradition—for it was Adam’s love for Eve that induced him to eat of the Tree of Knowledge, thus incurring the wrath of God and the destruction of that perfect bliss which had been his in the Garden of Eden. But love, as we have said, is an elusive term. Man’s relation to woman has not always been what it is in modern Western society. It would be profitable to trace briefly the evolution of this most intimate association before entering into a discussion of Valles-Inclán’s concept of love as expressed in the *Corte de amor* and the *Sonatas*.

The modern Western notion of love, which implies a certain equality and respect between man and woman, was unknown to primitive man. Prehistoric man dominated
his woman completely. She was fit only for menial chores and childbearing. The tasks men were loathe to perform fell to her, for she was weaker and compelled by force to do them. Anthropologists generally agree that in the Paleolithic Age (50,000-8,000 B.C.) a crude form of marriage probably came into existence. But this type of relationship evolved more in the common interest of defense and survival than as a result of romantically conceived notions of a union between man and woman.\(^1\) We might say that among primitive men sex and love were on the instinctual level and not until the Christian era did they attain a conscious level:

Christianity revealed, perhaps even aroused, the notion of a conflict, radical, bitter, bloody, between the flesh and the spirit of which the ancients had hardly a notion. For centuries this conflict caused torments of conscience, and until the threshold of our own era, no essentially new element seems to have been introduced into this development of love… Until then, "sex" and "love" were on the plane of instinct. Consciousness of sex was scarcely aroused, or was at least hardly to be distinguished from life itself. There was a kind of radiance lighting up such instinctive acts as the motions of love which could elevate, enrich, and expand them, but did not become detached as knowledge, which barely distinguished self from its object.\(^2\)

It is with the coming of Christianity that the conflict between the flesh and spirit—which is very important in the Sonatas—was impressed upon the consciousness of man, and he has continued even into the twentieth century trying to understand and reconcile the duality
of his desires and needs.

One of the first important expressions of a concept of love is found among the Greeks, Plato in particular. It has been pointed out that although the Greeks were familiar with conjugal love, it does not seem to have provided them with inspiration in poetry or philosophy. Although the Greeks had a word for desire—"Eros;" for friendship—"Philia;" and for God's love for man—"Agape;" they had no word to describe conjugal love.\(^3\) The Greeks seem to have been more interested in the state or condition of love and the life of the spirit than in love between a man and a woman. In the Platonic concept of love, the loved one is only an intermediary between the one who loves and the attainment of the supreme Good. By contemplation of his beloved, a man might hope to catch a glimpse of the beautiful spirit which is the eternal Good:

Plato is not interested so much in love itself as in the vibrations which love causes in the soul, and in the incentive which this passion gives to the aspirations of the spirit. Love is the medium of ecstasy, a kind of intermediary or "demon," as he calls it, which inspires flight towards the intelligible world...It is a spark kindling a fire which then feeds itself...The loved being only exists in order to be constantly surpassed...one must pass from the love of beautiful bodies to that of beautiful souls and from the love of beautiful souls to that of the supreme and formless Good.\(^4\) The purpose of love, according to Plato, is to attain...
a passage to a higher level of beauty and understanding of the supreme Good. The loved one is only a catalyst, an intermediate stage, in this ascent.

Quite different from the Platonic concept is the Tristan or passion myth of love which came into existence in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Denis de Rougemont, in *Love in the Western World*, describes the inescapable conflict in contemporary Western society between passion and marriage, which he says is due to the influence of the Tristan or passion myth upon Christian culture. He states that the majority of modern novels and motion pictures propagate the passion myth of love. The reasons for the popularity of this myth, the substance of which we shall discuss shortly, is that it deals with adulterous, unfulfilled love that masks a longing for death. This notion is diametrically opposed to the Christian concept of love between man and woman fulfilled here on earth and symbolized by the institution of marriage. It is not happy love, says Rougemont, but fatal, suffering love which moves poets to compose and philosophers to speculate. But why has this tragic view of love gained such popularity throughout Europe and America? Rougemont suggests that the conflict between the destructive love of the passion myth and the constructive love of Christian tradition represents two extremes which are locked in constant struggle for dominion over the
mind of Western man. 5

Although a "myth" may be defined generally as a fable of unknown origin which serves to define or explain symbolically certain phenomena or mores of men, Rougemont specifies the sense in which he employs the term as designating the "expression of the rules of conduct of a given social or religious group" (p. 5). He considers Tristan and Iseult as typical of the relations between men and women in twelfth and thirteenth-century Europe. And the "laws" of Tristan remain in effect today in our society, though in a diluted form. Rougemont sees in a series of contradictory and puzzling actions in Tristan the conflict between two duties or two religions of the period, feudalism and chivalry:

The Romance of Tristan and Iseult brings home to us the antagonism which grew up in the second half of the twelfth century between the rule of chivalry and feudal custom. Once it is granted that Tristan's experience was intended to illustrate a conflict between chivalry and feudal society—and hence a conflict between two kinds of "duty" and even between two "religions"—a number of episodes are made intelligible.

According to the theory officially received, courtly love arose as a reaction to the brutal lawlessness of feudal manners. It is well known that the nobles in the twelfth century made of marriage simply a means of enriching themselves, either through the annexation of dower estates or through expectations of inheritance. In order to counteract these abuses, which led to much quarrelling and to warring, courtly love established a "fealty" that was independent of legal marriage and of which the sole basis was
love. It was even contended—for example, in
the famous judgment delivered by a court of
love in the house of the Countess of Champagne—
that love and marriage were incompatible...This
courtly loyalty, however, displays one curious
feature. It is opposed to the satisfaction of
love as much as to marriage. Whatever turns
into a reality is no longer love.(pp. 21-23)

Confronted by the confusing actions of Tristan and Iseult,
Rougemont concludes that they love not each other, but the state of being in love:

Tristan and Iseult do not love one another. They say they don't, and everything goes to prove it. What they love is love and being in love. They behave as if aware that whatever obstructs love must ensure and consolidate it in the heart of each and intensify it infinitely in the moment they reach the absolute obstacle, which is death...What they need is not one another's presence, but one another's absence. Thus the partings of the lovers are dictated by their passion itself, and by the love they bestow on their passion rather than on its satisfaction or its living object. That is why the Romance abounds in obstructions, why when mutually encouraging their joint dream in which each remains solitary they show such astounding indifference, and why events work up in a romantic climax to a fatal apotheosis.(pp. 31-2)

According to Rougemont, this passion for suffering conceals a desire for death:

Hence Tristan's inclination for a deliberate obstruction turns out to be a desire for death and an advance in the direction of death! But this death is for love, a deliberate death coming at the end of a series of ordeals thanks to which he will have been purified; a death that means transfiguration, and is in no way the result of some violent chance.(p. 36)

If the aim of this passion is death, from where did this concept arise and why at this particular time
in history? The answer, Rougemont believes, is the flourishing of the heresy of Manichaeism in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. This sect, mingling Celtic traditions with the teachings of the Persian prophet Manes, holds the fundamental tenet that the soul is divine and is imprisoned in terrestrial form—the body, which is Night. But the soul's impulse, its natural longing, is to seek the Light with which it has a kinship. Hence, sexual love is only a reflection of the desire for love of the Light, the eternal Love, with which the soul yearns to unite. Death, then, is seen to be the ultimate good, whereby souls may return into the Oneness from which they had come: "The fulfillment of Love is the denial of any particular terrestrial love, and its Bliss of any particular terrestrial bliss. From the standpoint of life, it is this Love which is the absolute woe" (p. 58). Thus the Manichaean doctrine embodies the concept that terrestrial or sexual love is symbolic of the soul trapped in human form and only through denial of earthly bliss may the soul find its way, through death, to the eternal Light.

But why was it necessary for these ideas to be veiled in such terms as those employed in the Tristan myth? Because, declares Rougemont, they conflicted with Christian doctrine:
But in Christianity, thanks to its dogma of the incarnation of the Christ in Jesus, this process is completely inverted. Death, from being the last term, is become the first condition. What the Gospel calls dying to self is the beginning of a new life already here below—not the soul's flight out of the world, but its return in force into the midst of the world. It is an immediate recreation, a reassertion of life—not of course of the old life, and not of an ideal life, but of our present life now repossessed by the Spirit...

Thereupon to love is no longer to flee and persistently to reject the act of love. Love now still begins beyond death, but from that beyond it returns to life. And in being thus converted, love brings forth our neighbor...

The symbol of love is no longer the infinite passion of a soul in quest of light, but the marriage of Christ and the Church. And in this way human love itself has been transformed...

Christianity has restored human love to its proper status, and in this status has hallowed it by means of marriage. Such a love, being understood according to the image of Christ's love for His Church (Ephesians, v. 25), is able to be truly mutual. (pp. 59-60)

This is the basic conflict: one religion asserts adultery, suffering, and death as the ultimate good; the other asserts a remolded life and blesses the institution of marriage.

Rougemont infers that this conflict between religions has come down to the present century, although we are largely unaware of the implications:

...Whereupon it may be inferred (a) that the passion which novels and films have now popularized is nothing else than a lawless invasion and flowing back into our lives of a spiritual heresy the key to which we have lost; and (b) that underlying the modern breakdown of marriage is nothing less than a struggle
between two religious traditions, or in other words, a decision which almost always we reach unconsciously in complete ignorance of the causes, ends, and perils involved, and for the sake of a morality which, although still alive, we no longer know how to justify. (p. 139)

These opposing trends of passionate love and Christian love, according to Rougemont, have become confused in contemporary thought and are mainly responsible for the breakdown in modern marriage:

In my opinion, the present general demoralization reflects a confused strife in our lives as a result of the co-existence of two moral systems, one inherited from religious orthodoxy, but no longer sustained by a living faith; the other derived from a heresy of which the "in-essence-lyrical" expression has come down to us in a form altogether profaned and therefore distorted... Now passion and marriage are essentially irreconcilable. Their origins and their ends make them mutually exclusive. Their co-existence in our midst constantly raises insoluble problems, and the strife thereby engendered constitutes a persistent danger for every one of our social safeguards. (pp. 288-89)

But the attitude toward marriage has changed a great deal in the twentieth century. In the nineteenth century a rather materialistic view toward marriage was prevalent. This is not difficult to explain if one remembers the scientific and industrial revolutions, and the various rebellions throughout Europe which gave rise to a powerful new middle class keenly aware of material wealth. There were, of course, certain social and religious obligations which
were, generally, respected. For instance, a girl would not marry out of her social class or religious faith, although she might marry for money and not for what she considered love. Doubtless the ideal of material security was synonymous with love in the minds of many women of that period. Such women as those portrayed in Pérez Galdós' *La de Bringas*, López de Ayala's *Consuelo*, and in the plays of Emile Augier and Henri Beque are representative of the influence of materialism. So far as religion was concerned, people were supposed to be married permanently, but this extremely optimistic view did not allow for changes in time and in the personalities of the partners.

Freud and the twentieth century have brought even more confusion into focus concerning the essence of love and the purpose of marriage by equating love with sexual instinct. Yet, as Clemens Benda points out in his book, *The Image of Love*, millions have expressed dissatisfaction with mere sexual union, however frequent, and this would indicate that a more complex union than sex is involved in the search for love. The attitude of modern man toward marriage must be reduced to individual choice, the willingness to assume that both partners have an almost identical concept of love. But the influence of the *Tristan* myth and passionate love, which
has spread through every art form, brings about a crisis in contemporary attitudes toward marriage. The very nature of marriage is its permanence, its constant union. The essence of passionate love, to which, states Rougemont, the Western world has been subjected since the inception of the myth, is the parting of the lovers, the eternal obstruction of their happiness, and the constant suffering. An awareness of the influence of the passion myth must be realized if the institution of marriage is to survive.

From the numerous accounts of adulterous relations in Valle-Inclán's *Corte de amor* and the *Sonatas*, it seems evident that the passion myth is strongly influential in both works. History tells us that Galicia, Valle-Inclán's native land, was the favorite refuge of Manichaean poets who fled persecution in the south of France. But Valle-Inclán was born into a Catholic nation, therefore the equation of love with marriage and the sanctity of marriage in the eyes of the Church were impressed upon him from childhood. Throughout the *Corte de amor* and the *Sonatas* we shall see the conflict between passionate love and marriage, but Valle-Inclán has added something new. If we suppose that the Marqués de Bradomín falls under the spell of passionate love—and all indications are that he does—
there is one important difference in the reasons for his restless-ness and constant desire for new experiences in love: Whereas in the passion myth Tristan sought suffering and death as the ultimate union with the divine, Bradomín makes himself a divinity and love the goal of this life, not a means of ultimate union with the Divine. In Manichaeism, the creator of Darkness had lured men's souls into corporeal form by tempting them with a woman. But Bradomín himself often represents Satan and is aware that he does. Valle-Inclán's education in orthodox Catholicism doubtless made him cognizant that this glorification of the flesh was, in its most naked form, not acceptable in his society; and he has Bradomín, at times, transfer the responsibilities for his actions to a generalized force of fate or evil, thus exonerating him.

The element of obstruction to love is present throughout the Sonatas, but the difference between Bradomín's obstructions and those of Tristan is that the latter desired the obstacles as a means of thwarting his love and propelling him toward death, which would provide union with the Good. Bradomín, on the other hand, sees obstacles as things which must be overcome in themselves, not because they are a means of reaching a greater Love, but merely as a manner of gratifying his egotistic and narcissistic desires to conquer.

It is in their direction, then, that Tristan's efforts
in the passion myth and Bradomín's in the Sonatas are different. In a sense, the Marqués makes himself the ultimate end of all his love experiences, but he is a mortal and the final realization that he is not a divinity and has not the capacity nor the time to renew forever his experiences provides the melancholy note upon which the Sonatas close.

To suppose that the complex character of Xavier Bradomín reflects in large measure the personality of Ramón del Valle-Inclán would be a grave error. But Valle-Inclán was rather eccentric and given to great flights of imagination. As a child he fabricated stories of his lineage, tracing his ancestors back to Alexander the Great, Napoleon, and whoever else it struck his fancy to have as an ancestor. These games seem harmless enough in a child, but they extended to his manhood. When he lost his left arm as the result of an infection in a cafe fight, he told several different versions of what had happened: (1) He was accosted by a bandit and gave away his arm rather than his money. (2) While hunting in India, he found himself faced by a man-eating tiger; to appease the beast and gain time to escape, he cut off his arm and fled while the tiger ate it. Apart from this vivid imagination, there is no indication that Valle-Inclán actually lived as
he had Bradomín live in the Sonatas. However, Sigmund Freud would say that every artist expresses vicariously through his talent that which would not be acceptable if acted out on a realistic level, but which is accepted and even lauded when sublimated into art:

The artist is originally a man who turns from reality because he cannot come to terms with the demand for the renunciation of the instinctual satisfaction as it is first made, and who then in phantasy-life allows full play to his erotic and ambitious wishes. But he finds a way of return from this work of phantasy back to reality: with his special gifts he moulds his phantasies into a new kind of reality, and men concede them a justification as valuable reflections of actual life. Thus, by a certain path he actually becomes the hero, king, creator, favourite he desired to be, without pursuing the circuitous path of creating real alterations in the outer world. But this he can only attain because other men feel the same dissatisfaction as he with the renunciation demanded by reality and because this dissatisfaction, resulting from the displacement of the pleasure-principle by the reality-principle, is itself a part of reality. 8

It is impossible to say if Valle-Inclán really wanted to live as Bradomín. It is definite, however, that by combining two great concepts of love, the Tristan passion myth and the Christian tradition, along with the influence of several other authors such as Baudelaire, D'Annunzio, d'Aurevilly, Maupassant, Valle-Inclán created a new concept of love as displayed by that illustrious and complex individual, the Marqués de Bradomín.
NOTES

1Hutton Webster and Edgar Westley, World Civilization (New York, 1940), pp. 12-14.


3Ibid., p. 4.

4Ibid., p. 21.


7Ibid., p. 12.

CHAPTER TWO: CORTE DE AMOR

In 1895 Don Ramón del Valle-Inclán published his first book, a collection of stories titled *Pemeninas*. This collection included six stories: "La Condesa de Cela," "Octavia Santino," "Tula Varona," "Rulalia," "Niña Chele," and "Rosita." In 1908 he added two more works to this group, "La Generala," and "Augusta," and published the collection with the name *Corte de amor*. From 1901 to 1905 Valle-Inclán's most famous works, the *Sonatas*, appeared. It was the *Sonatas* that firmly established him as a first-rate stylist of modernist prose. Both *Corte de amor* and the *Sonatas* present intriguing studies of man-woman relationships. In *Corte de amor* each narrative deals with a different man and a different woman. But the *Sonatas* treat the same man, the Marqués de Bradomín, and four great loves in his life. The concept of love and the circumstances under which the characters live are radically different in each story. Juxtaposed to the sensuality of the Condesa de Cela in *Corte de amor* is the sacrificial love of Octavia Santino. Contrasting with the narcissism of Tula Varona is the idealized love of Currita Jimeno. The four loves of Bradomín are as diverse in their
nature as the women in *Corte de amor*. But the men in *Corte de amor* and the Marqués in the *Sonatas* make an equally interesting study. We have a striking comparison when we place the arrogant, erotic Bradomín beside the childish, dominated men of *Corte de amor*. It is the very complexity of these various relationships that has prompted this writer to examine the works mentioned. Our purpose here is to attempt to define and contrast the concept of love found in each of the works listed and to note the parallels and dissimilarities in an effort to gain a more comprehensive view of the psychology of the relationships described as opposed to a merely stylistic study, of which there have been so many dealing with the *Sonatas*. It is thought that the study will be more effective by contrasting Valle-Inclán’s less-read work, *Corte de amor*, with his best-known effort, the *Sonatas*. The first part of this study, therefore, will deal with the *Corte de amor*. 
"ROSITA"

Perhaps the most interesting character in Corte de amor is Rosita Zegri. Valle-Inclán describes her thus: "una preciosa que lucía dos lunares en la mejilla."10 When Rosita meets the Duque de Ordax in front of the Foreign Club in Madrid, they renew an old love. The Duque is a noble who wears a monocle and gestures like a "polichinela aristocrático." Several times it is mentioned that the Duque displays a mocking smile when he speaks with Rosita. At the beginning of the dialogue it seems that he can control and defend himself against Rosita's coquetry, but we see later that he loses this self-control and becomes emotional.

Rosita proves herself a master in the art of coquetry with every type of ambiguous and vexing reply. For example, when she and the Duque discuss the death of a famous bullfighter, Manolo el Espartero, Rosita says that she loved the bullfighter and cried half an hour when she learned of his death. Curious, the Duque asks: "Fue tu primer amor, sin duda?" (p. 11). Rosita replies, "Uno de los primeros" (p. 11). It seems that Rosita either cannot or will not answer candidly and sincerely. She wishes to make the Duque suffer and become jealous. When the Duque tries to put his arms around her waist,
she says, "Vamos, hijo, que atentas a mi pudor" (p. 13). The Duque asks her why and she replies, "Porque no me gustan las uniones morganáticas" (p. 13). Why does she use this term? Is this only coquetry or is there a trace of scorn present? If one remembers that the Duque is a noble and Rosita is of lower lineage, a gypsy, it is not inconceivable that she enjoys hurting him because she knows that he loves her; it is also possible that Rosita resents her station in life because, as we shall discover later, she laments the life that her mother had led and her own life.

When the Duque continues courting her, she suggests that they separate if she seems so seductive to him. The Duque wishes to speak seriously but she interrupts him, "Me aburre lo serio" (p. 13). This phrase is a key to the character of Rosita. For her, most of life is a game, at times sad, but a game still; and she cannot cease being flirtatious, mysterious, enigmatic. If we examine her manner of addressing the Duque, we may see more clearly her attitude toward life. She employs terms such as "hijo," "mamarracho," "chiquillo," "payaso," words which designate the comical, the young, and the immature. Rosita is the eternal flirt, showing off her beauty spots and teeth, winking and answering in mocking tones. When the Duque tells her, "Verdaderamente
eres una mujer peligrosa!" (p. 13), she reacts in this manner: "Rosita se detuvo riendo con carcajadas de descoco, que sonaban bajo el ramaje de la Avenida como gorjeos de un pájaro burlón..." (p. 13). The image which Valle-Inclán employs is quite appropriate. Rosita has wasted her life in traveling like a bird and in collecting lovers of all types.

The theme of the past, utilized often in the Sonatas, appears when Rosita mentions that the past binds her to the Duque. He says, "Debíamos renovarlo" (p. 14). But she answers, "Es de muy malísimo tono restaurar amores viejos" (p. 14). Yet the Duque persists and Rosita weakens: "¡Ya oigo! Deshojemos una flor sobre su sepultura, ya a vivir..." (p. 14).

While the Duque speaks with Rosita, we discover the attitudes of both with regard to love. Rosita says that she has often deceived the Duque. Although she believes that the Duque knows nothing of her deceptions, he explains well his stoic philosophy toward matters of love:

El Duquesito de Ordax alzó los hombros, como pudiera alzarlos el más sabio de los estoicos:
--No creas... Unicamente que con el tiempo cambia uno mucho. He comprendido que los celos son plebeyos.
--Todas los hombres comprendéis lo mismo cuando no estais enamorados.
--¡Hoy quien se enamora!
--¿También es plebeyo?
--Anticuado, nada más. (pp. 15-16)

A little astonished that the Duque had not been jealous
of her lovers, Rosita asks him why he had acted jealously, if he were not in love with her. Ordax responds, "Por orgullo" (p. 16). Later he informs her that he had copied the foolishness of his love letters to her from the dramas of Echegaray. Speaking of love, the Duque exhibits a profound cynicism:

¿Qué, no somos todos engañados, Rosita?
—No.
—¿Tú has sido fiel alguna vez?
—No recuerdo.
—¡Pues entonces!
Rosita le miró maliciosamente, humedeciéndose los labios con la punta de la lengua:
—Que trabajo para que comprendas. ¿A cuántos engañé contigo? ¡A ninguno!... ¡Y a mi pobre Duquesito con tantos!... Ahí tienes la diferencia (p. 17).

Reminding the Duque of the occasion upon which he had sworn to kill himself, Rosita wishes to know if his actions had been feigned. He reveals that he had copied the gestures from Rafael Calvo and the dialogue from Echegaray. When Rosita observes, "Por lo visto, en la aristocracia únicamente servimos para cómicos" (p. 17), Ordax replies, "y para cómicos malos" (p. 17). From these comments it would seem that the Duque is not so naive as Rosita had imagined him to be; it seems that he has merely adopted this point of view toward love as a manner of defending himself against grief whenever he is deceived. It is much easier to say, "Los celos son plebeyos" and "El amor es anticuado" than to admit the pain that he feels when he has been betrayed. We
shall see that the Duque is capable of feeling pain in affairs of the heart.

As the conversation continues, Rosita makes a very interesting statement: "El único amor verdadero es el amor patrio"(p. 18). Ordax asks her about maternal love and Rosita speaks of her mother. She did not really know her mother. But she had heard her described as "una mujer de aquéllas que dan el olé"(p. 19). When she mentions her mother, Rosita crosses her hands and seems to pray for her mother's soul. Doubtless the lack of maternal guidance has been a chief factor in determining the direction of Rosita's life; and she herself has become one of the women among whom her mother was classified.

Rosita now begins to cry and there is presented the most moving and sincere scene of the story; the only scene in which the true sentiments of Rosita are revealed completely. Basically she does not wish to be the woman she appears to be on the surface. In spite of all her lovers, she has not found "un hombre de corazón," whom she has sought as her ideal lover:

--Sí, lo comprendo, Rosita. Yo mismo lloro muchas veces el vacío de mi vida. ¡Es la penitencia de divertirse demasiado, chiquilla!
--¡Ah!... ¡Si cuando yo me lance en mi camino hubiera encontrado un hombre de corazón!
--Te hubieras divertido menos.
--Pero hubiera sido más feliz. Créeme, yo no había nacido para ciertas cosas. La vida ha sido muy dura conmigo. ¿Tú sabes la historia
The Duque is intrigued by this expression of hope for an ideal love and desires to know the qualifications which Rosita would impose upon her perfect lover. This revelation of the search for a perfect love makes the Duque confess his love for Rosita. But she interrupts him, telling him that his passionate discourse is only another quotation from Bohegaray. In spite of what Rosita says about an ideal lover, it seems that she actually is afraid of finding him; or perhaps she cannot be certain of the sincerity of a former lover and therefore silences the Duque before he can propose to her. This conversation makes evident two important points: (1) In reality, Rosita is not satisfied with her life, although she seems unable to change. (2) The Duque does not really believe that love is antiquated; but he has been disappointed so often that he is quite cautious about revealing his true feelings.

There is a very important facet of Rosita's personality that has to do with liberty. She says that her future has been decided by a trip that she has taken to India. She explains her reasoning this way: "Pues, hijo, únicamente ver leones y panteras en libertad. ¡Es de aquello que las fieras me encantan!" (p. 22). But she had been very disappointed by the trip because
she had seen only tame elephants and she believes that the tales of tigers and lions are only for children.
In an excellent passage, Valle-Inclán skillfully describes this thirst for liberty and savagery that is rooted deeply in Rosita's soul:

The sentence "Ella era muy gitanal" gives an indication of this admiration of Rosita for freedom. The gypsies are a hardy people, superstitious and vagabond. Perhaps these qualities of the gypsies help to explain why Rosita admires the same attributes in animals. But this does not completely explain the attraction which these beasts have for her. It is not improbable that the most exciting quality animals possess, so far as Rosita is concerned, is their cruelty. Although one should not refer to the "cruelty" of animals because they act out of a struggle for survival and never kill needlessly, it seems that Rosita has this cruelty to a certain degree with respect to her lovers, and especially toward the Duque de Ordax.
We have seen that she has told him of the times when she had deceived him. This does not mean that she cannot feel true love for the Duque; but she cannot refrain from speaking maliciously on occasion, as if she received a necessary pleasure from causing suffering.

During her voyage to the Orient, Rosita had met and married the king of the Dalicam Islands, a gigantic negro. When this king meets Ordax, he offers Ordax a photograph of himself and has Rosita write something on it because he is illiterate.

From the qualities that we have seen in Rosita, we may observe that she is coquettish, cruel, fun-loving, and zealous in her quest for freedom; but at the same time she feels deep grief in not having found "un hombre de corazón." Her attitude is that life is a joke, a strong, cruel thing always fighting for liberty, like the tigers of India that she admires so much. At times she appears sentimental, almost compassionate toward the Duque; but this mood is never sustained for any length of time. When things become too serious, she interrupts with a laugh, a wink, or anything that can mask her true feelings. It is as if she were afraid of examining and meditating upon her life; as if she cannot change.

The Duque de Ordax is a proud aristocrat. He has suffered many disillusionments and always tries to
convince himself that all of this does not matter; that every man is deceived in love; that jealousy is plebeian, love antiquated. He has attempted to adopt these attitudes to protect himself from pain. But when Rosita speaks from the depths of her soul about her search for the perfect lover, Ordax weakens and expresses his true feelings, which are swiftly interrupted by Rosita, who accuses him of quoting Echegaray.

In resume, what is portrayed in "Rosita" is a flirt who has become disillusioned and a nobleman in the same condition. They both search for love and both are certain that they will never find it. He is of the nobility; she is a gypsy. In spite of the cruelty of Rosita, the Duque seems fascinated by her; she even lets him stand instead of sitting when he talks with her. But the epitome of irony is the fact that Rosita has rejected this aristocrat to marry an illiterate negro. In progressing through the Corte de amor, the reader will note how often the men seem dominated and treated as children and how commanding the women are.
"LA CONDESA DE CELA"

This story presents to us another married woman, Julia, the Condesa de Cela, who has been separated from her husband for two years. Julia has children and when the story begins, we discover that her mother has been working desperately to effect a reconciliation between Julia and her husband. As the story opens, Julia has just received a letter from her husband, in which he forgives her for everything and says he wants her back. Now Julia, who has busied herself with the attentions of a young Bohemian type, Aquiles Calderón, must find a way to end their liaison.

To understand the relationship between Julia and Aquiles, we must examine in detail their personalities, and, in particular, their attitudes toward love.

Aquiles Calderón is a young Bohemian who left America to study in Brumosa. After so many courses, he still has not been granted a degree and is forced to live by his wits. He likes to live beyond his means and has squandered his family's money. He now finds himself in somewhat the same position as the famous "hidalgo" in the picaresque novel *Lazarillo de Tormes*—cleaning his teeth with a toothpick although he has not eaten for several days. There is much of the romantic spirit in Aquiles; he has a great capacity for passion and
love. His appearance belies the romanticism of his nature:

Aquiles Calderón tenía la alegría desesperada y el gracejo amargo de los artistas bohemios; por lo demás era en todo un simpático muchacho. Su cabeza airiosa e inquieta más correspondía al tipo oriollo que al español; el pelo era indomito y rizoso; los ojos negrísimos; la tez juvenil y melada; todas las facciones sensuales y movibles; las mejillas con grandes planos, como esos idolillos aztecas tallados en obsidiana. Era hermoso, con hermosura magnífica de cachorro de Terranova; una de esas caras expresivas y que parecen acolatadas en largas navegaciones transatlánticas, por regiones de sol.

Lo tronado de su perfección, la expresión ensoñadora de sus ojos, y el negro y largo cabello, que peinaba en trova, daba a gran semejanza con aquellos artistas apasionados y bohemios de la generación romántica. (pp. 42-3)

And Julia, the Condesa de Cela:

No diiera nunca la condesa gran importancia a los negocios del corazón. Desde mucho antes de los quince años, comenzara la dinastía de sus novios que eran destronados a los ocho días, sin lagrimas ni suspiros, verdaderos novios de quita pon. Aquella cabecita rubia aborrecía la tristeza, con un epicureísmo gracioso y distinguido que apenas se cuidaba de ocultar. No quería que las lagrimas borrasen la pintada sombra de los ojos. Era el egoísmo pagano de una naturaleza femenina y poco cristiana que se abroquela contra las negras tristezas de la vida.

Era la gentil condesa de condición tornadiza y débil, sin ambiciones de amor romántico ni vahemencias pasionales; por manera que en los afectos del hogar, impuestos por la educación y la costumbre, había hallado siempre cuanto necesitar podía su sensibilidad reposada y placibey. (pp. 47, 54)

Valle-Inclán presents an excellent portrait of egoistic love. Julia is a woman to whom love means so little that she would not smear her eye-shadow in shedding a
tear concerning another person's grief. But this incredible egocentricity extends beyond an indifference toward the feelings of others. She wishes to collect and preserve her old flames in a sort of living museum. It pleases her greatly to invite past lovers to a tea or some informal tertulia. As they surround her, she seems able to breathe the aroma of bygone years, years that appear more exciting as she thinks about them because they dealt with forbidden pleasures. There are traces here of the emotions of the Marqués de Bradomín, which will appear in the Sonatas six years later. There is this same element of paganism, nostalgia, and a diabolical pleasure in forbidden things, sacred things, although it seems to this writer that the Marqués was never so apathetic or cruel in these affairs.

Julia has come to a final meeting with Aquiles to tell him the affair must end. But she does not suspect the depth of his passion for her. Valle-Inclán succinctly describes her sentiments toward Aquiles:

Por demás advertir que no estaba la condesa locamente enamorada de Aquiles Calderón; pero quería a su modo, con esa atractiva simpatía del temperamento que tantas mujeres experimentan por los buenos mozos que no empalagan, del afeito decir femenino.

La condesa de Oca, aunque liviana, era una señora; tenía viveza de ingenio y sentía el amor en los nervios, y un poco también en el alma (p. 54)

Julia has had lovers before Aquiles—among them a young priest—and she doubtless will have lovers after her
reunion with her husband. The phrase "...y sentía el amor en los nervios..." is most significant because it suggests the strong sensual craving which ultimately is Julia's concept between man and woman.

Another indication of this strong carnal desire is provided when Valle-Inclán describes Julia's youth:

El corazón de la dama no había sufrido esa profunda metamorfosis que en las naturalezas apasionadas se obra con el primer amor. Desconoce a las tristes vaguedades de la adolescencia. A pesar de frecuentar la catedral, como todas las damas linajudas de Brumosa, jamás había gustado el encanto de los rincones obscuros y misteriosos, donde el alma tan fácilmente se envuelve en ondas de ternura y languidez de amor místico. Eterna y sacrílega preparación para caer más tarde en brazos del hombre tentador, y hacer del amor humano, y de la forma plástica del amante, culto gentílico y único destino de la vida. (p. 54)

This religious element is a curious and recurring theme in this story. It seems that Valle-Inclán is suggesting a struggle between paganism and Christianity, a juxtaposition of the spiritual and the carnal. Julia did not experience in church what the other girls of her age did. It seems that she has not the capacity for worshipping the spiritual and the mystic and this has led her to make an idol of human, or carnal love. The phrase "...y hacer del amor humano, y de la forma plástica del amante, culto gentílico y único destino de la vida" would indicate that, for Julia, "love" is sensuality more than anything else. This hypothesis is
reinforced later when she seduces Aquiles and cries from physical pleasure, while he thinks that she is weeping because of her love for him. And when did she remember her afternoon rendezvous with him? As she was praying in church. Once again there is presented this incongruous combination of emotions and places. At the precise moment when this woman should have been repenting her sins, she remembers a tryst with her most recent lover. Still another reference to the sacred and the profane occurs when Julia, in Aquiles' presence, is burning her love letters to him. Aquiles cannot bear to see them destroyed and burns his hand pulling them from the fire. Even a woman as insensitive as the Condesa cannot help but be moved deeply by such a demonstration of passion. But her emotion in this case indicates something that might suggest a sentiment resembling true love: "Ante dolor tan sincero, sentía el respeto supersticioso que inspiran las cosas sagradas, aun a los corazones más faltos de fe" (p. 53). Valle-Inclán has previously described Julia as "poco cristiana," and now he classes her as one of the "corazones más faltos de fe." She has a superstitious respect for Aquiles, as if even she is awed by the force of a love so powerful.

Exactly what does Valle-Inclán mean when he uses
the term "corazones más faltos de fe"? Considering Julia's character, it does not seem improbable that the purity of Aquiles's love might be considered sacred while Julia's capricious attitude toward life in general and love in particular might be regarded as profane. She is unaware of the ability of others to feel deeply, to love, and to trust, to have something matter a great deal. Although it may not be orthodox Christianity to which Valle-Inclán directly refers, it is a type of humanitarian concern for others, a faith in human relations and communications that he describes, and which Julia lacks completely. It seems to be implied, however, that if she had more sincere religious convictions, she could not be so whimsical, apathetic, and cruel in her relations with her lovers.

In comforting Aquiles and caring for his injured hand, Julia at first reacts maternally toward this passionate, volatile young man. But as she expertly caresses Aquiles, her thirst for physical satisfaction takes over:

Hablababa animada por la pasión. Su acento era insinuante; sus caricias cargadas de fluido, como la piel de un gato negro. Sentía la tentación caprichosa y enervante de cansar el placer en brazos de Aquiles. En aquella desesperación hallaba promesas de nuevos y desconocidos transportes pasionales; de un convulsivo languidecer, epi-leptico como el del león, y suave como el de la tortola. Colocó sobre su seno la cabeza de Aquiles, ciñóla con las manos enlazadas y murmuró en voz...
imperceptible...(p. 56)

It is plainly shown that her concern is not for Aquiles, but for gratification of her powerful physical desire, further evidence of the egocentricity of her passion. As she leads Aquiles to bed, he tries to resist her, wishing to show some strength by rejecting her. But the temptation proves too much and he succumbs.

Later, Julia tells him that nothing will ever separate them, not even her mother. But this woman is so fickle. Had she not just moments before burned his precious love letters right before his eyes and given him a lecture on a mother's responsibility to her children? Valle-Inclán describes Aquiles' desperation as he thinks of the influence of Julia's mother. He envisions a tapestry of red Damascine silk with the figure of Julia's mother woven into it. To him, she symbolizes a severe, archaic past that seeks to snuff out his love for Julia simply to maintain an atmosphere of propriety and dignity. To avoid this rupture, Aquiles decides to tell the Condésa the truth about her venerable mother. Julia has always revered her mother as a paragon of virtue:

Merced a no haber sentido estas crisis de la pasión, que sólo dejan escombros en el alma, pudo la condesa de Cela conservar siempre por su madre igual veneración que de niña; afición cristiana, tierna, sumisa, y hasta un poco supersticiosa. Para ella, todos los amantes habían
Now Aquiles tries to reveal to Julia, gently, the truth about her mother and the misdirection of her respect and devotion for the old lady. He tells Julia that when her mother was Julia's age that she was probably having affairs just as Julia was now. Shocked and adamant, Julia persists in believing her mother a saint. Aquiles attempts to comfort her by saying that there have been precedents wherein a woman's lover died, she repented, and was later canonized. Unable to convince Julia of any unsavory matters in her mother's past, he bluntly states: "¡Bueno! Cuando la canonicen a ella (Julia's mother), ya habrá la historia que buscamos" (p. 58). It now appears that there is a double motive of love and vengeance that compels him to speak as he does. Aquiles urges her to stay, saying that her children will never know and that they will always consider her (Julia) a saint, as she had her mother until now. But the wound is too deep. In his desperation to keep Julia, Aquiles has allowed his anger to reveal the one thing that will separate her from him forever—the dethroning of Julia's mother, the degradation of a saint. He does not realize that he will see Julia no more until she turns to him and says, "Ahora, todo, todo ha concluído entre nosotros! ¡Ha hecho usted de mí una mujer honrada!"
¡Lo seré! ¡Lo seré! ¡Pobres hijas mías si mañana las avergüenzan diciéndoles de su madre lo que usted acaba de decirme de la mía!" (p. 59).

"La Condesa de Cela," in this writer's opinion, presents the most complex and intriguing portrait of all the women in Corte de amor. Julia is sensual, capricious; she has been discarding lovers since the age of fifteen and never gives any serious thought to them. She describes herself as lacking in character, bending to her mother's will and then to Aquiles', depending upon whose presence she is in. She realizes that Aquiles' bohemian type of existence is not in keeping with her background. But Julia has had so many of these affairs that she simply uses her lovers and, surfeited with her own egoistic amusement and indulgence, dismisses them, avoiding any repugnant sentimental farewells if she can because she considers them plebeian. In brief, Julia knows how to make love, but not how to love. Valle-Inclán beautifully categorized her feelings toward young Aquiles when he wrote that she loved him "a su modo, con esa atractiva simpatía...", which he later characterized as a rather common attitude of many women toward young men who do not become too attached to them.

But there is one person whose feelings do matter to Julia—her mother. For twenty years everyone has
called Julia's mother "la canóniga." Although Julia would eventually have ended her liaison with Aquiles, her mother's pleas and admonitions seem to hasten the break. Valle-Inclán tells us that the Condesa holds all her lovers in a position inferior to that of her mother. Therefore, when Aquiles stuns Julia by revealing a grave imperfection in her saintly idol, she finally gains the resolve necessary to terminate their relationship. The thought that in years to come someone might tell her children a tale similar to the one told by her lover shocks her into decisive action and a definite farewell to Aquiles. But Julia had come with the intention of ending the affair, and, moved by the young man's tears, had been aroused to fever pitch. After love's consummation she had sworn that no one would ever separate them—not even her mother. As Julia stands in the doorway bidding Aquiles farewell and forcefully resisting his efforts to come near her, one can hardly help but wonder—considering the fickle and passionate nature of this woman—whether she is leaving for good or whether she will later return to Aquiles' room as he sleeps, awaken him, and elicit those sensual caresses that her kitten-like nature craves so deeply.
"OCTAVIA SANTINO"

The treatment of love in "Octavia Santino" is unlike the relationships described in either "Rosita" or "La Condesa de Cela." It is different for two important reasons: (1) Her love for Perico Ponal is altruistic in nature. (2) Perico is childlike in his love and dependent upon Octavia.

There is little information given regarding the background of either Perico Ponal or Octavia Santino, but they have been living together for a year. It is suggested that Perico met Octavia just as his family, for some unexplained reason, was drifting apart. At the beginning, it is made clear that Octavia is dying and there is an air of anxiety generated by Perico because he feels that he will not know what to do without her:

Y al pensar que iba a verse solo en el mundo, que ya no tendría regazo donde descansar la cabeza ni labios que le besasen ni brazos que le cinesen no manos que le halagasen, trespel de gemidos y sollozos subía a la garganta y se retorcía en ella como rabiosa jauría:

---¡Señor! ¡Señor!...¡no me la lleves! ¡Se bueno!

Y Perico, conteniendo trabajosamente las lágrimas, se puso a rezar, como un niño que era. ¿Por qué no había de hacer Dios un milagro? Y esta esperanza postrera, tan incierta, tan lejana, apoderándose de su pobre corazón, el recuerdo de la infancia en el hogar paterno, donde todas las noches se rezaba el rosario... ¡Ay! ¡fue al deshacerse aquel hogar cuando conociera a Octavia Santino!(p. 32)

Perico is of a very exaggerated, romantic nature and is
often compared to an adolescent:

Aunque mozo de veinte años, Perico Pondal no pasaba de ser un niño triste y romántico, en quien el sentimiento adquiría sensibilidad verdaderamente enfermiza. De estatura no más que mediana, ademan frío y continente tímido y retraído, difícilmente agradaba la primera vez que se la conocía; el mismo solía dolerse de ello exagerándolo como hacía con todo... Aquella cabeza impregnada de una tristeza misteriosa y lejana. Su mirar melancólico, era el mirar mirar de esos adolescentes que, en medio de una gran ignorancia de la vida parecen tener como la visión de sus dolores y sus miserias. (p. 32)

Valle-Inclán uses the word "matrona" in describing Octavia. In judging from passages cited previously, it seems not unreasonable to assume that the relationship between Perico and Octavia, if not completely void of sexual attraction, is at least similar in many respects to that between a mother and son. Perico's air of bewilderment and hopelessness, his dread at being left alone in the world seem appropriate to indicate a frightened child rather than a mature young man.

The genuineness of Octavia's love for Perico is seen in that she tells him not to grieve for her because she is only a burden to him. She believes that Perico has a brilliant future and asks him to live as a bachelor until he has achieved the zenith of his potentialities. But she does not request this because she wishes him not to love again or to selfishly insinuate herself into his memory as the dying, noble lady who thought
only of him:

Ella cerraba los ojos, suplicando que callase:
--Mira, encauto; si no debes sentirme de ese modo. ¿Qué era yo para ti más que una carga?
¿No lo comprendes? Tú tienes por delante un gran porvenir. Ahora, luego que yo me muera, debes vivir solito; no creas que digo esto porque este celosa; ya sé que a muertos y a ídolos...Te hablo así porque conozco lo que atañe una mujer. Tú, si no te abandones, tienes que subir muy alto.
Crees a mí. Para Dios que da las alas, las da para volar uno solo. ¡Sí, mi hijito! Después que hayas triunfado, te doy permiso para enamorarte. (p. 31)

Thus, there is firmly established the altruistic nature of Octavia's love for Perico.

Octavia is prepared to give up everything, even eternal salvation, to live with Perico. She tells Perico that a priest had visited her earlier that evening and had pleaded with her to confess, not to wait until the last moment. But she did not. Perico wants to send for the priest but Octavia refuses because Perico would have to leave and not return. As she speaks to him, she says, "—No, no! Prefiero condenarme así... Anda, dame un beso! (p. 33). But through the entire story there seems to be an undercurrent of unrest, of secrecy on Octavia's part. At times she appears to be on the verge of telling Perico something, only to end by reaffirming how much she loves him. Toward the end, as her fever intensifies and she fears that death is imminent, Octavia becomes extremely nervous and terrified. The sight of a scorched cat that raises its hair and casts a diabolic glance with its
phosphorescent eyes awakens terror in her heart. The
day itself, rainy, muddy, overcast with leaden clouds,
seems to increase the augury of imminent death for
Octavia. As he listens to the languid, haunting notes
of a water-carrier's song, Perico feels this same fear
penetrating his soul. Suddenly Octavia raises up on
the pillow and sobbingly repeats her previous admonition,
"Creo que voy a morirme. Escucha, no debes llorarme,
porque..."(p. 38); and now she adds what she had been
unable to say before, "¡No; no debes quererme; ¡Te
he engañado! ¡He sido mala!"(p. 38). Understandably
shocked at this revelation, Perico at first has an
ambiguous expression of comedy and terror on his face.
Then, as he brutally shakes Octavia and demands the name
of her lover, the realization comes that Octavia is not
joking. She dies before she can reply and the tale
closes with a scene immersed in an atmosphere of death
and desolation:

Octavia le miró con expresión sobrehumana,
dolorida, suplicante, agonica; quiso hablar,
y su boca sumida y seca por la fiebre se
contrajo horriblemente; giraron en las cuencas,
que parecían hunirse por momento, las pupilas
dilatadas y vidriosas; volviósele azulencia la
faz; espumajearon los labios; el cuerpo enfla-
quecido estremeciéase, como si un soplo helado
lo recorriese, y quedó tranquila, insensible a
todo, indiferente, llena del reposo de la muerte.
Perico Pondal, clavándose las uñas en la carne,
y sacudiendo furioso la melena de león, sin apar-
tar los ojos del cuerpo de su querida, repetía
enloquecida;

—¿Por qué? ¿Por qué quisiste ahora ser buena?
Nublóse la luna, cuya luz blanquecina entraba por el balcón; agonizó el fuego de la chimenea, y el lecho, que era de madera, crujio... (p. 39)

Unlike the coquettish Rosita and the sensual, egoistic Condessa de Cela, Octavia Santino truly loves Perico Pondal. It may be that the nature of her love takes on, at times, a closer resemblance to maternal affection than would be expected, but Octavia is ill and advancing in years. She is well aware that this will be her last love. Interestingly enough, she is not married—the only woman in Corte de amor who is not. Perico's bewilderment at the thought of life without Octavia indicates a rather immature, adolescent attitude. Certainly he should feel deep grief over losing her, but the impression conveyed when he speaks is that he is a child who is about to lose his mother and will have no one to guide him through the cruel world.

That Octavia really loves Perico can hardly be doubted if one recalls her statements of concern about his future. She desired him to reach the height of his abilities and knew he could do so only by himself, although she did wish him to marry after he had attained his goal. At one point Perico offered to marry Octavia, but she refused to hear of it.

There remains to be discussed only the problem of
Octavia's confession of infidelity. Why did she make this confession? Octavia was dying and felt that if she died with Perico thinking that he had been her only love, then he might waste his time grieving about her instead of continuing his climb to the pinnacle she hoped he could reach. She could easily have let Perico think that he had been her only love, but that would have been selfish and irreparably damaging to him. He was so dependent upon her for guidance and orientation that he might never have developed any independence or strength on his own. But the only time he becomes angry is when Octavia tells him of her former love; it may be that this type of shock is what is needed to make Perico realize that no one person in the world is worth the sacrifice of ruining his entire life in grief and self-pity. If Octavia's confession is examined from this point of view, it seems a noble gesture, although at the time it broke Perico's heart.
"TULA VARONA"

With "Tula Varona" we have the introduction of a woman who is obsessed with her own beauty and power of seduction. The man involved is Ramiro Mendoza, one of the sons of the Duque de Ordax, who appeared in "Rosita." This entire story involves Tula's attempt to seduce Mendoza, although she does not share his desire.

Tula first appears while Mendoza is hunting. She has heard that a mad dog has been sighted in the neighborhood and asks Mendoza to lend her his rifle for protection. As she walks, Valle-Inclán describes her coquettish beauty:

Su cabeza era pequeña y rizada; el rostro gracioso, el talle encantador. Gastaba corto el cabello, lo cual le daba cierto aspecto alegre y juguetón. Rehizo en el molde de su lindo dedo los rícillos rebeldes que se le entraban por los ojos... (p. 106)

Her movements are nervous and restless as those of a cat and her conversation is filled with banter and repartee that annoys and yet intrigues Mendoza. He seems driven to pursue this woman, as he would some sort of wild game. Physical attraction appears to be the only factor that incites Mendoza to have anything to do with Tula, because her capriciousness and vixen-like nature irritates him greatly.

When Tula tires of carrying the heavy rifle, she
begins the seductive bantering with this statement:

¡Ay! Tengo este hombro medio deshecho. Tome usted la escopeta; ¡es más pesada que su dueño! --¡Eso!...¡quien sabe, Tula! ¡usted aun no me ha tomado el peso! (p. 107)

Tula is also married, but is separated from her husband. There have been scandalous rumors concerning her, but she laughs at them all.

Tula invites Mendoza to have some mate with her and disappears to change clothes. When she returns dressed in a blue satin gown with a small parrot on her shoulder, Mendoza is reminded of the empresses of antiquity, who were fond of falconry and used to carry their hooded birds upon their shoulders or gloved hands. This whole situation may be paralleled to a hunt with Ramiro Mendoza as the prey, although he believes that he is initiating the action.

In an ironic fashion, Tula actually warns Ramiro that she is preparing him for something, although he probably thinks that she is merely teasing:

Conocía que quería hacer la conquista del buen mozo; y adoptaba con el aire de coquetería afectuosa; pero en el fondo de sus negras pupilas, temblaba de continuo una risita burlona, que simulaba contenida por el marco de aquellas pestañas, rizas y luengas, que al mirar se entor- 

...Colocaba la hierba en el fondo del mate, y se volvía sonriente. 

--A esto llaman, allá, cebar... (p. 110)

When the mate is ready, Tula provocatively instructs
Mendoza in how to drink it and hands him her cup:

---Pruebe usted, Ramiro; pero tiene usted que poner los labios donde yo los he puesto... Tal es la costumbre. La boquilla no se cambia. (p. 111)

Every movement, every phrase by Tula is intended to arouse and provoke Mendoza. Desire is what Tula wishes to see displayed, desire for her body. But she feels no reciprocal stimulation. Thinking the maté is too bitter, Tula adds water and takes a few sips. When she returns the cup, Mendoza says that he is sure that he will like it better now, the inference being that her mouth has sweetened the drink.

In the course of conversation, Mendoza discovers that Tula has been taking fencing lessons. She is anxious to demonstrate her ability in this area and arranges a pseudo-fencing match between herself and Mendoza. He easily beats her and scores several "botonazos," or touches. Tula calls his attention one of the more forceful "botonazos" by provocatively running her hands over her breasts and sighing voluptuously. It is at this point that Mendoza begins to lose his self-control:

Ramiro Mendoza miraba a Tula de hito en hito, y atussándose el bigote, sonriendo, con aquella sonrisa fatua y cortes que jamás se le caía de los labios. A su pesar, el buen mozo sentíase fascinado y temía perder el dominio que hasta entonces conservara sobre sí. Instintivamente se llevó una mano al corazón y temía que los dedos disimulando una sonrisa, al mismo tiempo que con la yema de los dedos se registraba la ola de los encajes. (p. 113)
The cat-and-mouse game progresses and Tula becomes more amused as Mendoza becomes more aroused. He offers her a cigarette, saying that they should smoke it together in the same way as they have drunk the mate. Mendoza playfully suggests that Tula should imagine that she is paying her taxes to the state, which, of course, is himself. But Tula coyly replies that she is not accustomed to paying taxes and should be considered a contrabandist. Now the scene is set for Tula's victorious seduction of Mendoza:

When Mendoza can stand it no longer, he furtively kisses her hair and she begins a beautiful performance as the lady who has not provoked anything and cannot imagine the actions of this gentleman:
llemas de ardimiento, y experimentaba un placer cruel al rechazarle tras de haberle tentado. Arrastrada por esa coquetería peligrosa y sutil de la mujeres galantes, placiale despertar deseos que no compartía. Perfida y desenamorada, haría con el aspíd del deseo, como hiera el indio sanguinario para probar la punta de sus flechas. (p. 115)

Savoring her sadistic triumph, she grabs a flower vase and repeatedly strikes Mendoza with it. Valle-Inclán describes her emotion at this particular moment, saying "sintiendo a cada golpe esa alegría depravada de las malas mujeres cuando cierran la puerta al querido que muere de amor y celos" (p. 115). This action leaves little doubt in Mendoza’s mind as to what all the flirtation has been directed toward. She had made her conquest. He desires her but she does not desire him. The true egoistic and narcissistic traits of her personality are revealed as she stands before the mirror just after Mendoza has stormed out of the house:

El duquesito, lívido de coraje, salió atropellando al criado. La criolla, apenas le vio desaparecer, hizo una mueca de burla y se encasquetó el tricornio de papel; luego, saltando sobre un pie, pues en la defensa, escurriérasele una pantufla, se aproximó al espejo. Sus ojos brillaban, sus labios sonreían, hasta sus dientecillos blancos y menudos parecían borlarse alineados en el rojo y perfumado nido de la boca; sentía en su sangre el cosquilleo nervioso de una risa alegre y sin fin que, sin asomar a los labios, deshaciasse en la garganta y se extendía por el terciopelo de su carne como un largo beso. Todo en aquella mujer cantaba el diabólico poder de su hermosura triunfante. Insensiblemente empezó a desnudarse ante el espejo, recostándose largamente en la contemplación de los encantos que descubría:
experimentaba una languidez sensual al pasar la mano sobre la piel fina y nacarada del cuerpo. Habíansele encendido las mejillas, y suspiraba voluptuosamente, entornando los ojos, enamorada de su propia blanoura de diosa, tentadora y esquiva. (p. 116)

Among the other females of Corte de amor there is none so obsessed with her own beauty and seductive capabilities. Concerning her attitude toward love, we know nothing. This whole story is merely an encounter which develops, for Tula, into a game in which she may test the power of her appeal. From the outset she knows that she does not want Mendoza physically. At one point she even has to bite her lips to keep from laughing at the poor man because she knows that she is not going to gratify the desire that she has so carefully nurtured in him.

The one part of Tula's personality that is developed fully is her narcissistic complex. Obviously she loves her face and body very much. She is aware of her power to arouse men and takes a sadistic delight in denying them the fulfillment of what her coy actions promise. It may be that Tula Varona is capable of experiencing love in the usual sense of the word, but it seems highly improbably that a woman so obsessed with her own physical beauty could ever establish a relationship that involved an examination of values and spirit that probed far below the surface of her delicate skin. For these
reasons, Tula, in this writer's opinion, is the most cruel and insensitive of the seven women in *Corte de amor*.
"LA GENERALA"

This is the only story in the Corte de amor in which the lovers are approximately of the same age. In the other narrations the woman is usually considerably older than her lover.

Currita Jimeno is the central personage and a vivacious one she is. From her actions no one would guess that she had spent ten years in a convent being educated by her aunt María del Perpetuo Remedio. Evidently Currita could not tolerate the cloistered life and even made novenas to the patron saint of the convent, praying that her parents might come to remove her from this guarded atmosphere.

At the age of fifteen her prayers were answered and she was turned loose upon a world that looked a bit askance at her. For her age and upbringing, Currita embarked upon a rather bohemian type of existence. Her actions shocked people as much as her wit charmed them:

¡Pero qué demagogia suya! Llena de paradojas y de atrevimientos inconcebibles, como elaborada en una cabeza inquieta y parlanchina, donde apenas se asentaba un cerebro de colibrí, pintoresco y brillante, borracho de sol y de alegría. Era desarrreglada y genial como un bohémio; tenía supersticiones de gitana e ideas de vieja miss sobre la emancipación feminina. Si no fuesen porque salían de aquellos labios que derramaban la sal y la gracia como gotas de agua los botijos moriscos, sería cosa de echarse a temblar y vivir en triste soltería, esperando el fin del mundo."

It was this young girl who married General Miguel Rojas,
more than sixty years old. It would be difficult to imagine two people more radically contrasting in age, appearance, and personality. The dark, animated, and nervous Currita hardly seemed a likely match for the austere, white-mustached general. Everyone had expected trouble from the outset of the marriage, but everyone was wrong. Currita adapted herself surprisingly and completely to the general's way of life. In fact, she even dominated him, to a degree, not permitting him to smoke unless there were no guests present. Oddly enough, it was the general's refusal to dispense with his after-dinner smokes that prompted the entrance of a third character who was to disturb the marriage. In order to enjoy his cigar, the general had to have a guest; thus, he frequently invited his young protegé, Lieutenant Sandoval, to dinner. At first Currita was rather apathetic toward Sandoval. Indeed, with his rosy-cheeked appearance and the down that he tinted to give the illusion of a full-grown beard, he presented a rather childish and comical picture. But Sandoval curried favor with the young lady and soon was accompanying her everywhere.

Under the pretext of intolerable boredom, Currita asks Sandoval to come each day and read to her from novels written in languages with which she is not familiar. He is anxious to make a conquest of Currita, but
he does not know how to interpret her ambiguous actions and changes of mood. He thus decides to wait until a more propitious moment and tints his beard even more.

One evening as he is reading a tearfully moving passage from Tristan and Isolde, Sandoval gets his long-awaited opportunity. From time to time, Ourrita's knees press against his, but they both pretend that they do not notice this and Sandoval continues reading. The passage concerns Isolde's great compassion and willingness to sacrifice herself for her love. Ourrita sobbingly asks if there can really be women of that compassionate nature. When Sandoval asks her if she is not capable of such action, she coyly replies, "Yo, señor ayudante, no puedo ponerme en ese caso. La principal compasión en una mujer casada debe ser para su marido" (p. 386). This response stifles the boldness that had begun to take possession of Sandoval. He now considers Ourrita a paragon of virtue and above any more of his attempts at seduction. Now she notices how much of his beard has been tinted. Sandoval feels childish and ashamed when Ourrita brings a basin of water with which to scrub off his false beard. But as she washes his face, he begins kissing her hands. At first she reproaches him, "¡Formalidad, niño!" (p. 388). It is difficult to tell whether Sandoval is so forceful or Ourrita so
weak, but eventually things develop to a not-too-surprising conclusion: "Sus ojos se encontraron, sus labios se buscaron golosos y se unieron con un beso..." (p. 389). At this point, General Rojas arrives and begins beating furiously on the door. Ourrita frantically runs to the door and tells her husband that she cannot open it because the canary has escaped from its cage and must be recaptured. When the general finally gains entrance, he sees a perfectly respectable scene in which Sandoval is standing on a chair putting the canary back into its cage.

The view of love presented in "La Generala" seems to be that of a spontaneous nature. Ourrita does not lead Sandoval on as Tula Varona did with Mendoza. She is neither coquettish nor vain. We do not know whether she loved General Rojas when she married him or not. But indications are that the marriage was arranged by Ourrita's family. Ourrita never embarrasses her husband in front of Sandoval or shows a preference for Sandoval's company to that of her husband's. It may be that she found herself gradually more attracted to this young lieutenant because of the differences in the ages of herself and her husband. Ourrita is also amused by Sandoval's attempts to be suave and elegant; she calls him "payaso" in one place. But she is not playing with Sandoval's affections. She undoubtedly is lonely because her
husband is away much of the time directing military activities. The availability of the young lieutenant, his reading romantic novels to her, etc. lead to an easily preconceived conclusion. What should be kept in mind here is that Currita does not have the coquettish, woman-of-the-world background that was evident in Rosita, the Condesa, and Tula Varona. The three women just mentioned had many lovers and had almost completely lost any concept they might have had of love except the sensual pleasure involved. So far as we know, Currita does not have this attitude toward love. If she had wanted only physical pleasure, she could have made the fact more obvious to Sandoval and would not have wasted so much time listening to him read novels. But Currita is romantic rather than sensual by nature. She is a woman who swoons over Tristan and Isseult; who idealizes love and sees it as a noble and even sacrificial passion. It is in this respect that she is different from Rosita, Julia, and Tula Varona. Currita has only two parallels in Corte de amor, Octavia Santino, and Bilalía.
The love of Augusta del Fede for Prince Attilio Bonaparte is probably the most sensual and erotic description of love in the Corte de amor. As the story opens, the Prince has just written some "salmos paganos" which he dedicates to Augusta. These poems are well titled because Augusta loves with an unrestrained passion that reminds Valle-Inclán of the naked goddesses of Mount Olympus:

Era el amor de Augusta alegría erótica y victoriosa, sin caricias languidas, sin decadentismos anémicos, pálidas flores del bulavár. Como el calor de un vino añejo, así corría por su sangre aquel amor de matrona lozana y ardiente, amor voluptuoso y robusto como los flancos de una Venus, amor pagano, limpio de rebeldías castas, impoluto de los escrúpulos cristianos que entrístecen la sensualidad sin dornseñarla. Amaba con la pasión olímpica y potente de las diosas desnudas, sin que el cilicio de la moral atarazane su carne blanca, de blanca realeza que cumplía la divina ley del sexo, soberana y triunfante, como los leones y las panteras en los bosques de Tierra Caliente. (p. 420)

From this description the importance of the physical aspect of love, which was strongly emphasized in "La Condesa de Oela," can hardly be denied. Valle-Inclán employs terms such as "alegría erótica y victoriosa," "amor voluptuoso y robusto como los flancos de una Venus, amor pagano, limpio de rebeldías castas, impoluto de los escrúpulos cristianos que entrístecen la sensualidad sin dornseñarla." The last part of the preceding
phrase is especially interesting because it is indicative of the omnipresent clash between sensuality (paganism) and Christianity, which recurs constantly in the Sonatas. It seems that Valle-Inclán cannot reconcile sensuality or the physical enjoyment of love with Christian doctrine. There is an incessant aura of evil, of something corrupt when he mentions the idea of one lover enjoying the other's body. Perhaps this occurs because the majority of women in Corte de amor are married to men other than their lovers, but this would not account for the same sentiment expressed so often by the Marqués de Bradomín. At any rate, this counterposition of the physical aspect of love as divorced from Christian doctrine and even associated with satanic desire and sin is quite interesting and will be treated more fully in the section dealing with the Sonatas.

The emphasis on the physical aspect of love is further expanded by references to the Borgias and Pietro Aretino, famous libertines of the Italian Renaissance. As Valle-Inclán often does, he alludes to figures of the Renaissance, the period when man rediscovered the joys of this earthly life and began to give them, at least in some measure, the same amount of consideration he had given to his spiritual welfare in the Middle Ages. Certainly the artists of this age glorified the human body and were not ashamed to portray it in paint or marble.
Valle-Inclán's fondess for this period may account for his imagining that the "pagan psalms" seem to have been written "sobre la espalda blanca y tornátil de una princesa y apasionada y artista, envenenadora y cruel" (p. 421). Augusta is described as one those women who like to be brutalized while making love:

"¡Ahora, no, Attilio!...¡Ahora, no!...
Se negaba y resistía, con ese instinto de las hembras que quieren ser brutalizadas cada vez que son poseídas. Era una bacante que adoraba el placer con la epopeya primitiva de la violación y de la fuerza. El Príncipe se puso en pie, clavó la mirada en Augusta, y tornó a sentarse mostrando solamente su despecho en una sonrisa. (p. 422)

The antithesis of chastity and sin is present again as Valle-Inclán describes the Prince's voice: "La voz del Príncipe tenía ese trémulo enronquecido, donde aun las mujeres más castas adivinan el pecado fecundo, hermoso como un dios" (p. 422). In another passage Augusta is depicted thusly: "La mano de Augusta, una mano carnosa y blanca de abadesa joven e infanzona, acarició los cabellos de Nelly con lentitud llena de amor y de ternura" (p. 423).

It is clear that the type of love described between Augusta and the Prince has strong elements of satanism, masochism, paganism, and sensuality. These are characteristics found in varying degrees in certain of the other stories in Corte de amor and will certainly appear more obviously in the Sonatas.
But, as with most of the women in this group, Augusta is married. She has a lovely young daughter, Nelly, who is infatuated with Prince Attilio. But as Nelly observes the actions of her mother and the looks she exchanges with the Prince, she begins to fear that the Prince is not in her home to pay her court, as she has been led to believe, but to woo her mother. In one scene Nelly is on the verge of tears as she realizes that the Prince loves her mother and not her. Here again a satanic element appears because Nelly observes a bat flying in the twilight:

Nelly no se movió. Con mirada supersticioso seguía los aleteos de un murciélago que danzaba en la media luz del crepúsculo. Augusta, apoyada en el hombro de su hija, descansó, cobrando aliento. Reía, reía siempre. (p. 426)

The bat seems to symbolize the illicitness of her mother's affair with the Prince and Nelly's heartbreak upon realizing Attilio's true intentions. As the scene closes, Augusta is scattering flower petals around the garden and laughing. Her laughter sound like "¡Salmó pagano en aquella boca roja, en aquella garganta desnuda y bíblica de Dalila tentadora...!" (p. 427). Once more Valle-Inclán emphasizes the pagan and the sensual. There have been three different metaphors used in regard to Augusta: "diosa desnuda," "abadesa joven," "Dalila tentadora."

This vacillation between the divine and the mundane,
the Christian and the pagan is stronger in this story than in any of the others in *Corte de amor*. It is intriguing to note that the image of the young abbess was employed when Augusta was speaking with Nelly; but as soon as her attention becomes focused on Attilio, she is once again the pagan goddess, eager for sensual gratification, even at the expense of her daughter's feelings. It is as if Attilio represented the force of evil and Nelly the power of good and innocence. When Augusta caresses her child, she is a portrait of saintliness and concern; but when her eyes meet Attilio's, even consideration of her daughter must take second place. The only elements presented and emphasized in this type of love or attraction are the physical and erotic ones. If there be any other basis for their relationship, this writer can find no evidence of it.

Evidently the action of the story occurs during a period when Augusta's husband is making a prolonged trip. She makes several references to her husband's return and the imminence of his return drives her to reveal the extreme to which she is willing to go to keep Attilio with her. Augusta suggests that Attilio marry Nelly so that she (Augusta) and he may be together always. She shows not the slightest compunction while making this proposal and her conversation following the proposition is indicative of her obsessive desire for this man to
the detriment of her own daughter:

--¡Estás loco! ¿Por qué habías yo de arrepentirme ni de sufrir? Al casarte con ella me parece que te casas conmigo...

Y riendo como una loca, hundía sus dedos blancos en la ola negra que formaba la barba del poeta, una barba asiria y perfumada como la del Sar Peladam.

El Príncipe pronunció con ligera ironía:

--¿Y si la moral llama a tu puerta, Augusta?

--No llamara. La moral es la palma de los eunuquos.

El Príncipe quiso celebrar la frase besando aquella boca que tales gentilezas decía. Ella continuó:

--¡Pues si es la verdad, corazón...! Cuando se sabe querer, esa vieja está muy encerrada en su convento... (p. 429)

This is certainly a hyper-egoistic sensual love that nullifies Augusta's maternal instinct to the point that she would chance destroying her daughter's future by having her marry Attilio. What does the Prince find charming about the manner in which Augusta makes this proposal?:

"Hallaba encantadora aquella travesura de Colombina ingenua y depravada y aquella sensualidad apasionada y noble de Dogaresa" (p. 429). The arrival of Nelly interrupts this passionate dialogue. Augusta quickly regains her composure and tells Nelly that the Prince has just been asking about her. Then she adds that she has promised the Virgin a pair of earrings if the Blessed Mother will grant her her wish. To this Attilio retorts:

--¡Oh, qué bien sabe usted llegar al corazón de las Vírgenes!

Augusta interrumpió vivamente:

--¡Calle usted, hereje!...Burlese usted de mí, pero respetemos las cosas del Cielo.

Y hablaba santiguándose para arredrar al Demonio.
This passage clearly reveals to what degree Christianity has had an impact upon Augusta. Her brand of Christianity is " placentero y gracios oso" and lip-service is all she renders to it. Surely the plan regarding her daughter and Attilio can hardly be called Christian or altruistic.

When Augusta informs Nelly that Prince Attilio seeks Nelly's hand in marriage, the young girl begins to sob and ask her mother's forgiveness. Nelly had inferred, and rightly so, that Attilio loved her mother. Augusta immediately realizes that Nelly knew what was going on and comforts her, telling her that she was mistaken about the Prince's intentions. Augusta convinces her innocent child that all of Attilio's wooing was directed toward the winning of her hand. As Attilio observes the scene, he wonders if there might not be appropriate material for a sensual, libertine poem. The tale ends on the same sensual note upon which it began:

-Augusta, reclinando con lenguada voluptuosidad todo el peso delicioso de su cuerpo en aquel brazo amante que la sostenía, exclamó con íntimo convencimiento:
—¡Qué verdad es que las madres, las verdaderas madres, nunca nos equivocamos al hacer la felicidad de nuestras hijas! (p. 433)

It is evident that in the type of love experienced
by Augusta, physical attraction is the primary factor, as it was with Julia. Julia, however, was prepared to sacrifice her erotic needs for the welfare of her children; whereas Augusta is sacrificing her daughter's happiness to her own selfishness. Augusta has neither the altruistic tendencies of Octavia Santino nor the flirtatious nature of Rosita. She is not a woman out to tempt men without intending to satisfy them, as was the case with Tula Varona. Augusta del Fede is merely a very erotic, possessive woman whose concept of love appears restricted to the physical and who is willing to pay any price to maintain her lover and the status quo.
"EULALIA"

This account presents a picture of romantic, idealized love that is paralleled to some degree only by the love of Octavia Santino for Perico Ponal. Contrary to the erotic elements pictured as the basis for love in "La Condesa de Cela," and in "Augusta," the type of love Valle-Inclán sketches here is altruistic and self-sacrificing.

Eulalia is married and the mother of small daughters. She does not love her husband and believes that he does not love her. For an indefinite period of time she has been involved in an affair with Jacobo Ponte, a melancholy and romantic young man, who apparently is in the country for the beneficial effects the climate affords his health.

Eulalia goes to meet Jacobo at a mill owned by an old lady, Madre Cruces. Madre Cruces is something of a go-between for the lovers and she increases the romance of the setting by talking of bygone days, sighing "caballeros," and by calling Eulalia "paloma blanca" and other names of a similar nature. The entire countryside exudes an atmosphere of melancholy and remembrance.

While Eulalia waits for Jacobo to return from a hunting trip, she and Madre Cruces have an interesting conversation in which Eulalia expresses a wish for death and a fear of it at the same time:

(Madre Cruces)--Nuestras tribulaciones son obra
de Dios, y nadie en este mundo tiene poder para hacerlas cesar.
--Porque nosotros somos cobardes...Porque tememos la muerte.
--Yo, mi señora, no la temo. Tengo ya tantos años que la espero todos los días, porque mi corazón sabe que no puede tardar.
--Yo también la llamo, Madre Cruces.
--Mi señora, yo llamarla, jamas. Podría llegar cuando mi alma estuviese negra de pecados.
--Yo la llamo, pero le tengo miedo...Si no la tuviese miedo, la buscaría.(p. 123)

The importance of this death wish will become more significant later on.

When Jacobo enters, the scene is one of idyllic union of lovers:

"Caminaban enlazados como esos amantes de pastorela en los antiguos tapices. Los dos eran rubios, menudos y gentiles.(p. 125)"

But this tranquility is soon marred when the dialogue turns to the subject of Eulalia's marriage. Jacobo wants Eulalia to leave her husband, bring her daughters with her and marry him. But Eulalia is afraid of ruining her daughters' lives by separating them from their father. She also feels that Jacobo is too young to understand what such a move would mean, that he would regret his decision in the years to come. This idea of the instability and compulsion of youth is not new in the Corte de amor. It has been demonstrated before in "Octavia Santino," where Octavia wishes Perico Pondal not to grieve over losing her and not to marry until he has fulfilled his potentialities. But in this situation, death is
not about to overtake Eulalia, and her only reason for not running away with Jacobo seems to be some vague notion that after youthful ardor cools, he will hate himself for having sacrificed the best years of his life to an older woman and children who are not his own. That she considers him a child is shown by the statement she makes as he ardently tries to convince her to leave her husband:

---Jacobo, tú quieres que yo viva a tu lado. Tú no sabes que seríamos muy desgraciados...No debes sacrificarme lo mejor de tu vida. Eres un niño y tendrías demasiados años para arrepentirte. Yo tampoco merezco ese sacrificio. (p. 130)

Valle-Inclán gives us descriptions that reinforce the portrait of an impulsive young man: "Sus ojos de niño, azules y calenturientos, se fijaban en Eulalia; aquellos ojos infantiles cobraban de pronto el frío azul de los turquesas" (p. 126). Eulalia tells Jacobo that she has revealed their affair to her husband because she could not continue filling her life with lies. Jacobo thinks her insane for having done this but she tells him that, contrary to what she had expected from her husband, he does love her more than life itself and refuses to leave her or grant her a divorce. Eulalia had thought that her husband would leave her after learning of her affair with Jacobo. She had imagined a happy future in which Jacobo could visit her as often as he liked and she could stay with her children. In this way, she could have
assured the future of her daughters, while maintaining her relationship with Jacobo without the restrictions of marriage. But her husband's unexpected reaction has crushed all these illusions and Eulalia refuses to leave her children. Jacobo refuses to continue their relationship on the present grounds because Eulalia has to escape like a prisoner each time she wishes to see him. In a desperate attempt to make him see why she does not deserve the sacrifice he is prepared to make for her, Eulalia makes a very painful confession:

"—Voy a causarte una gran pena. Yo ambicioné que tú me quisieras como a esas novias de quince años... ¡Pobre loca!... Y te oculté mi vida y todo te lo negué cuando me has preguntado, y ahora, ahora... Tú me adivinas... ¡Jacobo, tú me adivinas y no me dices que me perdonas!...

Jacobo murmuró sordamente, temblandose la voz como si temiese adivinar:

"—¿Has querido a otros?...

Eulalia inclino la cabeza. Jacobo la sacudió rudamente por los hombros:

"—¿Quíenes fueron tus amantes?

—Se ha muerto ya.

—Uno, nada más?

—Nada más.

—¡Y conmigo dos!... (p. 130)

It is in this scene that Jacobo's true immaturity and egoism acquire full revelation. He shoves Eulalia away from him, infuriated by her confession. Now she realizes that Jacobo had loved her as he would a schoolgirl, never suspecting that anything similar to what she has just told him could have occurred in her life. Eulalia begs
him to forgive her. Actually she degrades herself and
offers to be his slave. But Jacobo is finished; he
could never again be happy in Eulalia's presence. He
leaves with Eulalia entreating him to stay.

Madre Cruces tries to comfort Eulalia by telling
her that out great sadness may come great happiness. But
Eulalia can find no solace in aphorisms and no hope for
the future:

Y Eulalia se llevó el pañuelo a los ojos. La
angustia entrecortaba su voz, y al mismo tiempo
que combatía por serenarla, pasaban por su alma,
como rafagas de huracán, locos impulsos de llorar,
de mearse los cabellos, de gritar, de correr a
traves del campo, de buscar un precipicio donde morir.
Sentía en las sienes un latido doloroso y sin con-
ciencia caminaba, viendo apenas como el camino
blanqueaba al claro de la luna, ondulando entre
los mazales que se inclinaban al paso del viento
con un largo susurro:
--¡Dios mío, no le veré más!...¡No le veré mas!(p.133)

As Eulalia takes the boat back downriver, she lets her
loveletters to Jacobo drop one by one into the water as
if in an hypnotic trance. Suddenly she falls in and the
boatman can find no trace of her. He sees only her long
hair come to the surface twice, but the body never appears.

Eulalia, then, parallels Octavia Santino in the fact
that she does not wish Jacobo to sacrifice his future by
marrying her and assuming the burden of her children. She
has to shock Jacobo into the realization that she is not
worthy of the sacrifice he is willing to make by telling
him that she has loved before. This is almost the identical
situation presented in "Octavia Santino," except for the fact that Octavia was dying and was not married at the time. But both stories end with the death of the heroine. Octavia died of natural causes and Eulalia drowned herself. In only these two stories, "Octavia Santino," and "Eulalia," does the type of love described go beyond physical attraction to achieve a deeper emotional and spiritual significance.
CONCLUSIONS

In reviewing the seven women in *Corte de amor*, we find that there are really five types presented. The coquettish, cruel, and yet strangely sad Rosita is one type. The erotic and sensual Julia, along with Augusta del Fede, is a second type. Two examples of noble, sacrificial love are Octavia Santino and Eulalia, who represent a third category. Tula Varona is distinct in her sadism and narcissism and constitutes the fourth type. Currita Jimeno represents the only truly idealized, romanticized view of love given in the group.

The men are either childlike and immature (Aquiles Calderón, Perico Pondal, Sandoval, Jacobo Ponte) or dominated and made fools of by the women (Duque de Ordax, Ramiro Mendoza). In only one case, that of Prince Attilio in "Augusta," do we find a man who at least can equal the woman in stability and willpower.

The antithesis of paganism and Christianity has appeared from time to time, as well as some indications of satanism, and masochism. The second part of this study will compare the characters presented in *Corte de amor* to those depicted in the Sonatas, and will attempt to show the strengthening of certain elements found in the first work and the appearance of new ones in Valle-Inclán's description of love in the Sonatas.
NOTES

9 "Niña Chole" has been omitted from consideration in the Corte de amor because it was expanded and appeared in 1903 as the Sonata de Estío.

10 All quotes from the Corte de amor, excepting those in "La Generala," and "Augusta," are taken from Ramon del Valle-Inclán's Femeninas (Santiago, 1936).

11 The quotes from "La Generala" and "Augusta" are taken from Ramon del Valle-Inclán's Obras Completas (Madrid, 1954).
CHAPTER THREE: SONATAS

Undoubtedly the works that established Valle-Inclán as an outstanding stylist of "modernista" prose were the Sonatas. These four stories were published in the following order: Sonata de Otoño (1901); Sonata de Estío (1903); Sonata de Primavera (1904); Sonata de Invierno (1905). The Sonata de Otoño caused a great stir in Spain at the dawn of the twentieth century. Ramón Sender describes the effect this way:

Con la primera sonata--la de Otoño--Valle-Inclán ganó esa batalla que según Baudelaire el poeta de genio tiene que refir contra la nación entera. A partir de esa victoria el palomique fue ya de Valle-Inclán. Podía vestir como quisiera, llevar las melenas merovingias del modernismo o ir pelado al cero, hablar de un modo afable o insolente. Era Valle-Inclán y como tal tenía derechos y privilegios. No hay que decir que sabía usarlos. En la habilidad del poeta para imponer sus valores hay el gracioso rigor de los fundadores de dinastías. Mas meritorio porque el artista lucha contra imponderables tan obstinados y fieros y secretos como los encantadores del Quijote.12

The Sonatas are the memoirs of the Marqués de Bradomín, a character through whom, according to Ramón Sender, Valle-Inclán projects the type of man he would like to have been:

En las cuatro sonatas Bradomín es un dorado muñeco de guisñol bien vestido, bien educado, con toques del Renacimiento y música (a veces
There are many elements upon which one might concentrate in treating the Sonatas. They are filled with imagery, ornate style, and color. But they also present a picture of four periods and four different women in a man's life. The personality of the Marqués de Bradomín is complex and often contradictory. His concept of love is a strange mixture of religion, sensuality, nostalgia, satanism, narcissism, superstition, and death. The four women involved are as different from one another as one could possibly imagine. The Sonata de Primavera presents María Rosario, who is about to take her vows as a nun; Sonata de Estío takes the reader to Mexico and an encounter with the sultry, cruel Niña Chole; Sonata de Otoño depicts a dying, saintly Concha; Sonata de Invierno treats the Marqués' relationship to his daughter, Maximina, and a former love, María Volfani. These stories represent various stages in a man's life. There is a definite progression as the Marqués begins his adventures,
reaches his zenith, and begins to experience his decline and inevitable end. The treatment of love in these stories is most intriguing. At the same moment when he harbors the most tender, amorous feeling, the Marqués may feel a sensation of evil, of sinister forboding enveloping his soul. Some of the contradictory sentiments described seem irreconcilable, but to omit any one would diminish the beauty and complexity of a character who, if not completely acceptable on a realistic level, nevertheless will certainly be regarded as a memorable literary creation.

The Marqués de Bradomín represents a radical departure from the men depicted in Corte de amor. As with the men, there are parallels and differences among the women as compared to those in Corte de amor. The purpose of this section is to examine and contrast the complex emotion of love in the Sonatas with the types of love portrayed in Corte de amor.
SONATA DE PRIMAVERA

The Sonata de Primavera, as the name implies, represents the springtime of the adventurous life of the Marqués de Bradomín. Ligura is the site of the action and April is the time setting. A young Bradomín, member of the Papal guards, has been sent to bestow the office of cardinal upon Monsignor Gaetani. When he arrives, the Marqués discovers that Gaetani has fallen seriously ill and has been taken to the home of his sister-in-law, Princess Gaetani. The Princess had been fond of the Marqués when he was a child and she asks him to stay in her home.

Princess Gaetani's eldest daughter, María Rosario, is only a few days away from taking her vows in the Carmelite order. In his mind, Bradomín immediately associates all that is saintly and holy with this young girl. One of his earliest descriptions of her reads as follows: "Sobre el hombro de María Rosario estaba posada una paloma, y en aquel cándido suceso, yo hallé la gracia y el misterio de una alegoría" (p. 16). It is worthy of note that even at the first meeting of the Marqués with María he has a presentiment of tragedy: "María del Rosario salió la última. Creo que además de sus labios me sonrieron sus ojos, pero han pasado tantos años, que no puedo asegurarlo. Lo que recuerdo todavía es que viéndola alejarse sentí que una
nube de tristeza me cubría el alma" (p. 11). The Marqués had referred to the scene in which the dove lighted upon María’s shoulder as reminiscent of an allegory. For the Marqués de Bradamón, María del Rosario is saintliness incarnate. There is an aura of other-worldliness, of etherealness about her that attracts him immensely. This attraction will at times appear to be spiritual or mystical; on other occasions it will take on more physical overtones, but always with the mystic element present. As we have seen, from even their first encounter there is the hint of the tragedy that lies ahead.

The supernatural attraction that María has for the Marqués continues to grow with each occasion that they meet. Once when he sees her sewing, he describes his reaction to her this way: "En su mejilla temblaba la sombra de las pestañas, y yo sentía que en el fondo de mi alma aquel rostro pálido temblaba, con el encanto misterioso y poético con que tiembla en el fondo de un lago el rostro de la luna" (p. 19). The reader should note the recurrence of certain adjectives and concepts with regard to the Marqués’ descriptions of María: "misterioso," "cándido," "pálido." Also employed are the words "encanto," and "temblaba." These terms suggest that María casts a spell over the Marqués, that his being in her presence is almost like being in the presence of an angel.
or some other supernatural being. When he speaks of her pallid face quivering in the depth of his soul, one is reminded of the Platonic concept of love, whereby the lover catches a glimpse of the divine and beautiful by contemplation of his beloved. Later we see that although he is fascinated by this aura of divinity that María radiates, the desire to corrupt her with earthly love proves overwhelming and irresistible.

In the brief time during which the Marqués has become interested in María, Monsignor Gaetani, who is the reason for the Marqués visit, has weakened and died. María, like other members of the household, is praying for the Monsignor when the Marqués happens to think about her:

¡María Rosario, en aquella hora, tal vez estaba velando el cadáver de Monseñor Gaetani! Tuve este pensamiento al entrar en la biblioteca, llena de silencio y de sombras. Vino del mundo lejano, y pasó sobre mi alma como soplo de aire sobre un lago de misterio. Sentí en las sienes el frío de unas manos mortales, y, estremeciéndome, me puse en pie. Quedó abandonado sobre la mesa el pliego de papel, donde solamente había trazado la cruz, y dirigí mis pasos hacia la cámara morguaria. El olor de la cera llenaba el Palacio... Sólo se oía el rumor de sus pisadas y el chisporroteo de los cirios que ardían en la alcoba. (pp. 20-1)

It is important that the reader note the type of scene presented. A high churchman has died; many are in mourning for him. But the Marqués thinks only of María. He goes to the bedroom where the Monsignor lies in state:
Yo llegué hasta la puerta y me detuve. Monseñor Gaetani yacía rígido en su lecho, amortajado con hábito franciscano. En las manos yertas sostenía una cruz de plata, y sobre su rostro marfileño la llama de los círios tan pronto ponía un resplandor como una sombra. Allá, en el fondo de la estancia, rezaba María Rosario. Yo permanecí un momento mirándola. Ella levantó los ojos, se santiguó tres veces, besó la cruz de sus dedos, y poniéndose en pie vino hacia la puerta. (p. 21)

The Marqués asks if he may accompany her to her room. As they walk, he feels an uncontrollable urge to squeeze her hand and kiss it. She withdraws her hand and flees from him. Now the Marqués begins in earnest his campaign to seduce this model of saintliness and virginity:

--¿Qué haces?
--¡Que os adoro! ¡Que os adoro!
Asustada, huyó por el largo corredor. Yo la seguí
--¡Os adoro! ¡Os adoro!
Mi aliento casi rozaba su nuca, que era blanca como la de una estatua y exhalaba no sé que aroma de flor y de doncella.
--¡Os adoro! ¡Os adoro!
Ella suspiró en angustia.
--¡Dejadme! ¡Por favor, dejadme!
Y sin volver la cabeza, azorada, trémula, huyó por el corredor. Sin aliento y sin fuerzas, se detuvo en la puerta del salón.
Yo todavía murmuré a su oído:
--¡Os adoro! ¡Os adoro! (p. 21)

Once more the color white, symbolic of purity, appears. But it is the white of a statue, of an elegant and inanimate work of art into which man may not breathe life however hard he may try. The Marqués idealizes María in his own fashion and he wishes to make of this ideal something that will respond to him on an earthly level.
He wishes her to step down from the divine sphere in which he pictures her. But the fact that she represents holiness and virtue is what excites him most; it is these elements that make her irresistible to him. Can he seduce this apparently perfect example of purity? Can he make this woman who responds to carnal love no more than a statue surrender to him? This is the cardinal impulse that drives the Marqués de Bradomín to pursue María. This desire is, of course, coupled with his vanity and narcissistic traits, but it is María's virtue and complete renunciation of the things of this world that compels the Marqués to exert his power of seduction to the limit.

In the scene just described there are several other factors which should be emphasized. One of the most important of these factors is that the Marqués' first confession of love for María comes in the middle of a period of mourning. Monsignor Gaetani has just died. In fact, María has just finished praying for him when the Marqués arrives at the door of the bedroom. As they walk through a corridor of mourners, of flickering candles whose smell permeates the house, the Marqués chooses this moment to tell María that he adores her. This curious association of religion, death, and love-seduction occurs several times more in the story and strengthens the sense of impending tragedy. Even
as María joins her sisters in the wake, Bradomín describes her thus: "Luego quedó pálida, pálida como la muerte" (p. 21). There is the constant fluctuation between excitement and depression, between carnal desire and a sudden, deep intimation of imminent disaster, between love—which implies the propagation of life—and death.

Later, immediately after this furtive, passionate confession of love for María, the Marqués sits in the shadowy corner of a room, watching her:

Yo escuchaba distraído, y desde el fondo de un sillón, oculto en la sombra, contemplaba a María Rosario. Parecía sumida en un sueño. Su boca, pálida de ideales nostálgicas, permanecía anhelante, como si hablase con las almas invisibles, y sus ojos, inmóviles, abiertos sobre el infinito, miraban sin ver. Al contemplarla, yo sentía que en mi corazón se levantaba el amor ardiente y trémulo como una llama mística. Todas mis pasiones se purificaban en aquel fuego sagrado y aromaban como gotas de Arabia. ¡Han pasado muchos años y todavía el recuerdo me hace suspirar! (p. 22)

This is probably the best condensed description by the Marqués of the attraction that María Rosario has for him. Considering the vocabulary employed, we find terms like "pálida de ideales nostálgicas," "almas invisibles," "el infinito," "el amor ardiente y trémulo como una llama mística," and "mis pasiones se purificaban en aquel fuego sagrado." One could hardly give a more succinct definition of the effects of Platonic love. What the Marqués pictures here is not a person, but an ideal. It is this ideal that he wishes to seduce. María seems a divine being, the type
of woman Dante described as Beatricea and Petrach as Laura. But Dante and Petrach were speaking of love on a spiritual basis; the love and adoration they had for Beatricea and Laura was a reflection of their love of the divine. The Marqués de Bradomín, on the other hand, is making a conscious effort to remove his ideal and bring it to an earthly level to corrupt it.

This dynamic tension that is present constantly throughout the story between the sacred and the profane is particularly well portrayed in a scene that takes place in the chapel of the Gaetani home:

Again the Marqués finds himself in a religious atmosphere. And what are his thoughts? That María might place her hand on his chest. Bradomín makes a curious statement when he speaks of María as being cruel "como todas las..."
santas que tremolan en la tersa diestra la palma virginal."

The word "tersa" may mean "smooth," "glossy," "pure," or "correct." The Marqués is probably vexed by the idea that María would be so prudish as to avoid physical contact with him. As he thinks of this occasion, he reflects that he prefers those women who have first been great sinners. And then the Marqués makes a statement that is one of the keys to his philosophy of life: "La pobre no sabía que lo mejor de la santidad son las tentaciones." Bradomín revels in temptations; he anticipates, indeed he seeks opportunities to be morally weak. He intends to repent, but only at the last possible moment. Earthly love holds too much pleasure for him to sacrifice it at the cost of constant watchfulness and restraint. In other words, the Marqués wants what he considers the greatest joys of this life—the love of as many women as he has time for and, when he is a spent old man, the promise of eternal salvation. There is also reiterated the tragic destiny that awaits María, for Bradomín suggests that her lot will not be so pretty as was Mary Magdalene's. Mary Magdalene was a flagrant violator of Christian doctrine who had repented and washed Christ's feet with her hair. But María has always followed Christian principles and now is finding it extremely hard to resist the Marqués de Bradomín. It appears more than coincidental that after touching the
Marqués' fingers when he offers her the holy water, María makes the sign of the cross and leaves. Of course this action may be interpreted as only part of the ceremony. But on another level it may also be significant and symbolic of her fleeing the presence of the Devil, personified in Bradomín. In María’s mind, the Marqués is becoming ever more representative of a struggle that she fears she may lose. He symbolizes the mundane attractions which she has renounced. She was well prepared and content with the prospect of convent life and suddenly this man has interrupted her life, threatening to reduce her convictions and ideals to a quivering mass of irresolution and weakness. It is for this reason that she flees his presence, that she often will not look at him while speaking with him, that she avoids all physical contact with him. At this point, the Marqués' pride is piqued somewhat because his attempts at seduction are going unrewarded. But as he sees María grow increasingly nervous in his presence, he will begin to take a sadistic delight in tempting her and in narcissistically enjoying the exercising of his seductive charms. No matter how great the attraction María has for him or whether he thinks that he truly loves her, Bradomín deliberately plans to seduce her and any love he claims to have for her does not include respecting her intentions to enter the convent. From his actions it is evident that
the Marqués really loves only himself. How could a man
who truly loves a woman delight constantly in tempting
her to break those vows which he knows she has made in
utmost sincerity? What Bradomín loves is the chase, the
pursuit and possible corruption of an ideal. Any love
he might have for María is overshadowed by the need to
satisfy his ego by seducing her and thus proving that she
is susceptible to his charm. In his mind this would be
roughly equivalent to seducing an angel and it is this
desire that compels him to persist in his efforts.

The image of María as a saint is greatly strengthened
when the Marqués watches her dispensing alms to the poor
in the family chapel. She passes among the squalid and
leprous as a true angel of mercy:

*María Rosario lloraba en silencio, y resplande-
cía hermosa y candida como una Madona, en medio
de la sórdida corte de mendigos que se acercaban
de rodillas para besarle las manos...*

*María Rosario también tenía una hermosa leyenda,
y los lirios blancos de la caridad también la aro-
maban. Vivía en el Palacio como en un convento.
Cuando bajaba al jardín traía la falda llena de
espliego que esparcía entre sus vestidos, y cuando
sus manos se aplicaban a una labor monjal, su mente
soñaba sueños de santidad. Eran sueños albíces como
las parábolas de Jesús, y el pensamiento acariciaba
los sueños, como la mano acaricia el suave y tibio
plumaje de las palomas familiares. María Rosario
hubiera querido convertir el Palacio en albergue
donde se recogiese la procesión de viejos y lisiados,
de huérfanos y locos que llenaba la capilla pidiendo
limosna y salmodiando padrenuestros... Y después del
día lleno de quehaceres humildes, silenciosos, crí-
tianos, por las noches se arrodilla en su alcoba,
y reza con fe ingenua al Niño Jesús, que resplandece*
bajo un faral... La paz familiar se levanta como una alondra del nido de su pecho y revoltea por todo el Palacio, y canta sobre las puertas, a la entrada de las grandes salas. María Rosario fue el único amor de mi vida. Han pasado muchos años, y al recordarla ahora todavía se llenan de lágrimas mis ojos áridos y casi ciegos. (pp. 26-7)

A more nearly perfect version of saintliness would be difficult to imagine. María is the epitome of unselfishness. She is compared to the Madonna; her dreams are "albos," snow-white, like the parables of Christ. The image of the dove, another symbol of gentleness and peace, is also used. While she is performing these good works, she seems to be able to forget the Marqués. The more holy the works with which she busies herself, the less time for temptation. But she cannot fill every moment with such charitable deeds and greater temptations lie ahead. As for the Marqués' statement that she is the only girl whom he has ever loved, the reader may decide the validity of this from Bradomín's actions.

Since Monsignor Gaetani has died, the Marqués has no reason to prolong his stay in Ligura. But Princess Gaetani wishes him to stay a while longer and arranges to have María Rosario write to Monsignor Sassoferrato in Rome to get permission to retain Bradomín. As María starts for the door, the Marqués audaciously declares, "Me quedo porque os adoro!" (p. 28). María pretends not to hear him, but the Princess begins to suspect the Marqués' intentions toward her daughter:
Again the Marqués is probing to find how deeply and sincerely María's convictions go. Doubtless it intrigues him to think that María Rosario has never shown the slightest doubt or hesitation about entering convent life. This thought excites him because he feels that if he persists he can cause this apparently determined girl to falter and for this reason his hand trembles slightly when he says, "Es una vocación de Santa." Later that evening as he watches the Princess' four other daughters playing, Bradomín is struck by their innocence and angelic qualities: "Rizos rubios, dorados, luminosos, cabezas adorables, cuántas veces os he visto en mis sueños pecadores más bellos que esas aladas cabezas ángelicas que solían ver en sus sueños celestiales los santos ermitaños" (p. 29). The antithesis of the sacred and the profane is re-emphasized. In his "sueños pecadores" the Marqués has visualized these beautiful heads, but most assuredly not with the same thoughts
As the Marqués plans the future with regard to María, he is moved by the beauty of a spring night:

Yo recorría un sendero orillado por floridos rosales. Las luciernagas brillaban al pie de los arbustos, el aire era fragante, y el más leve soplo bastaba para deshojar en los tallos las rosas marchitas. Yo sentía esa vaga y romántica tristeza que encanta los enamoramientos juveniles, con la leyenda de los grandes y trágicos dolores que se visten a la usanza antiqua. Consideraba la herida de mi corazón como aquéllas que no tienen cura y pensaba que de un modo fatal decidiría de mi suerte. Con extremos wertherianos soñaba superar a todos los amantes que en el mundo han sido, y por infortunados y leales pasaron a la historia, y aun asomaron más de una vez la faz lacrimosa en las cantigas del vulgo. Desgraciadamente quedéme sin superarlos, porque tales romanticismos nunca fueron otra cosa que un perfume derramado sobre todos mis amores de juventud. ¡Locuras gentiles y fugaces que duraban algunas horas, y que, sin duda por eso, me han hecho suspirar y sonreír toda la vida! (p. 30)

The words "vaga," "romántico," "locas," and "fugaces" are indicative of the Marqués' adventuresome attitude toward love in this springtime of his life. However, it does seem out of character for Bradomín to admit that he did not achieve his dream of surpassing all the great lovers of history. He is, however, in a reminiscing and generous mood and perhaps he feels that such a statement might soften any harsh opinions the reader might gather from future scenes in which he reveals his unbounded pride and vanity. Another augury of ill fortune occurs when the Marqués says, "Consideraba la herida de
mi corazón como aquéllas que no tienen cura y pensaba que
de un modo fatal decidiría de mi suerte." Repeatedly
these sudden feelings of sadness and impending tragedy
gulp his soul, yet he seems driven to make this disaster
a reality. No matter what his intuition tells him, his
vanity drives him to continue the pursuit of María.

The Marqués obtains permission to remain in Ligura.
One night as the Princess and her daughters are sitting
on the terrace, Bradomín tries to approach María:

Yo quise varias veces acercarme a María Rosario.
Todo fue inútil. Ella adivinaba mis intenciones,
y alejábase cautelosa, sin ruido, con la vista baja
y las manos cruzadas sobre el escapulario del hábito
monjil que conservaba puesto. Viéndola a tal extremo
temerosa, yo sentí halagado mi orgullo donjuanesc,
y algunas veces, solo por turbarla, cruzaba de un
lado al otro. La pobre niña al instante se prevenía
para huir. Yo pasaba aparentando no advertirlo.
Tenía la petulancia de los veinte años... Recuerdo
que me hallaba hablando con aquella devota Marquesa
de Tescara, cuando, movido por un oscuro presenti-
miento, volví la cabeza y busqué con los ojos la
blanca figura de María Rosario. La Santa ya no
estaba.(p. 35)

This episode presents an excellent example of the Marqués'
Don-Juanish pride. He sees that he makes María nervous and
delights in doing so. He states that he crossed from one
side of the room to the other "sólo por turbarla." María
is growing increasingly nervous in his presence and, pro-
portionately, Bradomín will enjoy making her uneasy because
this is a sign that his seductive powers are beginning to
weaken her. The image of María as a saint is now firmly
established in the mind of the Marqués, as can be seen from his reference to her as "La Santa" in the last line of the paragraph.

Although Bradomín realizes that María Rosario is uneasy in his presence, he is not sure of the reason for her restlessness. Does she fear him, or does she fear falling in love with him?: "Yo la creía enamorada, y, sin embargo, mi corazón presentía no sé qué quimérica y confusa desventura" (p. 36). His meditation is interrupted by the croaking of a toad, which in black magic often represents the Devil:

Quise volver a sumergirme en mi amoroso ensueño, pero el encanto de un sapo, repetido monótonamente bajo la arca de los cipreses, distraía mi pensamiento. Recuerdo que de niño he leído muchas veces, en un libro de devociones donde rezaba mi abuela, que el Diablo solía tomar ese aspecto para turbar la oración de un santo monjo. Era natural que a mí me ocurriese lo mismo. Yo, calumniado y mal comprendido, nunca fui otra cosa que un místico galante, como San Juan de la Cruz. En lo más florido de mis años, hubiera dado gustoso todas las glorias mundanas por poder escribir en mis tarjetas: 'El Marqués de Bradomín, Confesor de Princesas.' (p. 36)

In a rare attempt to arouse sympathy from the reader, the Marqués compares himself to a devout monk whose thoughts are perturbed by this satanic distraction. Considering Bradomín's previous actions, it seems rather difficult to picture him as a man of God being tempted by Satan, but he makes the statement, "Era natural que a mí me ocurriese lo mismo" with complete frankness and evidently
in anticipation that the reader will accept it without reservation. He continues this strained metaphor by speaking of himself as a misunderstood mystic. There is little doubt that mysticism, be it holy or satanic, plays a great part in his life, but the comparison to San Juan de la Cruz seems a bit ludicrous when one examines the life of the true Saint and that of the would-be Saint, Bradomín. Perhaps he should have likened himself to Juan Ruiz, since this would appear more in keeping with his actions. As for his desire to be a confessor of Princesses, doubtless this is prompted by the delight he would experience in sharing the secret sins of these highborn ladies, and is another in a series of constant antitheses of the sacred and the profane, the divine and the mundane. The Marqués is ever aware of divine authority, but he revels greatly in the pleasures of this world.

As he reflects along these lines, Bradomín begins to excuse himself for the rash action he is about to take:

En achaques de amor, ¿quién no ha pecado alguna vez? Yo estoy convencido de que el Diablo tiende siempre a los mejores.

Aquella noche, el cornudo monarca del abismo encendió ni sangre con su aliento de llamas, y despertó mi carne flaca, fustigándola con su rústico negro. Yo cruzaba la terraza cuando una ráfaga violenta alzó la flamante cortina, y mis ojos mortales vieron arrodillada en el fondo de la estancia la sombra pálida de María Rosario. (p. 37)

This passage seems carefully constructed to create the impression that the Marqués cannot help himself, that he
is tempted beyond endurance. The scene described might well be represented in a medieval morality play: A horned Satan breathing flames and whipping a poor mortal with his black tail. Bradomín emphasizes just how intolerable the situation is by personalizing the temptation. It is not just an abstract force or one of the Devil's emissaries who taunts him, but the Monarch of evil himself. The Marqués has just stated that Satan tempts only the best and the demon is doing his best to entrap this poor mortal— at least that is the impression Bradomín wishes to give. And as the Marqués crosses the terrace, a gust of wind just happens to move the curtains and let his eyes glimpse the pale silhouette of María Rosario. The total effect of this scene, then, is that the forces of evil and nature have combined to compel the Marqués, who appears helpless before them, toward a sinister destiny. But suddenly the tone of the passage changes:

No puedo decir lo que entonces pasó por mí. Creo que primero fue un impulso ardiente, y después una sacudida fría y cruel. La audacia que se admira en los labios y en los ojos de aquel retrato que del divino César Borgia pintó el divino Rafael de Sancio. Me volví mirando en torno. Escuché un instante. En el jardín y en el Palacio todo era silencio. Llegué cauteloso a la ventana, y salté dentro. La santa dió un grito. Se dobló blandamente como una flor cuando pasa el viento, y quedó tendida, desmayada, con el rostro pegado a la tierra. En mi memoria vive siempre el recuerdo de sus manos blancas y frías. ¡Manos diafanas como la hostia!...
Al verla desmayada la cogí en brazos y la llevé a su lecho, que era como altar de lino albo y de rizado encaje. Después, con una sombra de recelo, apague la luz. Quedó en tinieblas el aposento, y con los brazos estendidos comencé a caninar en la oscuridad. Ya tocaba el borde de su lecho y percibía la blancaura del hábito monjil, cuando el rumor de unos pasos en la terraza heló mi sangre, y me detuvo. (p. 37)

What at first had been impulse now becomes "una sacudida fría y cruel." If previously the Marqués had felt himself driven by the Devil, he now enacts the role of Satan, joyfully anticipating the cruel, audacious act he is about to initiate. Now we witness a confrontation between good and evil. María's hands are described as being as white as the host; Bradomín speaks of "el cándido lecho y la figura cándida" of María. These terms serve to emphasize the virginity of the girl's mind and body. Even her bed is described as an altar. The bed is an altar upon which Bradomín wishes to sacrifice María to Satan. To do so, he naturally must put out the light, since workers of evil love the darkness. But as triumph seems near, someone passes by and the Marqués is forced to flee. On the terrace he is knifed in the shoulder by Polonio, the Princess' trusted servant and discovers that it was he who had passed by María's room.

The next day the Princess' disdainful attitude reveals to Bradomín that Polonio has told her of the previous night's escapade. But does the Marqués act contrite or
humble? On the contrary, he makes a great display of pride and brashness—and enjoys doing so immensely:

Con la sonrisa en los labios y atusándome el mostachito, entre en la biblioteca... Sobre el vasto recinto se cernía el silencio como un murciélago de maleficio, que sólo se anunciaba por el aire frío de sus alas. Yo comprendía que la noble señora buscaba herirme con su desdén, y un poco indecisó, me detuve en medio de la estancia. Mi orgullo levantábase en rafagas, pero sobre los labios temblorosos estaba la sonrisa. Supe dominar mi despecho y me acerque, galante y familiar:

Y mi voz, helada por un temblor nervioso, tenía cierta amabilidad felina que puso miedo en el corazón de la Princesa... (p. 39)

This is the portrait of a haughty man admiring his audacity to speak as if he had offended no one. The Princess informs him that she has received no letter authorizing his stay in Ligura and that he should return to Rome. Growing ever more daring, Bradomín replies that it will be necessary to have María Rosario write another letter. The Marqués himself has provided the best possible description of his rebellious pride. When circumstances are most unfavorable and he has reason to act humbly, even obsequiously, it is then that he asserts pride in its most extreme form.

Earlier in the story he had even become jealous of an aged prelate because the older women paid more attention to the churchman than to Bradomín:

Adivinaba, por primera vez en mi vida, todo el influjo galante de los prelados romanos, y acudía a mi memoria la leyenda de sus fortunas amorosas. Confieso que hubo instantes donde olvidé la ocasión, el sitio y hasta los cabellos blancos que peinaban
It is clear that any concept of love Bradomín may have must allow for the satisfaction of his incredible vanity. As he progresses through the Sonatas, it will become more difficult to distinguish whether he can love another person as much as he loves himself.

Not long after his unpleasant encounter with Polonio, outside María's room, the Marqués finds María reading the life of the Virgin Mary. He tells her that he is familiar with the book because his "padre espiritual" had read it when he was imprisoned in Venice. Naturally curious, María asks the name of his spiritual father and the Marqués initiates one of his boldest attempts at seduction:

---¡Vuestro padre espiritual! ¿Quién es vuestro padre espiritual?
---El Caballero de Casanova.
---¿Un noble español?
---No, un aventurero veneciano.
---¿Y un aventurero...?
Yo la interrumpí:
---Se arrepintió al final de su vida.
---¿Se hizo fraile?
---No tuvo tiempo, aun cuando dejó escritas sus confesiones.
---¿Como San Augustín?
¡Lo mismo! Pero humilde y cristiano, no quiso igualarse con aquel doctor de la Iglesia, y las llamó Memorias,
---¿Vos las habéis leído?
---Es mi lectura favorita.
---¿Seran muy edificantes?
---¡Oh!... ¡Cuánto aprenderíais en ellas!... Jacobo de Casanova fue gran amigo de una monja de Venecia.
---¿Cómo San Francisco fue amigo de Santa Clara?
---Con una amistad todavía más íntima. (pp. 43-4)

Any doubt as to Bradomín's intentions toward María or his
philosophy of life are erased completely by the two phrases: "Con una amistad todavía más íntima," and "Se arrepintió al final de su vida." Despite these passionate murmurings, María is able to withstand Bradomín and warns him to flee Ligura because his life is in peril.

Humiliated by the Princess' resentment of his presence, the Marqués falls into another of his spells of depression:

¡Fueron horas de tortura indefinible! Ráfagas de una insensata violencia agitaban mi alma. Con el vértigo de los abismos me atraían aquellas asechanzas misteriosas, urdidas contra mí en la sombra perfumada de los grandes salones. Luchaba inútilmente por dominar mi orgullo y convencerme que era más altivo y más gallardo abandonar aquella misma noche, en medio de la tormenta, el Palacio Gaetani. Advertíme pronta de una desusada agitación, y al mismo tiempo comprendía que no era dueño de vencerla, y que todas aquellas larvas que entonces empezaban a moverse dentro de mí habían de ser fatalmente furias y serpientes. Con un presentimiento sombrío, sentía que mi alma era incurable y que mi voluntad era impotente para vencer la tentación de hacer alguna cosa audaz, irreparable. ¡Era aquello el vértigo de la perdición!(p. 48)

Once more the Marqués pictures himself as a man driven against his will, compelled by supernatural forces toward a fate he cannot avoid. But the decisive factor seems to be "orgullo." He cannot dominate his pride. Bradomín has thoroughly convinced himself that he is incapable of restraining himself from some disastrous act and is transferring the responsibility for the consequences of such an act to a generalized force of evil or fate.

Now he receives word to return to Rome and he pays a last, fateful visit to María. He finds her filling the
vases of the chapel with roses and asks for the prettiest rose—that from her lips:

--No sois bueno... ¿Por qué me decís esas cosas?
--Por veros enojada.
--¿Y eso os agrada? ¿Algunas veces me parecéis el Demonio!....
--El Demonio no sabe querer.

Quedose silenciosa. Apenas podia distinguirse su rostro en la tenue claridad del salón, y solo supe que lloraba cuando estallaron sus sollozos. Me acerqué, queriendo consolarla:
--¡Oh!... Perdonadme.

Y mi voz fue tierna, apasionada y sumisa. Yo, mismo, al oírla, senti su extraño poder de seducción. Era llegado el momento supremo; y presintiendo, mi corazón se estremecía con el ansia de la espera cuando está próxima una gran ventura.

María Rosario cerraba los ojos con espanto, como al borde de un abismo. Su boca descolorida parecía sentir una voluptuosidad angustiosa. Yo cogí sus manos, que estaban yertas. Ella me las abandonó sollozando, con un frenesi doloroso:

--¿Por qué os gozais en hacerme sufrir?... Si sabéis que todo es imposible!
--¡Imposible!... Yo nunca esperé conseguir vuestro amor... ¡Ya sé que no lo merezco!... Solamente quiero pediros perdón y que de vuestros labios que rezareis por mí cuando este lejos.
--¡Callad!... ¡Callad!....
--Os contemplo tan alta, tan lejos de mí, tan ideal, que juzgo vuestras oraciones como las de una santa.
--¡Callad!... ¡Callad!....
--Mi corazón agoniza sin esperanza. Acaso podré olvidaros, pero este amor habrá sido para mí un fuego purificador.
--¡Callad!... ¡Callad!.... (p. 52)

This scene reveals better than any other the incredible vanity of Bradomín. In the presence of this girl, who is trying desperately to control herself, he delights in listening to his own seductive voice. The more upset María becomes, the more excited the Marqués becomes. The situation has become a contest: Devil versus Saint--
Bradomín versus María. He moves María especially by appearing to be humble and arouses sympathy by telling her what an idealized concept he has of her and how unworthy he is of her love. Certain key phrases, however, betray the Marqués' true thoughts:

Yo tenía lágrimas en los ojos, y sabía que cuando se llora, las manos pueden arriesgarse a ser audaces. ¡Pobre María Rosario, quedóse palida como una muerta, y pensé que iba a desmayarse en mis brazos! Aquella niña era una santa, y viéndome a tal extremo desgraciado, no tenía valor por mostrarse más cruel conmigo. Cerraba los ojos, y gemía agonizada:
--¡Dejadme!...¡Dejadme!...
Yo murmuré:
--+Por qué me aborreceís tanto?
--¡Porque sois el Demonio!(p. 52)

Bradomín enjoys his performance as if he were standing apart from the entire situation; as if he were an actor watching himself perform. María tells him that he has been denounced to the Church as a sorcerer and must leave Ligura. But since Bradomín is as persistent as the Devil, which María has come to consider him, he continues imploring María not to enter the convent. Now he sadistically taunts María about whether her mother had believed her when María said that she had not seen Bradomín that night in her room:

--+No, no fuisteis creída. Vos lo sabéis. ¡Y cuántas lágrimas han vertido en la oscuridad vuestrros ojos!
María Rosario retrocedió hacia el fondo de la ventana:
--+¡Sois brujo!...¡Han dicho la verdad!...¡Sois brujo!...
Yo murmuré con desesperación:
--+También vos me acusáis?
—Decid, entonces, ¿cómo habéis sabido?
La miré largo rato en silencio, hasta que sentí
descender sobre mi espíritu el numen sagrado de
los profetas:
—Lo he sabido, porque habéis rezado mucho para
que lo supierese... ¡He tenido en un sueño revela-
ción de todo! ...(p. 55).

The Marqués is truly savoring the pain he can inflict
upon María. He tries to convince her that to him she
is a saint and that he only wishes her to be concerned
for his spiritual welfare. María tries to escape his
influence by calling to her youngest sister, María Nieves.
But the child's presence makes no difference to the pass-
ionate Marqués and he makes a last desperate attempt at
forcing María to confess love for him:

...Yo busqué en la sombra la mano de María Rosario:
—¡Curadme!...
Ella murmuró, retirándose:
—¿Y cómo?...
—Jurad que me aborrecéis.
—Eso, no...
—¡Y amarme?
—Tampoco. ¡Mi amor no es de este mundo!
Y su voz era tan triste al pronunciar estas
palabras, que yo sentí una emoción voluptuosa, como si cayese sobre mi corazón recio de lágrimas
purísimas. Inclinándome para beber su aliento y
su perfume, murmuré en voz baja y apasionada:
—Vos me pertenecéis. Hasta la celda del convento
os seguirá mi culto mundano. Solamente por vivir
en vuestro recuerdo y en vuestras oraciones, moriría
gustoso.
—¡Callad!... ¡Callad!...
María Rosario, con el rostro intensamente pálido,
tendía sus manos temblorosas hacia la niña, que
estaba sobre el alfizar, circundada por el último
resplandor de la tarde, como un arcángel en una
vidriera antigua. El recuerdo de aquel momento aún
pone en mis mejillas un frío de muerte. Ante
nuestros ojos espantados se abrió la ventana, con
eso silencio de las cosas inexorables que están
determinadas en lo invisible, y han de suceder por un destino fatal y cruel. La figura de la niña, inmovil sobre el alfiz, se destaca un momento en el azul del cielo donde palidecían las estrellas, y cayo al jardín, cuando llegaban a tocarla los brazos de la hermana. (p. 56)

The tragedy that Bradomín had sensed would occur from the beginning has finally come to pass:

¡Fue Satanás! ¡Fue Satanás! ... Aún resuena en mi oído aquel grito angustiado de María Rosario. Después de tantos años aún la veo palida, divina y trágica como el mármol de una estatua antigua. Aún siento el horror de aquella hora...

Sentí miedo. Baje a las caballerizas y con ayuda de un criado enganché los caballos a la posta. Partí al galope. Al desaparecer bajo el arco de la plaza, volví los ojos llenos de lágrimas para enviarle un adiós al Palacio Getañí. En la ventana, siempre abierta, me pareció distinguir una sombra envejecida, arrugada, miedosa, que vagaba toda­vía por aquellas estancias, y todavía cree verla acechandola en la oscuridad! Me contaron que ahora, al cabo de tantos años, ya repite sin pasión, sin duelo, con la monotonia de una vieja que reza: ¡FUE SATANÁS! (pp. 56-7)

María Rosario's insanity, then, is the ultimate result of the struggle between the mundane and the divine. Doubtless María's last coherent thought as she watched her sister fall was that the Marqués de Bradomín was indeed the Devil incarnate, for what else could explain such a cruel act to a girl who intended to devote her life exclusively to God's work?

In comparing María Rosario and the Marqués de Bradomín to the heroines and heroes of Corte de amor, it is evident that they differ radically. Certainly
the women in *Corte de amor* were far from saints and the men, as it has been pointed out, were more often dominated than dominating. There is no man among the heroes of *Corte de amor* who is as vain, confident, or generally self-controlled as the Marqués de Bradomín.

Regarding the concept of love presented in this *sonata*, there are two types of love depicted. María's love of God, her desire to do his will, is an idealized love. Bradomín's love for María—or at least what he says is love—is of both a spiritual and physical nature. The attraction that María holds for him is very complex. It is spiritual and physical, mystical and earthly, ordinary and yet supernatural. There is an atmosphere of constant dynamic tension caused by these antithetic feelings. The Marqués respects and idealizes María for her saintly qualities, but the next minute he is carrying her to bed. Perhaps he does love her in the only way he knows, but that love proves corrupting, sadistic, and destructive. Bradomín's vanity obstructs everything he does, and on several occasions he admits taking pleasure in causing María grief simply because he has proved to himself that he can do this. Any sort of love that he claims to have for María does not respect her wishes to take vows. Bradomín is constantly urging her to come down to his level, to enjoy earthly love. No doubt he would repent later, as he always plans to do. His relentless
pursuit of María, culminating in the death of the child, makes a reality out of the shadowy premonitions he had experienced from the outset of the story. It is curious that at times Bradomín feels himself compelled by supernatural forces, a puppet; at other times he seems to become the force of evil itself and to initiate and enjoy the action. Whether or not the Marqués could have conquered his pride and averted this tragedy is a moot point, but as to what he symbolized to María there is no doubt: ¡FUE SATANÁS!
SONATA DE ESTÍO

In the *Sonata de Estío* there evolves a picture of a woman and an attitude toward love quite different from those in *Sonata de Primavera*. The Marqués de Bradomín does not state precisely at what time in his life this adventure took place, but he does make it clear that he is trying to assuage the painful effects of an unpleasant love affair and that he was at the time much more optimistic and disposed to the enjoyment of life than he is now:

Quería olvidar unos amores desgraciados, y pensé recorrer el mundo en romantica peregrinación...

Por aquellos días de peregrinación sentimental, era yo joven y algo poeta, con ninguna experiencia y harta novelería en la cabeza. Creía de buena fe en muchas cosas que ahora pongo en duda, y libre de escepticismos, dábame buena prisa a gozar de la existencia. Aunque no lo confessase, y acaso sin saberlo, era feliz, con esa felicidad indefinible que da el poder amar a todas las mujeres. Sin ser un donjuanista, he vivido una juventud amorosa y apasionada, pero de amor juvenil y buliente, de pasión equilibrada y sanguínea. Los decadentismos de la generación nueva no los he sentido jamás. Todavía hoy, después de haber pecado tanto, tengo las mañanas triunfantes, y no puedo menos de sonreír recordando que hubo una época lejana donde llora por muerto a mi corazón. Muerto de celos, de rabia y de amor.(p. 61)

He decides to go to Mexico because several of his ancestors, notably Gonzalo Sandoval, had established holdings there in colonial times. The Marqués himself has some legitimate claim to an inheritance in Mexico, although he admits that whatever holdings might be his have probably
depreciated.

But in the opening paragraph, before he speaks of his unhappy love affair and his decision to to to Mexico, the Marqués makes an interesting statement about the woman he will encounter in Mexico and about women in general:

...Aquella mujer tiene en la historia de mi vida un recuerdo galante, cruel y glorioso, como lo tienen en la historia de los pueblos Thais la de Grecia, y Niñon la de Francia, esas dos cortesanas manos bellas que su destino! ¿Acaso el único des- tino que merece ser envidiado! Yo hubiere tenido igual, y quizá más grande, de haber nacido mujer. Entonces lograría lo que jamás pude lograr. A las mujeres para ser felices les basta con no tener escrúpulos, y probablemente no les hubiera tenido esa quimerica Marquesa de Bradomín. Dios mediante, haría como las gentiles marquesses de mi tiempo, que ahora se confiesan todos los viernes después de haber pecado todos los días. Por cierto que algunas se han arrepentido todavía bellas y tentadoras, olvidando que basta un punto de contricción al sentir cercana la vejez.(p. 61)

The adjectives Bradomín employs in his reference to the memory of Niña Chole, for this is the woman of whom he speaks, are well chosen. Indeed she was cruel and yet at times so helpless as to evoke the most chivalrous and gallant feelings of which the Marqués is capable. How- ever, it is the statement that follows this initial allu- sion to Niña Chole that is the most thought-provoking. It would hardly be considered unusual for a woman to express a desire that she had been born a man, but for Bradomín to say that he would have considered it equal and perhaps greater to have been born a woman merits further scrutiny.
He states that as a woman he could have achieved what he never has been able to accomplish as a man, because, as the next line says, for a woman to be happy all that is necessary is that she have no scruples. He seems to imply that women have a greater capacity for mundane pleasures than men. Then he continues by referring indiscriminately to the noble ladies of his day who sin all week and repent on Friday. The "carpe diem" theme, which was prevalent in Sonata de Primavera, and will continue to prevail throughout the series, is firmly established by the last line of the opening paragraph: "olvidando que basta un punto de contrición al sentir cercana la vejez." The Marqués de Bradomín is definitely a man of the moment, impulsive at times, and always eager to taste forbidden fruit so long as he thinks that he can manage one final breath of repentance before he dies.

Bradomín's ship, the "Dalila," anchors first at San Juan de Tuxtlan. In describing the scene, he emphasizes the blistering heat and exotic atmosphere:

Nuestra primera escala en aguas de México fue San Juan de Tuxtlan. Recuerdo que era medianoche cuando, bajo un sol abrasador que reses- caba las maderas y derretía la brea, dinos fondo en aquellas aguas de brufiida plata. Los barqueros indios, verdosos como antiguos bronces, asaltan la fragata por ambos costados, y del fondo de sus canoas sacan exóticas mercancías; cocos esculpidos, abanicos de palma y bastones de carey, que mues- tran sonriendo como mendigos a los pasajeros que
se apoyan sobre la borda. Cuando levanto mis ojos hasta los peñascos de la ribera, que asoman la tostada cabeza entre las olas, distingo grupos de muchachos desnudos que se arrojan desde ellos y nadan grandes distancias, hablándose a medida que se separan y lanzando gritos. Algunos descansan sentados en las rocas, con los pies en el agua. Otros se encaraman para secarse al sol, que los ilumina de soslayo, gráciles y desnudos, como figuras de un friso del Parthenon. (p. 64)

In this unbearable heat he decides to take a side trip to Tequill to visit the famous ruins:

Aun a riesgo de que la fragata se hiciese a la vela, busqué un caballo y me aventuré hasta las ruinas de Tequil. Un indio adolescente me sirvió de guía. El calor era insoportable. Casi siempre al galope, recorrí extensas llanuras de Tierra Caliente, plantios que no acaban nunca, de henequén y caña dulce. En la línea del horizonte se perfilaban las colinas de configuración volcánica revestida de maleza espesa y verdigrés. En la llanura los charcos tendían sus ramas, formando una a modo de sombrilla gigantesca, y sentados en rueda, algunos indios devoraban la miserable ración de tamales. Nosotros seguíamos una senda roja y polvorienta. El guía, casi desnudo, corría delante de mi caballo. Sin hacer alto una sola vez, llegamos a Tequil. (pp. 64-5)

It is important to keep in mind the total mood being created in this passage. Bradomín is seeking to recover from an unhappy love affair; he chooses an exotic land to visit; the heat, vegetation, remnants of savagely beautiful civilizations surround him. All of this is quite different from the sunny Italy of the first sonata. As he approaches the pyramids, he sees for the first time Niña Chole:

En aquellas ruinas de palacios, de pirámides y de templos gigantes, donde crecen polvorientos sicomoros y anidan verdes reptiles, he visto por
primera vez una singular mujer a quien sus criados indios, casi estoy por decir sus siervos, llamaban dulcemente la Niña Chole. Me pareció la Salambó de aquellos palacios. Venía de camino hacia San Juan de Tuxtlaín, y descansaba a la sombra de una pirámide, entre el cortejo de sus servidores. Era una belleza broncea, exótica, con esa gracia extraña y ondulante de las razas nomadas, una figura hierática y serpentina, cuya contemplación evocaba el recuerdo de aquellas princesas hijas del sol, que en los poemas indios resplandecen con el doble encanto sacerdotal y voluptuoso. Vestía como las criollas yucatecas, albo hipil recamado con sedas de colores, vestidura indígena semejante a una tunicela antigua, y zagalaje andaluz, que en aquellas tierras, ayer españolas, llaman todavía con el castizo y jacaesco nombre de fustán. El negro cabello cañale suelto, el hipil jugaba sobre el clásico seno. Por desgracia, yo solamente podía verla el rostro aquellas raras veces que hacía mi lo tornaba, y la Niña Chole teníase esas bellas actitudes de ídolo, esa quietud extática y sagrada de la raza maya, raza tan antigua, tan noble, tan misteriosa, que parece haber emigrado del fondo de la Asiria. Pero a cambio del rostro, desquitábame en aquellos que no alcanzaba a ver el rebocio, admirando como se mezclaba la tornatil morbidez de los hombros y el contorno del cuello. ¡Valgame Dios! Me parecía que de aquel cuerpo brumido por el ardiente sol de México se exhalaban lenguidos esfíuvios, y que yo los aspiraba, los bebía, que me embriagaba con ellos...Un criado indio trae del diestro el pañuel de aquella Salambó que le habla en su vieja lengua y cabalgando sonriendo. Entonces, al verla de frente, el corazón me dió un vuelco. Tenía la misma sonrisa de Lili. ¡Aquella Lili, no se si amada, sí aborrecida! (p. 65)

This first description of Niña Chole is quite detailed and provides a colorful contrast to María Rosario of Sonata de Primavera. Whereas María was delicate, quiet, and of a marble-white complexion, Niña Chole is an exotic, nomadic type with bronze skin. "Serpentine" and "undulating" are other adjectives which Bradomín applies to her. Certainly
the sensual element is emphasized here more than it was in
the first sonata. An important expression employed is
"el doble encanto sacerdotal y voluptuoso." The Marqués
visualizes the creole as one of the ancient priestesses of
the Mayas; but he chooses to emphasize her physical appeal,
as though it were enhanced by her being a religious servant.
We have seen this particular kind of appeal before in the
first sonata, but here it takes on a much more sensual aspect.
Bradomín speaks of Niña Chole as a priestess only in an ex­
terior fashion, that is, her gestures, posture, and garments.
But she does not occupy in his mind the idealized sphere in
which he had placed María Rosario. He often described María's
virtues and saintly deeds—she was a saint, in fact as well
as in appearance. Niña Chole, on the other hand, merely
reminds him of an ancient cult of priestesses, notably among
the Mayas, and this largely because of dress, coloring, and
posture. It is significant, however, that the Marqués con­
tinues to make this association between religion—however
superficially—and sensuality. The one seems to stimulate
an interest in the other. Niña Chole's appeal, then, is
much more exotic and earthly than that of María Rosario.
But when the Marqués finally sees her face, he realizes
that she has the smile of the woman he had come to Mexico
to forget. And, more important, that smile is ambiguous.
Is it love or hate? This is what the Marqués must discover.

Later, as he sleeps in a hammock beneath the intense
tropical heat, he dreams that he is an Arab who has died and gone to Paradise. When he enters Paradise, the Prophet presents him with seven maidens, all of whom look exactly like Niña Chole. As he imagines that he sees seven Niña Choles, fear seizes him:

Lo advertí con terror, porque estaba seguro de concluir enamorándome locamente de sus lindos ojos si tenía la desgracia de volver a verlos. Afortunadamente, las mujeres que así tgn de súbito nos cautivan suelen no aparecer más que una vez en la vida. Pasan como sombras, envueltas en el misterio de un crepusculo ideal. Si volviésem a pasar, quizá desvanecería el encanto. Y a que volver, si una mirada suya hasta a comunicarnos todas las secretas melancolías del amor!(p. 66)

This is the first premonition of the dreadful power which Niña Chole will have over the Marqués. He is already certain that if he saw her again he would fall in love with her. But he phrases the possibility of a future encounter with her in these terms: "porque estaba seguro de concluir enamorándome locamente de sus lindos ojos si tenía la desgracia de volver a verlos." The adverb "locamente" and the noun "desgracia" are the keys to his thinking at this point. As Bradomín had felt from even the first meeting with María Rosario that misfortune lay in the future, so does he experience the same sentiment when he thinks of a possible second meeting with Niña Chole. Although he fears the attraction that she holds for him, he cannot help but feel drawn to her. As in the first sonata, the probability of some disaster, of an
ambiguous fate, tempts Bradomín to pursue the goal which can actualize that fate, give reality to premonition. It is almost as if her were a child who loved to play with fire. He knows the danger and the harm, but he cannot resist striking another match to see if what he believes will happen actually will occur. This appears to be a rather destructive and masochistic element in the nature of Bradomín.

The Marqués' thoughts of Níña Chole expand into a recollection of other love affairs and he gives vent to a parenthetic resume of the effects of love:

¡Oh románticos devaneos, pobres hijos del ideal, nacidos durante algunas horas de viaje! ¿Quién llaga a viejo y no ha sentido estremecerse el corazón bajo la caricia de vuestra alba blanca? ¡Yo guardo en el alma tantos de estos amores!...Aun hoy, puedo recordar sin melancolía un rostro de mujer, entrevisto cierta madrugada entre Urbino y Roma, cuando yo estaba en la Guardia Noble de Su Santidad. Es una figura de ensueño pálida y suspirante, que flota en lo pasado y esparce sobre todos mis recuerdos juveniles el perfume ideal de esas flores secas que entre cartas y rízos guardan los enamorados, y en el fondo de algún cofrecillo parecen exhalar el candido secreto de los primeros amores. (p. 66)

This passage is significant in that it illustrates a facet of Bradomín's personality that will intensify in the last two sonatas, and logically so since he is growing old--love is memory. Love is an exhilarating experience that heightens all the senses, a constant rebirth that can cure the sorrows of the past and present. He has
only to look at the exotic creole to recall the thrill of
love and its rejuvenating power. Although he is sad when
he reflects upon love affairs of the past, he is ever ready
to embark upon a new experience, confident that whatever
unhappiness may result will be worth the moments of joy
that he can store in his treasury of romantic experiences.
In this respect—his penchant for reflection and medita-
tion on former loves—he is somewhat similar to the Condesa
de Cela in *Corte de amor.* But the Condesa was out to break
hearts and make conquests deliberately. It was sheer vanity
that made her surround herself with trophies; and though
vanity doubtless plays a large part in the Marqués' recol-
lections, there are also traces of true sentiment, which
are not present in the Condesa. Perhaps the Marqués best
describes his feelings in this sentence: "Rejuvenecido
y feliz, con cierta felicidad melancólica, suspiraba por
los amores ya vividos, al mismo tiempo que me embriagaba
con el perfume de aquellas rosas abrileñas, que tornaban
a engalanar el viejo tronco." (p. 66)

Brodmin returns to the ship, but he has difficulty
falling asleep because the magnetism of Niña Chole has
begun to work on his mind:

Al mismo tiempo sentíame invadido por una gran
melancolía, llena de confusión y de misterio.
La melancolía del sexo, germen de la gran tris-
teza humana. El recuerdo de la Niña Chole per-
seguíame con mariposeo ingravido y terco. Su
belleza india y aquel encanto sacerdotal, aquella gracia serpentina y el mirar sibilino, y las caderas ondulosas, la sonrisa inquietante, los pies de niña, los hombros desnudos, todo cuanto la mente adivinaba, cuanto los ojos vieran, todo, todo era hoguera voraz en que mi carne ardía. Me figuraba que las formas juveniles y gloriosas de aquella Venus de bronce florecían entre cefíros, y que, veladas primero, se entreabrián, turgentes, frescas, lujuriosas, fragantes, como rosas de Alejandría en los jardines de Tierra Caliente. Y era tal el poder sugestivo del recuerdo, que en algunos momentos creí respirar el perfume voluptuoso que al andar esparcía su falda, con ondulaciones suaves. (p. 69)

Again the appeal described is mainly physical—undulating hips, bare shoulders. But he also mentions the fact that she reminds him of an ancient priestess, proving that the association with religion is still in his mind. We note that the Marqués speaks of his dream as "feverish and uneasy, the representation and symbol of my life." The statement lends an even more elusive and ethereal quality to the story, as if he might be dreaming all of this due to the sweltering heat.

The morning after this invigorating dream, Niña Chole boards the "Dalila." That night the passengers are amused and astounded by the feats of a huge negro who hunts sharks and decapitates them. Having performed this service several times, the negro is about to retire for the night when Niña Chole asks him to make one more kill. Realizing the danger of the situation—the moon is hidden from time to time and the sharks are now running in packs—the negro insists upon more than his usual price. Niña Chole
disdainfully consents to pay it and the negro disappears into the black waters. The diver makes his kill, but as the crew is hauling him aboard, the sharks drag him under and devour him. With a haughty gesture and complete apathy to the tragedy that has just occurred, Niña Chole flings into the sea the coins that would have been the negro's prize:

—¡Ya tiene para el fléret de Caronte!

Yo debía estar más pálido que la muerte, pero como ella fijaba en mí sus hermosos ojos y sonreía, vencíome el encanto de los sentidos, y mis labios, aun tremulos, pagaron aquella sonrisa de reina antigua con la sonrisa del esclavo que aprueba cuanto hace su señor. La crueldad de la criolla me horrorizaba y me atraía; Nunca como entonces me pareciera tentadora y bella. Del mar oscuro y misterioso subían murmullos y aromas: La blanca luna les prestaba no sé qué rara voluptuosidad. La trágica muerte de aquel coloso negro, el mudo esparto que se pintaba aún en todos los rostros, un violín que lloraba en la cámara, todo en aquella noche, bajo aquella luna, era para mi objeto de voluptuosidad depravada y sutil. (p. 75)

This paragraph is an excellent example of the strange fascination the creole exercises over the Marqués. The most important sentence is: "La crueldad de la criolla me horrorizaba y me atraía." Here again may be seen the antithesis of sentiments which frequently appears in Bradomín's nature. In spite of Niña Chole's cruelty, he feels drawn to her; he experiences what he terms a sensation of depraved and subtle voluptuosness. He then describes her smile as "el enigma de algún culto licencioso, cruel, y diabólico." This is certainly a different sort of appeal from that which
emanated from María Rosario. Whereas María represented gentleness and saintliness, Niña Chole seems to embody those qualities characteristic of a demon rather than an angel.

Now there begins to grow in Bradomín's mind a fear, fear of loving this exotic woman; and yet he has not the strength to flee from temptation:

Ya otras veces había sentido ese mismo terror de amar; pero llegado el trance de poner, tierra por mdeo, siempre me habían faltado los ánimos como a una romántica damisela. ¡Flaquezas del corazón, mimado toda la vida por mi ternura y toda la vida dándome singulares! Hoy tengo por experiencia aver-iguado que únicamente los grandes santos y los grandes pecadores poseen la virtud necesaria para huir las tentaciones del amor. Y confieso humildemente que solo en aquella ocasión pude dejar de ofrecerle el nido de mi pecho al sentir el rocío de sus alas. ¡Tal vez por eso el Destino tomó a empeño probar el temple de mi alma.

...Sin duda estaba escrito que yo había de ser ten­tado y vencido. Hay martires con quienes el diablo se divierte robándoles la palma, y, desgraciadamente, yo he sido uno de esos toda la vida. Pase por el mundo como un santo caído de su altar y descalabrado. Por fortuna, algunas veces pude hallar manos blancas y piadosas que vendasen mi corazón herido. Hoy, al contemplar las viejas cicatrices y recordar como fui vencido, casi me consuelo.(p. 76)

This concept of himself as a plaything of destiny is not new for Bradomín. He had expressed the same feelings in the first sonata. The Marqués says that unfortunately he has been a martyr whom the devil has delighted in temp­ting; then he makes the tongue-in-cheek statement that when he considers how he was conquered he is almost consoled.

This last confession is indicative of how much it pains him to be tempted and to submit to temptation; had he not
said in *Sonata de Primavera* that the best part of sainthood was temptation?

They disembark at Veracruz and the Marqués discovers that Niña Chole wishes to go to Necoxtlá. Necoxtlá is on the way to Grijalba, his destination, so he offers to accompany her. Bradomín had told the creole that he intends to kidnap her when they reach a sufficiently deserted region. When she asks if all Spaniards are as crazy as Bradomín, he replies in a manner befitting his ego: "Los españoles nos dividimos en dos grandes bandos: Uno, el Marqués de Bradomín, y en el otro, todos los demás" (p. 78). Niña Chole tries to discourage the Marqués by telling him that she is on her way to join her husband, General Diego Bermúdez, but he insists on escorting her.

They stop for the night at the convent of San Juan de Tegusco. Bradomín informs the nuns that he has come there to fulfill a vow; Niña Chole lets them assume that she is the Marquesa de Bradomín and has come for the same purpose. When the abbess becomes curious as to Niña Chole’s lineage, the Marqués invents a fanciful tale and delights in his ability to move the abbess to tears:

La Madre Abadesa conmovióse tanto, que durante mi relato vi temblar en sus pestañas dos lágrimas grandes y cristalinas... Yo mismo me maravillaba al ver cómo fluía de mis labios aquel enredo de
La niña Chole sepultó el rostro entre las manos, sollozando con amargo duelo. (p. 83)

Later, as he and Niña Chole are walking in the gardens, they approach a fountain which contains the large figure of an angel. This scene provides an indication of a rather perverse side to Bradomín's nature:

...Y las dos legas, hablando a coro, mostrabame el angelote desnudo que, enredador y tronera, vertía el agua en el tazón de alabastro por su menuda y candida virilidad. Me dieron que era el Niño Jesús. Oyendo esto, la Marquesa santiguose devotamente. Yo asuré a las legas que la Marquesa de Bradomín también tenía bula para beber las aguas del Niño Jesús. Ylas la miraron mostrando gran respeto, y disputaronse ofrecerla sus anforas, pero yo les aseguré que la Niña Marquesa prefería saciar la sed aplicando los labios al santo surtidor de donde el agua manaba. La Niña Chole se acercó con el rebocillo caído a los hombros, y estando bebiendo le acometió tal tentación de risa, que por poco se ahogó. Al retirarse me manifestó en voz baja el escrutínio de haber cometido un sacrilegio. (p. 84)

He refuses to let Niña Chole use a cup. Why? Perhaps he thinks it is humorous to do this in front of the two sisters. Perhaps he intends to humiliate the creole. Although this act may be considered only a joke superficially, it could be interpreted as a sacrilege, which Niña Chole believes it to be, and as a base suggestion of earthly love as opposed to the symbol of divine love. We have seen this contrast between divine and mundane love in the first sonata, except that there María represented divinity for the Marqués. Niña Chole does not symbolize divinity for Bradomín. But the atmosphere of the convent seems to
have proved too great a temptation for him; he has to display some crude preference for his physical love amidst this exaggerated emphasis on the spiritual. We have seen also how a religious atmosphere seems to stimulate the Marqués' baser instincts (his flirtations with María Rosario in the chapel) and this idiosyncrasy will reappear in this **sonata**.

Even the abbess is not exempt from Bradomín's carnal considerations. As she conducts him to Niña Chole's room (the abbess thinks that the creole is the Marquesa de Bradomín), our adventurer finds himself following his usual line of thought: "La Madre Abadesa, con su hábito blanco, estaba muy bella, y como me parecía una gran dama capaz de comprender la vida y el amor, sentí la tentación de pedirle que me acogiese en su celda, pero fue sólo la tentación" (p. 86).

When he enters Niña Chole's room and awakens her with a kiss, she is frightened and cannot imagine how he has arranged to enter room until he reminds her of the trick they had played on the abbess. Niña Chole cries in silence until her sobbing is interrupted by the tolling of a bell:

...De pronto, en el silencio de la noche, una campana del convento comenzó a doblar. La Niña Chole me llamó temblorosa:

--Señor, no conoce la señal de la agonía?

Y al mismo tiempo se santiguó devotamente. Sin desplegar los labios me acercó a su lecho y quedé mirándola grave y triste. Ella, con la voz asustada, murmuró:
—¡Alguien se halla en trance de muerte!

Yo entonces, tomando sus manos entre las mías,
le dije amorosamente:

—¡Acaso sea yo!...

—¿Cómo, señor?

—Estará a las puertas del convento el general
Diego Bermúdez.

—¡No!... ¡No!...

Y oprimiéndome las manos comenzó a llorar. Yo
quiso enjugar sus lágrimas con mis labios, y ella,
echando la cabeza sobre las almohadas, suplicó:

—¡Por favor!... ¡Por favor!...

Velada y queda desfalleció su voz. Quedó mirándome,
temblorosos los parpados y entrecierra la rosa de su
boca. La campana seguía sonando lenta y triste. En
el jardín susurraban los follajes, y la brisa que
hacía flamear el blanco y rizado mosquitero nos traía
aromas. Cesó el toque de agonía, y juzgando propicio
el instante beso a la Niña Chole. Ella parecía con-
sentir, cuando de pronto, en medio del silencio, la
campana dobló a muerto. La Niña Chole dio un grito
y se estremeció a mi pecho: Palpitante de miedo se
refugiaba en mis brazos. Mis manos, distraídas y
paternales, comenzaron a desflorar sus senos. Ella,
suspirando, entornó los ojos, y celebramos nuestras
bodas con siete copiosos sacrificios que ofrecimos
da los dioses como el triunfo de la vida.(p. 87)

In this scene we find a mixture of the elements of love,
religion, and death. Previously these same elements had
been fused in scenes in the Sonata de Primavera, notably
after the death of Monsignor Gaetani, when the Marqués
makes his first confession of love for María. This odd
predilection of Bradomín for making love when an aura of
death permeates the atmosphere is intriguing. Such extremely
antithetic acts as dying and love making(which implies the
propagation of life)seem to suggest that the Marqués enjoys
indulging in the greatest physical pleasure of life when
he is especially conscious that death is nearby. He again
displays a rather paganistic attitude, describing orgasms
as "siete sacrificios que ofrecimos a los dioses como el
triunfo de la vida." By his own admission he is affirming one of the highest joys of life, and, by using the number seven, lending it mystical and religious significance, although the entire scene is one of fear and sensuality, not of tenderness.

The next morning Niña Chole confesses that she is sad that she and the Marqués will not see each other again. Bradomín wants to take her with him but she fears the wrath of General Bermúdez. Niña Chole also suffers from a guilt complex—the General is her father, although she did not know it at the time she married him. This makes no difference to Bradomín and Niña Chole now declares that he is the only man whom she has ever loved.

They decide to return to Veraoruz and board the ship. For some time, one of the passengers, a young blonde man, has been the object of the Marqués' curiosity. At first Bradomín believes that Niña Chole is attracted to the young man, but she laughs at this and points out conclusive evidence that the "pretty" fellow is homosexual. Relieved of his suspicions, Bradomín reflects upon the pagan festivals of the past:

Y repentinamente entristecido, incliné la cabeza sobre el pecho. No quise ver más, y medite, porque tengo amado a los clásicos casi tanto como a las mujeres. Es la educación recibida en el Seminario de Nobles. Leyendo a ese amable Patricio, ha suspirado más de una vez lamentando que los siglos hayan hecho un pecado desconocido de las divinas fiestas voluptuosas. Hoy, solamente en el sagrado misterio
vagan las sombras de algunos escogidos que hacen
renacer el tiempo antiguo de griegos y romanos,
cuando los efebos coronados de rosas sacrificaban
en los altares de Afrodita. ¡Felices y aborrecidas
sombras: Me llaman y no puedo seguirlas! Aquel
bello pecado, regalo de los dioses y tentación de
los poetas, es para mí un fruto hermético. El
cielo, siempre enemigo, dispuso que solo las rosas
de Venus floreciesen en mi alma y, a medida que
envejezco, eso me desconsuela más. Presiento que
debe ser grato, cuando la vida declina, poder pene-
trar en el jardín de los amores perversos. A mí,
desgraciadamente, ni aun me queda la esperanza.
Sobre mi alma ha pasado el aliento de Satanas en-
cesiendo todos los pecados: Sobre mi alma ha
pasado el suspiro del Arcángel encendiendo todas
las Virtudes. He padecido todos los dolores, he
gustado todas las alegrías: He apagado mi sed en
todas las fuentes, he reposado mi cabeza en el polvo
de todos los caminos: Un tiempo fui amado de las
mujeres, sus voces me eran familiares. Sólo dos
cosas han permanecido siempre arcaicas para mí: El
amor de los efebos y la música de ese teutón que
llaman Wagner.(p. 93)

Bradomín seems to advocate a sort of eclectic philosophy
which would provide him the pleasures of defunct pagan
societies while still assuring him of eternal salvation.
From the line beginning "sobre mi alma ha pasado el aliento
de Satanás..." to the end of the paragraph is a valid
resumé of the Marqués' life, excepting the omission that
Satan's breath had usually been victorious. Bradomín
becomes eloquent and sweeping in his closing lines that
one almost expects to hear him say, as did St. Paul,
"I have fought the good fight; I have kept the faith."
But of course the difference between the lives of the
two men would not warrant such a claim by the Marqués.
The "Dalila" anchors in Grijalba and the Marqués
and Niña Chole participate in the carnival festivities that are taking place. But their happiness is short-lived. General Bermúdez, father and husband of Niña Chole, arrives and carries her away with him. He finds no opposition from Bradomín, who says that whatever else he may be accused of, that he has never quarreled over a woman (p. 108).

The Marqués appears to resign himself to having lost the beautiful creole to her incestuous husband. But as he camps along the seacoast near Grijalba, he falls into a feverish sleep:

Yo veía danzar entre las lenguas de la llama una sombra femenil indecisa y desnuda: La vía, aun cerrando los ojos, con la fuerza quimería y angustiosa que tienen los sueños de la fiebre. ¡Cuidado de mí! Era una de esas visiones místicas y carnales con que el diablo tentaba en otro tiempo a los santos ermitaños. Yo creía haber roto para siempre las redes amorosas del pecado, y el Cielo castigaba tanta arrogancia dejándome en abandono. Aquella mujer desnuda, velada por las llamas, era la Niña Chole. Tenía su sonrisa y su mirar. Mi alma empezaba a cubrirse de tristeza y a suspirar románticamente. La carne flaca se estremecía de celos y de cólera. Todo en mí clamaba por la Niña Chole. Estaba arrepentido de no haber dado muerte al incestuoso raptor, y el pensamiento de buscarle a través de la tierra mexicana se hacía doloroso. Era una culebra enroscada al corazón, que me mordía y me envenenaba. (p. 112)

Once more he pictures himself as a saint tempted of the Devil, as a being driven by forces beyond his control. Jealousy and vengeance obsess him and he determines to ransom Niña Chole from her abductor. He spends the night on one of his ancestral estates near Grijalba. At dawn
a servant announces that a band of renegades has been
beaten off a few miles from the hacienda and that a creole
girl has been rescued from them. Thus Niña Chole and the
Marqués are reunited:

Feliz y caprichosa me mordía las manos, mandándome
estar quieto. No quería que yo la tocase. Ella sola,
letra, muy lentamente, desabrochó los botones de su
corpiño y destrenzó el cabello ante el espejo, donde
se contempló sonriendo. Parecía olvidada de mí.
Cuando se halló desnuda, torno a sonreír y a contem-
plarse. Semejante a una princesa oriental, ungíose
con esencias. Después, envuelta en seda y encajes,
tendióse en la hamaca y esperó: Los parpados entor-
nados y palpitantes, la boca siempre sonriente, con
aquella sonrisa que un poeta de hoy hubiera llamado
estrofa alada de nívea y rojas. Yo, aun cuando pa-
rezca extraño, no me acerque. Gustaba la divina vo-
luptuosidad de verla, y con la ciencia profunda,
exquisita y sadica de un descamante, quería retardar
todas las otras, gozarlas una a una en la quietud
sagrada de aquella noche...

La gran llama de la pasión, envolvíéndonos toda
temblorosa en su lengua dorada, nos hacía invulne-
rables al cansancio, y nos daba la noble resistencia
que los dioses tienen para el placer. Al contacto
de la carne, florecían los besos en un mayo de amores.
¡Rosas de Alejandría, yo las deshojaba sobre sus
labios! ¡Nardos de Judea, yo los deshojaba sobre
sus senos! Y la Niña Chole se estremecía en deli-
cioso extasis, y sus manos adquirían la divina tor-
peza de las manos de una virgen. Pobre Niña Chole,
después de haber pecado tanto, aún no sabía que el
supremo deleite solo se encuentra tras los abandonos
cruels, en las reconciliaciones cobardes. A mí me
estaba reservada la gloria de enseñarselo. Yo, que
en el fondo de aquellos ojos creía ver siempre el
enigma oscuro de su traición, no podía ignorar cuanto
cuesta acercarse a los altares de Venus Turbulenta.
Desde entonces compadecía a los desgraciados que,
engañados por una mujer, se consumen sin volver a
besarla. Para ellos será eternamente un misterio
la exaltación gloriosa de la carne. (pp. 116-17)
In the first two sonatas, Bradomín describes things that appeal to sight, hearing, smell, and touch. He concludes by lauding the glories of the flesh.

In comparing the first sonata to this one, we see that the types of love portrayed are extremely dissimilar. In the Sonata de Primavera Bradomín conceived of María as an ideal, an ideal he wished to bring to an earthly level, but an ideal nevertheless. She radiated holiness and a mystic appeal. But Niña Chole's appeal has been almost entirely physical from the beginning. It was her figure, her coloring, her posture that attracted the Marqués. He does not speak of her as a priestess, but as a pagan priestess of the Mayas, not as a Christian. He does not feel his soul elevated by the contemplation of her as he did with María Rosario. Indeed he feels a feverish desire to possess her physically whenever he thinks of her. The increased emphasis on sensuality and voluptuousness, then, is the main difference between the attractions exercised by the two women. Also there is the recurrence of the mixture of religion, love, and death when Bradomín and the creole spend the night at the convent. As in the first sonata, his capacity for physical pleasure seems to be heightened by this peculiar combination of elements.

But also there is great cruelty in Niña Chole. One need only recall her apathy at the gory death of the shark
fighter to realize this. She is tortured by an incestuous relationship forced upon her by her father. In short, although Niña Chole claims to love the Marqués, there are depths of her personality that he may never know. It should be remembered that at his first glimpse of Niña Chole, he described her smile as enigmatic—"no sé si amada, si aborrecida!" And even as passion consumes them at this joyous reunion, he realizes that she will always be the unfathomable being she has been from the first: 
"Yo, que en el fondo de aquellos ojos creía ver siempre el enigma oscuro de su tracción, no podía ignorar cuánto cuesta acercarse a los altates de Venus Turbulenta"(p. 117).
SONATA DE OTOÑO

The first line of this sonata establishes the mood that will dominate throughout the story: "Mi amor adorado, estoy muriéndome y sólo deseo verte!" (p. 121). The words are those of Concha, a childhood sweetheart of the Marqués, whom he has not seen for many years. It is never explained what mortal illness Concha has, only that she is dying. Concha had loved the Marqués from childhood, but her family had arranged for her a marriage with a wealthy older man. The older man offered her nothing comparable to what she felt for Bradomín. Consequently, she proved unfaithful to her senile mate and was discovered by her mother. Concha's mother had demanded that she end her relationship with Bradomín and Concha had complied with her mother's wishes. But nothing could extinguish her love for the Marqués. Now that she is certain that she is dying, she sends for him.

This sonata surpasses the previous two in the abundance of symbolism and imagery, particularly religious imagery. It should be remembered that Concha is a very religious woman who is constantly tortured by the knowledge that her relationship with Bradomín is sinful. On several occasions she expresses fear of being found dead in his arms or in his presence, but she is only human and so in love with the Marqués that even the fear of eternal
damnation cannot prevent her from being with him. Bradomín pictures her as a religious symbol, but not in the same manner in which he did María Rosario or Niña Chole. For him it is mainly Concha's physical appearance that reminds him of saintliness, although he does mention that she is very pious. Concha's love for Bradomín and her constant awareness of the impropriety of their conduct in the eyes of the Church will prove a source of incessant tension for her. If the reader will remember these facts, he can see the progression of this tension throughout the sonata.

Bradomín's first recollection of Concha as he reads her letter summoning him reveals the delicacy of her nature: "Aquellas manos pálidas, olorosas, ideales, las manos que yo había amado tanto, volvían a escribirme como otras veces" (p. 121). These are the same adjectives that were applied to María Rosario, but we shall see that they apply here on a more physical level than on a religious one. That is, the paleness of Concha's hands reminds him often only of her frail health, not of any association with divinity. When he speaks of her hands as "ideal," he most probably is referring to size and shape, whereas with María Rosario the word appeared to have more literal force because she represented the ideal for him, a type of mystical inspiration. Therefore, the color white, although it will at times have religious significance, often will be
indicative only of Concha’s ill health and imminent death. This idea is re-enforced when the Marqués sees her for the first time in many years. When he approaches the Palace of Brando, he catches sight of a figure that appears more ghostly than human:

En el fondo distinguí el Palacio con todas las ventanas cerradas y los cristales iluminados por el sol. De pronto vi una sombra blanca pasar por detrás de las vidrieras; la vi detenerse y llevarse las dos manos a la frente. Después la ventana del centro se abría con lentitud y la sombra blanca me saludaba agitando sus brazos de fantasma. Fue un momento, no más. Las ramas de los castaños se cruzaban y dejé de verla. (p. 126)

This once beautiful young woman (Concha is only thirty-one) has become only a shadow, a phantom who waves her thin arms in welcome to Brando. When he enters the palace and observes her more closely, there is no doubt that she is dying:

Entré. Concha estaba incorporada en las almohadas. Dio un grito, y en vez de tenderme los brazos, se cubrió el rostro con las manos y empezó a sollozar. La criada dejó la luz sobre un velador y se alejó suspirando. Me acerqué a Concha tremulo y conmovido. Bese sus manos sobre su rostro, apartándolas dulcemente. Sus ojos, sus hermosos ojos de enferma, llenos de amor, me miraron sin hablar, con una larga mirada. Después, en languido y feliz desmayo, Concha entornó los parpados. La contemplé así un momento. ¡Qué palida estaba! Sentí en la garganta el nudo de la angustia. Ella abrió los ojos dulcemente, y opprendiendo mis sienes entre sus manos que ardían, volvió a mirarme con aquella mirada muda, que parecía anegarse en la melancolía del amor y de la muerte, que la cercaba. (p. 127)

Now the tone of the story has been definitely established—the death of Concha is inevitable.
But Concha wishes to entertain him and insists upon getting dressed. As he helps her dress, the concept of religious symbolism begins to grow:

Here he speaks of her for the first time as a religious image, in the physical sense of the word. For it is in the realm of the physical, not the spiritual, that she reminds him of piety. He cannot think of her as a bulwark of virtues because he knows how weak she is in regard to their relationship. She obviously and openly is desperately in love with Bradomín and is not ashamed to tell him so. She is, of course, deeply disturbed by the fact that she is married, but even this is not sufficient to keep her from idolizing Bradomín. He later speaks of her complexion as being white as the Eucharist (p. 130). His references to Concha as a saint in appearance become more frequent, as in this passage where he describes her lying in bed next to him:

Yo sentí toda la noche a mi lado aquel pobre cuerpo donde la fiebre ardía, como una luz sepulcral en vaso de porcelana tenue y blanco. La cabeza descansaba sobre la almohada, envuelta en una ola de cabellos negros que aumentaba la mate lividez del rostro, y su boca sin color, sus mejillas dolientes, sus sienes maceradas, y sus parpados de cera velando los ojos en las cuencas descarnadas
y violáceas, le daban apariencia espiritual de una santa muy bella consumida por la penitencia y el ayuno. (p. 135)

Concha is becoming a skeleton animated only by love. It is only when she is in the presence of the Marqués that she appears to have any vitality. Otherwise, she resembles a corpse more than a human being. Bradomín continues this association of her with religion by picturing her as the Virgin Mary:

Refamos con alegre risa el uno en brazos del otro, juntas las bocas y echadas las cabezas sobre la misma almohada. Concha tenía la palidez débil y enferma de una Dolorosa, y era tan bella, así demacrada y consumida, que mis labios y mis manos hallaban todo su deleite en aquello mismo que me entristecía. Yo confieso que no recordaba haberla visto nunca en lo pasado tan locamente como aquella noche. (p. 136)

The situation evokes opposing sentiments in the Marqués. He is attracted and yet saddened by Concha's sickness.

As the last line indicates, he is fascinated by making love to a semi-corpse. Another image of Concha as Mary is presented when she is picking flowers: "Sobre aquel fondo de verdura grácil y umbroso, envuelta en luz como diáfana veste de oro, parecía una Madona soñada por un monje seráfico" (p. 139). On at least one occasion he tells her that her increasing paleness is very appealing:

Ella cruzó sus manos pálidas y las contempló, melancólica. ¡Pobres manos delicadas, exangües, casi frágiles! Yo le dije:
--Tienes manos de Dolorosa.
Se sonrió:
--Tengo manos de muerte.
--Para mí eres más bella cuanto más pálida. (p. 149)
There seems to be an association of religious symbolism and death in the mind of the Marqués that makes being with Concha an especially stimulating experience for him. We have already seen how these elements have appeared in the first two sonatas. In the Sonata de Primavera the strongest element was undoubtedly the religious, although on occasion an atmosphere of death or disaster heightened the effect. In the Sonata de Estío there was one particular scene in which Bradomín made love seven times in a convent after hearing bells chiming for the dead. But in the first two stories, the element of death was provided externally by a source other than the woman to whom he was making love. In this sonata it is Concha, the loved one who is dying, making the situation even more exciting to the Marqués.

The image which Concha presents to Bradomín, then, is one of an ill Madona, a dying Virgin. Concha is a very devout woman and so far as we know her only serious failing is this obsessive love for the Marqués. Bradomín looks upon her with respect—respect for her convictions. But he knows that he need do very little to have her begging him to stay. Bradomín enjoys this combination of frailty and ardor present in Concha, as well as his absolute power over her. For the Marqués, Concha is simply a child who may make a feeble protest but allows herself to be overruled.

The image of Concha having been defined, let us
examine Bradomín's relationship to her, both from his point of view and from hers. It should be remembered that Concha experiences incessant anguish because of the impropriety of her association with the Marqués in the eyes of the Church. As much as she loves Bradomín, she will at times consider him as Satan, temptation incarnate; and his irreverence and levity toward sacred matters will disturb her greatly.

The first mention of the impossible situation in which Concha finds herself occurs immediately after the Marqués has received her letter. Before setting out for the Palace of Brandes o, he enters the chapel at Viana del Prior to pray. In the chapel are two old ladies, one of whom has a rosary that reminds the Marqués of a similar rosary owned by Concha:

En las manos pálidas de la que guiaba distinguía el rosario: Esg de coral, y la cruz y las medallas de oro. Recordé que Concha rezaba con un rosario igual y que tenía escrúpulos de permitir jugar con él. Era muy piadosa la pobre Concha, y sufría porque nuestros amores se le figuraban un pecado mortal. ¡Cuántas noches al entrar en su tocador, donde me había dado cita, la halle de rodillas! Sin hablar, levantaba los ojos hacia mí indicándome silencio! Yo me sentaba en un sillón y la veía rezar: Las cuentas del rosario pasaban con lentitud devota entre sus dedos pálidos. Algunas veces, sin esperar a que concluyese, me acercaba y la sorprendía. Ella tornabase más blanca y se tapaba los ojos con las manos. ¡Yo amaba logamente aquella boca dolorosa, aquellos labios trémulos y contráidos, helados como los de una muerta! Concha desasiase nerviosamente, se levantaba y ponía el rosario en un joyero. Después, sus brazos rodeaban mi cuello, su cabeza desmayaba en mi hombro, y lloraba, lloraba de amor y de miedo a las penas eternas.(p. 122)
It is clear that Concha considers their love a mortal sin, but she cannot help herself. The Marqués' levity in such affairs is displayed by his desire to play with the rosary. The Marqués watching Concha praying might be compared to the Devil observing his next victim. He consciously tempts her away from her devotion. It would not be amiss to assume that Bradomín delights in this sort of thing, for we have seen how he enjoyed listening to his own seductive voice and in making María Rosario so uncomfortable in *Sonata de Primavera*. Part of the excitement with María had been the fact that she was so virtuous and that he was never quite sure if he could seduce her. The seduction of Concha, of course, is not in question here. Bradomín knows that he may have her, but he seems to enjoy kissing her or disturbing her in some manner when she is thinking of the gravity of her sin, just to prove that his attraction is stronger than her moral convictions.

Concha is aware of the Marqués' libertines inclinations and reprimands him for them on more than one occasion:

---Candelaria es indulgente para nuestros amores como un buen jesuita.
---¡No empezemos!...¡No empacemos!...
Concha movía la cabeza con gracioso enfado, al mismo tiempo que apoyaba un dedo sobre sus labios pálidos.
---No te permito que poses ni de Aretino ni de César Borgia.
La pobre Concha era muy piadosa, y aquella admiración estética que yo sentía en mi juventud
por el hijo de Alejandro VI le daba miedo, como si fuese el culto al Diablo. (p. 131)

Such statements by the Marqués frighten Concha; she does consider him as associated with the cult of the Devil. But Bradomín, ever conscious of his power over her, knows that he need only appear a penitent devil to have his way: "Pero a la pobre Concha el gesto de Satan arrepentido la hacía temblar y enloquecer" (p. 132). The Marqués is almost always victorious in overcoming any resistance on Concha's part; but on occasion, the thought of dying in mortal sin lends Concha added strength to withstand him:

El corazón de Concha latía con violencia, y mis manos tremulas desabrocharon su túnica, y mis labios besaron sobre la carne, ungidos de amor como de un balsamo.

--¡Mi vida!  
--¡Mi vida!

Concha cerró un momento los ojos, y poniéndose en pie, comenzó a recogerse la madeja de sus cabellos.

--¡Vete!... ¡Vete, por Dios!...

Yo sonreía mirándola.

--¿Adónde quieres que me vaya?
--¡Vete!... Las emociones me matan, y necesito descansar. Te escribí que vivíases, porque ya entre nosotros no puede haber más que un cariño ideal... Tú comprenderás que enferma como estoy no es posible otra cosa. Morir en pecado mortal... ¡Qué horror! (p. 133)

At other times even the thought of being found dead in Bradomín's arms does not frighten her:

¡Pobre Concha!... Tan demacrada y tan pálida, tenía la noble resistencia de una diosa para el placer. Aquella noche la llama de la pasión nos envolvió mucho tiempo, ya moribunda, ya frenética, en su lengua dorada. oyendo el canto de los pájaros en el jardín, quedéme dormido en brazos de Concha. Cuando me desperte, ella estaba incorporada en las
almohadas, con tal expresión de dolor y sufrimiento, que sentí frío. ¡Pobre Concha! Al verme abrir los ojos, todavía sonrió... Acariciándole las manos, le pregunté:

--¿Qué tienes?
--No sé. Creo que estoy muy mal.
--¿Por qué tienes?
--No sé. ¡Qué vergüenza si me hallasen muerta aquí!

Estás temblando, pobre amor!

Y la estreché entre mis brazos. Ella entornó los ojos. Era el dulce desmayo de sus parpados cuando quería que yo se los besase! Como temblaba tanto, quise dar calor a todo su cuerpo con mis labios, y mi boca recorrió celosa sus brazos hasta el hombro... (p. 149)

This is also one of the more sensual passages in which the frailty and coldness of Concha's body appear to inspire Bradomín to more ardent efforts. For an instant he believes that she is dying:

Yo entonces la enlace con fuerza, y en medio del deseo, sentí como una mordedura el terror de verla morir. Al oírla suspirar, creí que agonizaba. La besé temblando como si fuese a comulgar su vida. Con voluptuosidad dolorosa y no gustada hasta entonces, mi alma se embriagó en aquel perfume de flor enferma que mis dedos deshojaban consagrados e impíos. Sus ojos se abrieron asomados bajo mis ojos. ¡Ay! Sin embargo, yo adiviné en ellos un gran sufrimiento. Al día siguiente Concha no pudo levantarse. (p. 150)

The fact that she may be dying only enhances the thrill of making love to her. He seems to derive a perverted pleasure from caressing this dying woman; he states that it is a joy which he had never known before. Again we have an antithetical sentiment expressed by the term "voluptuosidad dolorosa." The closer to death Concha seems, the greater the pleasure for Bradomín. In a sense, he is killing Concha as he makes love to her; he realizes
this when he speaks of her as a flower from which is profane hands are stripping the petals. The satisfaction derived from making love under these circumstances—Concha is almost a corpse—seems rather perverse and sadistic.

This scene also re-emphasizes the strange attraction that the blend of love, death, and religion hold for Bradomín.

From time to time Concha expresses a belief that she will die soon because of her sinful relationship with the Marqués. Soon after his arrival she looks mournfully out of her bedroom window at the road leading to the cemetery and tells him that she will soon walk that road. On another occasion the Marqués is greatly amused when Concha relates a dream that she has had:

Concha estaba perdida en el laberinto, sentada al pie de la fuente y llorando sin consuelo. En eso se le apareció un Arcángel: No llevaba espada ni broquel. Era candente y melancólico como un lirio. Concha comprendió que aquel adolescente no venía a pelear con Satánas. Le sonrió a través de sus lágrimas, y el Arcángel estendió sobre ella sus alas de luz y la guió... El laberinto era el pecado en que Concha estaba perdida, y el agua de la fuente eran todas las lágrimas que había de llorar en el Purgatorio. A pesar de nuestros amores, Concha no se consenaría. Después de guiarla a través de los mirtos verdes e inmóviles, en la puerta del arco donde se miraban las dos Quimeras, el Arcángel agitó las alas para volar. Concha, arrodillándose, le preguntó si debía entrar en un convento; el Arcángel no respondió. Concha, retorciéndose las manos, le preguntó si debía deshojar en el viento la flor de sus amores; el Arcángel no respondió. Concha, arrastrándose sobre las piedras, le preguntó si iba a morir; el Arcángel tampoco respondió, pero Concha sintió caer dos lágrimas en sus manos. Las lágrimas le rodaban entre los dedos como dos diamantes... Entonces Concha había comprendido el
misterio de aquel sueño...La pobre, al contármelo, suspiraba y me decía:
---Es un aviso del Cielo, Xavier.
---Los sueños nunca son más que sueños, Concha.
---¡Voy a morir!...¿Tu no crees en las apariciones?
Me sonreí, porque entonces aún no creía...(p. 154)

This allegorical dream is very interesting from several points of view. Instead of a wrathful messenger of God dressed for battle, there appears a rather humble, submissive angel who makes no attempt to do battle against Satan. Satan, of course, is a symbolic representation for Bradomín. The hopelessness of Concha's position becomes evident; her respect or fear of divine retribution is subordinated to her love for Bradomín. Although Concha knows that she must die, the Marqués still does not accept this fact.

The scene in which Concha dies is the clearest indication of her realization of the satanic power that Bradomín wields over her. She has decided to confess and tries to leave his room. Feigning indignity, the Marqués says that he will leave the next day. Concha weakens and bursts into tears:

---¡Qué cruel eres!...Ya no podré confesarme mañana. Y se reía, rodeándome el cuello con los brazos. El nudo de sus cabellos se deshizo y, levantando entre las manos albas la onda negra, perfumada y sombría, me azoto con ella. Suspiré parpadeando:
---¡Es el azote de Dios!
---¡Calla, hereje!
---¡Azóta-me, Cojcha! ¡Azóta-me como a un divino Nazareno! ¡Azóta-me hasta morir!...
---¡Calla!...¡Calla!...
Me das miedo cuando dices esas impiedad...Sí.
Miedo, porque no eres tu quien habla; Es Satanás...
Hasta tu voz parece otra...¡Es Satanás!...
Cerró los ojos estremecida, y mis brazos la abrieron amantes. Me pareció que en sus labios vagaba un rezo, y murmuró riéndome al mismo tiempo que sellaba en ellos con los míos:

---¡Amen!...¡Amen!...¡Amen!...

Quedamos en silencio. Después su boca gimío bajo mi boca.

---¡Yo muero!

Su cuerpo, aprisionado en mis brazos, tembló como sacudido por mortal aleteo. Su cabeza livida rodó sobre la almohada con desmayo. Sus parpados se entrecerraron tardos, y bajo mis ojos vi aparecer sus ojos angustiados y sin luz...(p. 172)

What Conocha had feared has happened. She dies in mortal sin, with her last prayers smothered by Bradomín's laughing "amén." She calls the Marqués cruel and says that he is a heretic and Satan himself. He does indeed appear cruel, for he knows Concha's wish to confess but he cannot resist exerting his seductive powers. The antithesis of divine and earthly love that has been noted before is present in a striking manner. He compares her hair to the "whip of God," a phrase which Concha considers sacrilegious. The more fervently she prays, the more ardently Bradomín makes love. The entire scene symbolizes a battle between the forces of good and evil in which earthly love triumphs, and Concha dies, as she had dreamed she would.

Concha is dead and the Marqués panics. He gropes his way along the darkened corridor to find his cousin Isabel's room. Evidently he wishes to enlist her aid in deciding how to break the news of Concha's death to her small daughters. But when he approaches her bed and rouses
...la más extraña escena sigue:

---¡Isabel!... ¡Isabel!
Isabel se incorporó con sobresalto.
---¡No grites, que puede oír Concha!...
Mis ojos se llenaron de lágrimas y murmuré inclinándome:
---¡La pobre Concha ya no puede oírnos!
Un rizo de mi prima Isabel me rozaba los labios, suave y tentador. Creo que lo besé. Yo soy un santo que ama siempre que está triste. La pobre Concha me lo habría perdonado allá en el Cielo.
Ella, aquí en la tierra, ya sabía mi flaqueza.
---¡Isabel murmuró sofocada:
---¡Si sospecho esto echo el cerrojo!
---¡Adónde?
---¡A la puerta, bandolero! ¡A la puerta!
No quise contrariar las sospechas de prima Isabel.
¡Hubiera sido tan doloroso y tan poco galante desmentirla! Era Isabel muy piadosa, y el saber que me había calumniado la hubiera hecho sufrir inmensamente.
¡Ay!... Todos los Santos Patriarcas, todos los Santos Padres, ¿todos los Santos Monjes pudieron triunfar del pecado más fácilmente que yo. Aquellas hermosas mujeres que iban a tentarlos no eran sus primas. El Destino tiene burlas crueldes. Cuando a mí me sonríe, lo hace siempre como entonces, con la mueca macabra de esos enanos patizambos que a la luz de la luna hacen cabriolas sobre las chimeneas de los viejos castillos... Isabel murmuró, sofocada por los besos:
---¡Temo que aparezca Concha!
Al nombre de la pobre muerta, un estremecimiento de espanto recorrió mi cuerpo, pero Isabel debió pensar que era de amor. ¡Ella no supo jamás por qué yo había ido allí!(p. 174)

Such proceedings would be difficult to believe if we did not already have a fairly good grasp of the Marqués' mentality. It seems incredible that after such a horrifying experience Bradomín could engage so easily in sex—and with his own cousin. But as always, he makes excuses for himself, saying that other saints did not have such pretty cousins. As in the previous two sonatas, he speaks in general terms of a "destiny" that smiles at him only with
a mocking grimace as it devises some new trap to rob him of sainthood. Bradomín even makes the ludicrous statement that to have told Isabel the true purpose of his visit would have been unchivalrous, since she was under the impression that he had come to make love to her. To culminate these inconceivable rationalizations, he states that undoubtedly Concha has pardoned him in heaven because she knew his weakness on earth.

If Bradomín had not feared heavenly retribution before, he does as he carries Concha's body to her room. Unless he wishes to circle the entire palace, he must pass through a room containing an image of Christ. This image frightens him:

Allá en el fondo de la antesala, brillaba la lámpara del Nazareno, y tuve miedo de cruzar ante la imagen desmeñada y lúgubre. ¡Tuve miedo de aquella mirada muerta! Volví atrás.

Para llegar hasta la alcoba de Concha era forzoso dar vuelta a todo el Palacio si no quería pasar por la antesala. No vacilé. Uno tras otro recorrí grandes salones y corredores tenebrosos...

Llegué hasta su alcoba, que estaba abierta. Allí la oscuridad era misteriosa, perfumada, y tibia, como si guardase el secreto galante de nuestras citas. ¡Qué trágico secreto debía guardar entonces! Cauteloso y prudente dejé el cuerpo de Concha tendido en su lecho y me alejé sin ruido. En la puerta quedé irresoluto y suspirante. Dudaba si volver atrás para poner en aquellos labios helados el beso postergro: Resistí la tentación. Fue como el escrúpulo de un místico. Temí que hubiese algo de sacrilego en aquella melancolía que entonces me embargaba. La tibia fragancia de su alcoba encendía en mí, como una tortura, la voluptuosa memoria de los sentidos. Ansía gustar, las dulzuras de un ensueño casto y no pude. También a los místicos las cosas más sartas les sugestionaban, a veces, los más extraños diabolismos. Todavía hoy el recuerdo de la muerta es
para mí de una tristeza depravada y sutil. Me arraña el corazón como un gato típico de ojos lú- cientes. El corazón sangra y se retuerce, y dentro de mí ríe el Diablo, que sabe convertir todos los dolores en placer. Mis recuerdos, gloria del alma perdidas, son como una música livida y ardiente, triste y cruel, a cuya extraño son danza el fantasma lloroso de mis amores. ¡Pobre y blanco fantasma, los gusanos le han comido los ojos, y las lágrimas rueden de las cuencas! Danza en medio del corro juvenil de los recuerdos, no posa en el suelo, flota en una onda de perfume. ¡Aquella esencia que Concha vertía en sus cabellos y que la sobrevive! ¡Pobre Concha! No podía dejar de su paso por el mundo más que una estela de aromas. ¡Pero acaso la mas blanca y casta de las amantes ha sido nunca otra cosa que un pomo de divino esmalte, lleno de afrodisias y nupciales esencias? (p. 176)

This passage is the most chilling and the most revealing in the entire sonata. In one paragraph Bradomín has condensed all of the multiple and contradictory elements that are involved in his love for Concha. He gives special emphasis to the mystic and religious sentiments he experiences after her death, speaking of how the Devil tortures him by permitting him only a sacrilegious memory of Concha.

The importance of sensual appeal is indicated by the phrase "La voluptuosa memoria de los sentidos." The entire scene occurs amidst an atmosphere of death, combined with Bradomín's fear of passing before the image of Christ, a fear that he had not felt before. His memory of Concha in the closing lines is reminiscent of a figure in the medieval "dance of death." By using the macabre and grotesque metaphor of a white phantom dancing to cruel music, Bradomín finishes his description of Concha as if she were not a
corporeal being, but simply an essence, an aroma that had
diffused in its passage through the world.

The morning after Concha’s death, her daughters see
a hawk attack a band of doves. They ask the Marqués to
kill the hawk. When the children have the hawk, they wish
to show it to their mother. Bradomín, mute with fear,
cannot stop them:

No osé detenerlas y quedé solo, con el alma cubierta
de tristeza. ¡Qué amarga espera! ¡Y qué mortal in-
stante aquel de la mañana alegre, vestida de luz,
cuando en el fondo del Palacio se levantaron gemidos
inocentes, ojos desgarradores y lloros violentos!...
Yo sentía una angustia desesperada y sorda, enfrente
de aquel mudo y frío fantasma de la muerte, que segaba
los sueños de los jarajines de mi alma. ¡Los hermosos
sueños que encanta el amor! Yo sentía extraña tris-
teza, como si el crepusculo cayese sobre mi vida, y
mi vida, semejante a un triste día de invierno, se
acabase para volver a empezar con un amanecer sin sol.
¡La pobre Concha había muerto! ¡Había muerto aquella
flor de ensueño a quien todas mis palabras le parecían
bellas! ¡Aquella flor de ensueño a quien todos mis
gestos le parecían soberanos!... ¡Volvería a encontrar
otra pálida princesa, de tristes ojos encantados, que
me adoraran siempre magnífico? Ante esta duda lloro.
¡Llora como un Dios antiguo al extinguirse su último
culto!(p. 177)

It is possible to assign symbolic value to the attack of
the hawk upon the doves and the subsequent death of the
hawk. The hawk may represent Bradomín and his intrusion
into Concha’s life. Because of her love for him, she had
been powerless to terminate their relationship. Concha
had been certain all along that she would die because of
her sin and she has died, with no medical reason offered
as explanation. Concha, then, may be considered the dove,
the victim of the evil influence of Bradomín. But it must be remembered that the hawk was killed. This action could be paralleled with Bradomín's sudden realization that the twilight of his life is approaching. The illusion of love that was his in the spring and summer has vanished with Concha. It is characteristic egoism that prompts him to look upon Concha as a devout member of a cult of which he had been the God. But with her death, so does the cult die; it is this realization that saddens him most.

In comparing Concha to María Rosario and Niña Chole, there are several interesting parallels to be noted. María Rosario represented for Bradomín an ideal which he wished to corrupt. María was a saint in deed as well as in appearance. There was a certain attraction with religious significance attached to Niña Chole. But the Marqués pictured her as a pagan priestess, not a Christian; and it was her physical attributes—skin, posture, dress—that recalled to his mind the external attractions of a pagan priestess. But Concha is an interesting blend of the first two. She represents a Christian symbol, the Virgin Mary, but primarily in an external fashion. Bradomín knows that she does not have the moral fiber necessary for sainthood. The Marqués uses the same terms—pale, white, fragile—to describe Concha as he did to describe María. These
terms are in direct contrast to the bronze, sensual beauty of Niña Chole. Sensuality does not play so great a part in this sonata as it did in the Sonata do Estío. The sensuality experienced with regard to Concha usually comes from a combination of sources, such as touch, smell, sight, sound; whereas with Niña Chole sensuality was almost exclusively a matter of touch. Also there is a contrast in the type of appeal produced by the women: Niña Chole emanates a more robust, animalistic appeal; but Concha is frail, even cold, and the fact that she is dying seems to fascinate Bradomín as he makes love to her.

Both María Rosario and Concha refer to the Marqués as Satan, and he himself is aware, at times, of the perverse joy he derives from exercising his seductive charm upon María and Concha. It is strange that Bradomín can delight in such sadistic things one moment and the next moment regret what he had done. He expresses in this sonata the same sentiment that appears in the other two: Destiny imposes upon him such circumstances that he shall never achieve martyrdom because of his weak nature.

The element of death is also an important factor in this story. It has been shown that the Marqués appears especially stimulated to love-making when an atmosphere of death is present. This fact holds true in this sonata. The essential difference in this account is that it is his loved one who is dying. In the first two stories, it
was someone else's death that had provided the proper mood. But in this account Concha is both the source of love and the source of death. Perhaps the best way to describe Concha's attraction for the Marqués is to project that Concha is what Marfa Rosario might have been if Bradomín had been able to seduce her. In any case, the elements of death and religion remain still intertwined in Bradomín's love affairs. But the death of Concha jolts Bradomín into the realization that he has lost his last great love and that the twilight of his life has begun.
SONATA DE INVIERNO

This final sonata is concerned primarily with the activities of the second Carlist war and Bradomín's participation in them. He is a Carlist more for esthetic reasons than for political ones, and one of don Carlos' most trusted friends. As the story opens, the Marqués, disguised as a Franciscan monk, arrives in Estella to see don Carlos. Bradomín takes refuge in a monastery; aided by a warrior-monk, Fray Ambrosio, he gains an audience with don Carlos. From Fray Ambrosio he learns that Carmen, a former love, still lives in Estella. María Antonieta Volfani, another of his sweethearts, is in the service of the Queen. Bradomín had had a daughter by Carmen and the child had been placed in a convent. Maximina, Bradomín's daughter, and María Volfani are the two loves treated in this sonata. Since Maximina represents the last great love in the life of the Marqués, it is appropriate that she be discussed first.

But before introducing the reader to Maximina, it is desirable to know something of the Marqués' attitudes toward love at this stage in his life. He has grown disillusioned and believes that he has attained that state whereby his passions have become subjugated to his reason:

Yo acababa de llegar a Estella, donde el Rey tenía su Corte. Hallabame cansado de mi larga peregrinación por el mundo. Comenzaba a sentir algo hasta
entonces desconocido en mi vida alegre y aventurera, una vida llena de riesgos y de azares, como la de aquellos segundones hidalgos que se enganchaban en los tercios de Italia para buscar lances de amor, de espada y de fortuna. Yo sentía un acabamiento de todas las ilusiones, un profundo desengaño de de todas las cosas. Era el primer frío de la vejez, más triste que el de la muerte. ¡Llegaba cuando aún sostenía sobre mis hombros la capa de Almaviva y llevaba en la cabeza el yelmo de Hambrino! Había sonado para mí la hora en que se apagan los ardores de la sangre, y en que las pasiones del amor, del orgullo y de la cólera, las pasiones nobles y sagradas que animaron a los dioses antiguos, se hacen esclavas de la razón. Yo estaba en ese declinar de la vida, edad propicia para todas las ambiciones y más fuerte que la juventud misma, cuando se ha renunciado al amor de las mujeres. ¡Ay, por qué no supe hacerlo!(p. 181)

He feels, then, that old age is descending upon him and that the love of women is a thing of the past. But the last line presages events that will prove him incorrect.

While the Marqués is on a secret mission for don Carlos, he is wounded in the left arm. He stops in a village where an old friend, Sor Simona, cares for him. Assisting Sor Simona in the amputation of Bradomín's arm is a young girl who has been raised at the convent, Maximina. From his first glimpse of the girl, the Marqués has a presentiment that she may be his daughter: "Yo sentí el alma llena de ternura, por aquella niña de los ojos aterciopelados, compasivos y tristes. La memoria acalenturada comenzó a repetir unas palabras con terca insistencia. --¡Es feúcha! ¡Es feúcha! ¡Es feúcha!"(p. 220) The adjective "feúcha"—ugly, repulsive—sticks in Bradomín's mind; it is the word Carmen had used to describe their
But the Marqués is old and Maximina is a very young girl. At first he feels for her the love of a grandfather for his grandchild:

--- ¿Sufre mucho, señor?

Eran los ojos de la niña, y al reconocerlos sentí como si las aguas de un consuelo me refrescasen la aridez abrasada del alma. Mi pensamiento voló como una alondra rompiendo las nieblas de la melancolía donde persistía la conciencia de las casas reales, angustiada, dolorida y confusa. Alcé con fatiga el único brazo que me quedaba y acaricié aquella cabeza que parecía tener un nimbo de tristeza infantil y divina. Se inclinó besándome la mano, y al incorporarse tenía el terciopelo de los ojos brillantes de lágrimas...

Hablaba sonriendo, y en su cara triste y ojerosa, era la sonrisa como el reflejo del sol en las flores humildes cubiertas de rocío. Recogida en su silla de enca, me fijaba los ojos llenos de sueños tristes. Yo al verla sentía penetrada el alma de una suave ternura, ingenua como amor de abuelo, que quiere dar calor a sus viejos días, consolando las penas de una niña y oyendo sus cuentos...

Later, when he asks Maximina if she is willing to take a big risk for him, his love begins to assume another form:

Yo adivinaba que aquellos ojos aterciopelados y tristes serían ya los últimos que me mirasen con amor. Era mi emoción como la del moribundo, que contemplaba los encendidos ojos de la tarde y sabe que aquella tarde tan bella es la última.

Now the Marqués abandons his previous attitude of fatherly love to adopt his old Don Juan role:

Y se los besé paternalmente...Yo sentía que una profunda ternura me llenaba el alma con voluptuosidad nunca gustada. Era como si un perfume de lágrimas se vertiese en el curso de las horas felices...

Por primera vez la besé en los labios: Estaban helados. Olvida el tono sentimental y con el fuego de los años juveniles le dije:

--- ¿Serías capaz de quererme?

--- ¿Serías capaz de quererme con tu alma de niña?
--Sí... Le quiero!... Le quiero!
Y se arrancó de mis brazos demudada... Sentí
que a mis párpados acudía el llanto. Era la
emoción del amor, que da una profunda tristeza
to las vidas que se apagan... Por la sombra del
cielo iba la luna sola, lejana y blanca como una
novicia escapada de su celda. Era la hermana Maxi-
mina. (pp. 229-31)

Although the Marqués has changed his thinking, he still
emphasizes the delicate, the youthful even infantile attrac-
tion of Maximina. He mentions no physical attraction, but
he speaks of a tenderness that pervades his soul. When
she leaves, he experiences profound sadness. He is posi-
tive that she will be his last love. The metaphor describing
the moon as an escaped noviciate is appropriate, for Maxi-
mina(love) is escaping from Bradomín and he shall not find
it again.

Sor Simona discovers the effect Bradomín has had on
Maximina and requests that he leave as soon as he is able.
As Sor Simona reproaches him, the Marqués feels remorse
and its cumulative effect releases a torrent of guilt
feelings:

Yo repetí, inclinando la cabeza:
--¡Pobre hija!
Sor Simona retrocedió dando un grito:
--¡Lo sabía usted!
Sentí espanto y zozobra. Una nube pesada y negra
envolvió mi alma, y una voz sin eco y sin acento,
la voz desconocida del presagio, habló dentro son-
ambula. Sentí terror de mis pecados como si estu-
viese próximo a morir. Los años pasados se parecieron
llenos de sombras, como cisternas de aguas muertas.
La voz de la corazona repetía implacable dentro de
mi aquellas palabras ya otra vez recordadas con tercas
insistencias. La monja, juntando las manos, clamo
Maximina is not a pretty girl and the quality which Brado-\nmin mentions most often when he speaks of her is her
velvet-like eyes, which are usually filled with sadness.
Although he is not certain that she is his daughter, when­
ever he looks at her, he cannot help but remember Carmen's
description of their child—"faúcha." The Marqués realizes
that what he had seen in Maximina's eyes was the idealism
with which he had experienced love in his youth, the exu­
berance with which he had faced life before misfortunes had
led him into sceptical old age. It is this innocence,
this faith which he had once but lost, that he laments.

Quite different from the innocent, idealized love
of Maximina is that shown by María Volfani. María has
not seen the Marqués for many years; she is married but
on very bad terms with her husband. Despite attempts
by Queen Margarita to reconcile María and her husband—
Count Volfani is one of don Carlos' more valuable and
desperately needed commanders—María has refused to mend
his marital rupture. When Fray Ambrosio arranges a meeting between María and Bradomín, they rekindle a warm relationship.

María tells Bradomín of the Queen's attempts to reconcile her and her husband, expecting the Marqués to object vehemently and vow that he will share her with no man. But Bradomín is too old and too sly to display jealousy of a husband and this angers María. Evidently the Marqués obtains a sort of sadistic pleasure from María's tears. But it makes no difference whether he manifests a jealous love or not; María is still susceptible to his charm and her tears only sweeten the love that follows:

María Antonieta volvió a besarme, y sonriendo toda roja, murmuró en voz baja:
—Es muy larga la noche...
—Mira que voy a ser muy exigente.
Confieso que al oírle temblé. Mis noches ya no eran triunfantes, como aquellas noches tropicales perfumadas por la pasión de la Niña Cholé.
...María Antonieta fue exigente como una hogareña, pero yo fui sabio como un viejo cardenal que hubiese aprendido las artes secretas del amor en el confesionario y en una corte del Renacimiento...
Aaquella noche rugí en mis brazos como la fauna antiqua. Divina María Antonieta, era muy apasionada, y a las mujeres apasionadas se les engaña siempre...
María Antonieta era candida y egoísta como una niña, y en todos sus transportes se olvidaba de mí. En tales momentos, con los senos palpitanes como dos palomas blancas, con los ojos nublados, con la boca entrecerrada mostrando la fresca blanura de los labios, era de una incomparable belloza sensual y fecunda. Muy saturada de literatura y de Academia Veneciana. (pp. 203-4)

This scene is reminiscent of the young Marqués, the Marqués of the Sonata de Justo. As María becomes more
provocative, Bradomín seems more rejuvenated. Her demands stimulate him to a virility of which he no longer thought himself capable. But what he might lack in ardor he compensates in art. The reader should note especially the simile in which Bradomín compares María to an Italian noblewoman and himself to a cardinal who has learned the art of love in confession. This reference, as well as the one regarding the passion-filled eyes of the nuns, indicate the association of religion and love-making that remains in the Marqués thinking even in his old age.

During the Marqués' absence on missions for don Carlos, Count Volfani has suffered a stroke which has incapacitated him for all but the most mechanistic aspects of living. Because of this misfortune, María has decided to terminate her liaison with Bradomín and to live an exemplary life. But the Marqués, ever confident in his ability to change the mind of a fickle woman, insists upon a last meeting just to say goodbye. When María arrives, the Marqués and his aunt are arguing about the propriety of his action in requesting this last rendezvous. Bradomín is certain that if he can speak with María alone, he can make her change her decision:

---Si hoy atendiese su ruego, acaso mañana me llamase. ¿Crees que esa piedad cristiana que ahora la arrastra hacia su marido, durara siempre?...
---¡Siempre, Xaviej!
Mg volvi y hallame enfrente de María Antonieta: Inmovil y encendidos los ojos, me miraba. Yo le
mostró mi brazo cercenado, y ella, con un gesto de horror, cerró los párpados. Había en su persona tal mudanza que parecía haber envejecido muchos años... Tenía la boca de estatua y las mejillas penitentes, desacarnadas y altivas, que parecían vivir huérfanas de besos y de caricias...

Ella a su vez me interrumpe:
--Tu vienes a exigírmelo que abandones a un pobre ser enfermo, y eso, jamás, jamás, jamás! Sería en mí una infamia.
--Son las infamias que impone el amor, pero desgraciadamente ya soy viejo para que ninguna mujer las cometa por mí.
--Xavier, es preciso que me sacrifique.
--Hay sacrificios tardíos, María Antonieta.
--¡Eres cruel!
--¡Cruel!...
--¡Verás, Xavier! ¡Déjame!
--¡Cuánto me haces sufrir con tus escrúpulos, mi pobre María Antonieta!...
--¡Me tenido amantes!
--¡La vida es así!
--¡No me desprecies!
--No puedo
--¡Pero te sonríes!...
--Mi pobre María Antonieta, me sonríe porque me hallo motivo para ser severo. Hay quien prefiere ser el primer amor; yo he preferido siempre ser el último...
--¡Compadecete, no me guardes rencores!
--No es renoces lo que siento, es la melancolía del desengaño. Una melancolía como si la nieve del invierno cayese sobre mi alma, y mi alma, semejante a un campo yermo, se amontonase con ella.

The final scene captures perfectly the melancholy and disillusionment of a man who has burned himself out in the pursuit of love, often not knowing why, and not being able to avoid his indiscretions. The Marqués speaks cruelly and brutally to María Antonieta and appears unmoved by the sincerity of her farewell. Perhaps it is merely ego that will not permit him to believe that any woman could keep a vow to stay away from him. Even as María--who has
aged overnight because of her husband's stroke—pleads with Bradomín to go and not return, he approaches her in a futile attempt to convince her that she will always love him and will not be able to maintain her pious behavior as long as she believes she will. He tells her frankly that her generous action toward her husband is insincere and too late. When the Marqués says: "¡Cuánto me haces sufrir con tus escrúpulos, mi pobre María Antonieta!", he is describing those women who live a life devoted to the joys of love only to repent in senility and die as saints. He should not feel angry toward her because this is exactly the procedure he himself had recommended in the Sonata de Estío: "For cierto que algunas se han arrepentido todavía bellas y tentadoras, olvidando que basta un punto de contrición al sentir cercana la vejez" (p. 61). In a final effort to force Bradomín to depart, María confesses that she had had other lovers. This does not disturb him in the least, for, with characteristic egoism, he states that he has always preferred to be the last love. Apparently Bradomín's indifference at her confession convinces María that he cannot have thought too highly of her. But he says that he does not despise her; that it is only the disillusionment of old age that is covering his life like a funeral shroud.

At last the Marqués has concluded his memoirs. Of
the four great loves of whom he speaks, we have noted distinct parallels and differences. In all four—María Rosario, Niña Chole, Concha, and Maximina—the element of religion has played a role of varying degree. María Rosario was the ideal; Niña Chole the pagan priestess; Concha the dying Virgin; Maximina the sad-eyed lass. In the first three sonatas death was an important factor. In the last sonata it is not death but the realization of a wasted life or at least of an unfulfilled one that obsesses Bradomín. His ego is of such proportions that he has considered himself a god whom his women have worshipped. He realizes the intensity with which he has lived:

Hoy, después de haber despertado amores muy grandes, vivo en la más triste y más adusto soledad del alma, y mis ojos se llenan de lágrimas cuando peino la nieve de mis cabellos. ¡Ay, suspiro recordando que otras veces los halagaron manos principescas! Fue mi paso por la vida como potente florecimiento de todas las pasiones: Uno a uno, mis días se caldeaban en la gran hoguera del amor: Las almas más blancas me dieron entonces su ternura y lloraron mis crueldades y mis desvíos, mientras los dedos pálidos y ardientes deshojaban las margaritas que guardan el secreto de los corazones. (p. 181)

The Marques has only memory left. It would seem that he had devoted his life to love and that without it he feels disconsolate. But the Marques has expended his energies in too many affairs. By his own admission he never loved anyone but María Rosario (p. 27). Whatever the attraction that the other women had for him, it does not appear
to have been genuine because he hurts them too easily and too frequently. The Marqués has always been conscious of performing some role that destiny has given him, but he has always enjoyed doing so. Christian scruples have never prevented him from doing as he pleased or from tempting others to do the same. He has come to consider that all women fall into the same general category and that they all act as they do only in accord with social and moral convictions, which occasionally thwart his desires. In short, Bradomín has lived a libertino, pagan life that he aptly describes for Queen Margarita he says:

—Yo no aspiro a enseñar, sino a divertir. Toda mi doctrina está en una sola frase: "¡Viva la bagatela!" Para mí, haber aprendido a sonreír es la mayor conquista de la Humanidad.

But old age has slowed him down; now he has a great deal of time to reflect upon what these "trifles" have cost him. He does not admit to bitterness, only to melancholy. But the statement he makes as he thinks of Maximina indicates that his pride cannot conceal his sorrow:

¡Ay, yo sabía que los ojos aterciopelados y tristes que se habían abierto para mí como dos florecillas franciscanas en una luz de amanecer serían los últimos que me mirasen con amor! Ya solo me estaba bien enfrente de las mujeres la actitud de un ídolo roto, indiferente, y frío.

One could not better describe the ultimate fate of this man whom passion had dominated so intensely and so completely.
12 All quotes in chapter three are taken from the Sonatas of Ramón del Valle-Inclán, "estudio preliminar" por Ramón Sender (New York, 1961). This first reference is to the "estudio preliminar" by Ramón Sender on p. xiv. Any references to the "estudio preliminar" and not directly to the Sonatas themselves will be so noted.
CONCLUSIONS

Now that we have examined both the Corte de amor and the Sonatas, it is possible to determine an evolving concept of love which is distinct in each work and which illustrates the conflict between the passion myth and the Christian concept of love. In summarizing the conclusions reached, it is advantageous to discuss first the female characters of Corte de amor and the Sonatas and then the male characters.

Corte de amor presents seven women who actually may be divided into five categories: (1) Rosita, the flirtatious, cruel gypsy who prides her liberty as a wild animal would. (2) Tula Varona, the sadistic, narcissistic temptress. (3) Currita Jimeno, the young, idealistic girl who reads romantic novels. (4) Eulalia and Octavia Santino, who display a self-sacrificing, maternal love. (5) The sensual, erotic Julia and Augusta, whose relationships to their lovers are based primarily on physical attraction.

In the Corte de amor, adulterous, passionate love, which is the theme of the Tristan myth, is of major significance. With the exception of Octavia Santino, all of these women are married when they acquire lovers.
There is incessant conflict between passion and marriage, and the failure of marriage is made evident. Among the women, Rosita and Julia notably display the tendency illustrated in the passion myth to provide themselves with obstacles to happiness by their numerous affairs with men and their constant awareness that no one man can satisfy them. The fact that all but one of the women are married while they carry on these liaisons parallels the passion-myth concept that love and marriage are irreconcilable because that which is possessed and not sought after loses its value. Despite the diverse natures of the seven relationships described, there is one characteristic which they all have in common: There is no indication on the part of the women that they desire a permanent attachment or even a long-range one of definite length. The women either do not desire this from an emotional standpoint or find it impossible because of external pressures. It is curious that the men in Corte de amor desire marriage, but the women do not. It is true that all but one of the women are married, but some of them give other reasons for not wishing to marry—fear of differences in age, of their inability to adapt themselves to a younger husband's environment. This type of reasoning is further evidence of similarity to the passion myth: By making excuses to avoid removing obstructions to happiness, they can imagine that they
actually desire a permanent union, which, in fact, they fear, because their suffering would be terminated.

In general, then, the love affairs described in *Corte de amor* do not resemble what might be considered the conventional Christian concept of love in which both partners openly make emotional and physical commitments on a long-range basis. The love affairs are clandestine or volatile due to the emotional instability of the partners. As we have seen, the reasons for these liaisons range from maternal and narcissistic to sensual desires and none(with the possible exception of Currita Jimeno) displays the qualities which would make a happy marriage. Love in the *Corte de amor* is an immediate, temporal experience, never an enduring one. And we see clearly the struggle between the passion myth, whose aim is suffering, and Christian ideals of marriage as a permanent, happy union.

In the *Sonatas* we learn much more about the Marqués than the women he loves, but there is ample information about their personalities. Apparently three of these women—Concha, Niña Chola, and Maximina—loved the Marqués, although the nature of their love varies. All four women held a type of appeal with religious connotations:

1. María Rosario is idealized as a saint.
2. Niña Chola is equated to a pagan priestess.
3. Concha is often described as the Virgin Mary.
4. Maximina represents
The backgrounds of the women in the Sonatas are quite distinct from those of the women in the Corte de amor. None of the four has a past similar to that of Rosita or Julia. The narcissism, sadism and sensuality exhibited by several of the women in Corte de amor is rarely displayed by these women. This is not to say that there is no emphasis on sensuality, but that it is described from the Marqués’ point of view rather than from that of the women. Perhaps the decreased emphasis on the sensual on the part of the women arises from the fact that all of the women in the Sonatas are pictured, in varying degrees, as religious symbols.

As we have seen, Bradomín appears to undergo a type of mystical experience when he thinks of María Rosario, something similar to Platonic love. But he does not wish their relationship to remain Platonic and his relentless pursuit of María leads to the disaster that costs her her sanity.

The most sensual and appealing of the women from a physical standpoint is Niña Chole. Contrasted to the paleness and frailty of Concha, María, and Maximina, she is bronze-skinned and voluptuous. But the religious element is present because the Marqués sees her as a pagan priestess. The delicate Concha is referred to as the Virgin and the Madonna; her conversations with Bradomín often seem to be battles between good and evil—with the Marqués
Maximina, his daughter, has been raised in a convent and is the very epitome of innocence—all of which only inspires Bradomín to greater efforts at seduction. Three of these women—María, Concha, and Maximina—are devoutly religious. This element of piety is not stressed in the Corte de amor. Also the maternal instinct toward the lover evident in Octavía Santino and Eulalia does not appear in the Sonatas.

Another important difference between the women in the Corte de amor and those in the Sonatas is that those in the Sonatas are the same age or younger than Bradomín and only two of them are married. Since Niña Chole is not married by choice and Concha's marriage had been arranged by her family, we may say that none of these women had chosen a lover for herself before she met Bradomín. But in Corte de amor only Currita Jimeno and Octavía Santino did not choose their husbands.

The major difference, therefore, between the women in Corte de amor and those in the Sonatas is the religious symbolism connected with those in the Sonatas. But there is also a decreased emphasis on the sensual, on the part of the women, and an absence of the maternal attitude toward the loved one, which we do find in the Corte de amor. Bradomín dominates the women and their love for him appears more intense and sincere than most of the relationships in
Corte de amor.

Among the men in Corte de amor there is a great deal of similarity. Most of the men are young and inexperienced in affairs of the heart. Aquiles Calderón, Perico Pondal, Sandoval, and Jacobo Ponte are immature and childlike in their dependence upon women. All of the men in Corte de amor, with the exception of Prince Attilio in "Augusta," are dominated by their women. In a sense, the men are victimized by women who are frustrated by their failure in marriage and harbor illusions of finding some idyllic state with a younger man.

But when we consider the Marqués de Bradomín and his relationships in the Sonatas, we see that he assumes a role quite different from that played by the men in the Corte de amor. In the Sonatas Bradomín dominates the women. This is the role of which society generally approves if it is at least what is expected of a man—that he be the aggressor, the stronger. It is curious that Valle-Inclán allows the women in Corte de amor to subjugate the men to their wishes. The Marqués is never submissive to a woman; he may be moved by her, but he is never commanded or directed. Bradomín is an aristocrat and makes the reader constantly aware of it. He speaks of his lineage and he himself participates in a war to maintain the monarchy. Even for an aristocrat, his ego assumes tremendous proportions and an uncommon tendency toward narcissism. We
have seen numerous examples of the pleasure he takes from listening to himself deliver a particularly seductive speech or in trying to imagine what tale he may manufacture to romanticize the loss of his left arm. Bradomín is incessantly aware of performing during the act of seduction. At times he becomes almost mechanistic in the manner in which he describes various stages of love-making. It is doubtful whether he enjoys the act of love itself as much as he does the fact that he, the Marqués de Bradomín, is once more triumphant. In the Sonata de Estío he goes so far as to divide all Spaniards into two groups: The Marqués de Bradomín and everyone else.

Sensuality is a facet of Bradomín's personality that is essential to an understanding of this complex man. The Marqués thrives on voluptuousness; the gratification of the senses becomes almost an obsession with him. Often he refers to the love sonnets of Pietro Aretino, the famous Italian libertine of the Renaissance. The act of love has been dissected and refined to such a degree by Bradomín that he submits all of his senses—sight, hearing, touch, smell—to a perfectly ordered regimentation that allows him to derive the greatest pleasure from each and to synthesize them all in achieving an incredibly ecstatic sensation. Of all the senses, probably sight and smell are the ones he enjoys most.
He delights in noting shades of color and aromas that stimulate his erotic nature. The Marqués de Bradomín is a pagan by nature and he laments the vanished days when the Greeks exhausted themselves in week-long orgies to the naked goddesses of Olympus. He is a man who lives for the present, having only a vague past and no future.

In his treatment of women, the Marqués proves himself both satanistic and sadistic. On several occasions he mentions something that makes him cognizant of Satan's influence or presence. Frequently he feels that he is compelled by Satan to the actions he takes. It is certain that María Rosario and Concha fear him as if he were the monarch of evil. Both of these women call him Satan and Bradomín describes himself as affecting a gesture of Satan. Concha even has a dream in which an archangel refuses to do battle against Satan, who here is a symbolic representation of Bradomín. The satanic tendencies of the Marqués are intertwined with sadistic manifestations. For instance, he enjoys making María Rosario uncomfortable because she represents virtue and holiness, which he is attempting to seduce. He plays with Concha's rosary and smothers her prayers with kisses, thus proving that he commands more attention than her devotion to God. As he talks with the child Maximina, he speaks of a previously
unknown voluptuousness which comes from his seducing a girl so young. It is clear, then, that the Marqués is constantly aware of the power of evil which he willfully exerts.

The relation of death to love in the Sonatas is a curious phenomenon. In the first three sonatas there are scenes in which death appears to be an aphrodisiac. The entire Sonata de Otoño occurs while Concha is dying and the Marqués' delight in making love to a semi-corpse approaches necrophilia. In the first two sonatas the atmosphere of death is supplied by exterior sources (the death of Monsignor Caetani; church bells), but the loved one, Concha, provides the aura of death in Sonata de Otoño. She dies while Bradomín is making love to her. Ramón Sender has noted this antithesis of death and love (which implies the propagation of life):

El rasgo más decadente de las sonatas (que aparece en las cuarto) es la asociación delgantante del amor con la muerte. No con la abstracción ni la idea de la muerte, sino con su presencia inmediata. Para Bradomín el olor del incienso o de los cierios en la cámara mortuoria, el de las flores funerales que comienzan a marchitarse, el mismo doblar de las campanas son elementos afrodisiacos. Ciertamente cuando la muerte anda cerca los hombres sentimos el imperativo de la especie que nos ordena "cumplir con nuestro deber", y dejar nuestra semilla en el surco de la germinación antes de irnos. Pero, poner en esas circunstancias el regodeo y la fruición del marqués revelan una obsesión enfermiza y exaltarla rapsódicamente es un vicio. (Sonatas, "estudio preliminar," p. xvi)

It is difficult to say why death stimulates the Marqués
to great sexual arousal because this reaction would be considered abnormally generally. Nevertheless, death is an important factor and is present, in a figurative sense, in the Sonata de Invierno, because in that work love is dying and Bradomín will not experience it again.

The last significant factor to be considered in the concept of love expressed in the Sonatas is the dynamic antithesis between the Christian religion and paganism. We have already seen how the Marqués is fascinated by the saintliness that María possesses and the piety which Concha displays. As with the element of death, religion or anything symbolic of divine authority seems to act as a catalyst upon Bradomín. It is as if he wished to challenge heaven by his conduct, yet obtain eternal salvation. The deliberate consciousness of sinning appears to thrill him as much as the physical act. Ramón Sender suggests that Bradomín enjoys more thoroughly the sin of the spirit than that of the flesh:

En un ambiente u otro el marqués de Bradomín es siempre el mismo. No peca solo por el número sino especialmente por la complejidad del saber y de la conciencia de ese saber que añade especias metafísicas al deleite. Más que de la carne es un pecado del espíritu, es decir, contra el espíritu santo(o "Paraclete," como gustaba de escribir Valle-Inclán usando la expresión griega por el placer modernista de lo raro y lo criptico). Un pecado total a la plena luz de todos los riesgos temporales y eternos. Solo le falta a Bradomín dar las gracias a Dios por la sobrenatural y placentera conciencia de su barroca y compleja viciosidad. (p. xxi)
It is difficult to see how these conflicting desires—to live like a pagan and to receive the eternal reward of a saint—may be resolved. Bradomín seems not to care whether they are resolved or not. He is aware of the danger of heavenly retribution but this does not deter him from his libertine activities:

There is no solution to this conflict, but this antithesis serves to make his amorous adventurous more exciting.

For the Marqués de Bradomín, love is not an emotion, but an obsession. He says that he loved only one woman—Marfa Rosario—but his actions indicate otherwise. With none of the women does he imply a desire for a permanent emotional relationship, only a temporary and primarily physical one. This is not to say that the Marqués does not feel some true affection for these women, but he appears to be so intent upon achieving new experiences in love that he is compelled to form only temporary bonds with women simply because no one woman can permanently satisfy his narcissistic and erotic needs. The Marqués de Bradomín has considered himself a god, a god worshipped by his women. But as he grows old, he finds little comfort in
his memories because he has never been able to love any woman as much as he loves himself. As Ramón Sender points out, Bradomín has only the past:

It is fitting that even in his cynical old age, Bradomín, although he does not hope to encounter love again, should adopt in the presence of women that manner which best reflects the essence of his life—the posture of a cold and broken idol.

What was only partially developed in the Corte de amor becomes a sharp contrast of extremes in the Sonatas: the conflict between pagan doctrine and Christianity. Bradomín hurries from woman to woman overcoming obstacles, but the reason for his search does not have the religious significance that Tristan's quest had. The Marqués makes of physical love an end unto itself on this earth, while
Tristan's love in the passion myth is merely a reflection of the yearning for union with the ultimate Good, which could come only through death. In effect, Bradomín has perverted the religious quest portrayed in the passion myth into a temporal, earthly one with his ego as the ultimate good toward which all efforts are directed. It is not dissatisfaction that Bradomín desires, but perpetual gratification, which he finally realizes is beyond his grasp. The fact that three of the women are very devout Christians heightens the contrast between Bradomín's pursuit of pagan, ephemeral pleasures by making the reader constantly aware that the actions of the Marqués are sinful in the eyes of the Church.

Thus we see that Valle-Inclán's originality in fusing the passion-myth concept of love with that held by Christianity is that he changed the goal toward which the lover, the Marqués de Bradomín, was striving. Instead of the divine union which Tristan sought, Bradomín seeks his heaven here on earth. In doing so, he is locked in ceaseless struggle with prevailing Christian mores and he emerges a disillusioned cynic who finds no lasting satisfaction in this life and appears ill-prepared to enter the next one.
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