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As members of the Final Examination Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by Joseph Michael Deters entitled LOVE AND THE POSTMODERN: THE POETRY OF ANGEL GONZALEZ and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Dr. Judith Nantell  
Date 4/25/97

Dr. Malcolm Compitello  
Date 4/25/97

Dr. Amy Williamsen  
Date 4/25/97

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copy of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

Dr. Judith Nantell  
Date 4/25/97
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for Karla,
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation considers the discourse of love in Angel González’s poetry and the affinity that the poet’s amorous verse has with a postmodern aesthetic. Beginning with his first collection and continuing through his last, the study focuses on how the amorous sentiments of the poet are manifested in his work.

The evocation of love is quite varied throughout González’s poetic trajectory. In chapter one, the foundation of the study is set as the poetry of Aspero mundo (1956) is revealed to exhibit some early signs of a postmodern bent. The theoretical works of Julia Kristeva, Roland Barthes and Catherine Belsey are used in order to illustrate and support the relationship of the poetry with postmodernism.

Chapter two examines Sin esperanza con convencimiento (1962) and Palabra sobre palabra (1965). Here, the manifestation of a markedly postmodern irony and the apparent fusion of love, language and poetic creation is studied. Among the critical references employed in this chapter are the ideas of Ihab Hassan, Jean François Lyotard, and others.

Tratado de urbanismo (1967) is the focus of chapter three. Specifically, this chapter considers the use of intertextual elements and their manifestation in the love
poetry of this work. The critical ideas of Kristeva, Barthes, Jonathan Culler and Mikhail Baktin form the theoretical underpinnings of this chapter. In addition, the revelation of the manner in which González uses love poetry as a tool for social commentary is also explored as the poet assumes a more public voice within the discourse of love.

Chapter four studies the next three books of the poet, Breves acotaciones (1967), Procedimientos narrativos (1972) and Muestra (1977). Here, the poet examines his ability to control the linguistic medium, parodies traditional love poetry and many times employs what Michael Riffaterre has termed "ungrammaticalities."

In the fifth and final chapter of this dissertation, Prosemas o menos (1985) and Deixis en fantasma (1992) are studied. The importance of poetic ordering as well as the poet’s retrospective views on his own mortality and the immortality of his amorous verse are investigated in these final works.
INTRODUCTION

Angel González is one of the most celebrated Spanish poets of Generation of 1956. Born in Oviedo in 1925, he witnessed the Spanish Civil War as a child and grew up in the aftermath of the conflict. As a young man he attended university, worked as a journalist and a bureaucrat and later began to write poetry. In the early 1970's, after having already published six poetic collections and earned some reknown as a prominent Spanish poet, he immigrated to the United States and assumed the first of his many posts as a university professor. In addition to having written more than ten books of poetry, he has also authored many scholarly writings and has remained active even after his retirement in 1993 from the faculty of the University of New Mexico. His work has earned him the acclaimed Premio Príncipe de Asturias (1985), the Reina Sofía de Poesía Iberoamericana (1996), and last year, as a culmination to his exceptional career, he was awarded a chair in the prestigious Royal Academy of the Spanish Language. Much of his work has been translated into English and his poetry has been the subject of study by many critics on both sides of the Atlantic.

It is the goal of this dissertation to add to an already substantial body of critical research concerning
this important poet by contributing a creative and original analysis of Angel González’s love poetry and its affinity with the postmodern aesthetic. There is a discernible amorous bent present in the poet’s work from the very onset of his artistic career. As Andrew Debicki notes in his book Angel González, "Importante también es la veta amorosa y erótica, dentro de la cual predominan poemas en que idealizaciones románticas quedan contrapesadas por notas irónicas y elementos desmitificadores" (11). This study will illustrate the many changes that González’s love poetry exhibits over a course of more than forty years by focusing specifically on the presence and evolution of a discourse of love. For the purposes of this dissertation, the term discourse of love can be understood as the language employed by the numerous poetic speakers that are heard in González’s work as each attempts to define and come to know the multiple aspects of this emotion.

Paco Ignacio Taibo’s anthology, A todo amor (1968; 1988), brings together González’s love poetry and itself testifies to the importance of this aspect of his work. Despite the ubiquitous presence of the amorous in his verse, there are no monographic studies focusing specifically on González’s portrayal of love and its development throughout his various poetic collections. As Taibo eloquently puts it, "Angel González, encasillado por los críticos . . . ha
sido motivo ya de algunos trabajos importantes y reveladores, pero desatendido como poeta amoroso" (11). It is this lack of attention that the present dissertation intends to address. The present study will bring to light the various creative ways in which the poet utilizes language, tone, perspective and poetic technique as he investigates the changing nature of love.®

A number of critics note that much of González's poetry exhibits many of the characteristics associated with postmodernity. As Martha LaFollette Miller affirms, "Overall his work reflects many of the elements that theorists of postmodernism have identified as characterizing the art and literature of recent decades" (45). Specifically, this project will underscore the poet's use of a postmodern irony, intertextualities and semantic indirection. Furthermore, it will illustrate how the (in)adequacy of the linguistic medium often complicates the poet's attempts at expressing amorous sentiments and speaking about love. This, in turn, highlights how language is revealed to be a mutable and an inconstant bearer of unequivocal meaning. It is this linguistic skepticism that inspires the poet to engage in metapoetical commentary while simultaneously attempting to comprehend the nature of the discourse of love.
This dissertation consists of five chapters, the first of which is entitled "The Advent of Postmodern Love." Here, González's first book of poetry, *Aspero mundo* (1956), will be studied in detail. The analysis of this work will consider each section of the collection using the theoretical ideas of Julia Kristeva, Roland Barthes and Catherine Belsey to illuminate the poet's usage of language in his amorous discourse. As shall be shown, even here, as early as 1956, certain postmodern characteristics begin to emerge. The foundation of this dissertation will be established in this chapter emphasizing that both the emotion of love and the medium of language are elusive notions, difficult to define and unstable and indeterminate in their manifestations. As shall be evidenced, much of the poetry of this first collection is lyrical and displays an intimate, very personal voice.

In the second chapter, the study will turn to the consideration of the poet's book, *Sin esperanza con convencimiento* (1961). Of special interest in "Irony and Poetic Fusion," is González's use of irony in a way that underscores the postmodern nature of both his outlook and, consequently, his text. A discussion of these characteristics will be presented referring to the ideas of Jean François Lyotard and Ihab Hassan. Later, the poet's fourth work, *Palabra sobre palabra* (1965), will be analyzed,
considering the more and more pronounced lack of faith in the poetic word that González experiences and its manifestation in the fusion of love, language and poetic creation.

In the third chapter *Tratado de urbanismo* (1967) will be examined. In this collection, which the critics have identified as representative of the poet’s transition from his first to his second poetic stage, the use of a variety of intertextual elements will be considered. In this work, which includes social and political commentary, the poet will eschew the more intimate personal voice of his earlier collections and adopt a more critical public voice and discourse. An eclectic and openly comprehensive view of intertextuality, synthesized from theorists as diverse as Jonathan Culler, Michael Riffaterre, Barthes, Mikhail Bakhtin and Kristeva, will aid in the discussion of this poetry. Specifically, this chapter, "Intertextuality and the Discourse of Love," will underscore González’s criticism of Francoist Spain and his continuing, conflicting preoccupation with the (in)adequacy of language. It will also be shown how the poet breaks with poetic tradition by redefining love poetry as a catalyst for both social commentary and critique and also an expression of his ever more evident linguistic skepticism.
Chapter four consists of the study of three brief collections published between 1971 and 1977. In "Poetic Technique and Semantic Indirection," this dissertation will consider the continued attempts on the part of the poet to control his own elusive discourse of love. Among other ideas, in Breves acotaciones (1971), González, through his poetic voice, will speculate on the lover's discourse as a communicative medium utilized and understood by lovers. Later, his use of parody with regard to traditional poetic discourse will be highlighted in Procedimientos narrativos (1972). Finally, in the last section of this chapter, the ideas of semantic indirection and ungrammaticalities as described by Michael Riffaterre will be discussed in Muestra, corregida y aumentada (1977).

The study of the trajectory of González's love poetry also will encompass his poetry of the eighties and nineties in "A Retrospective and Future Look at Love." Here, the chapter will discuss the importance of poetic ordering as a means of establishing and/or disrupting thematic and tonal continuity as is evident in Prosemás o menos (1985). Later, as González's last work to date is examined, Deixis en fantasma (1992), the poet's conclusions about the (non)lasting nature of both love and his own poetry will be discussed.
Since the focus of this dissertation is primarily on the discourse of love evident in González’s poetry, each of the analyses offered in some way will be representative of the amorous sentiments displayed by the poetic voice. While the many close readings that follow have been conducted with specific goals and ideas in mind they are not, by any means, definitive. After all, as the poet himself will illustrate, the very nature of love and language make this an impossibility.
1. For a discussion of the primary characteristics of this poetic grouping see chapter one of Debicki's *Poetry of Discovery* and Persin's *Recent Spanish Poetry and the Role of the Reader*.

2. For more biographic information about González see chapter two of LaFollette Miller's *Politics and Verbal Play* and chapter one of Debicki's *Angel González*.

3. In February of 1997 I attended a poetry reading given by Angel González at the University of New Mexico. While retired, it was clear that his commitment to and participation in the artistic and intellectual community of that institution is far from over.

4. Interestingly enough none of the poetry of Angel González is included in the anthology *Poesía española contemporánea: antología, 1939-1964, poesía amorosa* (1967), edited by Jacinto López Gorge. This volume has many selections from other poets of the Generation of 1956. In Perry Higman's anthology *Love Poems* (1986), González's work is also absent. However, some of González's love poems are present in the *Antología de la poesía erótica española de nuestro tiempo* (1973), compiled by Joaquín Caro Romero.

5. See the section entitled References for complete citations of these critics' works.

6. Debicki, Taibo, Alarcos Llorach and Singleterry have all referred to González's amorous verse, but none have offered a detailed study on the notion of love in his poetry.

7. Of the ten books of poetry that González has written over the last forty years all but one, *Grado elemental*, will commented in this study. The reasons for the exclusion of this text are explained in a note in chapter two.

8. Also, a very comprehensive study by Diane Fisher specifically focusing on the evolution of irony in González's poetry will be considered.
1. THE ADVENT OF POSTMODERN LOVE IN ANGEL GONZALEZ'S POETRY

1.1 Aspero mundo: The Diminishing Returns of Love

The title of Angel Gonzalez's first collection of poems is Aspero mundo (1956). Published after the poet's thirty-first birthday, the book was awarded the second-place Adonais Prize one year prior to its publication. Aspero mundo consists of thirty eight poems divided into four parts: "Aspero mundo," "Canciones," "Sonetos," and "Acariciado mundo." As the first and last section titles indicate, the world of which the poet writes is sometimes perceived negatively áspero, rough, rugged, harsh, horrid and unpleasing to the senses, and at other times positively acariciado, caressed, embraced and cherished.

How the poet views the world around him through his poetic persona represented by the first person singular subject pronoun yo [I], will be influenced greatly by the presence or absence of the beloved. In many of the poems to be studied the yo speaks of and at times converses with a female loved one who is represented by the second person familiar subject pronoun tú [you]. The presence of the tú is a key factor in how the speaker interprets and describes the poetic space, mundo, surrounding him. As will be illustrated, many times when accompanied by or reflecting upon the loved one the poetic voice finds himself in an
"acariciado mundo" and without her in an "áspero mundo."

As these preforatory comments indicate, a truly dichotomized world is portrayed in the poetry of Aspero mundo, a view that is substantiated by many literary critics. Tino Villanueva has said:

se desarrolla por dos vertientes. Se nota una poesía formal e intimista no exenta de elementos líricos, por una parte; y por otra, se encuentran poemas que, por su tono amargo y visión pesimista de la realidad, gravitan hacia la expresión de una temática de preocupación social. (120)

This idea of two different poetic manifestations is further supported by Mario Benedetti who has commented on the "tono desalentado" of some poems and the "monologar amoroso a lo Salinas" that is revealed in others (Villanueva 121). Douglas Benson echoes these ideas saying, "desde el primer poema se puede notar el contraste fundamental entre una nostalgia ilusoria por el pasado, expresada en términos más aptos para un amor no correspondido, y un presente de 'agrios perfiles' (Voces 12). The poet himself has been quoted as saying, "escribí poemas que expresaban una vaga sensación de incomodidad, cierto sentimiento de fracaso o de derrota, que desemboca precipitadamente en un final provocado por el desaliento. Escribí también poemas de amor" (Martino 229).
It is apparent that in this first book there is both love poetry and also poetry of another content, an observation that Joaquin González Muela attributes to a causal relationship: "si el estado del poeta es de soledad, olvido y muerte, es porque le ha abandonado la que le amaba" (190). Villanueva also notes:

son veintidós los poemas que de alguna forma tratan el tema del amor, o en los que se destaca la presencia de la amada, símbolo del amor. La amada constituye todo un mundo idealizado. No sólo nutre y da ánimo al poeta, sino que dinamiza y embellece a la naturaleza. (122)

These critics qualify the amorous content of Aspero mundo as idealized and say that the beloved deserts the poetic voice leaving him in a state of despondency. Others have commented that González's love poetry consists of, "fictions based on poetic models that had nothing to do with his own reality" (LaFollette Miller 62), or once again in the poet's own words, "aunque derivados de un sentimiento amoroso verdadero, son únicamente, en el fondo, un puro ejercicio imaginativo" (Introduction 18). It is these observations that will act as a point of departure from which this study will further interrogate the expression of love in Angel González's poetry. The poetic treatment of this emotion is evoked in many different and at times contrasting ways.
What is certain is that love resists a constant definition or classification illustrating what Julia Kristeva has indicated in *Tales of Love* (1983): "No doubt the risk of a discourse of love, of a lover's discourse, comes mainly from uncertainty as to its object. Indeed, what are we talking about?" (2). It is precisely this notion of the poetic discourse of love and its uncertainty that helps the reader discover the occasionally contradictory manifestations of this emotion in the poet's work.

In the analysis of this first book of poetry the ideas of Julia Kristeva, Roland Barthes and Catherine Belsey will serve as theoretical referents. The observations of these theorists will be employed to examine the discourse of love expressed in specific selections. Among other things, the works of these critics will help to elucidate that this varied, inconsistent and contradictory presentation of the amorous discourse suggests that as early as 1956, González's poetry already demonstrated some of the characteristics that would later define postmodern literature. After all, as Debicki notes, the presence of a constantly changing discourse "niega la unidad, la permanencia, y la resolución orgánica que esperábamos de una obra <<moderna>>" (Posmodernidad 171). While it would be premature to assert that *Aspero mundo* is a bona fide postmodern work, the evolutionary and at times seemingly disparate evocation of
love does indicate the initiation of a challenge of the notion that, "While using a seemingly common language. . . these works still emerge from the canon of modernity, the belief that Art uses its forms to discover essences in the materials of Life." (Debicki, New Poetics 43). The indeterminate and open nature of González's amorous discourse is, however, the first sign that this poetry reveals a postmodern aesthetic.

The first section of this chapter is entitled, "The Diminishing Returns of Love." Here, it will be shown how love, as a powerful human emotion, appears quite prominently at first, but later seems to diminish in importance and dissipates into almost nothing. Next, in "Absence and Presence: The Solitude of Love," it will be shown how the amorous is described as a profoundly solitary and negative emotion causing the poetic speaker pain and anxiety. Later, the focus of the study will turn to the consideration of sexuality and sensuality as it relates to love in, "Lasting Love, Fleeting Desire." Finally, the complete fusion of the beloved with nature will be illustrated in "Love Remembered, Love Lost." In this chapter the ideas of the aforementioned critics will be applied to González's poetry in order to underscore the affinity of the poet's work with some contemporary theoretical observations. This will be done in order to appreciate and more fully comprehend the poetic
texts while at the same time establishing the foundation of this dissertation: the evocation of love in Angel González's poetry can be viewed as postmodern.

The collection starts with an introductory poem beginning with the words "Te tuve" (9). The poem is separated from the four sections constituting Aspero mundo and it has been suggested that it may well have been added as an afterthought. In spite of when, or why it was added, "Te tuve" is important to the work as a whole because it establishes the tone of the entire collection, a tone that Alarcos Llorach describes as "nostálgico, agridulce, melancolico" (12). Also, and of equal importance, the appearance of the tú clearly illustrates how her presence or absence defines the space that the poetic speaker occupies, first as "dulce" and "acariciado" and later as "agrio" and "áspero."

Te tuve
cuando eras
dulce,
acariciado mundo.

5 Realidad casi nube,
¡cómo te me volaste de los brazos!

Ahora te siento nuevamente.
No por tu luz, sino por tu corteza,
percibo tu inequívoca
10 presencia.

...agrios perfiles, duros meridianos,
áspero mundo para mis dos manos! (9)

The first three lines appear to be addressing a loved one, "Te tuve / cuando eras / dulce," or as Benson asserts, "la primera estrofa parece dirigirse inicialmente a una joven de quien el poeta está enamorado" (Ironía 571). However, upon reading further one sees that the tú to whom the poetic voice refers is actually the personified "mundo." Although it gradually becomes evident that the yo is not addressing a flesh and blood woman the use of the pronoun tú, along with the adjectives "acariciado" and "dulce," all act to preserve the initial image of the beloved. As shall be demonstrated, this image will never be completely absent.

A description of the "acariciado mundo" is offered in the line "Realidad casi nube" revealing the almost onirical atmosphere of the "world" inhabited by the poetic voice. It also indicates the ephemeral, always changing nature of the "realidad," where words such as "casi nube" highlight the intangible, nebulous ambiance described in the first stanza. Although the speaker tries to hold fast to his "world" and what he considers reality, he is incapable of hanging on as the exclamation, "¡cómo te me volaste de los brazos!,"
indicates. This phrase recalls the initial interpretation of the tú as a lover, thereby intensifying the sense of loss expressed by the poetic voice. After all, for the speaker, the loss of the "acariciado mundo" is as terrible as the loss of a loved one.

Alarcos Llorach has interpreted this poem as a description of lost youth, the first stanza representing the world seen through the eyes of an idealistic adolescent and the second stanza representing the same world now seen through the eyes of an embittered, old man. Villanueva relates the poem to the historical conditions of Spain and the biography of González, both the infantile, pre-war world of the poet and the adult, postwar world. (126) What is certain, is that there is a change in the speaker's perspective from the first to the second stanzas as "Ahora te siento nuevamente" underscores. The word "ahora" indicates a break with the past and a new present moment. The adverb "nuevamente" is another temporal link stressing that the action described, sentir, is occurring in the present. The change in verb tense from the first to the second stanza is especially important. The usage of the preterite verbs "tuve" and "volaste" communicate a finality and create a definite division between past youth and present adulthood emphasizing that this change in perspective is brought about during the aging process and is
permanent since there can be no return to the past. This use of contrasts, in this case present/past, is not only seen in the verb tenses. As both Debicki and Alarcos Llorach point out, the use of contrasts is also revealed in the adjectives "agrio"/"dulce" and in the perception of the illusionary romantic tone of the first stanza with the desillusioned tone perceived at the end of the second.11

Upon reaching line eight the reader notes that the poetic voice cannot describe the tú using the same metaphor of a woman suggested earlier. Now, it is no longer adequate, "el poema abandona la metáfora de 'novia'...y crea otra" (Benson, Ironía 571). The tú of the first lines, who earlier escaped the arms of the speaker is now defined in terms of "corteza," "agrios perfiles" and "meridianos." The tú is now seen solely as the objectified "mundo" identified by its physical, scientific attributes. Benson comments: "la imagen de la novia ha desaparecido; en su lugar tenemos de nuevo el vago 'mundo' de nube. Y ahora el lector se da cuenta de que este angustiado lamento por un amor efímero resulta algo exagerado ante un mundo hecho 'duros meridianos'" (Ironía 571). What is clear is that any humanness that the world may have exhibited is gone. The trauma experienced by the yo is doubled, as he not only loses the sweetness of the youth he once enjoyed, but also finds himself in a world that has become impersonal and very
different from the one described in the beginning of the poem. The speaker is alone in a sterile, uncaring, inhuman world. It is this feeling of despair that causes the final exclamation, "¡áspero mundo para mis dos manos!," and establishes, as indicated earlier, a tone of melancholic despair manifesting clearly that "el poeta ve la existencia como algo desolado y amargo" (Martino 230).

As the first section begins, the poetic voice continues to express the existential dismay, personal despair and hopelessness that seemingly define his life. In the first poem "Para que yo me llame Angel González"(13) the poetic voice is self-deprecating and critical, referring to himself as "un escombro" (l. 21). Next, he speaks of himself in third person singular as an objectified man alone on busy urban streets, "Aquí, Madrid, entre tranvías / y reflejos, un hombre: un hombre solo"(ll. 9-10). In "Cumpleaños"(14) (15), the poetic voice describes the usually felicitous event of his birthday as a depressing reminder that, "Para vivir un año es necesario / morirse muchas veces mucho" (ll. 11-12). Instead of the momentary rejoicing, happiness and celebration that a birthday usually implies, the yo focuses on the muertes or suffering that one endures in life, calling to mind his own mortality and the temporal nature of human beings. For the yo, death is never completely absent from life; rather "es necesario."
In the selection "Eso no es nada" (16) the speaker collectivizes humankind’s anguish and reiterates the futility of human actions that will ultimately terminate in nothingness, "Y si fuese posible aún / oprimir el agua, / ya no nos quedaría entre las manos / nada" (ll. 9-12). Here, the tone of profound, unrelenting despair permeates the speaker’s meditation on the end of existence.

Witnessing the verbal impotence that the poetic voice experiences when he tries to express himself with language in the poem "Me falta una palabra, una palabra sólo" (17), the reader discovers that this poetic voice cannot find the desired word confessing:

La necesito: ¿No veís que sufro?

Casi la tenía ya y vino ese hombre ceniciento.

20 Ahora...

¡Una vez más!

Así no puedo. (ll. 16-20)

The torment that the yo experiences when he does not discover the needed word leads to resignation and despair. These feelings, caused by his inability to find a suitable word are the same emotions that he describes when he begins to write about love in subsequent poems. Both the suffering to which the speaker makes reference, "¿No véis / que
sufro?," and the desperation caused by his inability to express himself with language, "Así no puedo," are nearly identical to the suffering and desperation lamented by the poetic voice when he later speaks of love and his beloved. This brings to mind Kristeva's assertion that, "The language of love is impossible, inadequate, immediately allusive when one would like it to be most straightforward; it is a flight of metaphors—it is literature" (1). It is precisely the inadequacy of his attempts to define love and to utilize language to portray this emotion that results in the extremely varied manifestations of the amorous discourse and the suffering of the poetic voice. What he discovers is that the allusive nature of both language and love are the origin of his despair.

"Muerte en la tarde" (19), reveals the speaker's thoughts as they turn towards death with the end of the day. Here, the feeling of solitude is intensified as nighttime draws near:

15 La luz del día huye hacia el oeste.
   El aire de la noche se adelanta,
   y nos llega un temor agrio y confuso,
   casi dolor, apenas esperanza.

   Todo lo que me unía con la vida
20 deja de ser unión, se hace distancia,
se aleja más, al fin desaparece,
y muerto soy,

...y nadie me levanta. (11. 15-23)

The last stanza discloses that as daylight vanishes the yo loses his only tangible link with life. With the coming of night, despair and confusion become more pronounced. The only collective experience, "nos llega," that the poetic voice shares with other humans is one of fear, bitterness of existence, and an almost physical pain. The yo preserves his fragile connection to humanity and his surroundings by being able to perceive them visually, and it is, thus, this link that is now severed as night falls. When daylight disappears the union between the poetic voice and that which he could earlier see slowly dissipates and everything and everyone appears farther away and less distinct as it grows darker, "todo lo que unía con la vida / deja de ser unión."

Possibly, the yo begins to fall asleep and loses sight of his surroundings. In any case, at the end of the poem the speaker can see nothing and is left utterly alone and afraid in the dark with no one to raise him from the metaphoric sleep, "y nadie me levanta," of his horrible nightmare of an acrid, isolated existence.

In these first selections the poetic voice has described himself with a great deal of self-awareness. He has stated: "yo no soy más que el resultado, el fruto, / lo
que queda, podrido, entre los restos;" ("Para que yo me llame Angel González" ll. 17-18, p. 13); "Un hombre con un año para nada / delante de su hastío para todo," ("Aquí Madrid, mil novecientos" ll. 13-14, p. 14); and "confuso, / disolviéndome en aire / cotidiano, burdo / jirón de mí, deshilachado / y roto por los puños" ("Cumpleaños" ll. 2-6, p. 15). Finally, he admits that he is presently living with death, "De los cientos de muertes que me habitan" ("Muerte en la tarde" ll. 1, p. 18). A tone of desolation, caused by the poetic voice’s estrangement from society and his beloved, underscores his extreme solitude. It is the sum of these characterizations that define the poetic voice and it is through these personal self-portraits that the reader comes to know the world through the eyes of the speaker. In all of the descriptions cited above, the yo reveals his inner world, or as the section title indicates, his áspero mundo. He is alone, without the tú and without love.

In these first poems of "Aspero mundo" the yo has portrayed himself as an unfortunate, solitary, suffering individual. This all changes, however, in the poem, "Muerte en el olvido" (19). Here, the poetic voice momentarily escapes his own limited self environs and finds refuge in the tú. The change is noticeable almost immediately with the emergence of the beloved. Although the tú was present in "Te tuve," the opening poem of this section, this is the
first time that love and its transforming power is seen. This is evident when the tú takes on the role of altering the yo-speaker.²⁰

Yo sé que existo
porque tú me imaginas.
Soy alto porque tú me crees alto, y limpio porque tú me miras
5 con buenos ojos,
con mirada limpia.
Tu pensamiento me hace inteligente, y en tu sencilla ternura, yo soy también sencillo
y bondadoso.

Pero si tú me olvidas quedará muerto sin que nadie lo sepa. Verán viva mi carne, pero será otro hombre
15 - oscuro, torpe, malo- el que la habita...

Perhaps the most drastic difference between this poem and those preceding it is the change in tone. With the evocation of the loved one, along with the affirmation that begins the poem, a much more positive attitude is conveyed. The individual earlier described as a hollow, lifeless man with few redeeming qualities, has become "alto," "limpio," "inteligente" and "bondadoso." No longer isolated, the yo...
has been metaphorically transformed by the love of the powerful, life-giving, creative tú.

In lines eight and nine the poetic voice describes how the tú grants the yo his very existence through her "sencilla ternura," which, in itself, has regenerative effects. The actions of the loved one, "imaginás," "crees," "miras," alter the speaker and through her love she makes him, "me hace," her mirror image. Life is given by the imagination of the tú as she changes the yo into someone much like herself. She looks at her lover and he is purified because her gaze, like her imagination, is transformative. Taking on her attributes, the speaker becomes her likeness: "yo soy también sencillo / y bondadoso." Taibo describes the effect of her love in this way: "es un amor que se refleja en el ser amado y al volver al poeta lo transforma" (12). Debicki takes it one step further when he observes:

Rather than a mere restatement of the idea that the beloved makes the lover better, or a simple formulation of the conventional view that love elevates one, this text becomes a dramatization of the tremendous force which the beloved (and love) exerts on the speaker. (Discovery 62)

The very existence of the poetic voice thus depends on the tú because, as the final lines explain, if she forgets him
he will die. Debicki points out, "he has attributed to her such importance that she breaks the 'rules' of the world and becomes the causal agent for his life. . .she is important to him as if she were literally the creator of his being and his qualities" (61). The death described is not physical, "quedaré muerto sin que nadie / lo sepa," but rather emotional, filled with existencial anguish. Without her love he will become another, someone else, and only his flesh, or the shell of his body will remain: "Verán viva / mi carne, pero será otro hombre / -oscuro, torpe, malo- el que la habita." The essence of what he is, the very part of him that she has transformed, will disappear and only his outer shell will remain. In actuality, the yo will have returned to the state described in the first poems of "Aspero mundo." Love, and the presence of the tú are vital for the survival of the new yo and are the only possible shelter, refuge and escape from the bitter, threatening, outside world. The hopelessness expressed by the poetic voice earlier in the collection has vanished with the presence of the loved one.

With the appearance of the beloved the poetic voice has been altered and given life. She changes him into a new, distinct individual because love permits him to escape from his own inner anguish and isolation thereby encountering solace and companionship.21 The poetic voice is quite
conscious of the dependency that is established between himself and the beloved and, in fact, he states the consequences of what will happen if she forget or stop loving him: "pero si tú me olvides / quedaré muerto." Life without her is a nothingness comparable only to the oblivion of death.

In the poem that follows, "Miro mi mano" (20-21) love is once again viewed as a force capable of transforming an individual. This time, however, the tú does not appear and as shall be illustrated, the degree of alteration which the yo experiences is lessened due to her absence. The poem describes how the poetic voice, engaged in the process of self-contemplation beginning with his own hand, reflects upon his own physical attributes:

10 Otro hallazgo: aquí está
mi cuerpo. Vivo
en él sin saber
de él, casi sin sentirlo.
A veces tropieza

15 de improviso
contra otro cuerpo inevitable.
Y es el amor. Sorprendido,
lo siento entonces aislado,
entero, distinto. (ll. 10-19)
He sees himself as separate from his body which he objectifies. Using the subject pronoun "él" as a substitution for the word "cuerpo", the speaker describes the place that he inhabits. Later, the yo admits that he knows very little about his body, "sin saber / de él" and can barely feel it, "casi sin sentirlo." Once again pronouns, here a direct object pronoun "sentirlo", are used to grammatically replace and metaphorically represent his body devoid of life. Not only does the poetic voice not seem to feel at one with his body nor understand it, but he can scarcely perceive it sensorially, as if it were unknown to him.

Later the speaker describes how his body, which he continues to objectify and refer to in third person, occasionally and unintentionally, "A veces" and "de improviso," stumbles into another body which he defines as love itself, "tropieza / . . . contra otro cuerpo inevitable. / Y es el amor." Perhaps this encounter is with another human being, but it is never described or referred to in specific terms. What is focused on, instead, is the immediate physical response that the collision of the two bodies produces. The yo experiences and describes the effect: "Sorprendido, lo siento entonces aislado, / entero, distinto." The love, that he stumbles upon causes a sensory reaction that changes him. Due to the ambiguous nature of
the object pronoun "lo," another grammatical possibility could be that it refers again to "cuerpo" emphasizing the new and distinct way the poetic voice now perceives his own body. This is relevant because prior to the encounter with love, the speaker could not, as previously indicated, perceive sensory stimulation in his own body, "casi sin sentirlo."

The series of adjectives, "sorprendido," "aislado," "entero," and "distinto" describe the change that the poetic voice undergoes. The previously isolated yo is metamorphosized when love is near. Curiously, it was known that the poetic voice and love would cross paths, "otro cuerpo inevitable." Therefore, it is not the encounter itself that is surprising but rather the new and overwhelming reaction of the yo when he experiences love. It is this emotion that makes him a new man, "aislado, / entero, distinto." Once again, love transforms the poetic voice.

Precisely how the yo has been altered is not specific. In the previous poem the yo was made "alto," "limpio" and "inteligente" but here, exactly what has happened is not as clearly defined. However, it must be remembered that in this case the beloved is not present as she was in "Muerte en el olvido," where she cast the poetic speaker into a likeness of herself. In "Miro mi mano" it is the presence of love and the encounter with this emotion that modifies
the yo. Because of the absence of the tó the degree to which the concrete transformation of the poetic voice can be identified is less apparent.

The penultimate poem of this section is "A qué mirar" (22) where the beloved appears once again. However, in this selection love is evoked quite differently.

A qué mirar. A qué permanecer seguros
de que todo es así, seguirá siendo... Jamás pudo
ser de otra forma, compacto y duro,
este -perfecto en su cadencia-
mundo.
Preferible es no ver. Meter las manos en un oscuro panorama, y no saber qué es esto que aferramos, en un puro afán de incertidumbre, de mentira. Porque la verdad duele. Y lo único que te agradezco ya es que me engañes

15 una vez más...

-<<Te quiero mucho...>>

The poem begins with two questions asked by the poetic voice. By using the plural adjective "seguros," the speaker establishes early on that he is not alone. However, in
spite of the presence of another person the inquiries beginning the poem are not to stimulate dialogue but rather are more rhetorical in nature. After all, the poetic voice himself replies to his own speculations and arrives at his own conclusions without the help of the tú whom he does not identify until the end of the poem.

Almost immediately the poem emphasizes the permanency of "este...mundo". The poetic voice painstakingly shows that everything is unalterable even with the passage of time. This is illustrated by the use of the many different verbal constructions and tenses in the poem. The infinitives, "mirar" and "permanecer" have no specific subject and lack the termination that usually indicates tense. It is neither past, present nor future, but rather a continuous verbal action or state. The poem, then, begins without a specific time referent. The first conjugated, time specific verb, "es," is in line three, the next conjugated verb is in the future progressive, "seguirá siendo," and finally, the preterite, "pudo." There are infinitives, present tense verbs, future tense verbs and past tense verbs all within a few poetic lines. This usage creates a sense of timelessness in which past, present and future are fused together creating a certain atemporality. The world, or the surroundings of the poetic voice, are "compacto", closed-in, dense, confining, and "duro", hard,
unbearable and unjust and the only certainty is that time, in its perfect rhythmic cadence of seconds tic-tocking away, will change nothing.

The first subject of a conjugated verb is seen in the undefined phrase, "todo es así." Exactly what the subject is remains ambiguous but later a grammatical possibility is presented with the word "mundo." If one considers the meanings of these two words "todo," could well be a synonym for "mundo", often used to mean everything and everyone. In effect then, there is one subject expressed with two different words, todo/mundo. What is said about this subject illustrates the timelessness mentioned earlier, "everything" is just so and will be the same tomorrow as it was in the past. After all, todo/mundo, the subject of the verb poder, could not, "Jamás pudo," and cannot change.

At first the poem shows the reader the disagreeable world that the poetic voice inhabits and the despair that he experiences as he questions what there is to look at and what there is to be sure about. It is not until the end of the poem that the answers to these preoccupations are provided. The response to the question that begins the poem, "A qué mirar" has its definitive answer in "preferible es no ver." There is nothing to see and there are no certainties. Human actions are futile, the yo along with his companion can only "Meter las manos / en un oscuro
panorama." The desperation of this action is further underscored when the poetic voice and his companion are portrayed as two people groping in the dark, trying to grasp onto all that is unknown, undefined, and vague. The use of the verb *aferrar* is especially important as it denotes to physically grasp, to moor or to persist obstinately. The two poetic personae have no knowledge of what they are trying to clutch onto, "y no saber / qué es esto que aferramos," yet at the same time the use of this verb conveys the idea that they are trying to hold fast, just as a boat anchors itself in a tempest, as if they too were seeking refuge or protection.

Furthermore, the verb *aferrar*, with all of its tactile connotations, also communicates the notion of a more intellectual grappling. That is to say, the images of the "oscu ro panorama," "incertidumbre" and "mentira" suggest that the wrestling to which the poem refers could also be the poetic voice attempting to achieve knowledge or understanding. It is both ignorance as well as a feeling of despair with which the speaker and his companion are trying to come to terms.\(^2\) Just as the *yo* sought refuge in the beloved in "Muerte en el olvido," here, both lovers are trying to find shelter from the emptiness, which is physical, emotional and intellectual, permeating themselves and their surroundings.
Due to the fact that neither is able to achieve a real understanding of their world there is a desire, "un puro / afán," to latch onto that which the lovers do not understand, the "incertidumbre" and "mentira." They yearn for a lie because the truth is indeed cruel, "la verdad duele." The poetic voice and the tú console themselves in the pronouncement of "<<Te quiero mucho>>." This pledge of love is as hollow and empty as the "oscuro panorama" in which the two lovers have been searching. It is not the all-powerful transforming emotion evidenced in "Muerte en el olvido," or even to a lesser degree in "Miro a mi mano." In the last three lines the poetic voice identifies the tú and thanks her for continuing to deceive him. Nonetheless, it remains unclear whether it is the beloved or the poetic speaker who utters the last deceptive words of the poem.

After the poetic voice had seemingly established that love possessed a certain transforming power, in what has just been viewed it is nothing more than a great deception or a lie. Love, which was first described as a positive regenerative force, appears now as an uncertain and insincere emotion, an idea intensified even more in the final selection of "Aspero mundo."

From the first glance at the poem, "Todos ustedes parecen felices. . ." it appears that the poetic voice seems to distance himself from those with whom he is talking by
using the third-person, plural formal form of address.\textsuperscript{23} The use of the pronoun "ustedes" is important because it opens up the possibility that the poetic voice is talking directly to a group using a critical, reprimanding tone.\textsuperscript{24} This being the case, the title acquires a certain apostrophic nature and a dialectic is created. That is to say, the reader has the impression that the poetic voice is speaking to or with a collective of individuals. The text is as follows:

...y sonríen, a veces, cuando hablan.
Y se dicen, incluso,
palabras
de amor. Pero
se aman
de dos en dos
para
odiar de mil en mil. Y guardan
toneladas de asco
por cada
milímetro de dicha.
Y parecen -nada
más que parecen- felices,
y hablan
con el fin de ocultar esa amargura
inevitable, y cuántas
veces no lo consiguen, como
no puedo yo ocultarla
por más tiempo: esta
20 desesperante, estéril, larga
ciega desolación por cualquier cosa
que -hacia donde no sé-, lenta me arrastra.

Although the poetic voice begins the poem with a rather severe tone, by the time the selection ends the speaker has ceased to distance himself from the group and shows his own commiseration in their experience, "no lo consiguen, como / no puedo yo ocultarlo."

With the use of the verb parecer, the possibility that the people whom he is addressing might appear to be, but really are not happy is presented. As Villanueva comments, "se puede suponer que en la inmediata posguerra era común fingir la felicidad, cuando a decir verdad el odio, el <<asco>> y la <<amargura>> eran los sentimientos dominantes bajo el clima opresivo de aquel entonces" (133).

Furthermore, the use of the ellipses at the end of the title underscore a pause in the poetic discourse which is continued when the poem itself begins.

The first three lines take up where the ellipses left off and imply how the smiles and sweet comments between lovers signify nothing. They might "say" that they love each other, "Y se dicen, incluso, / palabras / de amor,"
but, as will be shown, there is no transcendence to their love. Later the poetic voice reveals, "Pero / se aman / de dos en dos / para / odiar de mil en mil." The word "pero" can be used in three ways: it can indicate a contrast, an exception, and/or a limitation. Keeping in mind that love is spoken of in terms of its exact opposite, hatred, it would seem that in this case this conjunction is used to underscore further the dualistic contrast. By analyzing the verbs and the preposition that links them, "se aman. . . .para. . . .odiar," it is evidenced that there are two verbal opposites: to love and to hate. An illogical relationship has been constructed. How can the collective speak to each other of real love and love each other in groups of two, only to hate by the thousands? How can one love in order to hate? Villanueva poses possible answers to these questions when he comments, "el amor ya no es aquí un acto de consolidación, engendrador de la felicidad entre seres humanos, sino más bien una unificación para odiar a los demás" (133-34). However, the text itself remains open and indeterminate, very characteristic of a postmodern work. The reader might try to interpret the selection concretely, but the language of the poem continues to resist conclusive meaning. In general terms, it appears that the love that is present, ironically, generates hatred. The poem describes a world without love, and it is because of this absence that
the members of the collective only appear to be, but are not really happy. The hyperbolic expressions in lines nine and eleven, "toneladas de asco" and "milímetro de dicha" stress that the group is far from content. This unhappiness is later restated even more emphatically, "Y parecen -nada / más que parecen- felices" (11. 12-13). This certainly challenges the notion that describes González's poetry "as portraying a desolate world in which love and solidarity provide positive notes... {and} affirms the poet's belief in the possibility of a better future for humanity" (LaFollette Miller 35). While the world described in this poem is certainly desolate, neither love nor solidarity have shown themselves to be a refuge from the immediate surroundings.

Later, the poetic voice offers an explanation of why people speak to each other at all. This is revealing considering that in the first four lines the reader was lead to believe that the "ustedes" were speaking of love. Here, it is learned that they actually talk to one another, "con el fin de ocultar esa amargura / inevitable." Conversation or any type of dialogue is another way to hide, or escape from the inevitable bitterness of the áspero mundo. It is shortly thereafter where the poetic voice integrates himself with the collectivity expressing his own participation in their experiences as previously noted. Perhaps too, the
poetic voice speaks in order to escape the "amargura" defined at the end of the poem.

As the first section of Aspero mundo comes to a close, it is clear that the poetic speaker is indeed immersed in an uncaring, unforgiving world. The despair and futility that he experiences extend to all facets of his life, from his (in)ability to work with language to his union with other human beings. Tranquility and solace are rarely found and only appear when the beloved is near. Love can be positive but like everything else, it too is not impervious to its surroundings. This great emotion appears with a flash and is then reduced to a spark; it is first seen as a transformative force, later a physical tingling, next as a desperate lie and finally a complete charade. Each time love appears its intensity is diminished little by little. As was noted at the onset, there is no unified or permanent representation of the amorous discourse reinforcing the idea that as early as Aspero mundo there are some initial suggestions of the advent of a postmodern poetry. As the poetic speaker struggles to express his discourse of love he reinforces the idea of Kristeva that both love and language are individually problematic. As the reader attempts to decipher the lover's amorous sentiments expressed in the language of the poems of this section, he/she also learns to
grapple with these same two elusive and difficult concepts, just as the speaker himself has done.
1.2 Absence and Presence: The Solitude of Love

The second section of *Aspero mundo* is entitled "Canciones" and consists of seven poems. In many of these selections the poetic voice expresses his loneliness and sense of abandonment when he speaks of love and his beloved. This was also seen in the first section of this collection and is partially responsible for the tone of melancholic despair which continues in the majority of the poems of this second section. As this chapter continues, Roland Barthes' observation from *A Lover's Discourse*, (1977) that, "the lover's discourse is today of an extreme solitude" (1), will be kept in mind. This idea, and those of the absence and presence of the beloved will all be considered as the investigation of Angel González's lover's discourse proceeds.

The section opens with a selection that begins with the words, "Vengo de guerrear" (27). This poem, like the introductory "Te tuve" which prefaced the collection, is important because by merit of being first, it too, is decisive in establishing the tone.

Vengo de guerrear.
De guerrear por campos
de Castilla.
Cansado
There is a resounding note of patriotism with the mention of the Spanish heartland, "Castilla," which when considered as a poetic space, is viewed as both an áspero mundo, a place of battle, and an acariciado mundo, a place propitious for love. There is a reference to love as an activity of leisure for the yo on his return from fighting, "Ya es tiempo de enamorar / bajo los tilos que marzo / ilumina."

After having fought in battle it is now time for the poetic voice to enjoy the pursuit of love.

With the mention of the castilian plains and a warrior returning on horseback a rather romanticized, almost epic tone is evoked. This changes, however, as the reader reaches the last line "(Me voy soñando. Vengo de soñar.)" That which has been described is explained at the end of the poem to be the product of a dream. Just as the interpretation of this veteran soldier returning home is an illusion, so too is the existence of a pleasant space like
the one described in this poem, an illuminated, natural setting appropriate for love. Both are merely dreams of the poetic voice. There is no victorious return and there is no chance for love. This is emphasized even more by the fact that the beloved is nowhere present. The tone has changed from romantically patriotic to one of disappointment. It is as if the poetic voice has awakened from a nice dream only to be confronted with a not so agreeable reality once again.

The second poem, which begins with the words "Ancha para el dolor" (28), portrays Spain as a place of pain, anxiety (1. 3), sadness (1. 5) and frustration (11. 6-7). This evocation is the exteriorization of the inner world that the poet described in the first poems of the collection. The last lines, "Mar amarga, / donde sus aguas pierden el perfume, / y mi amor la esperanza," metaphorically show how love, and the hope for love, like so many other frustrated emotions of the poetic voice are lost in the waves of despair upon the seas of the áspero mundo. Later, the selection that starts, "Voz que soledad sonando" (29) emphasizes the sadness of the poetic voice and just how alone he really is. The yo listens to his own words as they become lost in the wind explaining that there is no one who hears what he says or understands what he means. The alliterative use of the initial so sound, "-Sólo soledad sonando." (1. 10) creates the effect of an echo thereby
intensifying the feeling of solitude that the poetic voice
is lamenting. The words of this line convey the physical
and emotional loneliness that the poetic voice is
experiencing. Furthermore, the fact that his words simply
dissipate in the wind accentuate the inadequacy of language
as a means of existential comfort.

The prevalent tone that these first poems create is a
reflection of the despair that the speaker is experiencing.
The impossibility of love and the solitude of the poetic
voice is underscored and in not one of these poems does the
beloved appear. While the absence of the beloved continues
to be evidenced in the fourth poem, the focus turns more to
the revelation of love itself and less on the emotional
state of the speaker.

From the onset of "Tras la ventana, el amor," (30) the
very notion of love is objectified. Villanueva asserts that
this is an example of how, "Los más íntimos sentimientos
amorosos se revelan ora al contemplarse tiernamente el amor
idealizado" (121). As in the previous poems of this section
the beloved is absent and the speaker attempts to
conceptually comprehend the presence of love.

Tras la ventana, el amor
vestido de blanco, mira.
Mira a la tarde, que gira
sus luces y su color.
5 La begonia sin olor
sus verdes hojas estira
para mirar lo que mira
tras la ventana, el amor:
la primavera, surgida
10 del pico de un ruiseñor.

Love, more than an object, is anthropomorphized, as it is not only dressed like a human being, "el amor / vestido de blanco," but has visual capabilities as well, "mira." This is an interesting contrast with the concept of blind love. The phrase, "Tras la ventana," reiterated the space that love occupies. The preposition "tras" indicates that love is figuratively behind the window where, in its personified state, it stares through the glass watching the afternoon. The natural world is described by its lights and color which together create the visual radiance that has drawn the attention of "el amor." Right away it is noticed that love is cast in a passive role of spectator, while beyond the window there is movement and vitality, "gira / sus luces y su color."

In effect, there is a spatial barrier, albeit transparent, that separates inside from outside. This division is paralleled by the poet’s placement of poetic verses and stanzas. The white space on the printed page is a divider visually distancing the first stanza, which speaks
of the interior space, from the second, which refers to exterior space. Nonetheless, nature penetrates the window with both the watchful stare of the begonia and the song of bird. Indeed, "La begonia...estira para mirar lo que mira / tras la ventana, el amor." With the repetition of verse eight, the reader is once again reminded of the separation of spaces, but this division cannot prohibit love from enjoying the celebratory song of nature, "la primavera, surgida / del pico de un ruiseñor." Here, there is a use of synesthesia mixing visual and auditory qualities, as love watches the spring song of a nightingale. The presence of this living creature and the mention of this vernal season call to mind the notions of natural rebirth and awakening.

Everything outside is alive, colorful and dynamic while everything on the inside is pale and motionless. "Love dressed in white" is an allusion to purity. However, white, as a color, also evokes a certain palidness and lack of vitality, underscoring what was mentioned earlier about the stationary, passive nature of love. All of this contrasts with the variety of colorful illuminations found in the natural world. The bright red begonia with its green leaves surrounded by a spectrum of light offer a stark visual contrast to the achromatic white seen behind the window. The presence of these colors and their vitality, typical of springtime, emphasize the dynamic, living, exterior world
which is further conveyed by the verbs of action, "gira," "estira" and surgir. Love is portrayed as a motionless and pure entity gazing out the window, able to watch but not able to participate in the rebirth of spring. In this way Villanueva's idea that love is idealized is well taken. The images of flowers, springtime and birds in song all underscore the pristine natural setting of the outdoors. It is not the dreary world seen in other poems describing an áspero mundo. Nonetheless, this love, idealized though it may be, remains at a distance. It is a captive within the confines of the area found behind the window, visible but unattainable, removed from nature and from humankind.

Curiously, although all four of the poems up to this point reveal some elements of the discourse of love, none have made reference to the speaker's beloved. In fact, it is only after he has expressed his glum outlook on life in the first three poems, and then speculated on a distant unattainable love, that the poetic voice focuses specifically on his loved one. Here, in the fifth poem of "Canciones," he constructs a causal relationship linking his emotional state with the absence or presence of the tú.

In "Mientras tú existas" (31), the poetic voice identifies his companion specifically as "amada mía." Villanueva observes that this use of direct address and naming makes a "voto de amor duradero a una amante real o
idealizada" (121). One of the elements that this analysis will highlight, as was just indicated, is the effect that the absence of the beloved has on the poetic speaker.

Mientras tú existas,
mi mirada
te busque más allá de las colinas,
mi nada
me llene el corazón,
si no es tu imagen, y haya
una remota posibilidad de que estés viva
en algún sitio, iluminada
por una luz -cualquiera...

Mientras yo presiento que eres y te llamas
así, con ese nombre tuyo
tan pequeño,
seguiré como ahora, amada
mía,

transido de distancia,
bajo este amor que crece y no se muere,
bajo este amor que sigue y nunca acaba.

By anaphorically using the word "mientras" in conjunction with verbs in the present subjunctive the poetic voice creates a certain suspense regarding what is to come. At the same time, the use of the subjunctive mood in these
subordinate clauses illustrates the relationship of interdependency between the **yo** and the **tú**, which, as shall be shown, is the root of the suffering experienced by the speaker.

The poem describes the relationship of the poetic voice with his beloved: if the **tú** is alive "existas," "estés viva," the poetic voice will continue to be "bajo este amor." That is to say, as long as the **yo** knows that his beloved lives he will continue loving her, even though this devotion to her causes him anguish because she is not present. Persin comments that the poem "highlights the absence of the beloved and the speaker's dependence on her for his own image" (105). The love that the **yo** feels for the **tú** is so intense that when he is not with her he is in physical pain. It is apparent that the two are separated and that the beloved could be anywhere whatsoever, "que estés viva / en algún sitio." The poetic voice emphasizes his resolve not to forget her, underscoring that their love is infinite, "crece, y no se muere" and "sigue y nunca acaba." The **yo** is able to continue, "seguiré," as long as he is loved, or as Taibo has stated, "el amor es aún más fuerte y vivicador que la propia vida; ya que es únicamente el amor el que llena la presencia y justifica el acto de vivir" (102). According to this idea, although the distance between the two causes the poetic voice great pain, their
love is strong enough to endure separation. Persin points out how the poetic text, through the evocation of the beloved by the speaker manages to unite them both:

It is only through the reader's intercession that absence is turned into presence. In spite of the distancing expressed in the text between the tú and the yo the reader ultimately must substantify and join the absent beloved to the present speaker. In the final two lines of the text there is a sort of synthesis of presence and absence in the concept of love. (106)

This "synthesis of presence and absence" underscores the importance of the reader and the reading process in the interpretation of the text. However, considering solely the poetic personae of the poem, the reader also sees that the "joining" of which Persin speaks has not eased the pain suffered by the poetic voice as he remains "bajo este amor."

When commenting on the absence of one's beloved and the distress which separation causes lovers to experience, Roland Barthes describes a situation that is very much analogous to that of the yo in González's poem:

Endlessly I sustain the discourse of the beloved's absence; actually a preposterous situation; the other is absent as referent, present as allocutory. This singular distortion generates a
kind of insupportable present; I am wedged between two tenses, that of the reference and that of the allocution: you have gone (which I lament), you are here (since I am addressing you). Whereupon I know what the present, that difficult tense, is: a pure potion of anxiety. (15)

Indeed, the "insupportable present" and the "potion of anxiety" is manifested in González's poem by the poetic voice which he describes as "transido de distancia."

Furthermore, just as Barthes explains that his own discourse of absence is "endlessly" sustained, the poetic speaker uses the future tense, "seguiré como ahora," to indicate that he too seems quite willing to wait forever, adoring his beloved even though she is not present, and suffering as a result of her absence.

The last two lines of the poem speak exclusively of the notion of love itself and not the individual participants. González Muela asserts that the poem, "supone que la desaparición de la amada no es definitiva, y el amor podría sobrevivir" (191), and indicates that it ends on a somewhat optimistic note. The critic notes that what urges the yo to continue, in spite of the tormented state which he admits to be experiencing, is the hope for the return of the beloved. In this case, the longer the yo continues hoping and loving the longer he continues suffering.
As alluded to before, this suffering is due to the dependency of the *yo* on the *tú*. This element was first seen in the poem "Muerte en el olvido" (19), where the first line stated, "Yo sé que existo porque tú me imaginas." In both that poem and here in "Mientras tú existas" the *tú*, and the love that the poetic voice has for her, act as the forces that permit him to continue living. In "Muerte en el olvido" the *yo* lives because the *tú* imagines him and here, the speaker continues living as long as the beloved is alive. In both poems the metaphoric life or death of the poetic voice is in the hands of his beloved. The presentation of this duality, death/life, is pertinent as it is one of many oppositional pairings evident in González's love poetry, others of which include: *áspero/acariciado*, absence/presence, frustration/hope, loneliness/union and hatred/love. Therefore, by extension the presence of the *tú* metaphorically represents all of the positive elements, hope, union and love, while her absence recalls all of the undesirable components. When the poetic voice speaks of love and his beloved it is an attempt to shut out the cruel reality of the surroundings. However, what is evidenced is that not even through love can the *yo* entirely escape the cruelty and suffering that his world offers. In "Muerte en el olvido" the speaker feared that the beloved would forget him and he would die while here, the lover suffers because
she is gone. Love, however strong an emotion it might be, is not impervious to the effects of the poetic voice's surroundings. This explains in part how in "Tras la ventana," when love was described as idealized and distant, it also appeared sterile and artificial. There, it seemed to be uneffectuated by the confines of the áspero mundo while in "Mientras tú existas" it is clear that love is indeed a product of and susceptible to the environment surrounding the speaker. As these last two poems have illustrated, the portrayal of love in Aspero mundo can indeed be contrastive and contradictory.

In the following poem, which begins, "Adiós. Hasta otra vez o nunca" (32), the poetic speaker seems to be contemplating the sleeping tú, reflecting on whether or not a future amorous encounter will be possible.

Adiós. Hasta otra vez o nunca.
Quién sabe qué será,
y en qué lugar de niebla.
Si habremos de tocarnos para reconocernos.
5 Si sabremos besarnos por falta de tristeza.
Todo lo llevas con tu cuerpo.
Todo lo llevas.
Me dejas naufragando en esta nada inmensa.
10 Cómo desaparece el monte
The uncertainty of a later meeting between the tú and the yo is expressed from the very start. The definitive farewell that begins the poem together with the negative "nunca" manifest the pessimistic attitude of the poetic voice. In line two, the unlikelihood of a future rendezvous is intensified even more with the implied question, "Quién sabe qué será." The speaker does not know what the future holds and refers to a possible meeting in an undefined place. With the absence of the loved one, the future will take on a dimension of instability, haziness and ambiguity, implying then, that her presence creates stability, clarity and certainty. The "lugar of niebla" to which the speaker refers, enhances the dreamlike atmosphere which is created and persists throughout the poem. This space metaphorically reflects the undefined nature of the speaker's thoughts, which he continues to reveal. He uses the first person plural nosotros in expressing his preoccupations when he says, "Si habremos de tocarnos para reconocernos." The poetic voice wonders if he and his beloved tú will need to experience physical contact in order
for them to recognize each other if and when they are reunited. Since the only possible encounter between the tú and the yo would occur in an amorphous, undefined locale, the sense of touch, and not sight would allow the lovers to ascertain the presence of one another even when enveloped in the figurative mists of the uncertain future. Later the poetic voice admits that if they know how to kiss each other at a future reunion it will be "por falta de tristeza." That is to say, the lovers will be saddened in the absence of one another and will only be content if and when they are reunited.

It is clear that the tú is the one departing, "lo llevas," "me dejas," and emphasizes, both with the repetition of the line "todo lo llevas," and the use of the pronoun "lo" referring to "todo," that with her departure he will remain completely alone. This solitude, that will be caused by the absence of the beloved is described in line eight where the consequences of the departure of the tú are stated. Using the verb "naufragar" the speaker describes the abandonment he will feel as being cast adrift by the tú into a void of nothingness "nada / inmensa." If the presence of the beloved offered the yo something, algo, her leaving and subsequent absence leaves him with absolutely nothing, recalling once again the poetic use of oppositional dualities.
The poetic voice intensifies this nothingness that he will experience when left alone with three parallel images: a mountain disappearing from view into the mist, a river sinking into its bed, and the disintegration of the city. The presence of these images call to mind Barthes' observations regarding the "disreality" created by the subject when he manifests his sentiments of "absence and withdrawal of reality" (87). He provides a similar example when he writes: "I walk back and forth in my room: the various objects-whose familiarity usually comforts me - the gray roofs, the noises of the city, everything seems inert to me, cut off, thunderstruck- like a waste planet" (87). The poetic voice in González's poem comprehends that with the departure of the tú the very world that he inhabits will crumble around him and disappear leaving him alone in "disreality" abandoned in his own aspero mundo. As seen in the previous poem, the absence of the tú has brought about suffering and despair for the vo.

The distraught state in which the poetic voice has been portrayed slowly builds from the last two selections and culminates in "Final" (33), a poem that, as its title indicates, concludes "Canciones" and leaves the reader wondering about the fate of the poetic voice. In this poem the ambiguous ambience represented by mist in "Adiós," is
now described as shadowy as the speaker contemplates but two choices, "amor" o "sombra":

Entre el amor y la sombra
me debato: último yo.

Prendido de un débil sí,
sobre el abismo de un no,
5 me debato: último
amor.

Tira de mis pies la sombra
Sangran mis manos, mis dos
manos asidas al frío
10 aire: último dolor.

Este es mi cuerpo de ayer
sobreviviendo de hoy.

The poetic "I" has arrived at a juncture in which he must make a decision. The debate that confronts him, as he admits, is with himself, "me debato: último yo." Although "el amor" and "la sombra" are not exact opposites in this poem they do seem to form yet another oppositional duality. After all, the poetic voice is faced with a choice represented by lexical terms thereby reflecting what Barthes terms, "The language-nature of the amorous sentiment." Yet,
the speaker of González’s poem will ultimately fail in his choice because as Barthes contends, "the lover’s discourse is in a sense a series of No Exits" (142). That is to say, with the very formulation of the option "amor/sombra," an opposition constituted by the "language" of the "lover’s discourse," there is always already a foregone conclusion of inevitable failure. This is substantiated by González’s poetic text. If the poetic voice chooses love, there is little to grasp onto, "prendido de un débil sí." If he chooses a life without love, "sombra," the outlook is ominous, "el abismo de un no." The yo thus creates his own self-imposed choice between love and shadow, described as the abyss or the last pain, and this could well be the last opportunity for him to choose, as indicated by the repeated use of the word "último." This choice, however, is ironic considering that consistent with how love has been portrayed throughout this section of Aspero mundo. After all, choosing love as an option is really an election of the impossible and the unattainable as portrayed in "Vengo de guerrear," "Ancha para el dolor" and "Tras la ventana." Or worse yet, this choice involves suffering due to the beloved’s absence and abandonment as described in "Mientras tú existas" and "Adiós."

The poetic voice thus finds himself in a quandary: is "el amor," which has been portrayed by absence, suffering
and abandonment, really quite so different from "la sombra," an unknown, ambiguous void? This is a query to which he seems to be trying to find some kind of answer, a conflict in need of a resolution. According to Barthes, this self-imposed desire for answers is typical: "Enticement of solutions, whatever they may be, which afford the amorous subject, despite their frequently catastrophic character, a temporary peace" (142). The poetic voice is "enticed" by an imagined "temporary peace." However, this can only be gained by the realization that "amor/sombra" are one and the same, the Barthesian "No exits." In González's love poetry, it is this knowledge that causes the yo his "último dolor."

As this poem and section end the poetic speaker is experiencing the "extreme solitude" mentioned at the onset. The last line of "Final" reads, "este es mi cuerpo de ayer / sobreviviendo de hoy," and illustrates how the speaker, as Barthes observes analyzing the discourse of love, is "wedged between two tenses, that of the reference and that of the allocation" (15). The yo defines his present self by recalling the past, "ayer," while at the same time he is living through and even beyond the present as he moves daily towards the future.

It is clear that in "Canciones," love is not a positive emotion for the poetic speaker. As he attempts to express his discourse of love he is constantly reminded of the
elusive nature of both love and the language used to articulate this emotion. For the most part, the speaker, as he analyzes and attempts to experience love, is in great pain, reflecting what Barthes calls; "The particular sensibility of the amorous subject. . .[which] renders him vulnerable, defenseless to the slightest injuries" (95). Indeed, in González's poetry, love has made the speaker miserable because it is at once possible and impossible since it leads to both the presence and absence of his beloved and to the resulting states of hope and frustration, union and abandonment. Furthermore, it is this interplay between the poetic text and the reader, as he/she struggles to comprehend these dualities, that underscores this poetry's indeterminate nature. The poetic voice, when attempting to speak about love becomes more and more susceptible to suffering because for him the process of the lover's discourse is the process of coming to know the agony that love can cause. This accounts for the wretched state in which the poetic voice repeatedly finds himself whenever the amorous is experienced and expressed.
1.3 Lasting Love, Fleeting Desire

The third section of *Aspero mundo*, "Sonetos," consists of eight selections written in the traditional verse form often associated with love poetry. Here, the speaker considers the sensual aspect of love for the first time. While contemplating the relationship existing between sexuality and love, he also continues to be preoccupied by the thought of being abandoned (absence) and speculates on different ways in which he can achieve a permanent and meaningful union with his beloved (presence). As the reader proceeds through the poetry of this section, he/she does sense upon reading the last poem, that the poetic speaker himself has arrived at some conclusions. As the amorous discourse of these poems is considered, the ideas of Catherine Belsey, expressed in her article, "Postmodern Love: Questioning the Metaphysics of Desire," will inform the analyses. When referring to the discourse of the enamored individual the critic notes; "Lovers speak, and yet in doing so they are spoken by a language that precedes them, that is not at their disposal, under their control: this language is at the same time dispersed among banalities, poetry, the sacred, tragedy" (693). With these words Belsey makes it clear that the discourse of love does not exist in a vacuum. On the contrary, a long tradition
precedes it, and in the case of this section, the use of the sonnet is testimony to the existence of this past poetic tradition. More importantly, however, are the assertions that the lover's discourse is itself elusive, and that language, as a medium, does not necessarily lend itself to the task of "speaking" about love. As the study of the "dispersed" language of this poetry proceeds, these ideas and others proposed by this critic will be kept in mind.

A number of critics have commented on "Sonetos" but few have analyzed the poems in any detail. Villanueva observes, "Las composiciones de este grupo son de proyección sentimental; expresan un éxtasis frente a la naturaleza, o bien ante la belleza en general. Otros son claramente tiernos cánticos de admiración y devoción al amor" (125). González Muela asserts that the poet has written some of the sonnets "en soledad," and "otros en compañía -áspero y acariciado mundo" (191). And finally, Singleterry classifies all of these poems as love sonnets which, "reveal basically the same kinds of love that have inspired poets to write sonnets for hundreds of years: sexual love, love of homeland and nature, love and compassion for fellowman" (63). As all three of these scholars indicate, love and the companionship of the tú is an important consideration for the speaker of these poems.
For the first time in this collection, in the opening sonnet, the yo considers sensuality as it relates to love. Here, time seems to stand still for a brief second affirming what Alarcos Llorach’s observation, "cuando el poeta vibra ante el amor, el tiempo se para" (25). In this suspended moment the poetic voice reflects upon the ephemeral nature of the emotions experienced during sexual intercourse:

En este instante, breve y duro instante,
¡Cuántas bocas de amor están unidas,
cuántas vidas se cuelgan de otras vidas exhaustas en su entrega palpitante!

5 Fugaz como el destello de un diamante,
¡qué de manos absurdamente asidas quieren cerrar las más leves salidas a su huida perpetua e incesante!

Lentos, aquí y allá, y adormecidos,
10 ¡tantos labios elevan espirales de besos!... Sí, en este instante, ahora que ya pasó, que ya lo hube perdido, del cual conservo sólo los cristales rotos, primera ruina de la aurora. (37)
With the repetition of the word "instante," the poetic voice underscores the present moment and its transitory nature in the first verse. Later, this is intensified further by the use of present tense verbs. The exclamation beginning the second verse refers specifically to the sexual act, described here as "entrega paplitante," and the speaker wonders how many other people are engaged in lovemaking at this very instant. The poetic voice indicates the universality of the sexual act by using the third person plural verb forms and it would seem, in this case, that love and sex are intrinsically related, "bocas de amor están unidas." Furthermore, the idea of the dependency created by love is expressed in the phrase, "cuántas vidas se cuelgan de otras vidas." The lives of the lovers are intertwined, each seemingly sustaining that of their partner.

The brevity of the sexual encounter is articulated in the first verse of the second stanza. Before, it had been encapsulated into an "instante," and here it is described as, "fugaz como el destello de un diamante." Although the duration of the sexual act is relatively short, its value and importance is considerable as illustrated by the use of the word "diamante." The fingers of the lovers are enlaced, trying desperately to hold onto each other in order to preserve the moment that they are experiencing. However, the word "absurdamente" suggests that all is for naught and
that the short time of sexual ecstasy cannot be retained. This instant is so brief, "a su huida perpetua e incesante!," yet the lovers insist on trying to detain it, "manos...quieren cerrar las más leves salidas a su huida." Not only do they wish to extend their union but also, at the same time, preserve the fleeting temporal moment.

In addition to using the third person plural throughout the poem to underscore the universality of lovemaking, the poetic voice explains its ubiquitous quality, stating that it is "aquí y allá," and that there are many people, "tantos labios," engaged in this activity. It is to be remembered, however, that these gestures are not permanent and that kisses and caresses are as fleeting as time itself. Later, the poetic voice reminds the reader once again of the transitory nature of the experienced emotional and physical state recalling the present moment: "Sí, en este instante, ahora."

The fact that this temporary ecstasy has ended is underscored by the change from the present to the past tense, "que ya pasó, que ya lo hube perdido." The only thing that remains for the poetic voice are the broken shards of glass. The moment that was earlier compared to a precious gem is now described as much less valuable, ordinary glass. The poetic speaker has realized that the union brought about through sexuality has come to an end and
metaphorically depicts this as the ruins that daylight has brought.36

In this poem the poetic voice speaks of sexuality as it applies both to other lovers and to himself. The instant of sexual ecstasy is compressed temporally, time seems to stand still, yet the advent of dawn proves that it cannot be detained forever. Sexual love, like time, is fleeting. It is important to note that sexual love is different from non-sexual love in that while the latter implicitly implies an element of desire the former explicity implies desire. In Belsey's article she attempts to distinguish between love and sexuality in practical terms of economics speaking of the value of both; "love is a value that remains beyond the market. While sex is a commodity, love becomes the condition of a happiness that cannot be bought" (683). By following this same strategy and comparing terms of value associated with love and sex in the sonnet just analyzed the same is shown to be true. As mentioned before, in verse five the sexual act is compared with "el destello de un diamante," thereby emphasizing its value and importance. In the first three stanzas love and sex are a single unit, which is to say that sex is a physical expression of love. However, in the final tercet the poetic voice has lost the instant when the feeling of love produced by sex was valued, "que ya lo hube perdido." With the finalization of the
encounter and the advent of the new day the feeling of love experienced before is gone and the sexual act no longer has the value of a diamond but is compared to broken glass, "cristales / rotos." The "condition of happiness" mentioned by Belsey is not achieved and as the poem ends it has become apparent that sexual love is viewed by the poetic voice as only a temporary "commodity." As the sexual interlude expires, so too does the love of the couple. In this way, it appears that in this first consideration of the relationship between love and sexuality, the poetic speaker does indeed seem to assert that the two are indeed separable.

After this poetic episode in which the poetic speaker attempts to comprehend sexuality and love, he later turns to the despair and loneliness that he experiences when the loved one is absent, a state of being found earlier in other poems of Aspero mundo. The self-description offered by the speaker in the next poem is reminiscent of the man described as "transido de distancia" from "Mientras tú existas" where the yo spoke his suffering when the tú was absent. Here, once again, his beloved is far away.

Me he quedado sin pulso y sin aliento
separado de ti. Cuando respiro,
el aire se vuelve en un suspiro
y en polvo el corazón, de desaliento.
No es que sienta tu ausencia el sentimiento.
Es que la siente el cuerpo. No te miro.
No te puedo tocar por más que estiro
los brazos como un ciego contra el viento.

Todo estaba detrás de tu figura

Ausente tú, detrás todo de nada,
borroso yermo en el que desespero.

Ya no tiene paisaje mi amargura.
Prendida de tu ausencia mi mirada,
contra todo me doy, ciego me hiero. (38)

The cause/effect relationship of the tú's absence on the poetic voice is made quite clear: the speaker is metaphorically dead, he has lost his breath and has no pulse because he is far from his beloved. This had been precisely what the poetic voice foresaw in "Muerte en el olvido," where he stated that he would die if she forget him. The poetic voice intensifies the feeling of being alone by repeating the word "sin" twice in the first verse. The lover tries to breathe, to draw in oxygen and continue living, but can do no more than sigh, lamenting the loss of his loved one. His heart too is dead and has turned into "polvo." The last words of the quatrain, "de desaliento" refer to both his bereaving sigh and his broken heart.
Later the poetic voice emphasizes that it is not only an emotional but also a physical effect that the absence of his beloved has on him. While the speaker cannot affirm the existence of his beloved visually, "No te miro," or by touch, "No te puedo tocar por más que estiro / los brazos," he is portrayed as a blind man grasping at thin air. Singleterry's observation in regards to this poem is quite accurate, "Tú is the source, the giver of his senses, so without her he becomes blind, deaf, helpless" (67).

As seen earlier in the collection, the yo's entire perspective of the world around him and himself is defined by either the absence or the presence of the tú. When the speaker contemplates the past, and the presence of the beloved he asserts, "Todo estaba detrás de tu figura." Once again, Belsey's comments are illuminating:

Postmodern writing...takes for granted that the process of representation can never be the reconstitution of presence; it repudiates the modernist nostalgia for the unpresentable, ineffable truth of things; and it variously celebrates or struggles with the opacity of the signifier. Postmodern fiction precisely refuses to be silent in the face of what cannot be said. (687)
The phrase "detrás todo de nada" is a verbalization of the "unpresentable" and "ineffable" to which Belsey refers. The speaker's "representation" of the beloved shows how he "struggle[s] with the opacity" of her image. After all, the speaker has everything when the tú is near and the memory of her does indeed convey a sense of wholeness for the yo. This is his attempt at a "re constitution" of her "presence." When the tú is absent, "Ausente tú, detrás todo de nada," the sense of completeness associated with her presence is changed into nothingness and the yo is left in an emotional void. Just as indicated earlier in the poem "Adiós," when the tú is gone the space that the yo occupies is described as a desolate plain of hazey nothingness, "borroso yermo."

The bitterness the speaker experiences seems to overflow as it evolves into the lament expressed in the last tercet, "Ya no tiene paisaje mi amargura." Hyperbolically describing the vastness of his despair, the lover can still recall and even revisualize his beloved: "Prendida de tu ausencia mi mirada." It is this recollection which consumes him, leaving him without sight, rebelling "contra todo," frustrated in his futile attempt to recover the absent beloved. He is blinded by passion and suffers both emotionally and physically. The final image of a desperate, frustrated, flailing man underscores the emptiness and
impotence felt by the poetic voice in the emotional wasteland of his áspero mundo.

After this stark revelation regarding the state of mind and the distraught condition of the poetic speaker, the next poem portrays a very different vision. In "Geografía humana" (39), the poetic speaker seems to momentarily forget about his miserable surroundings and instead of dwelling on his own wretched state, he offers a very lyrical, almost fantastical description of the tú.

In this way "Geografía" is distinct from the other poetry of this section as its portrayal of the beloved can be defined in Belsian terms as a "construction of desire." In this case, the tú is poetically crafted in terms of her desirability in such a way as to suggest that fantasy has taken over and she has become an imagined construct of the speaker. Indeed, it seems apparent that the poetic voice has opted to focus on the "banalities," to which Belsey earlier made reference. As he attempts this endeavour he uses natural references, topographical terminology and images wraught with sexual innuendo to portray his dearest companion:

The role of fantasy in the construction of desire cannot be overestimated. The same events, the same bodies, differently imagined, differently interpreted, generate different effects. The
fascination of the beloved stems to an unknown
degree from meaning and values, some personal,
some cultural, which invest this body, these
actions. (Belsey 688)

As the reader proceeds with the poem it becomes clear
almost immediately that the description offered is more
imaginative and creative than tangible and realistic.
Curiously, in the sonnet, "En este instante," where the
poetic voice speculated on the relationship between
sexuality and love, the tú was notably absent. In this
poem, the "fascination" of the speaker in regards to the tú
is apparent as he metaphorically describes his beloved in
order to highlight her physical attributes and her potential
transformative power. In this way, the beloved's presence
in the life and world of the speaker is underscored.

Lúbrica polinesia de lunares
en la pulida mar de tu cadera.
Trópico del tabaco y la madera
mecido por las olas de tus mares.

5 En los helados círculos polares
toda tu superficie reverbera...
Bajo las luces de tu primavera,
a punto de deshielo, los glaciares.
Los salmones avanzan por tus venas
10 meridianos rompiendo en su locura
Las aves vuelan desde tus colinas.

Terreno fértile, huerto de azucenas:
tan variada riqueza de hermosura
pesa sobre tus hombros, que te inclinas.

The careful development of imagery in the first two stanzas creates a vision of a dark skinned, alluring woman. Both her overall, and her particularized beauty encompass her entire body extending beyond herself and into all of nature where at once, "toda tu superficie reverbera." The youth and vitality of the beloved, her radiating aura of energy and exuberance describe a person exuding sensuality. This is further achieved by the mention of her racing heart and blood stream, "Los salmones avanzan por tus venas / meridianos rompiendo en su locura," a description that additionally communicates a dimension of "unbridled" passion with the use of the word "locura." Later, the tú appears in the natural world with which she not only has so much affinity but also transforms. Just as nature is beautiful and bountiful, so too is the beloved. The speaker emphasizes the tú’s fecundity, "terreno fértile," by describing her as a garden of white lillies. The verses that state, "tan variada riqueza de hermosura / pesa sobre
tus hombros, que te inclinas," illustrate that the poetic voice considers the tú to be the source and the bearer of all natural beauty.

This portrayal of the the tú, which underscores her sensuality and beauty which have been hyberbolically described, results in her objectification. In this selection he does not dwell on the love that he feels for the tú, but rather he focuses strictly on her sensual appeal. This is yet another indication that sensuality and love can indeed be seen as separable entities.

By recalling the first sonnet, "En este insante," and comparing it with "Geografía humana," one can see how the two seem to communicate a similar message. While sexuality and sensuality are closely linked to love they are not integral to the emotion. In fact, the union of two lovers which both sexuality and sensuality produces is portrayed as imperfect at best. As the first poem revealed, sexual love is temporary and fleeting. In the same way, love based solely on the sensual appeal of another individual is clearly another example of a capricious desire more than a true emotional attachment. Having said this, it is clear that for the poetic voice physical love, while important, does not allow for a complete and lasting union with the beloved. It is precisely at this point, from which the following poem departs.
In his quest for a way to find a lasting union with his beloved, the poetic speaker finally decides to forget about his own human limitations and hypothetically speculates on the transformative abilities that he himself might have as a result of his love for the tú. The creative imagination of the speaker is highlighted by the use of the past subjunctive in the poem which begins, "Alga quisiera ser" (42).

In this selection the poetic voice is portrayed as desperately attempting to achieve an all-encompassing unity with his loved one." He has ignored the restraints which could keep them apart and explains how he hopes to abolish distance and become the very elements that surround the tú."

Alga quisiera ser, alga enredada,
en lo más suave de tu pantorrilla.
Soplo de brisa contra tu mejilla.
Arena leve bajo tu pisada.

5 Agua quisiera ser, agua salada
cuando corres desnuda hacia la orilla.
Sol recortando en sombra tu sencilla
silueta virgen de recién bañada.

Todo quisiera ser, indefinido,
10 en torno a ti: paisaje, luz, ambiente, gaviota, cielo, nave, vela, viento...

Caracola que acercas a tu oído para poder reunir, tímidamente, con el rumor del mar, mi sentimiento.

As the poem begins, the poetic voice describes his wish to transform himself into natural elements: "alga," "brisa," and "arena." By becoming one, or all of these, he hopes to achieve the longed for proximity to and unity with his beloved. The speaker wants to encompass the tú as is evident in the series of allusions to the ocean, a metaphorical space that would allow the poetic voice to be forever united with the loved one. It is clear that he would alter himself into anything, "todo," in order to achieve this unity. There is a metonimical use of language as the speaker names eight different things he would be willing to transform himself into which emphasizes his resolve and desire to try and remain near to his beloved. Just as his emotions mingle with "el rumor del mar" so too will he be able to maintain his proximity to and union with the tú: "poder reunir, tímidamente, / con el rumor del mar, mi sentimiento."

The love of the yo is so great that he will purposely transform himself to be near the tú. As was alluded to
earlier, this poem comes after the poetic voice has speculated on the idea of sexual union, and described the tú emphasizing her sensual qualities. After having earlier concluded that physical love is only temporary, his longing for a meaningful and permanent union with the beloved by means of his all-encompassing presence is quite understandable. He wants to be near the tú both sentimentally and physically, but in spatial, not necessarily sexual terms. Although his solution is obviously impossible, it does underscore his acquired knowledge of the limits of physical love.

In the same way that physical love is revealed to have limitations, the speaker also emphasizes the limited nature of the poetic medium. In the penultimate poem, "Se me hiela la voz en la garganta" (43), he focuses on his attempts to express his amorous emotions with language. Specifically, he mentions that when he wants to speak of love, the words or in this case his voice, as Belsey noted at the onset, are "not at [his] disposal." In the second and third verses of the poem he laments, "Mi voz más dulce, con la que solía hablar de amor a solas, se me enfriá." To "speak" of love is indeed an arduous task, and the (in)adequacy of language to reveal the amorous sentiments of the speaker is exemplified in Belsey's observation that: "postmodern love is both silent and garrulous. It cannot speak, and yet it
seems that it never ceases to speak in late twentieth-century Western culture" (685). As this study continues, the realization of the poetic voice that language is indeed a limited medium will become more and more pronounced.

The speaker's discovery that sexual love is fleeting is the key point of "Sonetos." While this section, like the last, continues to view love as a potential cause of suffering for the poetic voice, it also eschews physical, sensual love as a manifestation of lasting emotion and suggests a more spiritual or sentimental type of amorous union. As the poetic voice "speaks," he is spoken about, or revealed by the very same language he both wrestles with and employs. He continuously grapples with both words and emotion as he attempts to communicate his amorous discourse in an effort to more fully understand the language of love.
1.4 Love Remembered, Love Lost

The final section of this book of poems is entitled, "Acariciado mundo." As its name implies, the prevalent tone of this last part drastically contrasts with the somber, resigned mood of many of the earlier sections. Of primary interest in this fourth part of the collection is the continued and enhanced evocation of the beloved, who here acquires an almost ubiquitous presence, the poetic voice's treatment of time, and finally, the ultimate fusion of the beloved with nature. This is the longest section of Aspero mundo consisting of twelve poetic compositions, and while some of these are the antithesis of many of the earlier poems, the last selection of the book reveals the speaker's ultimate expression of abandonment, loneliness and defeat.

Throughout this chapter, many of the poetic analyses offered have made reference to the evocation of the tú, the subject pronoun which has been consistently equated with the beloved. In "Aspero mundo" and "Canciones" she appears twice respectively, and in "Sonetos," the tú is mentioned three times when referring to the beloved and once, in an exceptional case when referring to a city. In this last section, however, the tú is present in all twelve poems. As González Muela observes:
La amada está por todas partes - el río, el paisaje con lluvia, el invierno, la primavera, la mañana, la tarde--; ella es el punto de referencia concertante o desconcertante, del universo... Por eso, si ella se escamotea, deja al mundo desvalido. (191)

Upon further consideration, the constant presence of the beloved is to be expected in a section entitled, "Acariciado mundo." After all, it is her presence which, in part, defines this space as favorable just as her absence had previously defined it as negative. Also notable in this section is that in contrast with the other three, here, there is some uniformity in the way that the beloved is evoked in and by the amorous discourse. In all but one of the poems of "Acariciado mundo" the description of the tú is very similar and can be coherently followed throughout the section. That is to say, the portrayal of the beloved in "El otoño cruzaba" (50) is almost identical to the person described in "Bosque" (57). In other sections where the poetic speaker struggles to express himself within the confines of the "harsh world" this has not been the case. One explanation of the homogeneous manner in which the beloved is portrayed in this final part is that in all but the last poem, entitled "Ciudad," the tú is described as being immersed in nature. While this idea recalls the
sonnets "Geografía humana" and "Alga quisiera ser" of the last section, here, this concept is revealed in a more prolonged and intense way. A pristine, uncontaminated and uninhabited area where beauty and tranquility reside are in essence the poetic scenario of the acariciado mundo. This metaphorical space could be representative of a multitude of ideas: youth, innocence, the presence of love and/or the loved one, peace or even pre-Franco Spain. What is certain, however, is that the first eleven poetic compositions lull the reader into an idyllic, lyrical, dream-like state which is shattered at the end of the section when the tú disappears, leaving the poetic speaker alone and defeated in an apparently foreign, urban environment. As Alarcos Llorach explains referring to the last poem: "En cuanto el Tú desaparece, ya nada es nada" (26). As shall be shown, it is on this note of desolation and uncertainty that the collection ends.

Another key element in this final section is the poetic speaker's continued evocation of time. González Muela comments, "En esta última parte los verbos están en pasado o en presente, pero es un presente recordado" (191). This is an indication that the temporal reality of the poetic voice as he expresses the poems of "Acariciado mundo" is actually that of the áspero mundo. That is to say, many of the positive evocations and images that are described in this
final section do not necessarily reflect the current world or emotional state of the poetic speaker, but rather are nostalgic memories of the past remembered from the not so pleasant present. This is a return to the idea proposed in the introductory poem "Te tuve": "Te tuve / cuando eras / dulce, / acariciado mundo" (ll. 1-4). The reader realizes that by virtue of the fact that the poetic voice describes the past world as "dulce" and "acariciado," he is also implying that his present world is "agrio" and "duro." In effect, the discourse of love of this section allows the poetic voice to contemplate his past by submerging himself into memories and momentarily taking refuge from his desolate, temporal reality. In short, the speaker escapes into poetry.

The other important aspect regarding the temporal element of this section is the apparent effect that the presence of the beloved has on the passing of time. While also present in some of the poems of the earlier sections, for example, "En este instante," it is most pronounced here. Alarcos Llorach has noted the following:

Cuando el poeta vibra ante el amor, el tiempo se para: sólo luce como en éxtasis eterno ese Tú a quien se dirige. Nótese cómo en casi todos los poemas amorosos de este primer libro no hay movimiento temporal. Situados en presente o
pasado, son visiones estáticas de ese amor inconmovible, en torno al cual todas las cosas, incluido a veces el poeta, son accesorios que delimitan o perfilan el Tú esencial. (25)

Since love is perhaps the only positive aspect which appearing in the cruel, uncaring world described in the first three sections, there is little wonder that the poetic speaker attempts to preserve these ever too precious moments of temporary solace. By holding onto time he thus holds on to his beloved, even if only for an instant.

As the consideration of the poetry of this section proceeds, these critical observations about the evocation of the beloved and the speaker’s poetic treatment of time, will be kept in mind. In addition to these elements, the commentary that follows also will focus specifically on the fusion between the tú and nature. The first poem of the collection to be addressed begins, "Por aquí pasa un río" (47). This opening selection of "Acariciado mundo" has an almost reverent tone as it reveals how the tú becomes one with nature.

Por aquí pasa un río.
Por aquí tus pisadas
fueron embelleciendo las arenas,
acarando las aguas,
5 puliendo los guijarros, perdonando
a las embelesadas
azucenas...

No vas tú por el río:
es el río el que anda
10 detrás de ti, buscando en ti
el reflejo, mirándose en tu espalda.

Si vas de prisa, el río se apresura.
Si vas despacio, el agua se remansa.

The loved one is portrayed as fused with the river and
nature, two entities which she is able to transform in a
variety of ways. This is expressed by the various verbal
gerunds: "embelleciendo," "aclarando," "puliendo," and
"perdonando." The beloved beautifies, perfects and
recreates nature. The symbol of a flowing river has long
been a traditional representation of life. The tú does not
participate in life, rather life participates in the tú.
Debicki has stated that the poet, "inverts the normal
relationship between a person and a natural element, and
makes a river into a personified searcher who follows the
course and rhythms of a woman (the speaker's beloved) and
sees itself reflected in her" (Discovery 63). She demands
nothing from the natural world but the river follows her and
tries to imitate her at every moment. Her image is perfect
and for this reason nature emulates her example and copies
her every move, "buscando en ti / el reflejo, mirándose en tu espalda." As the poem ends the poetic voice has described the complete fusion of the beloved with nature and the two can no longer be considered as separate.

Another selection in which the tú seems to effect natural order is "La lluvia" (48). Here, as in the earlier, "Mientras tú existas," she is referred to as "amada mía," and as Villanueva observes, "el poeta fija su mirada en la belleza única y pura de su amada" (122).

No; la lluvia no te moja:
tee resbala.
Tienes la piel de aceite, amada mía.
Ungida con aceite, perfumada.

5 Todo lo ha traspasado de ternura
la lengua transparente de las aguas.
Un vapor dulce, como el aliento
de un buey, cálidamente exhalan
los árboles.

10 Gotas largas,
como alfileres líquidos,
brillan al primer sol de la mañana.

La lluvia que ha mojado tus cabellos
no ha mojado tu cuerpo ni tu cara.
Upon a first reading, the initial stanza of this poem may seem to indicate that the tú’s oily skin is a repellent to the raindrops. However, it is not the chemical opposition of oil/water which the poem illustrates, nor the imperviousness of the beloved to the effects of nature. On the contrary, here, just as in the first poem, the relationship between the tú and nature is distinctive and, at times, the two seem to completely join together merging into one single unity. The lines "piel de aceite, amada mía. / Ungida con aceite, perfumada," convey how these usually oppositional substances come into harmony when the tú is present. After all, it is not their repellent qualities that are stressed, but rather their ability to coexist, each liquid in contact with the other, but not in conflict, as the verb resbalar indicates. It is her skin, or by extension her presence, that allows the fusion of her oil covered body with the rainwater to become an image of harmony and peace and not one of opposition. It is known that the rain is a bestower of tenderness (ll. 5-6) a fact which further highlights the total immersion and union of the beloved in and with nature. Additionally, as a result of this transmission of kindness, the natural world is revitalized. As Benson states, "El hablante describe a "Tú" en un ambiente natural revelador de la función cíclica y renovadora del agua y a la vez de la escencia extranatural
de "Tú" (Ironía 576). The trees are given new life, breathing as if they were animals and all is glistening and luminous in the first light of morning. As the poetic voice returns to the image of his loved one in the last two lines he emphasizes her beauty, radiance and vitality. It is as Taibo observes, "La presencia de la mujer va a poner en el poeta una mirada nueva en la que el amor se traslada de ella a su entorno" (14). The whole world seems to be a natural paradise, a Garden of Eden, invigorated by the presence of the beloved.

As noted earlier, there is a certain continuity which is established in this section with regards to the evocation of the tú as she is seen immersed in the natural world. In the third poem of the collection, "Jardín" (49), various kinds of flowers found in a typical garden are described. It is a poem replete with colorful, natural images and as the tú appears her very presence infuses the flowers with fragrance, "Pero tú cortas / un clavel. / Los alhelíes / recobraron su aroma" (11. 11-14). In the poem "El otoño cruzaba" (50) the tú's ability to transform nature is accentuated once again as she is described as a bearer of peace and silence, "Tú llegabas, / y una amarilla paz de hojas caídas / reponía el silencio a tus espaldas" (11. 22-24). This same notion is also seen in "Lluvia sobre la nieve en primavera" (51) where the footprints of the tú left
in the snow are forever filled with kindness. The following poem, "Perros contra la luna, lejanísimos" (52) makes a brief reference to the sleeping tú whose presence has brought about the silence of nature. While the portrayal of the the beloved is not identical in all cases there is an undoubted similarity in all of these poems that is not present in any other sections of the collection.

In "Apoyas la mano" (53), once again the reverent tone noted earlier is evident as the poetic voice emphasizes the goodness and sweetness of his beloved.

Apoyas la mano
en un árbol. Las hormigas
tropiezan con ella y se detienen,
dan la vuelta, vacilan.

Es dulce tu mano. La corteza
del abedul también es dulce: dulcísima.
Una agridulce plata otoñal sube
desde su raíz honda hacia ti misma.
Mojada por la luz sucia y filtrada,
peinada friamente por la brisa,
te estás quedando así: cada momento
más sola, más pura, más concisa.

The poem presents various oppositional ideas all of which are harmonized as a result of the presence of the loved one. For instance, the presence of the tú in spite of her
quality of sweetness, *dulzura*, appears to dissuade the ants from approaching her hand, "tropiezan con ella y se detienen, dan la vuelta, vacilan." The fact that the beloved's presence is able to stimulate the ants retreat is testimony that she has rearranged the natural order of things much as she did in "La lluvia," where oil/water were seen in coexistence. Here, the ants would normally be attracted to something sweet, but due to the presence of the tú, they are inspired, as if out of respect or reverence, to forego swarming all over her hand. A potentially disagreeable situation has been pacified and harmonized by the presence of the beloved.

In another example, the tú is soaked by the rays of sunlight that unevenly filter down through the branches of the birch tree. Immediately the reader observes the poetic voice's utilization of seemingly contrary terms using the adjective "mojada" with sunlight. Due to the imperfect blend of light and shadow which reflect off the beloved, the light is referred to as "sucia," in this way communicating the patchwork-like, uneven nature of the rays and shadows created by the tree branches. However, instead of appearing dirty herself, the tú harmonizes the filtered light and shadow and appears as bathed in radiance. Her very beauty seems to slow time itself, "te estás quedando así: cada momento / más sola, más pura, más concisa." The anaphoric
use of the word "más" adds a certain rhythm to the poem which resembles that of the slowly ticking clock measuring each passing moment in which the beloved’s image becomes more and more concrete and perfect in the mind of the poetic speaker.

There are many other poems illustrating these same ideas. In "Pájaros" (54), for example, the tú appears and with her presence calms and quiets the singing birds of the afternoon (ll. 21-29). This is followed by a poem entitled, "Son las gaviotas, amor" (55). Here, the tú, and her quality of sweetness once again "enternecen a las olas" (1. 6) softening the waves as she walks by the sea, absorbed in thought and not hearing the "gaviotas" overhead. This poem is also notable because once again the tú is referred to by a term of endearment, "amor," thereby emphasizing the amorous feelings that the poetic speaker is feeling. Later, in "Milagro de luz" (56), the light that emanates from the tú is nearly as great as that of the morning and it appears to be a contest of beauty and radiance, "tú contra el alba" (1. 12). The use of light, here, and in other poems is explained by Villanueva in the following way: "la luz sirve como trasfondo de belleza ante el cual se recorra el perfil de la amante contemplada" (122). In the selection "Bosque" (57), the tú inspires awe in nature, as she passes through a forest almost like an ethereal being, "No dejan
huellas / tus pies. Cientos de árboles / contienen el
aliento sobre tu / cabeza" (ll. 4-7). She truly appears to
be, as Benson stated earlier, an "extranatural" being.

The last poem of the collection, "Ciudad" (58), offers
the reader a unique evocation of the beloved and also has a
completely different tone than the rest of the section that
it concludes. Now, the pristine natural atmosphere has been
replaced with an urban setting underscoring from the onset
the contrast of city versus nature.

Brillan las cosas. Los tejados crecen
sobre las copas de los árboles.
A punto de romperse, tensas,
las elásticas calles.

5 Ahí estás tú: debajo de ese cruce
de metálicos cables,
en el que cuaja el sol como en un nimbo
complementario de tu imagen.
Rápidas golondrinas amenazan

10 fachadas impasibles. Los cristales
transmiten luminosos y secretos
mensajes.
Todo son breves gestos, invisibles
para los ojos habituales.

15 Y de pronto, no estás. Adiós, amor, adiós.
Ya te marchaste.
Nada queda de ti. La ciudad gira:
molino en el que todo se deshace.

When the tú is taken from her natural environs the effect is immediate and catastrophic for the speaker. The poetic "I" and the physical surroundings which encompass him begin to noticeably change. Instead of the peacefulness and serenity described earlier, it is clear that the orb dominates nature, "Los tejados crecen / sobre las copas de los árboles." The tall, ominous buildings of the unfriendly city eclipse the natural vegetation portrayed as so imposing and ubiquitous in the previous poems and there is an immediate tension created when the beloved appears, "Apunto de romperse, tensas, / las elásticas calles. / Ahí estás tú:" In the city she is helpless, unable to transform the area around her which is no longer representative of an acariciado mundo but rather the reemergence of the áspero mundo. Here she is oppressed by "ese cruce / de metálicos cables" that is above her, and nature itself has been changed into a force which is threatening, uncaring and hostile: "Rápidas golondrinas amenazan / fachadas imasibles." After the poetic voice briefly glimpses his beloved the suspense in the poem builds with the mention of flashing lights and secret messages until suddenly, she is gone. She has left and the speaker has no recourse to recover her. The repetition of the word "adiós" underscores
the finality of her departure as does the speaker's realization, "Nada queda de ti." Alone, he turns his attention to the city itself which seems to be circling around him, destroying and consuming all which enters its confines. The last words of the poem and the entire collection, "todo se deshace," underscore the note of despair experienced by the yo as he expresses his last thoughts. As González Muela states, "Y al final, "Ciudad", ahí estás tú (vida), ya no estás (muerte)" (192). While the presence of the tú stimulated the poetic speaker to describe a natural world full of beauty and tranquility, her absence, once again, has been equated with his metaphorical death.

In what is the culmination of Aspero mundo, the reader has been led along the path of the "Acariciado mundo" to later experience the same fate as the poetic speaker, being left alone, abandoned, defeated and without hope as the collection ends. The positive tone with which the section began and in which, "la contemplación lírica de González lo lleva[ba] igualmente a fijarse en flores, aves, brisas y lluvias, ante los cuales se emociona[ba] y gozosamente se maravilla[ba]" (Villanueva 122), vanishes with the disappearance of the beloved. The uniform vision which portrayed the tú as encompassed by and fused with nature, that predominated in the preceding poems, is absent as the section, "desemboca precipitadamente en un final provocado
por el desaliento" (Martino 229). While in the previous sections of this book the discourse of love revealed such ideas as the impossibility of attaining love, the dependency brought about by love, the suffering due to the separation of lovers, and the relationship between sensuality and love, nothing resembling these notions appears in this "Acariciado mundo." As alluded to before, here, the speaker has seemingly chosen to immerse himself in a poetically created, idyllic plane of nostalgia, thereby avoiding and escaping from the outside, non-poetic, world. Interestingly, he is somewhat successful in this endeavour until the final poem where he is suddenly jolted back into reality. It is apparent that the amorous discourse of this final section has been largely one of poetic escape for the speaker. For the poetic voice, the presence of his beloved is necessary for any type of happiness, imagined or remembered, and this is made painfully clear at the end, for try as he might, the speaker's attempted literary escape from the áspero mundo has failed. As both the final section and first poetic collection draw to a close, the poetic "I" must once again confront the uncaring world surrounding him, but now with the knowledge that literature, and specifically poetry, have failed to bring him lasting happiness and union with his beloved.
As has been emphasized from the onset of this chapter, the discourse of love is a constantly changing aspect of Angel González's work. As this study of *Aspero mundo* has revealed there are many different portrayals and evocations of the amorous whenever the poetic speaker attempts to express and comprehend this emotional state. When commenting on this book of poetry González Muela writes, "Vemos más a Angel González y su desengaño amoroso, que al hombre y su desdicha en este áspero mundo en que ha tenido la mala suerte de vivir" (192). Truly, the poetic voice is profoundly immersed, mentally, spiritually, sentimentally and poetically, in a world unpropituous for love or loving. Unfortunately, the effects of his suffering are accentuated when the task of communicating a lover's discourse, a complex endeavour in and of itself, is attempted by the poetic speaker. As the collection comes to a close the lover appears completely defeated, however, as shall be shown in the following poetic collection of the poet, his interrogation of love does not end.

This first work of the poet is a testimonial to the fact that in spite of the difficult nature of revealing the amorous, the poetic voice of González's poetry is willing to grapple with the difficult, complex nature of both language and love. This undertaking nearly always causes the speaker/lover great emotional pain, if not by the constant
reminder of the absence of the beloved that "speaking" of love underscores, then by the repeatedly failed efforts of the speaker to detain both his beloved and time in his poetry.

As this dissertation moves forward from studying a work of the fifties to the consideration of a work of the early sixties a continued effort will be made to highlight those characteristics and artistic tendencies that reveal themselves as postmodern in the poetry of Angel González. As has been suggested, while the entity of Aspero mundo is not entirely postmodern, the varied nature in which the discourse of love is expressed does suggest that it is a work with elements characteristic of a new aesthetic or, as shall be shown in the next chapter, a new use of language and love poetry. In the following chapter, the focus of this study will shift to the consideration of the use of irony in González's discourse of love as is revealed in his second book of poetry.
1. All quotations in this dissertation are from the 1994, third edition of *Palabra sobre palabra*. Page numbers will be noted in the text.

2. I posit a male poetic voice in all of the poems of this collection and those that follow it. There are many poems that will confirm and support this assertion and none that specifically indicate a female poetic voice.

3. Various critics have commented on the tú appearing in González's poetry. Alarcos Llorach refers to a "Tú esencial" (137). In his dissertation of 1972, Gary Singleterry discusses the tú as a female deity who manifests herself through a holy trinity of love, fertility and beauty and is vital in the construction of the cosmovision of Angel González's poetic world (93). Douglas Benson expresses a very similar view, "Finalmente, ocurre en la poesía de González la constante aparición elusiva pero consoladora de una "Tú" que nunca se precisa pero que a lo largo de su obra parece identificarse cada vez más como símbolo de un amor cósmico que es la fuente y la meta de toda vida" (Ironía 571). My study will consider the tú as a metaphoric construct representative of the female beloved who alone possesses no god-like power. Only when love is present does the tú acquire any special qualities whatsoever. A more detailed discussion of the tú will be presented in the fourth section of this chapter that addresses "Acariciado mundo."

4. The work of Pedro Salinas is not the only one with which González's *Aspero mundo* has been compared. LaFollette Miller has commented that, "even his early, imitative love poems follow a model of poetry as an expression of emotional intimacy. (Not suprisingly, Machado and González share a taste for Bécquer.) It is not illogical, then, to view Machado as one of González's poetic fathers, in terms of poetic values" (49).

5. Years later González writes of these first years as a poet and cites his inspirations and motivations. See the introduction to *Poemas*, in the author's edition of the Catedra series.

6. Both critics comment on the postmodern elements in González's poetry but focus on his later (post 1965) poetic production.

7. Enrique Baena interprets this poem as an expresion of "los fundamentos figurativos, las claves de lectura y la argumentación simbólica de la imagen poética que domina, explícita o implícitamente, el sentido total y los procedimientos creativos de *Aspero mundo*" (39).
8. González Muela states: "en el (poema-prólogo) que se expresa la contradicción entre el "acariciado mundo" (que formará la última parte del libro) -un mundo que es una mujer, "realidad casi nube"- y un "áspero mundo" que ha venido después, más real tal vez, pero que significa menos (por ser -o aunque sea- más material: "corteza" en vez de "luz")" (190). The identification of the use of contradiction and the image of the world seen as a woman is well-taken.

9. This remark is not made specifically about González or Aspero mundo but rather is a general comment about the Generation of 1956 and quite appropriate in this case.

10. Alarcos Llorach comments, "Se ha perdido el paraíso de la infancia. . .el hombre está solo" (22-23).

11. See Debicki’s Angel González (19-20) and Alarcos Llorach (125).

12. For further critical commentary of "Para que yo me llame Angel González" see Villanueva (126-129), Benson in "Las voces de Angel González" (12-14) and "Ironía" (573-575), Debicki (21-22) in Angel González, Alarcos Llorach (24-27) and LaFollette Miller (165-167).

13. There are more detailed analyses of "Aquí, Madrid," found in the works of the following critics: Villanueva (131), Debicki Angel González (22) and Alarcos Llorach (138-139).

14. The poem "Cumpleaños" is studied in some depth by Villanueva (129-130), Alarcos Llorach (132-33) and LaFollette Miller (97-98).

15. Alarcos Llorach (23-24) and Martino (230) provide more detailed studies of "Eso no es nada."

16. Further analyses of "Me falta una palabra" can be seen in Villanueva (132), Benson "Ironía" (575-576) and Alarcos Llorach (138-139). LaFollette Miller makes several references to the poem in her book Politics and Verbal Play, highlighting among other things its metapoetical nature.

17. The selection "Muerte en la tarde" is analyzed by both Alarcos Llorach (126) and Villanueva (130).

18. For a brief commentary on "Muerte en el olvido" see Alarcos Llorach (80-81).
19. In his article "Angel González and the Anxiety of Influence," Julian Palley observes that this poem "may be situated within the Western tradition of courtly love, in which the speaker, the lover, is utterly dependent upon the beloved" (84).

20. Andrew Debicki studies this poem in chapter four of his book *Poetry of Discovery*. This chapter, entitled "Angel González: Transformation and Perspective" considers the idea of transformation in a different way. The critic refers to the "transformation of a physical truth ... and of a common belief" (61) that occurs in "Muerte en el olvido." Instead of interpreting love as a force which can change an individual, as I propose, the critic comments on two underlying ideas that undergo a change: "The reader first approaches the poem with his normal pragmatic belief that one's identity...[is an] objective reality, independent of the attitudes of any other human being. ...[the reader] also approaches the poem...with a remembrance of Descartes's 'cogito ergo sum'; the first two lines of the poem, with their neat causal pattern ('existo/porque') easily bring it to mind-and also twist it. Here again the poem breaks the convention, linking man's life and existence not to his own thoughts but to the thinking and imagining of another person" (61). In short, the trasformation that Debicki sees is one of "ordinary belief and philosophical convention." I will investigate love as a powerful emotion manifesting itself as a force that alters the poetic speaker.

21. This dependent relationship, in which the lover lives because the beloved loves him, is explained by LaFollette Miller as "psychic awareness" (183).

22. LaFollette Miller comments that, "For González himself, *Aspero mundo* functioned in a way that exemplifies the generation's oft-invoked conception of poetry as "conocimiento" [knowledge or discovery]; through the deep disillusionment he himself detected in the book, the poet was led to an awareness of his own despair" (32).

23. Although the *vostros* form of address has been used twice before in this section, this is the first time a formal subject, either singular or plural, has been employed.

24. This would not be a grammatical option if the pronoun used was *ellos* or *ellas*.

25. In this instance LaFollette Miller summarizes some of Alarcos Llorach's ideas with regard to González's work.
26. Villanueva describes these lines in the following way: "En otras ocasiones es la presencia de la naturaleza que da lugar a la ensoñación y a una resonancia machadiana en la expresión poética de González" (123).

27. See for example "Aquí Madrid," "Cumpleaños," "Me falta una palabra," and "Muerte en la tarde."

28. See Alarcos Llorach for his discussion on the use of alliteration in González's poetry (163).

29. This poem is studied in detail by Persin in her chapter on Angel González in Recent Spanish Poetry and the Role of the Reader (105-107).

30. Benson affirms this by stating that, "Varios críticos de la obra de González han comentado una serie de dualidades temáticas en tensión" (Ironía 570).

31. Singleterry's discussion of the atmosphere created in the poem is quite enlightening (58).

32. In this poem the reader sees for the first time how the despondency that the poetic voice exhibits can be attributed to the departure of his beloved supporting the claim of abandonment made by González Muela at the beginning of this chapter: "si el estado del poeta es de soledad, olvido y muerte, es porque le ha abandonado la que le amaba" (190).

33. Villanueva comments briefly on this poem in Tres poetas (124).

34. This idea will be discussed in more depth in section 1.4 of this chapter.

35. The relationship of love and dependency has been seen before in "Muerte en el olvido" and "Mientras tú existas" where the beloved and her love metaphorically granted life to the poetic speaker/lover. In the mentioned selections the tú was cast into a role in which her loving presence was integral to the fate of the speaker. In this poem there is no such portrayal and the emphasis is on the dependency of both lovers and the responsibility of each one to the other in order to maintain their momentary sexual union.

36. In Alarcos Llorach's interpretation of the poem he states that "<en este instante... = primera ruina de la aurora>" (61). I, however, do not see "este instante" as a temporal equivalent to "la primera ruina de la aurora." Rather, the two
notions are sequential, the compressed instant comes first and afterwards comes the ruinous first light of dawn.

37. It must be remembered that the poetic voice has also described himself as an object employing the same type of vocabulary in both "Para que yo me llame Angel González" and "Te tuve." This makes it clear that the female tú has not been singled out as a victim of objectification by the male poetic voice.

38. Alarcos Llorach comments on this poem (115-116).

39. Persin studies this poem and the use of metonymy (114-115).

40. The selections "Geografía humana" and "Alga quisiera ser" both revealed a sort of fusion between the beloved and her natural surroundings. It is precisely this idea that will be explored in this section of the chapter.

41. See "Capital de provincia" (41).


43. The examples Alarcos Llorach provides are all from "Acariciado mundo" (26).

44. Carmen Díaz Castañón speaks of the use of "lenguaje indirecto" in her article "Un cuarto tiempo para una metáfora" (171-173).

45. Benson sees the mention of the "buey" as a disruptive and ironical element in the poem which shatters the sentimental atmosphere created up until this point (Ironía 576).

46. Singleterry addresses the various kinds of flowers mentioned in this poem in a very informed analysis (98-101).

47. As for other poems where light is important in this section see "Lluvia" and "Son las gaviotas, amor" (Alarcos Llorach 122).
2. IRONY AND POETIC FUSION

2.1 Sin esperanza con convencimiento: Irony and the Multiple Manifestations of Love

Angel González’s second work is entitled Sin esperanza con convencimiento (1961). The collection consists of five numbered but unnamed sections with a total of thirty seven poems. This book differs from Aspero mundo in that it is a departure from the more lyrical verse seen in the first work and thematically it is more socio-political in nature. In spite of this new manifestation of social concerns, González’s amorous discourse remains clearly evident as Villanueva explains: "El sentimiento amoroso en sus complejas y diversas manifestaciones, y cantos a la esperanza encuentran también lugar en el conjunto poético" (135). Not only, according to this critic, is a discourse of love present, but it is expressed in a variety of creative ways as was also seen in Aspero mundo. The poet himself makes it clear in the introduction to his collected poems that while the focus of the 1961 work is not solely the expression of love, it is nonetheless still an important element of the text, "con el tema [principal] del tiempo aparecen los motivos que forman el entramado del libro: el amor, el sentido- o la falta de sentido- de la vida, la esperanza y la desesperanza" (Introduction 22). Yet another
similarity between the first and second collections is the continued presence of the tone of defeat earlier pervading much of *Aspero mundo*. Alarcos Llorach observes that while this tone of desolation is still quite noticeable in *Sin esperanza*, it differs slightly as there is also a glimmer of hope for a new, yet undefined beginning, "la esencia del libro -la derrota, la renuncia a la esperanza personal, el convencimiento del renacer-" (30). In spite of this possible expectation for a better future, the present of which the poetic voice speaks, is, as will be seen, most certainly bleak and depressing.

A very important element of this second book is the more developed use of irony.² Although used by many poets of the so called "Generación de Medio Siglo" in order to elude the censorship in Francoist Spain, Debicki points out that González's creative use of irony is a key factor indicating the ever-emerging affinity of his poetry with the postmodern aesthetic:

Junto con las transformaciones y las inversiones de perspectiva. . .la ironía ayuda a convertir al lector en copartícipe del poeta. Todos estos recursos apuntan, a mi modo de ver, a la índole <<postmoderna>>. . .Como ha notado Jean François Lyotard, la <<postmodernidad>> representa el
abandono de la confianza en significados inmutables y tajantes. (Angel González 27)

LaFollette Miller also affirms that Sin esperanza indeed suggests a new artistic tendency as she too, referring to the postmodern theorist Ihab Hassan, highlights the use of irony and the engagement of the reader as co-creator of the poetic text:

Esos poemas de González, en que el tiempo juega un papel capital, son textos que crean obstáculos para su lector a través de significados múltiples, de contextos imposibles, de la desfamiliarización, y de violaciones de la lógica y del sentido común. Caben dentro de una tendencia del postmodernismo descrita por Ihab Hassan, en la cual la ironía se convierte en un juego radical y en que el significado desaparece. (34)

As the comments of both of these critics highlight, irony, in and of itself, is not an indication of postmodernity. The ironic tradition in Spanish literature dates back to the works of Quevedo and Cervantes and by itself presents little novelty. However, in a very informed study, Diane Fisher follows the development of González's poetry from a "modern to a postmodern ironic mode" (141), and in doing so underscores those characteristics that she considers postmodern in nature. Summarizing the ideas
expressed in Fisher’s article, the elements defining postmodern irony are: the presence of competing and decentering voices that appear to use language unquestioningly while, in reality, they manipulate it to reveal its fallibilities, a use of language promoting open and indeterminate meaning, and finally, a use of language expressing multiple messages and truths that does not obligate the reader to choose between hierarchical terms. (145, 144, 151) These are the manifestations of irony that will be considered in this chapter.

As was mentioned in the conclusion to chapter one, there are signs of a postmodern bent in González’s poetry that do emerge in Aspero mundo. There, the poetic speaker grappled with love and language in order to describe his sentimental experiences. It was the elusive nature of both of these elements which resulted in the varied and, at times, contradictory manifestation of the speaker’s amorous discourse. This multiplicity and indeterminacy early on in González’s poetic trajectory both suggest and lead to the postmodern.

In some cases the poetic speaker/lover of González’s second collection briefly mentions love as incompatible with, or impossible to achieve due to his surrounding world.‘ This, as well as the idea that love can cause pain, "Donde tengo el amor, toco la herida" (p. 121 v. 3),
recall similar notions expressed in *Aspero mundo*. However, there are also new ideas presented and variations of the discourse of love that gradually become evident in reading *Sin esperanza*. For instance, there are more frequent allusions to love's symbolic and denotative importance. In one pointed example, the poetic voice states, "Pan significa pan; amor espanto" (p. 93, v.2), and later in the poem entitled "Símbolo," the speaker exclaims, "Ocho quiere decir: / Amor. / Nueve, ¿quién sabe!" (p. 105 11. 4-6).

This chapter will continue to analyze the discourse of love by concentrating on the most important and innovative examples as revealed in *Sin esperanza*. Furthermore, in the poems to be studied, a special attempt will be made to elucidate the use of irony by the poetic voice as he expresses his amorous sentiments. In the first six poems, where the poetic self often engages in dialogue, the speaker, referring to himself as tú, continues to express the anguish and defeat that the surrounding world produces in him. A tone of discouragement is established in the first untitled poem of the collection where the poetic voice speaks of a present without love and tries to anticipate the future criticism that he will some day hear about his poetic creation.

"Otro tiempo vendrá distinto a éste.

alguien dirá:
"Hablaste mal. Debiste haber contado otras historias:
5 violines estirándose indolentes en una noche densa de perfumes, bellas palabras calificativas para expresar amor ilimitado, amor al fin sobre las cosas todas>>.

Pero hoy, cuando es la luz del alba como la espuma sucia de un día anticipadamente inútil, 15 estoy aquí, insomne, fatigado, velando mis armas derrotadas, y canto todo lo que perdí: por lo que muero. (63)

From the onset, the future is set in contrast to the present. The verbs, "vendra" and "dirá" emphasize that it will be at some later date when the speaker will hear the commentary of the ambiguous "alguien" regarding his present poetic creation. The preterite verbs "hablaste" and "debiste," which the supposed critic will use when offering his/her opinions, dramatically underscore the temporal
change. The poetic voice puts words into the mouth of the future commentator of his poetry and in this way is able to criticize his own temporal reality, presumably the late fifties early sixties, from both a present perspective, that of the poem itself, and a future perspective, the time to which "alguien" makes reference.

The unidentified persona of the poem evaluates the poetry of the speaker reprimanding him for what he should have written, "amor al fin sobre las cosas." With the use of the verbal construction "debiste haber" it is apparent that in the view of the "alguien" of the poem, the poetic speaker did not talk about love. The pessimistic tone initiated in the first line of the poem is intensified in the second stanza with the images "espuma sucia" and "día inútil," the adjectives "fatigado" and "derrotadas," and the verbs "perdí" and "muerdo." As the poem concludes, the poetic voice seems dejected as he speculates on his unpleasant, present condition and the future criticism that he will receive for not having spoken of the amorous.

A first reading of this poem reveals the poetic voice's portrayal of time and the creation and development of tone. Furthermore, the reader forms some expectations of what is to come later in the collection. However, this all must be reconsidered when irony is taken into account during numerous rereadings. First of all, the supposedly utopian
scene of soft violin music floating on the fragrant night breeze while amorous words are exchanged between lovers is very much a cliché, almost to the point of a self-conscious parody. At best, it seems unrealistic that any critic of poetry would advocate this kind of sentimental, escapist verse especially considering the historical time frame when the poet would have composed these lines. After all, as a great many of the poems of *Sin esperanza* illustrate, the poetic voice seems concerned with real social issues and avoids expressing any kind of empty, overly sentimental poetry. In effect, the critic, by telling the speaker what he should have written, emphasizes how ridiculous it would have been had he actually "contado / otras historias" as he/she recommends. Through this use of irony, what apparently is a commentator's critique, actually reveals itself to be an affirmation and a foreshadowing of the social poetry that the poetic speaker offers in the pages that follow.

Additionally, the supposed critic of the poem remains unidentified lending yet another ironical twist to the selection. After all, he/she refers to the poetic speaker in the tú form and is very direct in his/her familiarity. However, the poetic voice calls him/her "alguien," removing any importance his/her opinion might have acquired while also implying that anyone else's opinion would be just as
valid. Perhaps also, it is a jab at the literary critic who is often anxious to judge rather than interpret the artistic creation. The reader is not exempt and is also likely to fall prey to the effects of irony for after reading the poem, he/she does not expect to find a single selection written about love. Since this is the opening poem of the entire work an expectation is created for the reader about the poems that follow. This, however, is a false notion and will later reveal itself as ironical as the reader proceeds with the text. As indicated earlier, through the use of irony, which in this poem manifests itself in two different, competing voices, the poem challenges and complicates the notion that a single meaning, message or interpretation is possible. In this example the poetic voice utilizes irony as an integral part of his amorous discourse and in so doing has avoided creating a common-place sentimental poem, instead creating a truly innovative and collaborative experience for the reader.

In the six selections constituting section two of Sin esperanza, the poetic voice offers the reader more insights into his existencial state and his sentiments of "pasión inútil, odio / ciego, amor desorbitado" ("Reflexión primera" p. 75, ll. 28-29). The most illustrative poem of this part is the sonnet entitled, "De dos palabras nítidas ahora," which is dedicated to "Vicente Aleixandre, por su libro La
destrucción o el amor." The mention of this particular poetic collection is not coincidental and Debicki points out that in Aleixandre’s work, "love becomes an image (could we say icon?) of an elemental drive to union with the cosmos. The very title of the book points to this theme: destruction and love are synonyms, two names for the same impulse" (Modernity 43). In González’s poem the poetic voice offers his own amorous discourse while simultaneously recalling that of his artistic predecessor.9

Destuirse o amar... ¿Qué significa
esa cruel disyuntiva o amenaza,
ese pavor cuyo final aplaza
la incertidumbre? ¿Opone o identifica 5 lo que enlaza? La voz que nos lo explica señala, desmenuza, despedaza,
profundiza en el ser, mas no desplaza
el misterio que el verbo intensifica.

Es difícil saber. Pero yo intuyo
10 esa verdad oscura, consecuencia
de dos palabras nítidas ahora:

ruina total, o fuego igual que el tuyo.
Dilema sin salida: no existencia,
After reading the initial verse of the poem one can deduce that the "dos palabras" referred to in the title are "destruirse" and "amar." It is, as shall be shown, the interrogation of this construct upon which the entire poem is based. These verbs, described as "nítidas," lead the reader to believe that the poetic voice has recently, "ahora," comprehended their importance or significance. Nevertheless, immediately after the use of ellipses in verse one the speaker poses questions about the verbal and, importantly, metaphoric construct that he has formulated, "Destruirse o amar." Taking into account the dedication preceding the sonnet it seems reasonable that the poetic speaker of González's poem is recalling *La destrucción o el amor*. Therefore, instead of the apparent choice, to self-destruct or to love, these two words do not represent oppositional terms but rather are "synonyms," just as Debicki commented above in reference to Aleixandre's poetry. This being the case, "Destruirse o amar," can be interpreted as a presentation of two alike terms joined by the conjunction "o." As Persin articulates, "The speaker of González's poem utilizes the conjunctive/disjunctive properties of the word o in order to point out the dualities of existence, language, art and perhaps even the relationship between the two poets themselves" (112).
Perhaps Carlos Bousoño explains the use of this conjunction best in his work *La poesía de Vicente Aleixandre*, where he observes:

> Lo usual es que la <<o>> sea una fórmula disyuntiva. Efectivamente, la coordinación entre dos elementos, establecida por la conjunción <<o>> en su uso más general, indica que uno de ellos excluye al otro: <<tú o él lo haréis>>. Sin embargo, puede poseer también en algún momento un matiz copulativo: <<juntos o separados te querré siempre>>; y aún . . .cuando esta conjunción tiene un sentido de equivalencia: <<Nueva España o México>>. . .En nuestro poeta la conjunción <<o>> tiene, sí, en ocasiones, el valor disyuntivo vulgar; otras muchas, el infrecuente copulativo; pero la mayor parte de las veces es el identificativo el que posee. (290)

In addition to underscoring the relationship between the two works, the González poem also broadens the conceptual issue of love-destruction expressed in *La destrucción o el amor* and also includes a linguistic issue as well. Once again as Persin observes, "First he establishes an obvious intertextual connection with the precursor poet, and second, he immediately focuses attention on the issue of language itself" (112). After the
presentation of the configuration "Destruirse o amar," the poetic voice asks, "¿Qué significa?" As Villanueva comments, "el soneto es de planteamiento temático muy distinto: ...el amor como idea y concepto, también materia de preocupación, de pensamiento intelectual y de la poesía" (151). On the conceptual level, the poem treats the apparent incompatibility of love and self-destruction. The poetic speaker seems reticent to accept these words as synonyms and refers to this dilemma as a "cruel disyuntiva," and an "amenaza." After all, interpreting love and self-destruction as equivalents does require a reconceptualization of both. On a linguistic level, "cruel disyuntiva" and "amenaza" highlight the inadequacy of language itself. This is a threatening notion because terms that would normally be considered as oppositional are seen here as identical, thereby disrupting any idea of denotative and/or prescribed meaning. In verses three and four, "ese pavor cuyo final aplaza / la incertidumbre?," the poetic voice underscores the fear that this conceptual/linguistic dilemma has caused him while also establishing the seemingly end moment, "final," that only postpones uncertainty. 

The second question presented, "¿Opone o identifica / lo que enlaza?," also refers back, both conceptually and linguistically to the initial construct. Conceptually, one would think that self-destruction and love are strictly
oppositional in nature and could not be ideas that identify and bind one another. Linguistically, the same notion is presented with the verbs "destruirse" and "amar," and the conjunction "o." It has become evident from the first quartet that the relationship between the "dos palabras" is in fact, far from "nítida," as was implied in the title.

Later, the poetic speaker once again recalls Aleixandre by referring to him as, "La voz," suggesting that it is he who explains the construct "destruirse o amar." The series of rather destructive actions that follow highlight the difficulty of figuratively fighting to get inside of the very being, "el ser," or in other words to understand, this conceptual notion, "desmenuza, despedaza, / profundiza en el ser." If this can be achieved, the conceptual question being asked can presumably be resolved. However, the linguistic issue is even more complex. While the speaker can, perhaps, arrive at an intellectual resolution, language continues to obfuscate "el misterio que el verbo intensifica." In other words, while the conceptual issue of "destruirse o amar" can be pondered and to some extent resolved, the linguistic dilemma is not as simple.\textsuperscript{11}

In the first tercet the poetic voice declares that he has deciphered the "verdad oscura" represented by the "dos palabras," and the reader learns that this revelation will be communicated in the form of a pronouncement, primarily
indicated by the presence of a colon at the end of verse eleven. Villanueva describes this conclusion in the following way:

Al igual que Aleixandre, González no puede menos que reconocer el "dilema sin salida": que como fuerza cósmica el amor constituye todo un poder amoroso-destructivo; que al entrelazarse en la pasión, son consumidos los dos amantes por la misma fuerza que crearon. (151)

Another important aspect of this conceptual revelation is that it is described as a "consecuencia / de dos palabras." This expression, focusing on the words themselves, keeps the linguistic question present at all times. The conclusion announced is similar to that offered by Aleixandre, to whom the poetic voice refers to as tú, "ruina total, o fuego igual que el tuyo." The last two verses illustrate how the linguistic construct "destruirse o amar" is indeed unsolvable, "no existencia / o vida incendio que el amor devora." Nonexistence is the same as an all-consuming, devouring love. The linguistic issue has not been resolved because the language itself resists a simple solution, "The final stanza, although it purports to explain away the proffered alternatives, ('la destrucción el amor') in point of fact is merely a restatement of their disjunction." (Persin 113) The poetic voice has ultimately returned to
the conflictive dilemma with which he began. It is, after all, the conjunction "o" that highlights both the linguistic and intellectual "disjunction" embodied in the poem itself. While recalling the complex notions associated with Aleixandre's poetic work, the poetic voice of González's poem offers an equally sophisticated and complex discourse of love while at the same time underscoring the open and indeterminate nature of language.

The collection continues with nine poems in part three where "Cumpleaños de amor" (92) is of special interest because of the amorous discourse revealed. In the view of LaFollette Miller this poem anticipates much of González's later, more ludic verse and she observes, "The traditional elegiac strain and the testimonial bent he owes to his historical context are replaced in these poems with play upon commonsense notions of time and everyday conventions of naming and measuring it" (96). Among other aspects, the effect that the passage of time has on the relationship between the speaker and the beloved is expressed in this poem.

¿Cómo seré yo

cuando no sea yo?

Cuando el tiempo

haya modificado mi estructura,

5 y mi cuerpo sea otro,
otra mi sangre,
otros mis ojos y otros mis cabellos.
Pensaré en ti, tal vez.
Seguramente,

10 mis sucesivos cuerpos
-prolongándome, vivo, hacia la muerte-
se pasarán de mano en mano,
de corazón a corazón,
de carne a carne,

15 el elemento misterioso
que determina mi tristeza
cuando te vas,
que me impulsa a buscarte ciegamente,
que me lleva a tu lado

20 sin remedio:
lo que la gente llama amor, en suma.
Y los ojos
-qué importa que no sean estos ojos-
te seguirán a donde vayas, fieles.

The unsuspecting reader could well render a fairly simple interpretation of this poem by assuming that the poetic voice is revealing a "traditional poetic stance" (LaFollette Miller 98) in which he expresses his loyalty to the beloved.14 However, a second reading, taking into account the use of irony, generates quite a different poetic
Indeed, the tone of this first part is serious and introspective as the poetic speaker reflects on the aging process that inevitably will effect him. Time is a force that will not only alter his physical make-up, but actually change him into another individual, distinct from the one who he is in the present moment. The personal effect that this process will have on him is intensified with the anaphoric use of the words "yo," "mi," and "otro." As Villanueva observes this poem is "existencialista" in that it constantly recalls the poetic voices's own mortality.

The declaration of, "Pensaré en ti, tal vez," breaks the rhythm established in the preceeding lines and it is here where the poetic voice finally forgets about himself momentarily and mentions the tú. At this point, with the mention of "tal vez" the serious tone diminishes and is lost. After all, this is no ordinary pledge of devotion and with the mention of the seemingly flippant remark of "tal vez," the reader concludes either that the poetic speaker is rather arrogant, or, that he really does not care about the tú. This is hardly the attitude one would expect from an enamored individual. Later, the speaker makes it quite clear that his "sucesivos cuerpos," which represent different stages of life, will undoubtedly be "well-lived." The verb "se pasarán" applies to the similarly constructed
phrases "mano a mano," "corazón a corazón," and "carne a carne," all of which can be interpreted with a sensual connotation. This results in the strong implication that perhaps the reason for which the speaker will only "maybe" think about the tú is because he will have been quite occupied with other love interests.

By the time the speaker makes reference to the "elemento misterioso" (l. 15) that he later defines as love, the reader finds the following statements, "que determina mi tristeza / cuando te vas, / que me impulsa a buscarte ciegamente, / que me lleva a tu lado / sin remedio," insincere, and perhaps, even a bit corny. This is emphasized by the poetic voice's clarification, "lo que la gente llama amor, en suma" (l. 21). Here, the speaker defines love by using clichéd images in what seems to be a half-hearted attempt to convince the tú and/or the reader that his love is really authentic. The last three lines of the poem display the poetic voice's true lack of interest in the beloved when he indicates that it is quite likely that it will be someone else's eyes, and not his own, that will follow her "a donde vayas, fieles." The use of the adjective "fieles" is ironic as it recalls the unfaithful nature of the speaker's own eyes and behavior towards his beloved. However, it also insinuates that someone else might be faithful to the tú. The phrase "qué importa" used
in the penultimate line underscores the speaker's complete disregard for the tú.

This second reading of "Cumpleaños de amor," taking into account the use of irony, casts the poem in an entirely new light. Instead of being what one might expect to be a typical love poem, the selection actually exploits these expectations and makes fun of the old-fashioned, hackneyed ideas of what love poetry should be. Rather than a sincere pledge of undying love, this reading reveals and portrays the poetic speaker to be conveying a message of, "don't worry, if I don't love you somebody else will." Reflecting back on the title, then, the reader comes to learn that instead of indicating a joyous celebration of an anniversary between a happy couple, it actually represents a sarcastic, almost pessimistic commentary on how the tú has no reason to celebrate since she possibly has been led along and deceived. All the elements of a traditional lover's discourse (the pledge to think about the beloved when separated, the sadness caused by the beloved's departure, the desire of the lover to search blindly for his beloved) have been used to evoke and create a very non-traditional, non-sentimental, imaginative look at the selfishness and egotism embodied by this poetic voice/lover.

The penultimate section of Sin esperanza includes nine poems. Of these selections, two, which exhibit very
interesting examples of discourses of love, will be addressed. The first poem to be studied is "Historia apenas entrevista" (101). The selection is anecdotal, presenting "una situación dramática... como 'escenario' del poema" (Martin 65) in which the poetic voice relates the "historia," while at the same time, assumes a very interesting position from which he speaks of what he sees.

Con tristeza,
el caminante
-alguien que no era yo, porque lo estaba
viendo desde mi casa- recogió su polovriento
5 equipaje, se santiguó, y anduvo algo.
Luego dejó de andar, volvió la cara,
y miró largamente al horizonte.
Iba ya a proseguir quién sabe a dónde,
cuando vio a alguien que venía a lo lejos.
10 Su rostro reflejó cierta esperanza, después una
[terrible
alegría. Quiso gritar un nombre, pero
su corazón no pudo resistirlo,
y cayó muerto sobre el polvo,
a ambos lados el trigo indiferente.
15 Una mujer llegó, besó llorando
su boca, y dijo:

Ya no puedes oírme,
p pero juro
que nunca había dejado de quererte.

The speaker has cast himself into a role of the disinterested spectator, who, as a witness to the events, makes it clear that the story that he is telling has been seen with his own eyes. He is removed both physically, "lo estaba / viendo desde mi casa-," and emotionally from the poetic scene. The speaker painstakingly asserts that the traveler is, "alguien que no era yo," and later differentiates himself from the "caminante" by emphasizing the space between them, the traveler on a dusty road and the poetic voice in the protected safety of his home. Martin suggests that the speaker is so emphatic in distancing himself from the scene that it makes the reader question him/herself as to why? It is paradoxical that while the poetic voice tries to remain at a distance from the personae of the poem, at the same time he tries to immerse himself in the events themselves. After all, he wants to remain close enough to the unfolding occurrences as to lend himself and his story the credibility of an eyewitness. This is reflected in the first few poetic lines, relayed with journalistic-like concision, stating the observable facts in a series of preterite verbs. Later on, in the last lines of the poem it becomes apparent that the speaker is near enough to the developing scene that he can hear the sobbing
words spoken by the woman addressing her deceased lover. Nevertheless, the aversion of the speaker to identify and relate himself to the individuals of the poem is prolonged as he continues his narration of events and continues to remain emotionally uneffected by what he sees, "más allá de la sugestión inicial de 'tristeza,' el hablante no investiga profundamente las íntimas realidades de este hombre o sus razones de estar allí" (Martin 65). Indeed, what is most obvious in this selection is the total lack of self-reflective contemplation on the part of the poetic voice, evident in so many of González’s poems concerning love.¹⁹

The speaker departs from his purely reporter-like style of the telling of a series of events by adding the dispensable phrase, "quién sabe a dónde."²⁰ This is a rather intrusive addition of the poetic voice, similar to lines three and four but not set off with punctuation in this case. Here, he refers to the direction that the "caminante" is going to walk. The phrase does two things, first it portrays the traveler as confused and without direction, and second, it intensifies the feeling of the unknown described in the poem. After all, there is an unknown traveler who does not know where to go, he is in an unidentifiable place, and has just seen an undescribed person. In spite of the speaker’s effort to relay the events in a supposedly objective, informative manner, which
would avoid all confusion, he has created an extremely ambiguous scene.

This ambiguity is underscored even more as the speaker describes the reaction of the traveler as that of "cierta esperanza" and "terrible alegría." In reference to this poem, González Muela states that, "Los adjetivos antepuestos reflejan una cualidad <<esencial>> puesta de relieve, o escogida, por el narrador. Es decir, el narrador toma bastante parte personal en la narración" (Gramática 49). Indeed "cierta esperanza" implies that the hope of the traveler is minimal. Later, the coupling of "terrible alegría" reflects the use of nearly antithetical terms. As a result, the reader is not sure of the emotional reaction of the "caminante" due to the use of this ambiguous and contradictory language. Nonetheless, with the mention of the word "terrible," he/she begins to anticipate the negative scene that follows. As the traveler becomes excited by the vision of the approaching someone, he suffers both a physical and an emotional trauma, a heart attack and a broken heart. It is the combination of the two that result in his death. The physical death is understandable, a physiological overload caused by the emotion of seeing his beloved. In this case, however, the broken heart is caused by great joy, not great sadness, and in this way manifests the "terrible alegría" that was mentioned earlier. The
indifference of the poetic voice, who has been watching all
of this, is mirrored by that of the wheat. Later, the
woman's futile pledge of love to her dead lover closes the
poem on a tragic note similar to many journalistic
articles.

Only upon finishing the selection, does the reader
begin to understand the significance of the title, "Historia
apenas entrevista." At the end, the interview is frustrated
because the woman does not arrive in time to have her
"entrevista," or meeting, with the "caminante" and thus, as
a result, the final reunion of the lovers does not occur.
This leads Martin to assert, "Entonces, lo que el poema de
veras comunica es una visión irónica de la inutilidad del
amor" (66). In her view, the exaggerated melodrama of the
poem prevents any literal reading. While this study concurs
that there is irony present in the language of the
selection, it is not so much in the uselessness of love of
which Martin speaks, but rather in the indifferent,
apathetic tone that the poetic/narrative voice adopts from
the onset as he tries to "tell" this story. While assuming
a posture of objectivity and detachment concerning the
poetic personae he also, at the same time, tries to portray
a certain kind of narrative omniscience, especially in his
evaluation of the emotions of the traveler and the woman.
As an eyewitness and a reporter of what has happened he has
chosen not to interrogate, entrevistar, the despairing woman as to the real facts of the episode but rather, to rely on his own interpretation of the events. It is precisely the callous disinterest on the part of the poetic voice that ironically contrasts with the emotive nature of the transpired events. It is this discrepancy, the tone of the selection contrasting with the content of the dramatic scene presented in the poem, that intensifies the poetic experience for the reader making it seem all the more tragic and sad. Once again, the speaker has integrated the use of irony in his poetic discourse to express what potentially could have been a trite, melodramatic love scene, in an original and challenging fashion demanding, ironically, the involvement of the reader.

The final poem to be studied from Sin esperanza is also found in section four and is entitled "Carta sin despedida" (103-104). Villanueva has pointed out how this selection underscores how love's opposite, hatred, effects relationships. Due to the rather extensive nature of the poem it will be presented and commented stanza by stanza.

A veces,
mi egoísmo me llena
de maldad,
y te odio casi
5 hasta hacerme dano
a mí mismo:
son los celos, la evidia,
el asco
al hombre, mi semejante
10 aborrecible, como yo
corrompido y sin remedio,
mi querido
hermano y parigual en la desgracia.

The first stanza comments directly on the hatred, scorn and contempt that the speaker has for himself, his fellow man and the tú. The poetic voice leaves nothing to the imagination and mixes no words as he offers his extremely precise self evaluation, "son los celos, la envidia, / el asco / al hombre," which are the negative elements that relate him to other human beings. The use of thirteen short lines gives the reader the impression that as the stanza proceeds from line to line that the level of despair that the poetic speaker experiences gets progressively and incrementally worse.

One noticeable incongruency of the selection is use of the nonspecific time referent, "A veces," which opens the poem. This phrase is later followed by a very specific series of disagreeable human traits. It is difficult to imagine a person who describes his intense hatred of human beings as an emotion that really only bothers him every once
in a while. The temporal understatment contrasts with the 
overstated, hyperbolical litany of humankind's failings. 
After all, how could a person have such excessive, 
passionate, all-encompassing emotions only occasionally? As 
the poem continues, it is this incompatibility, a general 
statement of time followed by a very specific emotional 
state, that is exploited in the verses that follow:

A veces -o mejor dicho:

15 casi nunca-,

   te odio tanto que te veo distinta.
   Ni en corazón ni en alma te pareces
   a la que amaba solo hace un instante,
   y hasta tu cuerpo cambia
   20 y es más bello
   -quizá por imposible y por lejano.

The clarification of the poetic voice, "A veces -o 
mejor dicho: / casi nunca-," abruptly stops the reader as 
it frustrates any expectation he/she might have had as to 
where the poem was going. Upon seeing the repetition of the 
phrase, "A veces," the reader might have supposed either 
that the speaker was employing it anaphorically, in order to 
provide some continuity between stanzas, or that he would at 
least explain it a little bit more clearly than when it 
initially appeared. However, it is precisely the sense of 
irreconcilability that this phrase creates in the first
stanza that the poet continues to exploit here. The apparent self-correction on the part of the poetic voice reduces the grave and somber tone established earlier. By the time the stanza ends, the poetic voice has admitted that it is his own hatred that makes his beloved seem unattainable and far away, traits that make her more beautiful to him. These changes, presumably caused by the hatred and/or love that the speaker is experiencing, also occur in the poetic voice himself. What is clear, however, is that the line between love and hate is becoming more and more undefined.

Both the speaker and his beloved have been altered by hatred and in these lines it becomes clear that the "odio" mentioned in the first stanza has changed. Now, it seems to inspire the poetic voice to love. The tú, who was earlier
despised by the poetic speaker is now the beloved. Clearly, the traditional notions of love and hatred are being reevaluated in this selection. The meaning of hatred is changing as the poem proceeds and is never clear nor constant. The poetic voice, in effect, again challenges the concept of denotative meaning, a fact that is underscored by the constant references to hatred's opposite, love. By juxtaposing the two antithetical emotions and constructing them to have a cause and effect relationship, the poem highlights the fact that language, like the emotions themselves, is also an unstable, constantly changing phenomena. In the final stanza of the poem hatred seems to be absent and replaced by its opposite, love. The tone of this last part is in direct contrast with that evidenced in the first stanza:

Cuando sonríes, yo te reconozco,
identifico tu perfil primero,
35 y vuelvo a verte,
al fin,
tal como eras, como sigues
siendo,
como serás ya siempre, mientras te ame.

The poetic speaker has limited his perspective and instead of speculating in grandiose terms on humankind as a whole, as in the initial stanza, here, he focuses only on himself
and his beloved. This is emphasized by the repetition of pronouns, "yo," "tú," and "te," and verbs in the first person and third person familiar. He makes reference to the fact that his moment of blind hatred has passed and that he has returned, "vuelvo," to his normal state. The poetic voice indicates that the tú has not changed, "tal como eras," and the reason for his earlier hatred can only be attributed to his own egotism, as he himself admitted in the first stanza. The repeated use of the verb ser and its various forms underscores the essence of the beloved and her constancy. In contrast, the last words of the poem, "mientras te ame," are stated in the subjunctive mood and imply that for the poetic speaker, she will only be identifiable and sonriente provided that he loves her. While the constant, seemingly immutable character of the tú is made evident, the yo has proven to be quite fickle. This was indicated by the speaker's use of overstatement and understatement and his constant attempts to frustrate the expectations of the reader. Furthermore, the comment "y cuando quiero darme cuenta / soy otro" (ll. 24-25) along with his very obvious change from hating to loving, underscore his whimsical, capricious nature. As the poem concludes, the reader has learned that it is not the actions of the beloved that will determine how she will be perceived, but rather, the poetic speaker's state of mind.
The poem is so drastically different from the first to the last stanza that the reader is reluctant to accept the sudden change of heart expressed by the poetic speaker. After all, hating intensely one minute and being enamored with the same person the next seems a bit schizophrenic at best. In a matter of forty short lines the poetic voice has emotionally gone from "te odio casi hasta hacerme daño," to, "soy otro / que no odia, / que ama." This is such a dramatic change that the reader cannot accept at face value the implied sincerity of the poetic voice now evident as the poem concludes. Nonetheless, this doubt underscores the dichotomy of love/hate underlying and motivating the poem itself.

At the beginning of the study of Sin esperanza the notion of the abandonment of concrete meaning was mentioned as a characteristic of a postmodern aesthetic. As different selections of the collection have been analyzed, it has been shown that those poems that present a discourse of love clearly fall into this category. Through the poetic speaker's use of various techniques: different voices, intertextual references, the presentation of preconceived and traditional ideas portrayed in a new light, the manipulation of tone and the juxtaposition of apparently similar terms, he has illustrated that love as an emotional and linguistic concept cannot be limited to a single all-
encompassing denotative representation. On the contrary, it is suggested that there are multiple options. This is not only confined to the language of love, but also to language in general as the title of the collection itself manifests, *Sin esperanza con convencimiento*. As Sandra Schumm asks, "¿Está el hablante convencido de que no existe la esperanza?, o más bien, ¿ha sustituido el hablante su esperanza con un sentimiento positivo de convencimiento?" (135). The choice of the words "sin" and "con" are contradictory and oppositional in nature, and thereby resist any concrete conclusion or interpretation. In González's work there is an absence of sentimental lyricism and in many instances he uses what is apparently a lover's discourse to speak of broader linguistic and social issues. While the poetic speaker continues to employ a simple direct language he also continues to expand his lover's discourse and in so doing enlarges both the poetic text and the amorous experience revealed by the poem.
2.2 Palabra sobre palabra: Love, Language and Poetic Creation

In Angel González's fourth work entitled, Palabra sobre palabra (1965), the speaker concerns himself with three elements that are integral to his poetic discourse: love, language and his ability to create poetry. Of these characteristics, all are of importance. When speaking of Palabra, the poet himself has described it as, "una breve colección de poemas con tema exclusivamente amoroso" (Introduction 22). His assertion, as well as some of the prevalent critical opinion, indicate that the text in its entirety is, "un poema de amor, mejor: un canto al Amor" (Martino 240). While these emphatic comments about the prominence of love in the collection are well taken, some critics are also quick to point out that the book, which consists of only five poems, has other interesting aspects as well. For example, Debicki regards it as fundamental in the evolution of the poet's work towards a postmodern aesthetic observing that it begins to reveal a more pronounced metapoetical nature, "marca un cambio en la poesía de temática amorosa de Angel González, que aquí, y en muchos poemas posteriores, se une con el tema del acto de poetizar. (0, dicho de otro modo, adquiere una fuerte nota metapoética)" (AG 38). This integration of love with poetic
creation, as will be shown, is of primary concern. In addition to the comments about the relevance of love in the collection mentioned above, Florentino Martino also underscores the creative, artistic techniques evidenced in the book of poems:

Otro aspecto importante de este libro lo constituye la presencia de ciertas innovaciones formales: combinaciones de palabras y de signos tipográficos que logran un efecto de doble sentido (o dos sentidos que coinciden en un solo efecto) y contribuyen a darle al poema una técnica original y moderna que alcanza nueva validez en la expresión y en la comunicación. (242)

Not only is the discourse love of interest, but poetic creation, formal innovations and original techniques are also paramount as well. In fact, some critics have argued that these apparently secondary characteristics may in fact be of greater importance than that attributed to love, "Detrás del tema amoroso evidente...y tal vez de aún mayor importancia en último término, late el asunto de la escritura y de la creación poética" (Debicki AG 36-37). Along this same vein, LaFollette Miller points out that the title of the book, which later becomes the name of González's collected works, "is significant...[because] the word, not love, predominates" (Politics 141). Keeping
these observations in mind, it will be shown that it is the union, or fusion of the ideas of poetic creation, language and love that make this text unique. As will be illustrated, the poetic speaker’s preoccupation with language and the beginning of a gradual loss of faith in the poetic word is yet a further indication of the postmodern nature of González’s work. Among the specific elements to be studied in this section are: the continued presence of various, competing and decentering voices, the overt self-consciousness on the part of the poetic voice regarding his role of poet/creator, the presentation of texts capitalizing on and exploiting the assumptions and preconceptions that readers bring to them, and finally, the gradual realization of the impossibility of concrete, unequivocal meaning in language.

The initial poem "La palabra" (171-173), offers a clear example of González’s postmodern utilization of multiple voices. After a first reading of this poem, it becomes evident that the poetic voice alternates between two very different perspectives. Sometimes the voice appears as a third person, semi-omniscient "narrator" and others, as an intrusive, first person commentator providing personal opinions and observations. While at times these perspectives seem to be quite distinct, even contradictory, there are instances when they seem to fuse into one. As
the first stanza is considered, it becomes evident that both of the mentioned tendencies of the poetic voice immediately manifest themselves.

Hace miles de años,
alguien,
un esclavo quizá,
descansando a la sombra de los árboles,
5 furtivamente,
en un lugar aislado
del fértile territorio
conquistado por su dueño el guerrero,
al contemplar los campos
10 regados por el río
-probablemente
no ocurrió nada así:
reconstruyo, sin datos, una escena
que nadie sabe cómo ha sucedido-
15 y ver cómo otros hombres
cuidaban de las viñas, podaban
los olivos, transportaban el agua
que habría de mojar la tierra donde
crecían las hortalizas,
20 o conducían rebaños hacia el monte,
o extraían la miel de las colmenas
In the first line the "narrator" immediately immerses the reader many years into the past establishing a tone similar to what would be present in a legend or myth. Although the reader has no way of knowing, at this point, the speaker is describing the historical time in which the word "amor" was first enunciated. In other words, the story of the origin of "la palabra" is being told. To emphasize the notion of historical origin, the poetic voice employs imagery orienting the reader in the remote past. One of the most striking images is that of the slave. This important poetic persona is identified as, "alguien, / un esclavo quizá." The adverb "furtivamente" implies that the actions of this character, (descansar, contemplar) are being practiced unbeknownst to the "dueño." This immediately creates suspense. The fact that the slave is not working and is apparently in hiding, presents the possibility that he will be discovered and punished by his master, a one-time soldier. While the reader indeed notes the tension created by this scenario, these same images have grounded him/her solidly in the past. The poem's sequence of words, "hace miles de años," "esclavo," "territorio / conquistado," and "guerrero," suggest the pre-classic world of the pyramids and pharaohs. As will be shown, the description of this ancient world is later enhanced. Recalling, that the time to which the poem refers is to that of the birth of "la
palabra," the reader appreciates both the primordial nature of the described scene and the longevity of the word which is to be described in the following stanzas.

While the speaker indeed presents a fairly concrete vision, narrative-like in its detail, the "narration," is constantly being amended or interrupted. The first sign of this is the use of the word "quiza." This gives the impression that the poetic voice is hesitant to tell the story and causes the reader, thus, to be wary as to the credibility of what is being told. After all, is he telling the truth or speculating? The reader is unsure of what to expect and the subsequent lines do little to ease his/her uneasiness about the text. If the mention of "quiza" had made the reader suspicious, the intrusion, highlighted by the punctuation, tone and a switch from the third to first person, of a new perspective in lines eleven through fourteen, dismiss the notion that what is being told has any merit or veracity whatsoever. These lines are important for various reasons. First of all, the "escena" which is mentioned refers to the one described in the proceeding ten lines. Also, while the impression is created that there are actually two different poetic voices in the poem, they are revealed as one voice with a split perspective that goes back and forth from third to first person. This is evidenced by the line "reconstruyo, sin datos, una escena."
The subject of *reconstruir* is a first person *yo*. However, this *yo* identifies himself as the same creator (the third person narrative perspective) of the "escena" who described the scene of the first ten lines. Thus the two perspectives reveal themselves to be one and the same voice. This is an example of the way in which the apparently distinct points of view momentarily fuse together and appear to be one.

Yet another important element established in these lines is the very use of the verb *reconstruir*. The scene is being "reconstructed," implying immediately that this is not the first time that this story has been told. The ideas of constructing, building, and edifying, all synonyms for *reconstruir*, are grandiose replacements to describe the act of "telling" a tale and this emphasizes the important nature of what is being described. This story, it must not be forgotten, was identified at the onset of this analysis as that of the origin of the word. Finally, these lines are also relevant because in spite of the supposed relevance of the tale being told, the reader now knows that it is an arbitrary reconstruction or interpretation of an invented scenario and facts. Naturally, this is quite a contradiction as it seems that the story, although emphasized as very significant, is based purely on conjecture.
As the first stanza continues in line fifteen, the third person "narrator" takes over again and continues to make repeated references and allusions to two elements in particular, fertility and slavery. As the "alguien" remains undiscovered by his master he watches the "otros hombres" engaged in jobs often associated with the agricultural labor assigned to slaves. The story that has been told, like the voice that tell it, seems to have two sides. On the one hand, there is an almost bucolic vision of a peaceful harvest embodying the agricultural of life many years ago. This vision, perhaps of the Nile Valley, is established by the portrayal of the fruits of the men's labor as well as the reproductive nature of the earth, underscored by the mention of the "fértile territorio," and the variety of crops and animals presented. However, on the other hand, there is the ubiquitous reminder that slavery prevents humankind from exercising free will. This creates a feeling of uneasiness which is in direct contrast to the serene, campestrine scene. In regards to this scenario, Benson has suggested that, "el hablante comienza creando la visión mítica de un lugar primitivo, anterior a las corrupciones de la sociedad moderna" (Ironía 579). While the comparison of primitive versus modern society is well taken, the critic seems to overlook the fact that the early society described here also has its shortcomings, namely the custom of slavery. As the
poem continues with the second stanza, it is again set apart by punctuation and a first person perspective.

-me parece escuchar el rumor duro del estío,

las metálicas hojas de los árboles

25 (perdida su humedad) crujiendo casi al ser rozadas por el seco viento,

el batir firme y alto de las alas de un águila, la viva luz aplastándolo todo con su peso-.

In this instance the "narrative" posture of the speaker is quite different than that seen earlier. In lines eleven through fourteen he was clearly removed from the "narration" offered and emphasized his role as the "reconstructor" of the story. Here he immerses himself in the scene and in this way, "el hablante se identifica con 'el esclavo'" (Fajardo 179). The subjective "me parece" contrasts with the apparent detail and precision employed when describing the sights and sounds of the natural surroundings constituting the poetic scenario. While the first stanza also provided a fairly detailed visual panorama, this is the first time that sound is mentioned. The various sounds described are "rumor duro," "crujiendo," and "batir firme." These noises, which are indeed none too comforting, prepare the reader for the appearance from above of the eagle. This
imposing bird of prey and "la viva luz" appear to be pushing down, "apalastándolo todo," on the world below. This reinforces the idea of an oppressive authority or watchful eye, "águila," recalling once again the enslavement of the poetic persona seen earlier and perhaps even the censorship that the poet himself experienced. The observations of Juan Eduardo Cirlot in regards to the symbol of the eagle are quite revealing:

La letra A del sistema jeroglífica egipcio se representa por la figura del águila, significando el calor vital, el origen, el día. . .Como se identifica con el sol y la idea de la actividad masculina, fecundante de la naturaleza materna, el águila simboliza también el padre. (65)

These observations both support what has already been mentioned and anticipates what is to come in the poem. The affiliation of the eagle with the Egyptian alphabet underscores two of the key ideas of the poem. In the first place, by mentioning the letter "A," the notion of "la palabra" is clearly emphasized. Also, the fact that the eagle was closely associated with the ancient civilization of Egypt recalls the scene of characters, activities and the practice of slavery seen earlier. In addition to this, while the notions of "calor" and "sol" can be directly associated with lines twenty eight and twenty
nine, the primary idea of "el origen," mentioned by Cirlot, is precisely what the poetic voice is focusing on in terms of the word. Finally, in terms of what is both recalled and anticipated in the poem by Cirlot’s remarks, of paramount importance is the reference to fertility, "actividad. . . .fecundante." This is revealed in the third stanza.

30 y fijándose acaso especialmente
en el volumen firme e insinuado
bajo el gastado lino
del vientre grávido de una mujer muy joven,
cerró un momento los cansados ojos
35 (el hombre que miraba todo aquello)
y articuló un suspiro
o bien dijo un sollozo,
o algo semejante
que repitió, y creció, y dejó su pecho
40 estremecido -así la rama
abandonada por un pájaro...

As the speaker resumes telling the story, the reader realizes that the subject to which "fijándose" (l. 30) refers, is to the slave mentioned back in line three. While he was earlier described as viewing other men at work, here, he takes special notice of the "vientre grávido de una mujer joven." This mention of human fecundity is a continuation of the image of the "fétil territorio" from line seven and
reinforces the underlying notion of the poem which is the origin or birth of "la palabra." The slave, who is referred to in the parenthetical line thirty five as, "el hombre que miraba todo aquello," is clearly moved by what he has seen. His reaction is explained gradually and with great detail in lines thirty six to forty one. His first action is described by the word "suspiro," which can be interpreted either postively, a sigh of contentment, or negatively, a sigh of despair, and creates suspense of what is to come. This is accentuated even more by the use of a series of preterite verbs and short poetic lines which underscore the idea of short, quick actions coming one right after another. The sigh then turns into a "sollozo, / o algo semejante." Indeed the emotions that the slave is experiencing are becoming more intense as he goes from sighing to a sobbing that, "repitió, y creció, y dejó su pecho / estremecido." As the tension builds, primarily with the verb "creció" and the simile begun in line forty that ended with ellipses, the reader realizes that the images and language used in these lines are similar to those that would be used to describe the process of a woman giving birth. However, instead of revealing just what has happened, the stanza ends leaving the reader without a resolution. It is like an expectant parent being told that his/her child has been born, but not being informed whether
it's a girl or a boy. This feeling of being left hanging, as well as the image of a trembling chest, is precisely what the springing branch of the simile, "así la rama / abandonada por un pájaro..." portrays. It is this image, as shall be shown, which begins the next stanza.

The ambiguity of both what is to come in the poem and what has happened reaches its highest point in line forty one. As mentioned before, this element of uncertainty has been present from the onset. In addition to the mentioned "quizá," the words "probablemente," "reconstruyo, sin datos," "me parece," "acaso," and "o algo semejante" have underscored the unstable, decentered nature of both the language of the selection and the poem itself. This in mind, the notion of concrete, univocal meaning is indeed challenged. After all, words like the ones mentioned above constantly act to undermine and question just what the poetic voice is saying. The poem continues in the fourth stanza:

Igual que un pájaro
salta desde una rama,
de ese modo
45 surgió en el aire limpio de aquel día
la palabra:
amor.

Era
suficiente.

As Fajardo has suggested, the long build-up of the previous lines ends in the pronunciation of "la palabra," an event analogous to a human's birth (181). Using rather distinct terms, a bird springing into flight is paired with the quivering chest of the slave, the first human being to pronounce, "la palabra." This image, "pájaro," is significant when the powerful and oppressive eagle of the second stanza is recalled. While the "pájaro" may seem a rather feable counterpart, it is this little bird, and not the more imposing eagle, which metaphorically announces "la palabra: amor." By extension, it would seem that it is the slave and not the master, and the poet and not the censor, who are responsible for the expression of the word. It is precisely this act, or recognition of the existence of the word which is described as "suficiente." Of no small consideration is the fact that the word that was pronounced is "amor," set apart spatially on the written page and by its italic print. According to the text, the origin of language is the word love. However, as the poem continues it becomes clear that it is not the notion of love that is the focus of the selection, but rather the revelation of "la palabra."

50 Pronunciada primero, 

luego escrita,
la palabra pasó de boca en boca,
siguió de mano en mano,
de cera en pergamino,
55 de papel en papel,
de tinta en tinta,
fue tallada en madera,
cayó sobre las láminas
olorosas y blancas,
60 y llegó hasta nostros
impresa y negra, viva
tras un largo pasaje por los siglos
llamados de oro,
por las gloriosas épocas,
65 a través de los textos conocidos
con el nombre de clásicos más tarde.

The evolution of "la palabra" is rapidly traced from
its origin, that of being pronounced by the slave, to later
being written and handed down through the generations of
humanity. This idea is underscored with the phrases, "la
palabra pasó de boca en boca, / siguió de mano en mano."
Just as its oral manifestation is mentioned, "pronunciada"
and "boca en boca," so too is its written manifestation,
"escrita," "cera en pergamino," "papel," "tinta," "tallada
en madera," and "sobre las láminas." The incremental
sophistication which each form of writing indicates,
underscores the passing of time in the poem. This is also
done by the use of allusions to the literary world of old,
"siglos / llamados de oro," "textos conocidos" and
"clásicos." As to just what point in time "la palabra"
arrives, is made clear in line sixty, "y llegó hasta
nosotros."

With such a plethora of references to the written word,
the idea of literary creation, based fundamentally on
"palabras," comes to the forefront. Just as humankind’s
ingenuity and capacity for technological advances with
regard to the word is made clear, by the use of images from
wax on parchment to the living printed word, so too is the
fertile nature of the human mind to create. Language, as
has been shown, allows for naming "amor," a notion that will
be discussed more in a moment. In short, as Debicki
observes; "A medida que el poema se desarrolla, el énfasis
cae más en la importancia y en los efectos del
descubrimiento de la palabra que en el asunto del amor en
sí" (Angel González 37). The poem continues with a short
stanza:

    Retrotraerse a un sentimiento puro,
    imaginar un mundo en sus pre-nombres,
    es imposible ahora.

Lines sixty seven through sixty nine dismiss the possibility
of trying to imagine a world like the one so painstakingly
described in the entire first part of the poem, or as Fajardo observes, "Estos versos parecen... una consideración paradójica, ya que afirman la imposibilidad del proceso mismo que las precede" (182). The "sentimiento puro" can be associated with the slave's first utterance of "amor," for it was in his time, before the word, "pre-nombres," that "la palabra," first appeared. It should be remembered, however, that the setting described earlier was not as utopic as the phrase "sentimiento puro," may suggest. While there is perhaps a hint of nostalgia as the speaker considers the impossibility of going back to the purity associated with the birth of the word, this melancholy does not persist.

70 La palabra fue dicha para siempre.
Para todos, también.

Yo la recojo,

la elijo entre otras muchas,

la empano con mi aliento

75 y la lanzo,
pájaro o piedra,
de nuevo al aire,

al sol,

hoy

80 (rostros, árboles,
nubes: todo es distinto en esta
primavera. En el vaso,
el agua huele a río.
Como una larga caballera, el viento
ondea por las calles y se abate
de pronto
rizado y frío sobre el suelo.
Y en ocasiones,
¿por qué mi pensamiento
no acompaña a mis ojos,
y se aleja
de lo que ven, perdido
y a la vez fijo en algo...?},
porque quiero.

The first two lines of the final stanza emphasize both
the lasting nature of language as well as the fact that "la
palabra," is for everyone. In the indented line seventy
two, the poetic voice emphasizes his active role in
promulgating the word. This is relevant as it underscores
the vital role, that of disseminator of the word, that he
has assumed. With the mention of the subject pronoun "Yo"
and the subsequent use of four conjugated first person
verbs, "recojo," "elijo," "empano," and "lanzo," the
participation of the speaker is highlighted. Just as God
breathed life into Adam and offered him to the world, the
poetic speaker breathes life into the word, actively creating this poem and offering it to his readers.  

The expression "de nuevo" in line seventy seven indicates that the word is being offered anew. It is first metaphorically described as a "pájaro," just like earlier in line forty two, and next as "piedra." With the appearance of the words, "piedra," "aire," "sol" and "hoy," in a descending or staircase like pattern on the written page, the notion of "la palabra" as being associated with the origins of the earth and intimately linked to the passage of time, "hoy," is clearly represented.

After the one word line seventy nine, "hoy," the parenthetical italicized lines interrupt the finalization of the thought begun in line seventy two until the last line of the poem. Naturally, this creates suspense as to what is to come and leaves the reader scanning through the parenthetical information to arrive at the continuation of the unfinished sentence outside the parentheses and in regular print. This comes at the end of the poem with the verse, positioned in the same descending pattern as the words noted earlier, "porque quiero." In effect, the poetic voice has stated, "Yo la recojo. . .la elijo. . .y la lanzo. . .porque quiero." With the use of this final verb, querer, the reader can interpret either that the speaker offers the word because he wants to, or because he loves it ("la
palabra"). This being the case, the initial pronunciation of the word and the concept of "amor," associated with the verb querer, surfaces once again. Again, the ambiguity of the language of the poem necessarily demands a somewhat open interpretation, emphasizing again the challenge to the notion of denotative meaning.

The italicized lines seem to underscore the newly gained perspective that this rediscovery of "la palabra" has given this poetic speaker. He can now name and come to know objects with words: "rostros, árboles" and "nubes." The line "todo es distinto en esta / primavera" centers the speaker and reader in the present time and highlights the newfound poetic sensibility that makes everything seem new and different.

Nonetheless, the wind, unlike the "aliento" breathed into the word, does not grant life, but rather as the poem's final lines reveal, dies out and sinks to the ground. This image of defeat, produced by the verb abatir, prefaces the question the poetic voice asks himself in lines ninety to ninety three, "¿por qué mi pensamiento / no acompaña a mis ojos, / y se aleja / de lo que ven, perdido / y a la vez fijo en algo...?" This question underscores the notion of shifting perspectives and thus exemplifies that what one thinks, sees and focuses on, do not always coincide. That is to say, perspective consists of many competing factors
and is by its very nature, variable. In this way, the question itself reflects the technique of varying perspective and point of view that the poem has revealed from the onset.

When this long poem ends the reader may well feel as if he/she has just been on a poetic roller coaster ride. After all, he/she has been witness to the evolution of "la palabra" all the way from the ancient past to the present day. As the poem has revealed, this is quite a temporal journey. While the selection has various suspenseful and tense moments urging the reader onward, it is at times, difficult to continue in some instances due to the ambiguity produced by the multiple and varying perspectives of the speaker. In turn, this is compounded by the occasional suggestions of his unreliability. This is perhaps best explained in Benson's comment, "la descripción del mundo antediluviano en que nace por primera vez la palabra 'amor' se ve socavada por una serie de interrupciones semejantes que desmienten la "fábula" del narrador" (Voces 17). In addition to having a changing perspective, the poem also highlights the role of both the poet and poetry as the speaker continuously emphasizes how he alone recovers the word and offers it to humankind. While all of this, and a great deal more is portrayed, the reader becomes more and more aware that the poem as a whole highlights the fact that
the ambiguous nature of language makes the idea of unequivocal meaning an impossibility.

In "Palabras casi olvidadas" (174-175), the poetic considers the notions of time, abandonment and, following along in the same vein as "La palabra," language. The first three stanzas are as follows:

En ocasiones,

el corazón se siente abrumado por la melancolía, y al pensamiento llegan

viejas palabras leídas en libros olvidados:

5 felicidad, misterio, alma infinito.

¿Es la tarde que mete sus uñas venenosas en el sombrío cuerpo del olvido y huye hacia la noche llevándose en la boca algún gesto borroso,

10 una canción perdida,

la desteñida cinta que no pudo atar tantos recuerdos?

Pero no.

En esta hora, la nostalgia

15 no viene del ayer, sino del ahora mismo, del solohaceuninstante que estabas a mi lado,
rasgando
con tus dientes de niña
20 la penumbra,
rompiendo la raíz de mi tristeza
y alzando en su lugar un árbol de alegría.

The first important aspect which the initial stanza reveals is the use of the phrase, "En ocasiones." This is relevant in that it implies that the feeling of melancholy experienced by the speaker is not his permanent state, but rather it is usually caused by something. The cause of the wistfulness that he experiences will become apparent as the poem progresses. Also significant is that the reader learns that the forgotten "palabras" to which the speaker is referring are, "viejas palabras leídas en libros olvidados: / felicidad, misterio, alma, infinito." Since the idea of el olvido is present from the onset, the forgotten words coming back to the speaker are immediately associated as the initial cause of the "corazón...abrumado" and the "melancolía" which he has described.

The poem proceeds as the speaker wonders if it is "la tarde," that causes him to fall into a disconsolate mood. The general image of late afternoon indicates the coming of darkness, the end of the day and even loneliness. The poetic voice asks if it is this time, between night and day, that causes him to recall his somber past. The language of
this stanza is quite notable as he describes "la tarde" as an evil cat. The phrases "uñas venenosas," "llevándose en la boca," and "la destrañida cinta," all suggest images which seem to construct a vision of a cat, grabbing onto a roll of ribbon, putting it into its mouth and scurrying away as the ribbon unravels and trails behind it. If the "cinta" metaphorically represents the speaker’s memories, its unraveling would be his subsequent recollection, or viewing of the past and the cause of his gloom. Clearly, he is not fond of dwelling on the past.

The importance of "palabras" themselves in these lines is also emphasized. First of all, the reference to "una canción perdida," could indeed be an allusion to the lyrics of a song from his past. Also, the image of "la destrañida cinta que no pudo / atar tantos recuerdos," suggests a small bundle of tattered letters tied up with a faded ribbon. In this case, however, the ribbon could not, "no pudo," contain the memories, perhaps because of their volume, or more likely, because the words (language) contained in the letters, could not be tied up, held onto or even completely grasped.

Later, in the third stanza, the speaker asserts that it is actually not the memory of the past, "no viene del ayer" but the present, "ahora mismo," which has created this pervasive dejected tone. His beloved has departed and time
seems to have been suspended in one compressed moment. This is underscored by the word, "solohaceuniniente," where three words are combined (compressed) into one. The innocence, "niña," of the tú is emphasized in these lines as it is only she who can cure the speaker of his "tristeza" and replace it with happiness. Unfortunately, however, she has left him, abandoning him to the "penumbra" of loneliness. The poem continues:

La claridad evanescente, como
un animal incierto,

25 salta -quizá en busca de ti-
por la ventana de la alcoba
donde mi rostro abandonado intenta
penetrar en lo oscuro:
nada tras de la sombra, sino sombras.

30 Tras de ti misma,
tu ausencia se dibuja
como una nada pavorosa:

el tiempo
que debo estar sin ti
es la aguda herramienta que el destino utiliza
para cerrarme el paso a la esperanza.

With the departure of the beloved, the "claridad evanescente" also disappears. Any sense of understanding that the poetic voice had before is now gone. The simile
comparing the vanishing lucidity to an "animal incierto," leaping through the window of the room to search for the tú, vividly recalls the earlier image of the cat. Meanwhile, the despair of the poetic voice has intensified as the words "rostro abandonado," "oscuro" and "sombra" illustrate. The absence of the tú, "tu ausencia se dibuja / como una nada pavorosa," seems to be the root cause of the poetic voice's suffering. In lines thirty three through thirty six the speaker describes the time spent apart from his beloved as destiny's way of blocking his only hope. Just how "el paso a la esperanza" is denied him, is portrayed by the image of the "aguda herramienta," and the verbs "utiliza" and "cerrarme," depicting an almost mechanical process of shutting the door on the poetic voice's hope. The fact that he shall never be reunited with the tú is more fully explained in the following stanzas.

Añorar el futuro que no existe
es aceptar la vida despojada
de sus días mejores,

40 y vivir es igual que haber vivido
ya, sin que ese haber vivido
suponga -por desgracia- estar ya muerto.

De esa forma,
porvenir y pasado se confunden,
45 y el tiempo no sucede,
y uno no existe
sin recuerdos ni afanes,
igual que un dios pequeño y miserable
que no tiene memoria
50 porque todo para él está presente:
como
esas viejas palabras
- felicidad, misterio... -
que hoy vuelven a mis manos
55 - ¿desde cuándo? -
que ahora escribo
- ...alma... -,
sin vergüenza,
para ti, porque tuyo
60 es todo lo que pienso
- ...infinito-
y lo será por siempre
hasta los límites donde mi fe alcanza.

In these lines the speaker reveals again that without
the tú time has ceased to move forward, "el futuro que no
existe." According to his resigned point of view, "vivir es
igual que haber vivido ya." There is no hope for a future
and living without the tú is worse than being dead. The
poetic voice cannot transcend the present moment, "y el
tiempo no sucede," and for him, living without his beloved is like torture, recalling yet again the "aguda herramienta" of earlier. The frozen present moment has become a temporal infinity of suffering. The reason for the speaker's despair, however, is twofold. First he is without his beloved and second, "uno existe / sin recuerdos ni afanes," "que no tiene memoria." There is no future with the present moment suspended indefinitely and even the memory of the past is no refuge. As the speaker remains frozen in this infinite temporal void he equates himself with "un dios pequeño y miserable." Here, the word "pequeño" represents his own insignificance and impotence to change his situation, and the word "miserable" reflects his truly wretched state of being. As he states in line fifty, just as if he were a small, powerless deity, he can do nothing to effect a real change in his condition, "todo. . .está presente."

It is at this point that the poem broadens its focus and specifically addresses the issue of words and language as was alluded to earlier. In fact, Debicki suggests that "el tema amoroso (los recuerdos del hablante de su amada) pasa a segundo plano. Se subraya más la manera en que las palabras que se escogen. . .definen y crean la realidad" (AG 37-38). After the speaker just affirmed that he had no capacity of memory, he contradicts himself by recalling the
"viejas palabras." The first two words that he mentions are, "-felicidad, misterio." While happiness is obviously a longed for impossibility for the poetic voice, the word "misterio" is a bit more suggestive. After all, it could well point to any one of the mysteries presented in the poem; that of suspended time, the ability to remember after having previously been without memory, and the mystery and power of language itself which is just now beginning to manifest itself. These two words that, "hoy vuelven a mis manos," can immediately be put to use in his poetry as, "que ahora escribo," indicates. Line fifty five, "-¿desde cuándo?" is yet another reference to time and memory thereby keeping the notion of the suspended present and the remembered past in mind at all times. As the speaker writes, "alma," he could be either recalling his own spirit of creativity, his mortality, or perhaps using it as a term of endearment for his beloved. The ambiguity of the word lends itself to various possibilities. What does become apparent, however, is that when the tú is concerned, the poetic voice has no shame, "sinverguenza." He immerses himself completely in contemplation of her, "para ti, porque tuyo / es todo lo que pienso." Later, in addition to recalling the suspended time of earlier, the word "infinito," implies that the memory of the tú will remain alive, "por siempre / hasta los límites de donde mi fe alcanza."
The notion of faith and its limits which is suggested in the last line merits more consideration. While it could indeed have to do with the faith that the speaker has in the love of the tú it could also refer to much more. For instance, the speaker’s faith in language. While it appears that it was language which allowed the poetic voice to go from a state in which he was "sin recuerdos" to being able to remember the past as it was manifested in "esas viejas palabras," the reality that he is able to construct with these words is only one of nostalgic remembrance of his beloved. He goes no farther than this and makes it clear that his sole focus is on recalling the tú. What also becomes apparent, however, is that she cannot be recovered by means of language. This explains the poetic voice’s self-deprecating evaluation of himself as "pequeño y miserable." As a poet who must use language he is thus helpless: "el lenguaje, sin embargo, no puede captar ni transformar plenamente al ser amado" (Debicki AG 38). Although he can name these elements of his past they are otherwise beyond his reach. Herein lies his dilemma with language. Its very limited utility, according to the speaker in this poem, is in its evocative power. While it can assign names, it does not allow for the recovery of the named person, object, feeling or time. Not only is the beloved unrecoverable, but so too is the rest of his past.
In conclusion it is this idea of linguistic skepticism that reveals itself as the most important element of the poem. While the speaker had bemoaned his loss of the tú in earlier poems, here, his preoccupation of the inadequacy of language, his role as poet, and the continued revelation of the indeterminate nature of his medium to come to the forefront. Perhaps one of the most revealing images of "Palabras casi olvidadas," is that of the "dios pequeño y miserable." As was mentioned before, the poetic voice used this image to emphasize his inability to change his situation and his impotence as a creator. In the poem that follows, this same idea is discussed yet again.

In the third poem of Palabra, entitled, "Me basta así" (176-177), the poetic speaker begins the selection by speculating on what he would do if he were God. In this poem, which is not nearly so somber as the previous one, "se entremezclan dos ingredientes: uno, la ensonación del poeta-ser Dios y poder crear un ser exacto a la amada-, y otro la realidad que se vive y que aparece al final del poema" (Alarcos Llorach 39). It is these two elements, "la ensonación," and "la realidad," which prove to be of great importance as the selection develops. The poetic voice begins by hypothetically musing about his beloved, who was both absent and unrecoverable in the last poem. By utilizing verbs in the past subjunctive mood, the speaker
Si yo fuese Dios
y tuviese el secreto,
haría
un ser exacto a ti;
5 lo probaría
(a la manera de los panaderos
cuando prueban el pan, es decir:
con la boca),
y si ese sabor fuese
10 igual al tuyo, o sea
tu mismo olor, y tu manera
de sonreír,
y de guardar silencio,
y de estrechar mi mano estrictamente,
15 y de besarnos sin hacernos daño
-de esto sí estoy seguro: pongo
tanta atención cuando te beso-;
entonces,

As becomes evident almost immediately, the representation of this "Dios," is distinct from the "dios pequeño" alluded to earlier. Upon reading the poem's first line, the reader may well assume that since the word "Dios" is capitalized, it refers to the all-powerful, perfect
deity. This being true, anything is possible and the limits of what the poetic voice can do and create are infinite. Indeed, this is quite a contrast to the small, miserable god seen before. In effect, by using the subjunctive mood and conditional verbs from the onset, the speaker has removed himself, and the reader, from reality and entered, "la zona irreal de lo soñado y lo deseado" (Alarcos Llorach 39). Clearly, the implication is that if the speaker "fuese Dios," he would have God-like creative abilities. While the "secreto" mentioned in line two is never revealed, it could well be the secret of creation or being able to create. In any case, the speaker's first action is to create the image of his beloved, "un ser exacto a ti." It is this notion which the poem goes on to emphasize.

In the lines that follow, the speaker explains how he would test or try out, probar, his newly imagined, poetically created beloved. One effect of these lines (ll. 5-8) is that they are somewhat suprising and most likely break with the assumptions and expectations that the reader may have formed after reading the first few words of the poem. After all, by having already established his omnipotence, what need would there be to authenticate the creation of a perfect God? Would it not be in God's image and therefore perfect? Following the image of "Dios" with one that is extremely terrestrial, "panadero," the poetic
voice seems to return from the realm of imagination to that of reality. In part, the reader's tendency to formulate these kinds of questions are due to the discrepancies created by the simultaneous use of hyperbole, the grandiose position of God assumed by the speaker, and understatement, the simplistic and possibly imperfect re-creation of the beloved described metaphorically as "pan."

In line six, the poetic voice engages himself in the details of the hypothetical scenario he has created and goes on to explain the testing process which he would use to determine the authentic nature of his creation. Oddly enough, the speaker is proving to be much more human than God-like as is illustrated by his reliance on human perception; tasting, smelling, seeing, hearing, touching and kissing, to verify the identity of his beloved. Furthermore, the use of parenthesis (ll. 6-8) and aclaratory intrusiones (ll. 16-17) by the speaker himself, interrupt the created hypothetical atmosphere and are termed by Alarcos Llorach as "insertions" of reality (39). Clearly, the poetic voice who has defined himself as a creative God, is also, amusingly, a creative baker and, as shall be shown, a creative poet as well. The last word of the stanza which is set off to the side of the text, "entonces," leaves the reader hanging until the poem picks up again in line eighteen:
si yo fuese Dios,
podría repetirte y repetirte,
siempre la misma y siempre diferente,
sin cansarme jamás del juego idéntico,
sin desdeñar tampoco la que fuiste
por la que ibas a ser dentro de nada;
ya no sé si me explico, pero quiero aclarar
que si yo fuese
Dios, haría
lo posible por ser Angel González
para quererte tal como te quiero,
para aguardar con calma
a que te crees tú misma cada día,
a que sorprendas todas las mañanas
la luz recién nacida con tu propia
luz, y corras
la cortina impalpable que separa
el sueño de la vida,
resucitándome con tu palabra,
Lázaro alegre,
yo,
mojado todavía
de sombras y pereza,
sorprendido y absorto
en la contemplación de todo aquello
que, en unión de mí mismo,
recuperas y salvas, mueves, dejas
45 abandonado cuando -luego- callas...

(Escucho tu silencio.

Oigo
constelaciones: existes.

Creo en ti.
50

Eres.

Me basta.)

In lines eighteen through twenty three the speaker emphasizes his love for the tú by declaring that his only action as God would be to recreate and repeat her image. This is underscored by the recreation/repetition of the words of line eighteen, identical to those of line one, and the twice repeated words, "repetirte" (l. 19), "siempre" (l. 20), and "sin" (ll. 21,22). Later, he realizes that, "si fuese Dios ya no sería él y ya no podría amar a su amada" (Alarcos Llorach 39). Line twenty four again shows the very human side of the speaker as he tries to explicate his point saying, "ya no sé si me explico, pero quiero / aclarar.../ haría lo posible por ser Angel González." As far as love is concerned, only "Angel González," can love the tú adequately. Also relevant in these lines is the revelation that the speaker is unsure if the language he is using is understandable to both himself and the reader. The
ambiguous nature of language motivates the poetic voice to repeat and emphasize this important point about the love he feels for the tú so that he is not misunderstood. The use of hyperbole emphasizes that the speaker's love for her is so great that not even God's could equal that which he feels, "para quererte tal como te quiero."

In the lines that follow (ll. 30-35) the speaker continues using the subjunctive mood as he expresses his hopes and desires concerning the beloved. They are; "que te crees. . .cada día," "que sorprendas todas las mañanas / . . .con tu propia / luz," and "corras / la cortina impalpable que separa / el sueño de la vida." The first wish of the poetic voice addresses the issue of creation. Here, however, he hopes that she independently creates herself. Interestingly, this comes after he has speculated on creating an exact duplicate of her. He compares her presence to a "luz," so bright that it seems to rival the morning's. She becomes a symbol of illumination and understanding, described as the being who can separate dreams from reality. The mention of the dream recalls the imagined hypothetical scenario or the ambiance of "ensonación," which the speaker had so painstakingly developed earlier in the poem.

As the speaker contemplates his created tú she seems to acquire a life of her own and becomes an active independent
poetic persona. In turn, it is through the power of her love and language that she is able to resurrect (recreate) the speaker, "resucitándome con tu palabra." The poem seems to have come full circle and now the created tú has acquired God-like capabilities and brings the speaker, now called "Lázaro," back to life. In effect, the poetic voice's creation has become his creator, and at the heart of this creative ability is the "palabra."

Clearly, as the poem proceeds, the beloved, whether a hypothetical creation or living being, has become the salvation, "recuperas y salvas" of the poetic voice. Now, instead of describing himself as a God, he is revealed to be "mojado. . ./ de sombras y pereza," as he seems awakened from a dream in which he was God, mesmerized by the tú and her actions. She appears to heighten the sensibilities of the speaker, "(Escucho tu silencio. / Oigo/ constelaciones)," as he seems not only in "unión de mí mismo," but in union with the stars as well. At the end of the poem the speaker believes in her as if she were God, "Creo en ti" (creer), and in using the ambiguous "creo," also recalls and suggests the possibility of crear, described earlier. What began as the speaker's speculative musing has resulted in the creation of the beloved underscored by the verbs "existes," "eres." The state of contentment that he has found with the tú at the end of the
poem is sufficient, "me basta," as he seems to be in harmonious bliss.

There are various elements in this text underscoring its affinity with postmodernism. First of all, as alluded to earlier, through the poetic voice’s use of both hyperbole and understatement the poetic drama presented often times catches the reader off guard or breaks with a probable expectation he/she may have formed. After all, a poem that begins with the speaker speculating "If I were God," and ends with the very same person being created by the words of his beloved has departed substantially from what one my first assume. The use of ambiguous language that can have two or more meanings and the poetic voice’s tendency to repeat and clarify his thoughts both point to the slippery, mutable nature of the poetic medium. Finally, by including the name, "Angel González," in the text of the poem the poetic endeavour and the role of the poet, which here has God-like creative capabilites, also comes to the forefront. It is precisely, this notion of being a poet which is explored further in the next selection.

In the fourth poem of the Palabra sobre palabra, "Las palabras inútiles" (178-179), the tone of the selection is completely different from "Me basta así." While the earlier poem began with a more positive tenor, this one begins on a much less optimistic note.
Aborrezco este oficio algunas veces:
espía de palabras, busco,
busco
el término huidizo,
5 la expresión inestable
que signifique, exacta, lo que eres.

The selection has been termed a "dramatic monologue" which recounts the frustrated confession of the poetic voice who admits that he cannot find an adequate expression to define his beloved. After describing the task of the poet as that of an, "espía de palabras," he repeats the verb buscar in two different poetic lines, one right after the other, to indicate both the urgency and his energy in trying to encounter the always fleeting, "huidizo," and "inestable," words that are necessary to define his beloved. Clearly, language, and especially words used to describe a loved one are difficult to find. The poem continues with the second stanza.

Inmóvil en la nada, al margen
de la vida (hundido
en un denso silencio sólo roto
10 por el batir oscuro de mi sangre),
busco,
busco aquellas palabras
que no existen
-quizá sirvan: delicia de tu cuello...

15 que te acosan y mueren sin rozarte,
cuando lo que quisiera
es llegar a tu cuello
con mi boca
-...o acaso: increíble sonrisa que he besado-,
20 subir hasta tu boca
con mis labios,
sujetar con mis manos tu cabeza
y ver
allá en el fondo de tus ojos,
25 instantes antes de cerrar los míos,
paz verde y luz dormida,
claras sombras

-tal vez

Apparently, due to his all-consuming desire to define
or name the tú, he has ultimately distanced himself from his
beloved, "Inmóvil en la nada, al margen / de la vida." That
is to say, here, the inability of the poetic speaker to
utilize language has left him, "hundido / en un denso
silencio." He has been left in a void of nothingness
without inspiration. He cannot move and the intensity of
his despair is underscored by the allusion of his heartbeat
which breaks the silence in which he has become immersed.
Later, the repetition of "busco" for the second time in the
poem emphasizes his continued search for "aquellas palabras / que no existen."

As the speaker continues to try and find the right words, he begins to offer possibilities of what these could be. The first of these is prefaced with a dash and the word, "quizá," and then the italicized words "delicía de tu cuello." This short verse, which could easily be taken from almost any traditional love poem, is later described as inadequate in regards to the tú, "que te acosan y mueren sin Rozarte." Clearly, these words have no effect on her. Interestingly, the words themselves have been personified, acosar, morir, rozar, and it seems that in spite of their effort, they have no impact on her and ultimately fail, or metaphorically die. Later, the poetic voice explains that in reality, he wants to indulge himself in the more pleasant aspects of love, "cuando lo que quisiera / es llegar a tu cuello / con mi boca." This use of sensual imagery continues in the lines that follow.

The second possibility of words which could describe his beloved are the equally clichéd, "incredíble sonrisa que he besado," again set apart by their print style, punctuation and the word, "o acaso." As the speaker relates his subsequent amorous plans it becomes more and more clear that these suggestions at lovemaking have as their ultimate goal understanding of both language and love: "sujetar con
mis manos tu cabeza / y ver / allá en el fondo de tus ojos, 
. . ./ paz verde y luz dormida, / claras sombras." The use of
the verb "sujetar" is revealing in that it implies a
physical grasping or holding that parallels the intellectual
and linguistic idea of understanding and controlling the
medium of language. After all, his search for words
has revealed his creative impotence and has underscored his
inability in being able to find the exact word. He has been
left feeling powerless and with no control of his situation,
quite likely the impulse of his initial declaration of
"Aborrezco este oficio." In any case, his exasperation
leads him to abandon his search for words and seek the
physical body of the tú.

Curiously, as the speaker physically touches and holds
his beloved, he seems to acquire a kind of inspiration and
understanding, "paz verde y luz dormida / claras sombras." This is emphasized with the images of peacefulness and clear
or transparent shadows. LaFollette Miller astutely observes
that, "his portrayal of words as inadequate and stale
creates by contrast the illusion that the love described is
immediate and fresh" (141). While the love experienced by
the speaker indeed seems pleasant, there is also yet another
indication of the ambiguous and unsatisfactory nature of
language. This is in the use of the words "quizá," "o
acaso," and "tal vez," that come before each suggested
phrase that could possibly describe the beloved. This last one, "tal vez," serves as the transition to the final stanza.

fuera mejor decir: humo en la tarde,

30 borrosa música que llueve del otoño,
niebla que cae despacio sobre un valle-
avanzando hacia mí,
girando,

35 penetrándome
hasta anegar mi pecho y levantar
mi corazón salvado, ilesos, en vilo
sobre la leve espuma de la dicha.

While the speaker appeared to have found momentary understanding in the arms of the tú, this seems to have vanished. In his third attempt to try and describe his beloved he employs shadowy, opaque images clearly associated with not being able to see or understand, "humo," "borrosa," and "niebla." All of these words seem to confirm the speaker's lack of understanding of language. On the other hand, however, the following verbs; "avanzando," "girando," "penetrándome," "anegar" and "levantar" describe how he is swept way in a wave of happiness leaving "mi corazón salvado, ilesos, en vilo / sobre la leve espuma de la dicha."

While the speaker may believe that he has failed and been unable to understand the language of love or encounter the
necessary words to express this emotion, the poetic project has not been unsuccessful; "his poem itself belongs to the category that in the poem he disavows: verbal expressions of love. His poem thus tells us that it is not a love poem, but rather love itself, which cannot be expressed" (LaFollette Miller 141). While individual words have not offered the poetic voice the desired expression to define his beloved, the poem as a whole does manifest an innovative and revealing discourse of love.

Obviously, key to this poetic text is the poetic voice's struggle with both language and love. It is, in fact, the task of using the former to describe the latter which Debicki describes in his book *Poetry of Discovery* in the following way:

The stress placed on the act of naming poetically as a way of discovering reality adds to the work's intensity, making us feel that in the very act of writing for us the speaker / poet is exhibiting his quest, just as he exhibits it in the act of loving the "tú." (71)

Love and language are indeed intimately linked together for the speaker and in this sense his "palabras" are far from "inútiles," as the title may suggest. While perhaps the twofold "quest" of the speaker is not completely resolved, to discover reality through both language and love, it has
not been a total failure either as the image of the poetic voice being left upon the "espuma de la dicha," indicates. Once again, this selection has revealed a pronounced self-consciousness on the part of the poetic voice as his role as poet and highlighted throughout the evasive, ambiguous nature of the amorous discourse.

The final selection of this work is, "En ti me quedo," and, like those that came before it, is also a very long poem. Since the primary interest of this study is to investigate the evocation of the discourse of love in this poetry, only some of the text will be referred to specifically. While the entire text possesses a variety of notable elements, it is not essential to provide a detailed analysis of each stanza. There are three ideas which are established and developed in the first forty two lines of the text and will be important to the comments offered here. They are: the solitude of the poetic speaker (ll. 1-14), his subsequent lack of hope and despair (ll. 15-22) and the refuge which he sometimes finds in his imagination (ll. 23-42). In these final lines, he describes his habit of imagining himself traveling rapidly to far off lands and places, or as he puts it, "dentro de una semana [puedo estar] en cualquier parte / de la esfera terrestre, por alejada que os parezca ahora" (ll. 40-42). With the mention of the pronoun "os," the speaker clearly shows that he is
directing himself to a familiar and perhaps sympathetic collective. The poem continues in this way:

Consciente de esa circunstancia,
en muchas ocasiones emprendo largos viajes;

pero apenas me desplazo unos milímetros
hacia los destinos más remotos,
la nostalgia me muerde las entrañas,
y regreso a mi posición primera
alegre y triste a un tiempo

-como dije al principio:
alegre,
porque sé que tú eres mi patria,
amor mío;
y triste,

porque toda patria, para los que la amamos,
de acuerdo con mi personal experiencia de la
[patria-
tiene también bastante de presidio.

The circumstance to which line forty three refers is precisely the imaginary journeys which the speaker occasionally "makes." However, these trips, which are an escape from the solitude and hopelessness referred to earlier, do not always have the desired effects. As an indication of this, the animalized "nostalgia" seems to gnaw at the insides of the speaker causing him to step out of his
imaginary world of faraway lands and return to reality, "mi posición primera." This has the contradictory effect of making him both "alegre y triste a un tiempo." The use of these antithetical terms seems to call for some kind of clarification which indeed follows in lines fifty through fifty nine.

Line fifty begins by reiterating a previously made point, "como dije al principio." The fact that the speaker feels it necessary to clarify his point again underscores the inadequacy of the language he employs. He's not sure he's been understood and wants to repeat or restate his thoughts. He goes on to say, "alegre, / porque sé que tú eres mi patria, / amor mío." By employing the word, "patria," he uses a geographical term which coincides with early images of traveling to foreign lands. This word, which also alludes to one's birthplace, is normally associated with comfort and safety. However, in this case, the speaker goes on to use this same word as the source of his sadness, "y triste, / porque toda patria, para los que la amamos, / -de acuerdo con mi personal experiencia de la patria- / tiene también bastante de presidio." The speaker seems to have rather mixed emotions. While the "patria" represents his beloved, it also is described as a "presidio." This description of the homeland as a prison reflects the social/historical reality of the poet during
the dictatorship of Franco. The image of the beloved as a prison, however, requires a little more explanation.

It is implied that the beloved, just like his homeland, has a restrictive and confining aspect. If one considers this idea in terms of the entire collection, perhaps this is true. After all, love and understanding love has been one of the poetic voice's preoccupations throughout the text. Here, the speaker underscores the all-encompassing and consuming nature of this consideration using "presidio" to describe how it has limited the scope and focus of his life and his poetry. Having finally realized this, the speaker seems to forget about all else and completely immerses himself in his contemplation and adoration of the beloved. In this way, he has left the "presidio" of the outside world for the much more pleasant, but at the same time restrictive, prison of love. This is emphasized in the final stanza.

Así

en ti me quedo,

60 paseo largamente tus brazos y tus piernas,

asciendo hasta tu boca, me asomo

al borde de tus ojos,

doy la vuelta a tu cuello,

desciendo por tu espalda,

65 cambio de ruta para recorrer tus caderas,
vuelvo a empezar de nuevo,
descanso en tu costado,
miro pasar las nubes sobre tus labios rojos,
digo adiós a los pájaros que cruzan por tu frente,
y si cierras los ojos cierro también los míos,
y me duermo a tu sombra como si siempre fuera
verano,
amor,
pensando vagamente
75 en el mundo inquietante
que se extiende -imposible-detrás de tu sonrisa.

Lines fifty eight and fifty nine have a rather resigned
tenor to them and seem to be the resolution to which the
speaker arrives after admitting that his beloved is in some
ways like a "presidio." Instead of taking off on his
imaginary journeys, he decides, "Así / en ti me quedo."
Later, in lines sixty through sixty seven, all but one which
begin with a present tense verb, he describes the excursion
which upon which he will embark around the body of his
beloved ("patria"). He is completely engrossed in her
contemplation and, whereas earlier in the poem his imaginary
trips were an escape from his solitude and despair, here,
his refuge is the tú. Lines sixty eight and sixty nine
emphasize how the beloved is also like an open door to his
imagination and he sees "nubes" and "pájaros" around her countenance.

The union of the speaker and the beloved is underscored by the two simultaneously closing their eyes and the poetic voice's comment, "me duermo a tu sombra." While all of the allusions commented on up until now have been clearly associated with the alegría referred to in line fifty, towards the end the speaker ambiguously mentions "el mundo inquietante / que se extiende -imposible-detrás de tu sonrisa." While the world beyond is described as both "inquietante" and "imposible," the reader may interpret a sense of yearning, on the part of the poetic voice, to break free of the confines of the tú if only to learn about the world beyond. This is also contradictory as the outside world was previously described as a place of solitude and despair. In any case, this sense of yearning does recall both the tristeza of line fifty four and the notion of the tú as a "presidio." With this in mind the emotional state of the poetic voice at the end of the poem is unclear. While on the one hand he seems happily contented just being with the beloved, on the other, there also seems to be a part of him that feels restricted and confined.

The rather ambiguous state of mind revealed by the speaker seems to be a result of the unstable language that has been employed throughout the poem. Contradictory terms,
like "alegre y triste a un tiempo," reflect the conflictive forces of the language which have been exploited by the poetic voice. In turn, this highlights the role of the reader who must try and derive some meaning from the text. As Luis Izquierdo comments, "La polisemia o invitación al lector para participar en los reflejos del discurso- junto a la alteridad de voces en pugna- disponía una caleidoscopia sintáctica significativa" (Izquierdo 21). Along these same lines is the notion revealed in the poem that there can be no one definitive meaning. Again, Izquierdo suggests, "los detalles expresivos ya prefiguran una decantación acusada a los dobles o plurales sentidos de palabras" (21). Perhaps this is best illustrated by the title. "En ti me quedo" can be interpreted in different ways. First of all, if the tú is considered as the geographical "patria," it implies that the speaker will remain in that space. On the other hand, if the tú refers to the beloved, it implies that he will remain immersed and involved with his loved one. Ironically, as was just mentioned, the poetic voice does not seem to be completely contented at the end of the poem, an indication that neither interpretation, or option for the speaker, is perfect. In any case, he emphasizes again how language, texts and words cannot be perceived as having only one definitive meaning. Indeed, the intricacies of love, language and poetry present a continual challenge for the
speaker and reader as the amorous discourse continues to be revealed.

As has been shown in this chapter, both *Sin esperanza con convencimiento*, and *Palabra sobre palabra*, are complex poetic collections. When examining the amorous discourse of these works the reader uncovers various postmodern characteristics: a decentering irony often times resulting in indeterminate meaning, the use of multiple competing voices in a single text, the portrayal of language as inadequate for expressing a discourse of love, poems requiring the overt participation of the reader, and finally, the idea of a lack of definitive meaning and the open nature of the poetic text. While in *Sin esperanza*, the speaker revealed how love can seem to have multiple manifestations, in *Palabra* the poetic voice has explored how love, language and poetic creation, while seemingly individual entities, cannot be separated in his poetry. The speaker experiences varying levels of frustration and despair as he comes to realize that language is indeed often insufficient in explaining and describing the contradictory, fragmentary nature of his reality. According to Debicki this is typical of the postmodern time, "tendemos a compartir como habitantes de la época de la posmodernidad, en la que nos es difícil hallar mensajes sin contradicciones, en la que el juego reemplaza la búsqueda de
la trascendencia, y en la que crece la autorreflexividad" (39). As the study of the amorous discourse continues with the fifth collection of the poet, the focus will center on the manifestation of the self-reflexivity to which Debicki just alluded. In chapter three, the self reflexive nature of literature will be considered as the echoes of other texts, some literary and some not, resound in the love poetry of Angel González.
1. Villanueva points out, "la temática que González habrá de desarrollar en este libro hondamente testimonial es inconfundiblemente la de la poesía social" (134).


3. There are many theoretical studies on postmodernism and irony. Linda Hutcheon's essay "The Power of Postmodern Irony" found in Genre, Trope, Gender provides an interesting discussion and good bibliography.

4. This is exemplified in the poem "El futuro" (90-91). See especially lines 28-31 and 35-36.

5. Fisher states the following, "The assignment of 'ocho' to mean love is especially striking in its arbitrariness, for in González's poetry love appears often as a unique phenomena which approximates an experience of plentitude and this absolute quality may be seen to encompass the relationship between the word and its referent" (Logocentrism 53). In the poem "Palabra muerta, realidad perdida," in one instance the poetic voice, using the pronoun "la" as a referent for the word "palabra," says the following, "Pronunciarla despacio equivalía / a ver, a amar, a acariciar un cuerpo" (p. 109, ll. 33-34). LaFollette Miller comments that this poem "explores the complicated relationship between words and what they name" (71). In another interpretation, Singleterry asserts that the word to which the poetic voice refers is actually the word "amor" (236-239).

6. Alarcos Llorach comments briefly on this poem (76-77).

7. Lines 6-8 are endecasyllabic calling to mind the motif of beatus ille, common in Garcilaso's sonnets.

8. José Luis Cano states the following; "el hecho de que a partir de La destrucción o el amor el pensamiento central de la poesía de Aleixandre- el mundo sentido como fuerza creadora amorosa que tiende a su unidad, a su fusión -adquiere su total plentitud, y la cosmovisión del poeta se nos revela en toda su
pujanza" (27) This is in the prologue to Espadas como labios/La destrucción o el amor, Madrid: Clásicos Castalia, 1976.

9. Persin studies this poem in chapter five of her work Recent Spanish Poetry and the Role of the Reader. See in particular pp. 112-113.


11. The prefatory comments of Debicki are in essence a conceptual resolution of the construct "destruirse o amar." Many other critics have reached this, or similar conclusions about Aleixandre's work (Cano, Olivio Jiménez, Schwartz).

12. Villanueva briefly comments on this poem (149-50).

13. This idea is developed by Villanueva in his study of the poem (150).

14. Villanueva echoes these ideas saying that the poetic voice wonders, "cómo afectará su vejez su relación con su amada a quien está dispuesto a entregarse fielmente para siempre" (149).

15. LaFollette Miller observes, "Though the poem can be read as a variant of the literary tradition of love outlasting time or as a mimetic vision of a speaker overcome by genuine feelings of attachment, decontextualization remains in the picture at some level to undermine the poem as a traditional expression of love" (99).

16. In her perceptive reading of this poem LaFollette Miller comments, "The changes that at first seemed merely to express metaphorically the normal aging process have become, by line 9, so literal, so focused on what is exclusively physical, that they have begun to seem absurd. A scientific commonplace indeed affirms that human cells are continuously replaced, making today's eyes materially different from those of the past. But in commonsensical practical and emotional terms, individuals tend to be viewed as maintaining a continuous identity over time." (99)

17. Martin states, "El hablante señala que no es la persona que él está describiendo -como si él esperara que el lector concluyera que sí lo es- y esta prisa hace que el lector tome una actitud cuestionante: ¿por qué es que el hablante está tan determinado a distanciarse de la escena?" (65).
18. The use of journalistic or reporter-like poetic speakers has also been identified in other poems both in this, and other collections. See Benson ("Linguistic Parody" 17) and Caballero Bonald (Insula 4).

19. In Sara Martin's article, "La experiencia desfamiliarizada de Sin esperanza, con convencimiento," she studies the effect that a defamiliarization process has, based on the reader's expectations as he/she approaches González's poetry in this work.

20. The use of a journalistic register of language in a poem is in itself an example of irony.


22. Villanueva comments on this poem briefly (147-148).

23. This construction recalls some of the selections of Aspero mundo especially "Mientras tú existas" (31).

24. For a related idea see Villanueva's note (148).

25. González's third collection, for which he was awarded the Premio Antonio Machado, is Grado elemental (1962). This work consists almost exclusively of social poetry and at no time reveals a discourse of love. For this reason, the study of Grado is omitted from this dissertation. However, it should be mentioned that the text does manifest many of the characteristics indicative of postmodernism. Among these most pronounced characteristics are: the absence of one, stable, all-encompassing meaning, the continued use of centering irony and the importance of the role of the reader. Of this last characteristic, Debicki observes, "invitan al lector a tomar un papel más activo, reaccionando al hablante y valorando sus actitudes. Lo cual pudiera relacionarse, tal vez, con un relativismo <<postmoderno>>" (AG 30). Additionally, there is an enhancement of other elements associated with a postmodern aesthetic including the use of intertexts and metaliterature. Both of these components will be considered in detail in the following chapters.


27. Salvador Fajardo describes the voices in the following way: "El poema desarrolla dos isotopías entrelazadas: la primera, narrativa, traza el origen, transmisión y uso de la palabra amor desde un punto de vista que se pretende objetivo: la segunda,
meditativa, interrumpe el fluir narrativo (el mito de creación de la palabra amor) por medio de una serie de digresiones en las que el hablante pondera la leyenda. El resultado de este doble desarrollo produce la isotopía formal clave del poema: la digresión creadora" (177).

28. Both Debicki (Angel González 37) and Fajardo (177) comment on the mythical or legendary tone of the poem.

29. Tracing the theme of fertility Fajardo points out, "Así pasamos del poder generativo del río, al de la agricultura humana, al de la procreación" (181).

30. There are many possibilities for a religious centered interpretation of this poem. In these lines it is especially evident. Other interesting parallels are the idea of origins and the book of Genesis, the role of both God and poet as creator and consideration of "la palabra," as "la palabra de Dios."

31. The intertext of Vicente Huidobro's poem "Arte poética" is duly noted. The last three verses of the Chilean's poem are almost the exact opposite in González's poem.

"Solo para nosotros
Viven todas las cosas bajo el Sol.
El poeta es un pequeño Dios." (129-130 Jiménez)

32. See section 1.2 of this dissertation for other poems revealing the effect of the absence of the beloved on the poetic speaker.

33. Debicki defines "monólogos dramáticos" as compositions that, "presentan a hablantes específicos cuya perspectiva e identidad se definen a medida que se desarrolla la obra" (Angel González 32).
3. INTERTEXTUALITY AND THE DISCOURSE OF LOVE

3.1 Tratado de urbanismo: Intertextuality and Linguistic/Social Criticism

Tratado de urbanismo (1967) is Angel González’s fifth book and is significant as it is this work which is considered to be the culmination of his first poetic period and at the same time the transition into his second.\(^1\) One aspect of the text which catches the reader’s eye right away is the title. This apparent shift in perspective from the often times all-consuming interior self-scape seen in his earlier poetry, to that of a more public urban-scape is new for the poetic voice.\(^2\) As shall be shown, here, in the realm of the metropolis, the reader is far away from the intimate, inner space of love and lovers seen before. Also relevant is that in this text, unlike the ones studied previously, the discourse of love reveals itself to have a clearly political and social dimension. This was not the case in Palabra sobre palabra, where both the title and the poetry contained within indicated that the speaker had begun to question language’s expressive capacity. In Tratado, the overt social nature of some of the poetry suggests that the poetic speaker still exhibits an underlying trust in his work as a tool for social commentary.\(^3\)
This faith in language and its communicative power, however, seems to diminish by the end of this section. As the reader arrives at the last poem, the poet has reconsidered his view of both the world and poetry:

Creo que Tratado de urbanismo marca el final de una etapa- o de una actitud- y también el comienzo de otra. El poema <<Preámbulo a un silencio>> viene a ser la negación de mi intermitente, pero hasta entonces sostenida, ilusión en la capacidad activa de la palabra poética. (Introduction 22)

The poem mentioned here by the artist, "Preámbulo a un silencio" (212), ends with the poetic voice's confession, "y sonrío y me callo porque, en último extremo, / uno tiene conciencia / de la inutilidad de todas las palabras" (ll. 31-33). At this point in the collection, with the pronouncement of "me callo," it would seem that both the poetic voice of Tratado and González himself have lost faith in the linguistic medium. However, there are other indications illustrating that the poet indeed maintains some confidence in the poetic word. This being the case, the true stance of the speaker with regard to the faith that he has in the power of language is in a state of evolution throughout the text, a situation that will be kept in mind in the following poetic analyses.
It is the contention of some literary critics that in the late sixties many poets realized their inability to effect social change through poetry. This fact was made all too apparent by the lack of real improvement in the sociopolitical conditions under the leadership of the government of Franco. Thus, it was, in part, the poets' disenchantment with a failed agenda, that of political verse of commitment, that led many to begin to focus instead on the linguistic medium itself. According to LaFollette Miller, in the case of González, in essence, "his critique of society [turned] into a critique of language and of his powers of expression" (16). While this is an important aspect of his work, it must not be forgotten that González, perhaps showing more resiliency than his poetic contemporaries, also continues his assault on the ills of Spanish society. In this way, his critique in this 1967 collection is actually two-fold since he questions the (in)adequacy of language and also gives voice to his own nonconformity with Spain and its dictator. As shall be shown, this dual critique is especially evident when the poetic voice speaks of amorous sentiments within the social context and backdrop of Franco's Spain.

As chapters one and two have shown, the idea of the speaker grappling with love and language has been present since González's first book of poetry. One of the more
constant elements of these earlier collections was the way in which the poetic speaker manifested his perspective through the persona of the yo. The first person speaker has consistently offered a personal, and sometimes intimate, point of view with regard to the discourse of love. In most cases, this has involved his internal thoughts and feelings regarding both his beloved and the nature of love itself. As has been illustrated, this can range anywhere from despair and depression to consolation and sensual ecstasy. Many times when the speaker ponders love he either addresses a beloved whom he calls tú, or personifies the very notion of love with the same second person familiar pronoun. While the poetry that has been analyzed has made it clear that the speaker still remains far from completely comprehending love and mastering verbal expression about love, his effort, as evidenced by the poems themselves, has been continual and evolving.

Of key importance in Tratado is that the perspective of the poetic voice drastically changes. Here, the discourse of love that is revealed is from a non-personal, external point of view, one that is almost identical to that of a distant narrator. What was earlier a private more intimate discourse has, in effect, become much more public. Perhaps this change is occasioned by the frustration caused by the cumulative effect of years of artistic censorship. It could
also be a reaction to the standards of behavior and conduct dictated by the intrusive and ubiquitous governmental and religious institutions of Spain. While the reason for this is unclear, the effect is evident. The speaker seems to lash out against the society and atmosphere that attempt to stifle his expression and in doing this, he appropriates a public, external discourse. It is precisely in his appropriation of this public language or "official discourse," clearly a product of society and thereby the agent that censors the poetic voice, that permits his subsequent criticism of both language and society.

It is to be remembered, at the same time that many of the concerns and preoccupations of the poet were strictly a result of the particular situation of Spain, the artistic techniques he employs reflect a universal trend in the attitudes and conceptions of how art was being considered. LaFollette Miller accurately describes this artistic evolution, linking these new concerns to the more and more prevalent ideas of postmodernism surfacing in the late sixties:

González's skepticism regarding attempts to state meaningfully any consciously held worldview parallels certain structuralist and poststructuralist leanings, such as the loss of faith in individual consciousness as the center
and origin of the literary work or the devaluation of the signified in favor of the play of the signifier. The poet's shift reflects the influence of the postmodern sensibility emerging around him. (17) The changes highlighted in González's poetry are, as will be shown, representative of the evolving international and national conception of art.

Among the most interesting techniques which González utilizes in Tratado is that of intertextuality. In her doctoral dissertation, Mary Makris discusses some of the prevalent theoretical notions on this subject. Her primary conclusion is that a broad esoteric view of intertextuality is most adequate when studying González's poetry. Among the specific theorists to whom she makes reference are Jonathan Culler, Michael Riffaterre, Roland Barthes, Mikhail Baktin and Julia Kristeva (20). In her study, Makris synthesizes many of the important ideas of these critics. In the poetic analyses offered here in the present chapter, there will be examples of the following characteristics which have been identified by Makris as indicative of an intertextual presence:

texts that contain allusions and references to historical, social or cultural situations, or incorporate clichés, parody and irony. . .[and/or]
poetic texts that adopt the form of a letter, use techniques such as footnotes, or incorporate culturally and/or socially based situations or commonplaces. (20,21)

The importance of an intertext should not be "understood in the banal sense of 'study of sources'" (60) as Kristeva cautions. On the contrary, intertexts enrichen the poetic experience for reader and poet by making it possible to include, not just one, but many "signifying systems." In this way, the texts become "polysemic" and articulate a "new system with new representability" (60).

It is primarily this important aspect of multiple texts and voices, indicative of a postmodern aesthetic, that will be explored here.

The title of this collection merits substantial comment since it clearly points towards a non-literary text or document. Martino points out:

Así, la misión de dicho título no es otra que parodiar la formalidad burocrática y municipal propia de un Reglamento o de un Registro (Tratado es, según el Diccionario de la Lengua Castellana, <<escrito o discurso sobre una materia determinada>>, y Urbanismo, <<relativo a la urbe: ciudad grande y muy poblada>>. (243)
From the onset, the presence of a voice from "outside" of the text, albeit a non-literary one, is suggested to the reader. From the very beginning, the mention of a bureaucratic legal document in a work of art offers a challenge to the notions of what literature is or what a poem should be. After all, how can a government document be seen as poetry? Benson observes that in this collection, "podemos notar un aumento del número de fuentes de todas las facetas de la vida, de las referencias metapoéticas, y del carácter lúdico de la experiencia poética" (Voces 18). These "fuentes" create the intertextualities present in much of the poetry of this collection.

*Tratado de urbanismo* consists of twenty seven poems separated into three sections, "Ciudad uno," "Intermedio de sonetos, canciones y otras músicas," and "Ciudad cero." According to Debicki, "La nota dominante del libro es la crítica. . .[que] se localiza específicamente en una ciudad moderna" (AG 41). The urban setting of many of the poems in this collection is a new aspect of González's poetry, seen only rarely in his previous collections. The first section, "Ciudad uno," consists of fourteen poems presented in pairs. One selection is presented with a roman numeral and the other with an arabic numeral (I, 1). Subsequently, each poetic pairing introduces an idea explored in both selections. This introductory section consists primarily
of poems that, in one form or another, criticize different aspects of urban life.

The first selection, entitled, "I. Inventario de lugares propicios al amor," (187) immediately establishes a serious tone. The official sounding tenor of the title is underscored by the roman numeral, which suggests a list or official enumeration. Naturally, this is further reinforced by the use of the word "inventario." The expectation for the reader, as he/she begins the poem, is that the text will bare some similarity to a somber, official sounding document. What is encountered, however, is quite different.

Son pocos.
La primavera está muy prestigiada, pero es mejor el verano.
Y también esas grietas que el otoño forma al interceder con los domingos en algunas ciudades ya de por sí amarillas como plátanos.
El invierno elimina muchos sitios: quicios de puertas orientadas al norte, orillas de los ríos, bancos públicos.
Los contrafuertes exteriores de las viejas iglesias
dejan a veces huecos
15 utilizables aunque caiga nieve.

Pero desengañémonos: las bajas
temperaturas y los vientos húmedos
lo dificultan todo.

Las ordenanzas, además, proscriben
20 la caricia (con exenciones
para determinadas zonas epidérmicas
-sin interés alguno-
en niños, perros y otros animales)
y el <<no tocar, peligro de ignominia>>

25 puede leerse en miles de miradas.
¿A dónde huir, entonces?

Por todas partes ojos bizcos,
córneas torturadas,
implacables pupilas,

30 retinas reticentes,
vigilan, desconfían, amenazan.

Queda quizá el recurso de andar solo,
de vaciar el alma de ternura
y llenarla de hastío e indiferencia,

35 en este tiempo hostil, propicio al odio.

Immediately the reader notices that the beloved is not
present in the text and the perspective of the poetic voice
is far from personal. The first eighteen lines have the
typically Spanish "paseo de los novios" as a cultural subtext. Furthermore, the emphasis on the climatic conditions, the mention of Sundays, public benches and old churches remind the reader of the numerous town squares found in various parts of every Spanish city. It is precisely in these public and highly visible "plazas" where many a "first date" takes place. Since any kind of display of public affection would be repudiated by both church and state in Franco's Spain, the most a couple was permitted was to walk chastely arm in arm around the plaza in the midst of and under the scrutiny of the entire community. In this way, an intimate sphere of private life, love romance and dating, remained under the ever vigilant eye of everyone from parents to the local priest, the nextdoor neighbor, and the guardia civil.

It is this notion of constant vigilant supervision that inspires the poetic voice to refer to the scarcity of "lugares" appropriate for possible amorous reunions. Clearly, both the options and the opportunities available would have been very few. What follows is an apparently serious consideration and subsequent rejection of different possibilities for a romantic rendezvous. The poetic speaker follows a strictly literal interpretation of the traditional idea of springtime as a season for love and lovers. This inspires him to point out, relying on practical facts, that
there are actually other seasons better suited for love than spring. LaFollette Miller observes, "With his practical tone and his concern over 'propitious places' rather than over the many other romantic aspects of love, the speaker of 'Inventarios' conveys a mechanistic approach" (104). On the literal level, the poetic voice preserves the seriousness established by the title. However, the result is comical due to the fact that his seriousness is misplaced, especially with regard to the frivolous notion that "la primavera" is the best time of the year for lovers. By assuming a stance of strict literal interpretation, the poetic speaker underscores how ridiculous and oppressive any sort of mindless adhesion to words, laws or customs ultimately becomes.

Curiously, according to these first lines of the poem, the elements prohibiting the figurative "lovemaking" to which the poetic voice refers are all temporal climatic elements, "Pero desenganémonos: las bajas / temperaturas y los vientos húmedos / lo dificultan todo." It is almost as if he is implying that if it were not for these meteorological difficulties, love would be much easier. Nevertheless, this apparent emphasis on the restrictions imposed by the weather implicit in different seasons, is symbolically linked to and representative of the more important societal restrictions of Franco’s Spain since,
metaphorically speaking, the ubiquitous, long-lasting winter could be linked to the oppressive dictatorial regime.

In line nineteen, with the appearance of the word "ordenanza," the official character of the poem is once again reinforced. This is further intensified by the use of proscribir, a verb commonly used to dictate laws or rules. Also, the words inside the parentheses imitate and parody the type of speech used in bureaucratic discourse and treatises. The style used is clearly making fun of the "legaleese" or "double-talk" often associated with the language used by those in public office or governmental service.

Later, in line twenty three the speaker recalls the image of a warning sign often posted in public areas. Instead of the likely, "Do not touch danger of electric shock," here the reader has been warned of "ignominia." In this way, yet another non-literary "text," that of a public warning sign, has been educed while at the same time, physical touching between lovers has been condemned. What the poem is suggesting, then, is that a public show of affection could indeed result in infamy or disgrace for the "perpetrators." In so doing, the poetic voice underscores that any showing of affection or love is, in effect, impossible within the urban confines. The constant allusions to the oppressive Spanish society are clear.
The poetic voice has illustrated how the practice of the "paseo," a public act that could be monitored and supervised, is a metaphor for all love and by extension, all expression of love. While the prescribed public stroll is acceptable, any private interlude is strictly prohibited. Just as the "novios" must follow the cultural norms and dictates, so too, must the writer conform his discourse to that permitted by the censors. It is this restricted atmosphere, described throughout the poem, that ultimately leads the speaker to the question, "¿A dónde huir entonces?"

In lines twenty six through thirty five, the speaker emphasizes the always present eyes or vigilance that he experiences. He explains that the ubiquitous and distorted "ojos" make it impossible to find a place for love.¹² This is underscored further by the three verbs in a series in line thirty one. As the poem concludes, he offers a possible, but not definitive solution to this dilemma. The speaker considers the unhappy option of remaining alone forever, "andar solo," sacrificing the idea of intimacy or love but free from public scrutiny and eventual reprimand in "este tiempo hostil, propicio al odio." At this point, the poem comes full circle. At the onset it proposes an inventory of possible places for love yet at the end it confirms the exact opposite, that only its opposite, hatred, is possible. In this way, the poem itself exemplifies the
"double speak" of a bureaucratic report that may propose one thing while affirming the exact opposite.

Also notable is that throughout the poem time and space are compressed. The "lugares" mentioned at the beginning are first described as seasons, divisions of time, yet as the selection concludes it is both time and space which are described as hostile. In essence, both elements are seen to be equally restrictive, as LaFollette Miller notes, "The confusion between time and place communicates a frustrating disorder, a world out of whack. . .[and] recalls not only a time but also a place, Spain, at the time the poem was written" (104).

Although the speaker may ultimately decide to "andar solo," his resignation is not complete. This is best indicated by the fact that his voice has been far from silenced and he essentially is in complete linguistic rebellion. By appropriating official governmental discourse, he uses the acceptable and approved public language in order to illustrate the drastic limitations on his personal freedom. In this sense, his amorous discourse has taken on political and social overtones rarely associated with love poetry. Clearly, in this poem the poetic voice has not given himself over to the linguistic skepticism that manifests itself at the end of this poetic section, where he states, "me callo." Rather, public
circumstances have encouraged a linguistic response that cannot be silenced.

The second poem to be studied from this first section is entitled, "4. Lecciones de buen amor" (199-202). In this selection the poetic voice once again eschews a personal perspective and assumes the vantage point of a third person, omniscient narrator describing the, "apariencias y la realidad de [un] <<amor>>, (Debicki AG 46). The love portrayed is that between a middle-aged husband and wife and the intertexts present are many and varied. They include: literary texts, cultural scenarios, music, clichés, drama, parody and even cartoons. The presentation of the actual written text of the poem on the printed page catches the reader's eye immediately because of the unusual use of a footnote (yet another intertext) appearing at the end of poem. The first stanza is as follows.

Se amaban.
No demasiado jóvenes ni hermosos,
algo marcados ya por la fatiga
de convivir durante aquellos años,
5 una alimentación con
excedentes de azúcar y de grasa había dañado su silueta,

desdibujando la esbeltez del cuello,
añadiendo volúmenes al vientre

10 y cierta pesadez a las caderas.
Pero se amaban y se mantenían
juntos. Juntos se les veía
en la misa de doce, los domingos,
ella con su astracán y sus carrillos

15 empastados en rosa, él con su aire
de hombre abstraído y su corbata
de seda natural, made in Italia.
Juntos con otros seres también juntos
pasaban las veladas de la tarde

20 exponiendo al unísono
idénticas creencias,
defendiendo los mismos ideales,
atacando los vicios más comunes:

In an honest, none too flattering description of the
couple, the speaker makes sure to point out that it is not
so much the years themselves that have worn on the two, but
rather the process of living together, *convivir*, which has
produced the fatigue that they seem to exhibit. The object
of this verb is, *"una alimentación con / excedentes de
azúcar y de grasa,"
which in effect, uses the images of food and the customary hour of dinner to represent the day in and
day out existence of the couple. The physical effects of
the passage of time on the bodies of the couple, due to both
the unhealthy diet and their constant togetherness, is offered almost as testimony that indeed they have survived the effects of both time and matrimony. While the first ten lines of the poem give the reader a vision of the mundane, private existence of this middle aged couple, it is their public life and presence that is the focus in the stanzas that follow. In this way, the speaker underscores the great importance of outward appearances, one's reputation and the ubiquitous and insidious, "qué dirán," so typical of Spanish society under the Franco regime.

As the poem continues two specific behaviors are emphasized repeatedly, "se amaban y se mantenían juntos." Partially as a result of this repetition, Alarcos Llorach points out what he perceives as a "técnica musical" in this poem:

El desarrollo de tipo musical se basa en las variaciones del tema central (Se amaban v. 1; Pero se amaban v. 11; era evidente y claro que se amaban v. 48; ¡se amaban tanto, tanto, tanto! v. 82), cada una de las cuales -irónicamente- marca un grado más de amor, con lo que el contraste de lo afirmado resulta mayor respecto a lo que se describe. Esa actitud irónica se aprecia en el contrapunto de motivos contrarios al tema central. (107)
While the critic’s observation about the main theme of the text is well taken, his comments are also important because they underscore how the poem uses a variety of artistic resources to create a selection with a multitude of both literary and non-literary voices. As the poem progresses the reader must continually reevaluate his/her preconceived notions of artistic genre. Above all, the anaphoric use of "juntos" reinforces the fact that the couple is always together and that the two, supposedly individual voices of the personae, actually appear as one.

In contrast with the first ten lines, eleven through twenty three describe the public life that the couple leads. Naturally, this includes their timely appearance in mass clad in their Sunday best. The mention of her "astracán" and his Italian tie underscore the notion that the couple has few material wants. The speaker also emphasizes that this routine is not a phenomena particular to the two of them, but rather is prevalent in all of society, "Juntos con otros seres también juntos." This togetherness not only refers to their sharing each other’s company, but also the fact that they are of one mind and one opinion, "exponiendo al unísono / idénticas creencias, / defendiendo los mismo ideales, / atacando los vicios más comunes." Clearly this couple, and their friends, are representative of those who have prospered under the Franco regime and are advocates of
the official government rhetoric, ironically referred to here as beliefs and ideals. This is emphasized in the stanzas that follow:

Creemos que el señor subsecretario
25 nos dará la licencia antes de junio;
en calidad de prestatario, pienso
que lo ideal, sin duda, es la hipoteca;
pero la juventud, y eso es grave,
gusta el pecado incluso al aire libre.

30 Juicios así de firmes, compartidos
sin una indecisión en la mirada,
y ese estar siempre juntos, sin tocarse.
(más tan compenetrados y corteses,
tan medidos sus justos ademanes,
35 tan comedidos sus bostezos entre
pasta y taza de té o pausa y pausa,
que parecía que toda su historia conyugal sólo era
un largo ensayo general, pensando
40 en la ovación final de las visitas)

The unanimous opinion of the couple and their friends, set off in italics, shows both the adequate respect to a governing body, "señor subsecretario," as well as an attitude of moral censure to be applauded by the staunchest
Francoist. The clichéd notion that most middle-aged people are critical of the "younger generation" is also presented and in this way implies the idea that the couple of this poem could well belong to the ordered, "Zona residencial" (197-198), described in the selection with which it is numerically and thematically paired. Both poems emphasize the presence of, "<<gente bien>>, que se siente obligado a considerarse como tal, o sea, a servirse de modelo irreprochable de lo que se llaman <<buenas costumbres>>" (Alarcos Llorach 45). Having said this, it is also clear that these two exemplary people and their friends are terrible gossips, a fact underscored by the use of italics and the content of these lines, which is predominantly that of the details of daily life and the condemnation of that which is new or different. The following comment of, "Juicios así de firmes, compartidos / sin una indecisión en la mirada," emphasizes how their shared beliefs are neither questioned nor doubted. Clearly, this is the speaker's way of poking fun at those who choose not to think for themselves as individuals but rather to accept instead the official rhetoric without a second thought.

While the two individuals of this exemplary couple are, as line thirty two reiterates, "siempre juntos," they never show an outward sign of emotion, "sin tocarse." For a couple described as so intensely in love, this could be
considered strange. However, as the poem "I. Inventario de lugares propicio al amor" showed the reader (the presence of yet another text), any public expression of affection is to be criticized not condoned. To illustrate this point, the always proper and correct behavior and gestures of the couple are constantly lauded by the narrative voice. Alarcos Llorach observes that their actions can be attributed, in part, to the fact that they are "on stage." The critic asserts that their relation, "Es la perfección de la vida histriónica -hay público-, llevada hasta sus límites para que el papel de cada uno no presente fisuras ante los espectadores, los demás, también partícipes, sin duda, en la farsa obligada y correcta" (45). The "farse" to which he refers is the daily lifestyle described in González’s poem because, as this couple shows, public opinion was of such vital importance that individuals themselves were forced to assume distinct these roles and discourse. This facade was not, once again, limited to a few, but rather was a pervasive element of Spanish society as the phrase "ensayo general," indicates.

The idea of the presence of actors and a dramatic play underscored by the mention of "largo ensayo" (l. 39) and "ovación final" (l. 40), call to mind other notions as well. For instance, the use of the two conjugated verbs, "parecía" y "era" (ll. 37-38), recall the Quixote inspired
concept of what seems to be and what is, or put in other words, the difference between appearances and reality.\textsuperscript{17} With the mention of the idea of \textit{ser/parecer} as well as the "acting" in which the couple is engaged, the reader perceives yet another example of how the public, outward appearance of the couple is truly synonomous with the "farsa obligada," that Alarcos Llorach mentioned earlier. The poem proceeds:

\begin{verbatim}
y e s e estar cotidiano sin tocarse,  
repito, pero juntos,  
irreparable, tenazmente próximos  
como mandan la Epístola y las Leyes,  
45 acreditaba ahora ante los hombres  
lo que un distante día  
había consagrado un sacramento:  
era evidente y claro que se amaban,  
y su amor era ejemplo para algunos,  
50 admiración de todos,  
comentario obligado en las ausencias  
inmediatas, cuando en los recintos  
el ambiente quedaba liberado  
del volumen espeso de su carne  
55 (que persistía, no obstante, de algún modo  
en el rastro de olores  
-Chanel número cinco y halitosis-
\end{verbatim}
volados de sus cuerpos, y en las frases
ligeramente desvaídas
60 con las que su partida era glosada:
han engordado más, pero se aman;
una lástima el lazo del sombrero;
aunque, de todas formas,
un amor semejante no es frecuente.)

In this part of the text the narrative voice emphasizes his presence by intruding in line forty two and saying, "repito." He later proceeds to describe the day of the exemplary couple’s wedding all the while repeating the words "juntos" and "amaban." The admiration of others that the couple has inspired is further testimony to their respectable and proper "buen amor." However, arriving at this juncture of the poem, the reader must take into account the speaker’s rather distorted physical descriptions of the couple and their parrot-like discourse of society’s values and beliefs. In the same way that their physical appearance is becoming more and more distorted, so too, are the official values and ideals which they espouse. They have lost all individual identity in their embodyment and subsequent advocacy of the traditional, official way of life. In essence, "Los protagonistas del amor se convierten así en caricaturas, y en consecuencia el amor baja al plano de lo ridículo" (Alarcos Llorach 108). By focusing on the
descriptive language used to portray the couple, the reader realizes that they are actually quite hideous individuals, disgusting not only due to their outward appearance but also their beliefs and words as well.

Furthermore, the emotion supposedly links these two human beings, constantly referred to as love, is really not love at all. Instead they are bound by the traditional and conservative lifestyle of which they are "perfect" examples. They have become so caught up in exemplifying and adhering to the norms instituted by their society that any love they might have at one time felt, has long since vanished.

The constantly reinforced visual image of a flabby, sweating couple maintains the satirical tone throughout. It is made clear that the "show" in which the couple "performs" for all who see them ends when they are alone in the confines of their prestigious automobile. It is here where the true sentiments, although never spoken, are displayed and revealed, "asco introvertido," "letal penumbra de las glándulas" and "mutuo horror."

65 del volumen, decía, de su carne
húmeda y abundante, trasladada
solemnemente por las piernas
cortas hasta el asiento
delantero de un coche americano
70 donde, a solas, pensaban
en esa cosa extraña que es la vida
y se veían
tal como eran por dentro, justamente,
con toda exactitud el uno al otro,¹

75 pasando
mental revista a un asco introvertido
en la letal penumbra de las glándulas
y a un mutuo horror basado en experiencias
más lúcidas-no mucho más, es lógico.

80 Pero
no se lo decían nunca, porque
-como afirmaban todos sus amigos-
¡se amaban tanto, tanto, tanto!

It is also in this last part where the number
indicating a footnote appears as a continuation of verse
seventy four. This technique of citation is certainly not
expected in a poem and is usually associated with a non-
fictional prose text. Clearly, as Debicki suggests, with
the appearance of the footnote, "se niegan y se vuelven al
revés las expectativas no sólo del amor sino también del
poema de amor" (AG 45). That is to say, the very notion of
the genre of love poetry is called into question. What is
certain, is that the reader has not received the kind of

¹ This footnote is the poetic text lines 83-106.
"lecciones" about love that he/she probably expected at the beginning. The footnote is divided into two parts, her reflections on him and later, his reflections on her. By presenting the information in this fashion, it is clear that the "narrator" of these lines is omniscient, knowing both the interior thoughts of the husband and the wife.

1. Y en efecto, era así.

Respecto a él, ella sabía

85 su egoísmo, que sólo le dolía
-o mejor, le dolió- algunas veces
con ocasión de aquellas cosas
-hablo de gente bien, ténase en cuenta-
que se hacen en el lecho los domingos

90 por la mañana,
antes del desayuno
y tras el primer llanto de los niños.
No ignoraba tampoco
la complicada trama de su alma

cuya blanda envoltura permitía
advertir los punzantes materiales
que formaban su núcleo oscuro y frío:
puñales de violencia hundidos, yertos
en la ceniza de su cobardía,

100 vergüenzas hechas vidrio, inhibiciones
envenenadas como flechas viejas,
agujas de impotencia, roído todo
por la herrumbre de un odio que nadie perdonaba

The negative aspects of the husband, while hidden from sight to all others, are well-known to his companion as the narrative voice reveals. His outward selfishness is manifested by their (coerced) lovemaking on Sunday mornings, "le dolió-algunas veces / con ocasión de aquellas cosas / . . /que se hacen en el lecho los domingos." This intimate fact is revealed by the speaker, who in yet another attempt to clarify himself, inserts his own voice into the poem saying, "-hablo de gente bien, téngase en cuenta," as he officially, and humorously, reminds the reader of the decency of the people of whom he is speaking. Later, the husband's even more internal, but nevertheless present cowardliness and hatred are mentioned. He is formed by a "núcleo oscuro y frío," made up of, "puñales de violencia," and "vergüenzas hechas vidrio, inhibiciones / envenadas como flechas viejas / agujas de impotencia." The images used to describe the interior of the man all suggest sharp, metalic objects. It is as if these flaws have a life of their own and are constantly trying to cut their way out of the shell of the man and manifest themselves in an exterior way. The image of "herrumbre," which has effected these metal objects, is the resultant hatred that the concealment of these emotions has produced. Metaphorically speaking,
although his internal faults try desperately to penetrate the surface and express themselves, the man has managed to keep them inside, within the folds of his "alma," out of sight of all but his wife. All of this interiorization of his feelings has produced his underlying hatred that pardons no one. Obviously, the mention of hatred is not expected in a poem entitled "Lecciones de buen amor." The narrator then offers insights concerning the wife:

En cuanto a ella, él conocía

105 su estupidez congénita, acentuada
posteriormente en largos internados
-oraciones, solfeo y acuarela-
en lo que, con la pausa
de húmedos veraneos en el norte,
110 su personalidad fue madurando,
cubriéndose de costras, retorciéndose hasta quedar así: excipiente inocuo
-o secreción balsámica de sus mismas heridas-
emulsionado con dos partes
115 semejantes de gula y de codicia,
y perfumado
por una firme, extensa,
ciega adhesión al culto de dulía:
Estanislao de Koskas, santa Gema,
120 la venerable madre Rafols, y otros
héroes y heroínas de la Iglesia Triunfante,
ocupan las horas
inevitamente desprovistas
de sentido, que median
entre la mermelada y la menestra y luego
las más lentas y turbias, señaladas
con un especial énfasis por todos los relojes,
fatalmente abocadas
a la succion de chocolate, poco
antes de que las sombras del crepúsculo
propicien
el rosario en familia, y la amarilla
luz eléctrica manche las paredes
de la sala, y sea
necesario pensar:

en la cena y la compra de mañana.

In these lines the narrative voice reveals the innermost details of the wife's daily existence. Specifically he mentions her stupidity, idleness and domestic chores. Her personality is compared to a "costra" and her routine is described as unimportant, boring with hours "desprovistas de sentido." Perhaps the most pointed criticism of this woman within the Spanish society of her era is her almost fanatical religious faith. While earlier
in the poem the "Epístola y las Leyes" (l. 44) were named, there, the sacred texts were evoked as a spiritual guide for the couple's conjugal behavior. Here, however, the narrative voice makes fun of the wife's religious zeal. Ironically, at least two of the comments that highlight the wife's shortcomings belong to the category of the seven capital sins. These include gluttony and greed. In this way, he underscores her hypocritical nature while also putting her faults in evidence. Certainly, this can also be seen as social criticism condemning the hypocritical Catholic church which was closely in league with the Franco government.

The woman described here is the antithesis of the idealized beloved seen in earlier collections. The discourse of love, which had been used before to describe a transformative force whose absence left the poetic speaker in a state of despondency and despair, is nothing like what has been offered in this poem. The poetic voice, who earlier employed a personal perspective to describe his feelings and experiences about love, has become a cold, impersonal narrator describing the minutia of the public life and outward appearances of two despicable people. While the narrative voice insinuates that the husband and wife are conscious of each other's faults, "Respecto a él, ella sabía," and "En cuanto a ella, él conocía," it remains
unclear whether it is the poetic personae themselves who know this information, or solely the omniscient narrator.

In any case, neither attempts to change their situation. This is made obvious by the last line of the poem which indicates that this routine, although horrid, will continue. The narrator has made a strong statement as Alarcos Llorach points out, "una crítica del amor establecido por la ley y la conveniencia social, una crítica de la vida familiar de pura fachada y ausente de verdaderos sentimientos" (45). In the end, the couple is less than exemplary and the "lesson" that the poem has taught is that exterior appearances can be deceiving. While a fairly simple message, it has been revealed in a very inventive way. As Debicki points out, "Combining techniques normally used in poetry, narrative fiction, and expository writing, he invents a fresh way of communicating a strongly negative view of a society while avoiding any didactism" (Modernity 87).

The poem portrays a time and environment in which love is an impossibility. Throughout the text the focus of the speaker has been on the external, public appearance of the two characters. This has been to illustrate to the reader the notion of the importance of the public facade in Franco’s Spain. On the outside, the couple, like the government, seems under control, normal, stable and even
thriving. However, just as the couple has been shown to have its grotesque disturbing side, the regime too had its own ugliness, machine gun carrying guardia civiles, soldiers lined up in rows on horseback, curfews, censorship and countless portraits of the dictator himself in every home and public building. The repeated, outward assertion that, "Se amaban," has revealed itself to be a farsical lie. Herein, lies the genius of the speaker, who by using a public, almost narrative-like discourse, has shed light on the fact that in this society, neither love, nor a true expression of it can be manifested.

As has been illustrated, many different textual voices have been evoked in the selection. The voices of other poems, music, cliché, drama, parody and prose have all been revealed in the text but the strongest, loudest voice is certainly that of the oppressive cultural scenario of a dictatorial Spain. It is this context that is constantly referred to as the lives of the couple are described. Clearly, this intertextual referent overshadows and silences, just as the dictatorship itself overshadowed and silenced, the other voices of the poem/society. In this way, the speaker's use of intertexts not only parallel, but also call attention to the sociohistoric situation, the metaphoric backdrop of the poem.
Also worthy of comment is the evocation of the genre of love poetry. While neither poem seen thus far has revealed anything like the traditional poetic stance that one might associate with the poetry of Garcilaso or even other examples of González's own poetry, in both cases, a discourse of love has been employed. Although the genre itself has usually been thought of as harmless and innocuous, in these two instances, it has been appropriated by the speaker and used to offer sociopolitical commentary. The private personal perspective typical of love poetry has been replaced with a public narrative-like perspective. In this way, the poetry has transcended the "function" of what one would normally associate with amorous verse and instead offers an innovative re-definition.

The second part of this collection, "Intermedio, de canciones, sonetos y otras músicas," is comprised of ten poems which Debicki has described as "evocaciones subjetivas y notálgicas de amor y de formas musicales del pasado" (AG 41). The first four compositions make direct reference to musical genres or compositions, "Vals de atardecer" (215), "Tango de madrugada" (216), "La trompeta (Luis Armstrong)" (217) and later "Canción para cantar una canción" (218). Clearly, just as the genre of the love poem earlier was called into to question, here the poetic voice complicates issues even further by focusing on different musical genres
now encompassed within his book of poetry. The poet himself has commented:

inicio cierta apertura hacia lo imaginativo, un acercamiento a temas intrascendentes (la música ligera) y una búsqueda, más a través del tono y de la estructura profunda del poema que de su organización estrófica, de una expresión próxima a la canción- (Introduction 23)

After these poems about music the poetic voice continues with two that are in traditional poetic forms, "Soneto para cantar una ausencia" (219) and "Soneto para imaginarte con exactitud" (220). In both, he employs a familiar structure, the first one lamenting the absence of the beloved and the second, speaking of the contemplated beauty of tú. Here, the speaker has abandoned the public, impersonal voice seen in the first two poems of the chapter and returned to the private personal perspective witnessed in his earlier collections. The poem that follows, "Letra para cantar un día domingo" (222), once again touches upon the idea of the absence of the beloved. While the discourse found in all three of these poems is certainly one of love, none of these selections is extremely innovative or much different from similar poems revealing these same ideas studied in earlier collections. They are important, however, because they
strongly contrast in perspective, tone and focus, with the first two poems.

The poem "Canción de invierno y de verano" (223) also has some very interesting intertextual elements. This selection uses geographic clues and allusions to evoke the voice of a specific poet and poem. It is further indication of the kind of poetry which, as Debicki observes, "alude directa e indirectamente a poemas y tradiciones anteriores, obligando a su lector a desarrollar nuevas visiones contraponiendo su texto a otro anterior" (AG 12). The perspective of the poetic voice is personal, interiorized and almost intimate, and the tú he evokes is once again his idealized beloved.

Cuando es invierno en el mar del Norte
es verano en Valparaíso.
Los barcos hacen sonar sus sirenas al entrar en el puerto de Bremen con jirones de niebla y de hielo
en sus cabos,
mientras los balandros soleados arrastran por la superficie del Pacífico Sur bellas bañistas.

Eso sucede en el mismo tiempo,
pero jamás en el mismo día.
10 Porque cuando es de día en el mar del Norte
-brumas y sombras absorbiendo restos
de sucia luz-
es de noche en Valparaíso
-rutilantes estrellas lanzando agudos dardos
15 a las olas dormidas.

Cómo dudar que nos quisimos,
que me seguía tu pensamiento
y mi voz te buscaba - detrás,
muy cerca, iba mi boca.

20 Nos quisimos, es cierto, y yo sé cuánto:
primaveras, veranos, soles, lunas.

Pero jamás en el mismo día.

The selection begins by describing two contrasting
scenes. One is of a frosty port in Germany along the North
Sea while the other is the paradisiacal Valparaíso, Chile.
The poetic voice comments on the geographic and climatic
differences between the cities and also points out that the
two countries are located in different time zones. Basing
himself both literally and metaphorically in this last fact,
the speaker also shows that due to these differences in the
hour, although two boats could presumably enter the two
ports simultaneously, it would be the "mismo tiempo" but not
el "mismo día." The poetic voice seems to have gone to great lengths to differentiate and contrast the space which each country occupies and the time that applies to that specific area. Not only are they separated by an enormous distance, but they are incompatible temporally as well. Furthermore, it is suggested that any kind of relationship between Valparaíso and Bremen is impossible due to these difficulties. Finally, by describing two opposite seasons, one in the north and the other in the south, the speaker contrasts the images of "brumas y sombras" with those of "estrellas" y "olas."

As the reader continues on to the last stanza of the poem the ideas of spatial distance and temporal incompatibility are both present. It is here, however, where the poem takes a turn asking the implicit question, "Cómo dudar que nos quisimos." This rhetorical question (or emphatic statement) shifts the focus of the reader from an external discussion about ships and weather to a personal, sentimental state. The speaker goes on, as if to remove any doubt about a one-time love between himself and the tú, to describe how each used to think of the other. The description of the subsequent events, "me seguía tu pensamiento / y mi voz te buscaba-detrás, / muy cerca iba mi boca," are compressed spatially in the text of the poem by the phrase "nos quisimos," which both preceeds and follows
the lines. In this way, it is fair to assume that the events described did indeed transpire in the past during the now ended love affair. With the reiteration of "Nos quisimos," in line twenty, it is made clear a second time, by using the preterite tense, that the relationship is over. The speaker recalls how much they loved each by measuring the amount in, "primaveras, veranos, soles, lunas."

Curiously, in order to calculate quantity of love between the two, the poetic voice uses measurements of time. This, in turn, sets the reader up for the last line of the poem which ties the first three and the fourth stanzas together, "Pero jamás en el mismo día." The spatial difference and the temporal incompatibility mentioned earlier have been evoked yet again and in this way the poetic voice illustrates how the love of this couple, just like the clocks of the the countries, was never quite in sync. The conjunction "Pero," emphasizes this discrepancy, they love each other, but, never on the same day. What was first portrayed as spatial distance and temporal incompatibility is later extended to be emotional distance and sentimental incompatibility.

Once again, texts other than that of the poem itself come into play. In this case this is achieved by providing the reader with textual information pointing him/her in a given direction (in this case geographic), and later making allusions to a specific poem and poet." First of all,
Valparaíso is mentioned two times. In Chile it is summertime and while during the day one cannot miss glimpsing the "bellas bañistas," the nighttime is filled with "rutilantes estrellas lanzando agudos dardos / a las olas dormidas." A romantic setting indeed, these images keep the Chilean evening in the forefront of the reader's mind and are a clue to the invocation of another text. Later, as the fourth stanza begins with the interrogative or emphatic "cómo" and the repetition of the verb "quisimos" the reader begins to identify the similarities between the text of González and the famous "Poema 20" of the Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda. These textual clues could well have gone unperceived, if it were not for the mention of Chile. However, considering intertextual components, it does bring this famous poem to mind. Among the other elements that point to this relationship are the use of the phrase "es cierto" and "mi voz te buscaba." The nocturnal scenario earlier mentioned, the ponderance of a lost love, and the great distance between the lovers are also elements seen in both poems and reinforce the relationship between the two selections. In this instance through the effective use of intertexts the poetic speaker is able to universalize the experience of lost love in both time, Neruda's poem from 1924, and space Chile, Spain and even Bremen, Germany.
In all three of the poems studied from Tratado de urbanismo the importance of intertextual elements has been illustrated. The relevance of intertextualities extends to various other selections of the book as well. For instance, an intertextual relationship between González’s "Cadáver ínfimo" (205-206) and a poem by both César Vallejo and Pedro Salinas has been noted by two different critics. Furthermore, the poem "La paloma. (Versión libre)" (224-225), which has been studied in detail by LaFollete Miller, reveals the presence of three different texts:

(1) the love song "La paloma," intermittently quoted in italics throughout the poem; (2) the discourse of rare bird sightings, replete with references to flight and feathers and to the inevitable birdwatching professor; and (3) allusions to sites of global resistance and conflict. (80)

In the case of this poem, the interplay of all three of these voices result in what González himself has termed, "el poema más caracterizadamente político (me parece) entre los que yo escribí hasta entonces" (Introduction 23).

Curiously, this statement, which is a clear indication of the social aspect of González’s poetry, refers to a poem appearing in the second section of the book. That is to
day, after his supposed loss of confidence in the capacity of language, which had prompted the response, "me callo." Clearly, although the poet has stated that he has lost his faith in the utility of the poetic word, his silence is far from complete.

The principle idea of this chapter has been to underscore the presence and poetic effect of the multiple voices appearing in the poetry of Tratado de urbanismo. Primarily, two aspects have been focused upon, the criticism of society and the critique of language. The climate of Franco's Spain has been prominently revealed and criticized by constantly referring to cultural situations and stereotypes, people, and beliefs. Along the same vein, language too, has been a subject of frustration to the poetic voice. At times, he has appropriated the bureaucratic, official language of the regime in making his commentary on society, while in other instances he has expanded the discourse of love in order to include an openly public perspective incorporating many non-literary texts. Truly, as was indicated at the onset, these intertextual voices have allowed for the creation of a poetry that embodies a "new representability." While at times the discourse of love has been made public and acquired a functional capacity of social condemnation, the last poem studied recalls the reader of the personal, intimate
lyricism first evident in *Aspero mundo*. Love and its expression continue to be varied in González's poetry as shall be shown in the study of the poet's next three books.
1. See Benson's discussion of this work as transitional (Voces 17).

2. A quick look back at the poetry studied up until this point reveals that the poetic speaker has almost constantly focused on his own personal self-environs. For an example from each of the collections studied see: "Me he quedado sin pulso y sin aliento" (38), "Cumpleaños de amor" (92), and "En ti me quedo" (180-182).

3. This characteristic was inherited from the poets of the preceding generation whose attitude towards poetry is best explained by Celaya's definition, "un arma cargada de futuro."

4. LaFollette Miller's study and explanation of the reasons and motives behind the change in González's views on poetry are described in the introduction to her book Politics and Verbal Play (15-23).

5. The poet's third work, Grado elemental, is almost exclusively social poetry.

6. Makris' discussion of intertexts and the predominant postmodern theorists is found in chapter one of her dissertation, "Under the Influence: Intertextual Strategies in the Poetry of Angel González" (20-68).

7. Julia Kristeva's notions about intertextuality are discussed in Makris's article, "Intertextualidad, discurso y ekfrasis en 'El Cristo de Velázquez' de Angel González" (73). The pages cited here are those cited in the Makris article. The Kristeva book is Revolution in Poetic Language.

8. Both Alarcos Llorach (41) and Debicki (AG 42) make this observation.

9. Alarcos Llorach comments briefly on this selection (77-78).

10. At the same time, the juxtaposition of "official language" in a poem that alludes to a romantic theme is clearly ironical.


12. From the onset of the collection there is a strong invocation of other literary texts. Debicki notes the following about the speaker of the González poem, "se nos obliga a reírnos un poco del hablante (reacción acentuada por un eco en estos versos del poema <<Monstruos>> de Hijos de la ira de Dámaso Alonso: <<me acechan ojos enemigos / formas grotescas me
vigilant>>). Su queja resulta algo exagerada, <<literaria>> (Angel Gonzalez 44).

13. Due to the didactic tenor of the title of the poem, the reader might recall the Archipreste de Hita's El libro de buen amor, thus underscoring the way in which voices from other texts are evoked by González's poetry. This same didactic tenor is also seen in Grado elemental, which consists of two sections, "Lecciones de las cosas," and "Fábulas para animales."

14. The footnote that makes up part of the body of the poem and my own use of the term "narrator" to describe the voice of this selection are both indicative of the transgression of generic expectation exploited by the poetic voice. This was alluded to earlier in the summary of Makris' comments.

15. Referring to another intertextual relation, Debicki points out that due to the first line of the selection, "Se amamban," the poem could be considered a "Parodia acentuada, tal vez, por ecos irónicos de <<Se querían>> de La destrucción o el amor de Vicente Aleixandre, cuyo cuadro de una pasión elemental representaría el extremo opuesto a este seudo-amor hipócrita" (AG 44-45). Interestingly, once that this relationship has been pointed out, the reader of this dissertation may recall a poem commented on earlier in chapter two. There, the poem "De dos palabras nítidas ahora," was dedicated to Vicente Aleixandre for his book La destrucción o el amor. In this way, the reader experiences the very real presence of intertextual elements in González's poetry. After all, by reading the title and the first stanza, the literary voices of a medieval poet, a member of the Generation of 1927, and González himself in prior selections have all converged in "Lecciones."

16. Later, the italicized lines (ll. 61-64) underscore the dramatic nature of the poem even more as, "This parenthetical discourse reminds the reader of an aside in a dramatic work" (Makris 50). These comments, pronounced when the couple is no longer present, recall those voices which the audience can hear but the protagonists cannot.

17. Again, the reader of this dissertation may think back to the previously studied poem, "Todos ustedes parecen felices." In that selection, from Aspero mundo, the poetic voice spoke about an "ustedes" who exhibited the same hypocritical behavior as the couple in "Lecciones" and in a sense, acted out the same dramatical farse of being in love. Once again, this text of González proves itself to be textually self-reflexive.
18. Patrick Josef Lecertua's dissertation "Angel González: Poetry as Craft and the 'Word upon Word' Experience," refers to this section as an operatic intermezzo. His analyses of the poems of this section are quite interesting (113-121).

19. In an attempt to summarize the phenomena of multiple voices in Tratado de urbanismo Benson states, "Al terminar el libro, nos damos cuenta de que hemos oído fragmentos de canciones, 'oraciones' por la muerte de unas muelas, un trozo del "Poema 20" de Neruda (ligeramente alterado). . ." (Voces 18).

20. The final section of this collection, "Ciudad cero," consists of three poems which are all in some way or another childhood memories and not germane to this study.

21. This has been noted by Debicki (AG 45) and Palley (87).
4. POETIC TECHNIQUE AND SEMANTIC INDIREDICTION

4.1 Breves acotaciones para una biografía: Creation, Control and Communication

Breves acotaciones para una biografía (1969), is a short book consisting of only eight poems which is the first of a series of three that the poet will later qualify as "un único libro" (Introduction 23). In this chapter, all three texts will be analyzed so that their similarities and the continuity that they develop can be better appreciated. According to most critics, this collection, written after the transitional Tratado de urbanismo, is the first of González’s second poetic period.\(^1\) The two distinctive features studied in the last chapter as indicative of the advent of the poet’s second stage of development were the allusions to the ever-diminishing faith in language and the utilization of an often times public, impersonal poetic voice. In his book, Poetry of Discovery, Debicki summarizes some of the other characteristics that the reader can expect in this poetry:

González now reaches beyond the issue of individual ideals and losses, and even beyond the social patterns, conventions, and problems...he makes us feel the conflicts and tensions present
in all kinds of life schemes, and shocks us with highly unusual and irreverent visions. (75)

As the title indicates, there is an (auto)biographical bent throughout the collection but this does not manifest itself in poems that simply recount anecdotes of the poet's past. The selections are, as the word "acotaciones" indicates, poetic asides or notes, and have language and poetic technique as their focal point, not the now past events of Angel González's life. Indeed, the notion of what the poem says, is not as important as how says it. This, as Debicki points out, reflects a decidedly postmodern sensibility:

El poema contiene un asunto... [descrito] por multiples recursos linguistícos, que permiten comunicarlo en una serie de perspectivas complejas, con una falta de resolución final muy <<postmoderna>>. Estos recursos... acentúan la importancia del proceso linguistico de poema." (AG 64)

The lack of resolution to which this critic refers will be plainly evident in the selections to be studied in this section.

Another important element to be considered is the poetic voice of Breves. While notably different from that often heard in Tratado, here, the voice speaks in first
person and does not attempt to make any sort of social commentary while also reflecting, "un deseo de alejarse de un <<yo>> anterior tal vez demasiado personal" (AG 55). That is to say, while the speaker is clearly different from the last collection, it is also distinct from the intensely personal voice heard throughout Aspero mundo.

As the study of the amorous discourse continues in this dissertation, the focus will be specifically on the poetic techniques utilized in order to reveal the "conflicts and tensions" that the poet experiences with regard to both the emotion and expression of love. The poetic voice reveals three primary preoccupations that are evident in this poetry: poetic/sexual (im)potency, the ability to control the beloved, and the (in)communication that occurs between lovers. Just as language seems to be more and more elusive to the poet/speaker, so too does comprehending love. Although he continues to struggle with both, he seems powerless to completely grasp either.

The first selection to be considered opens the collection and is entitled, "A veces" (237). Although this poem does not necessarily exemplify a discourse of love, its implications about the significance of the emotion are quite interesting. From the onset, the reader feels the tension that the poetic voice is experiencing with regard to his (in)ability to create, both poetically and sexually.
Escribir un poema se parece a un orgasmo: 
mancha la tinta tanto como el semen,
empreña también más, en ocasiones.
Tardes hay, sin embargo,
5 en las que manoseo las palabras, 
muerdo sus senos y sus piernas ágiles,
les levanto las faldas con mis dedos,
las miro desde abajo,
les hago lo de siempre
10 y, pese a todo, ved:

   no pasa nada.

lo expresaba muy bien César Vallejo:
<<Lo digo, y no me corro>>.

Pero él disimulaba.

Clearly, writing poetry has been equated with sexual intercourse. Both are means of (re)production and both reflect the possible creative (im)potence of the speaker of the poem. González’s metaphoric construct is fairly straightforward and, as Debicki points out, the poetic voice is, "presentando a <<las palabras>> como mujeres a las que hace el amor. Explica en gran detalle como las actividades que normalmente producen un orgasmo a veces no funcionan" (AG 56). Just as an orgasm cannot always be achieved by
physical stimulation, poetry is not always the product of writing.

The alluded to image of poetry/woman parallels that of poet/lover thus revealing poetry and the sexual act as examples of when the speaker seems unable to control the outcome. In line ten, just after the poetic speaker describes the "repertoire of techniques" (LaFollette Miller 176) that ultimately fail him, he suddenly directs himself to a previously unmentioned vosotros, by using the imperative, "ved." The fact that the poetic speaker emphatically addresses a group of people seems not only surprising, but inappropriate as well. It is as if he were justifying his efforts and failures at successfully achieving poetry/orgasm by stating his case and later saying, "see, I tried." The fact that it is a familiar group to whom he speaks implies that perhaps he is looking for a nod of understanding in regards to his dilemma. In effect, the reader has become a voyeur of the poetic/sexual activities of the speaker.

After having affirmed that he is poetically impotent, later, he goes on to try and defend his failure by making this experience seem to be a common one. As if to show the vosotros that he is not alone in his impotence, he mentions another poet, César Vallejo, whom he suggests has the same problem. The passage, "<<Lo digo, y no me corro,>>" comes
from Vallejo's poem, "Piedra negra," and as LaFollette Miller comments, "if taken in context, Vallejo's words, "me corro," would probably be read, 'I say it, and I stand firm'" (176). However, the Spaniard has chosen these words precisely to use them in the context that he himself has developed. In González's poem, "no me corro," means I don't have an orgasm. While he has not misquoted the words of Vallejo, he has evoked them in such a way as to alter their original meaning. In doing so, he has exploited the ambiguous nature of words and their meaning while demystifying the notion of poetic creation. As LaFollette Miller points out, this has been achieved, "not only through employing crass terminology but also in its irreverent misuse (or abuse?) of a previous poetic text" (176). Later, the poetic voice of González goes on to reveal that in any case the Peruvian, "disimulaba," suggesting either that the quoted words of the poem are untrue or, perhaps, that the speaker of the González poem did indeed have an orgasm.

With regard to the discourse of love, the speaker's language has made it very evident that in this poem writing/sex are not to be considered the ultimate expression of poetic creation/love making. On the contrary, both are seen as "coldly physical and mechanical" (LaFollette Miller 176) acts which sometimes are successful and sometimes are not. In effect, this metaphor undermines the notion of
sexual intercourse as an expression of love and, at the same time, the idea of writing poetry as a creative, productive activity. Even though this second notion might be expected in a poet who is losing his trust in language, the reader also must note that as a consequence of his diminishing linguistic faith, any emotional importance or stature commonly attributed to the sexual act has been lost by trivializing it as an ordinary biological function.

As the selection ends, the reader is quite aware that González's commentary of his (in)ability to produce has served him quite well. This portrayal of the (im)possibility of writing is quite characteristic of the postmodern aesthetic. After all, by bemoaning his impotency as a poet and lover he has indeed created a poetic text. Inasmuch as the amorous is concerned, by presenting a rather "irreverent vision" of his ideas on poetic creation, the speaker has again revealed that he sees a stark division between sex and love, recalling a similar idea seen in chapter one.

The next selection to be studied is entitled, "Siempre lo que quieras" (239). Here, the poetic voice seems to begin the poem by giving some sweet advice to his beloved. At first, the speaker is contented with very little, but as the text develops this will be shown to be far from the truth.
 Cuando tengas dinero regálame un anillo,
cuando no tengas nada dame una esquina de tu boca,
cuando no sepas qué hacer vente conmigo
-pero luego no digas que no sabes lo que haces.

5 Haces haces de leña en las mañanas
y se te vuelven flores en los brazos.
Yo te sostengo asida por los pétalos,
como te muevas te arrancaré el aroma.

Pero ya te lo dije:
10 cuando quieras marcharte ésta es la puerta:
se llama Angel y conduce al llanto.

In spite of the fact that the title of the poem is, "Always, whatever you want," it portrays a situation that is, in effect, just what the poetic speaker wants. The selection begins with three seemingly sincere lines all sharing the same structure.¹ A content, satisfied tone resonates from the poem and it is suggested that the speaker is not a demanding lover at all. Essentially, he will be happy with whatever effort the tú makes. However, in the fourth line, which does not continue the use of the anaphoric, "cuando," a hyphen and the conjunction "pero," interrupt the flow of the poem. The words that follow, "no digas que no sabes lo
que haces," begin to change the tone and also signal a type of warning or reprimand directed towards the tú.

In the second stanza the complacent sweet tenor of earlier seems to be momentarily recovered as the tú is described as capable of turning wood into flowers with her embrace. This, however, is undermined both by the three times repeated, "haces," as well as the very next line where the lover asserts, "Yo te sostengo asida por los pétalos."

The verb asir, which is employed as an adjective means to grasp or seize and seems a bit harsh to be used in regards to holding the beloved. Furthermore, the line that follows intensifies the tight restrictive grasp that the yo has on his loved one as he states the consequences of what will happen if she move, "te arrancaré el aroma." Once again, the verb arrancar, seems extreme, to pull out by the roots, to force out, or to wrest. The tone has been permanently changed and now a sense of restriction, control and egotism on the part of the poetic voice is perceived.

The last stanza categorically lets the tú know that if she doesn't like her situation she can leave, and lines eleven and twelve contain the melodramatic ultimatum, "ésta es la puerta: / se llama Angel y conduce al llanto," implying that she will encounter only misery if she does decide to depart. Here, the door through which the disenchanted tú may exit is referred to as "Angel." The
fact that the poetic voice has chosen to give the door the same name as that of the flesh and blood poet immediately catches the attention of the reader. After all, given that the book is supposedly made up of notes for a "biografía," one is already naturally predisposed to equate the first person poetic voice of the text with that of Angel González the poet. If the door, "Angel," leads to despair, then presumably the tú should remain with the speaker of the poem who is also Angel. This is really not much of a choice for the beloved and instead of the poem ending in a way emphasizing, "siempre lo que quieras," it reinforces the control of the poetic speaker over the tú.

According to Debicki, the theme of the poem is the simplistic and universal affirmation of "el riesgo de amor" (61). However, due to the contradictory nature of many of the images and the unusual use of language and poetic technique it is quite easy for the reader to get caught up in the curious linguistic aspects of the poem and overlook the elemental message of the selection on a first reading. This occurs primarily for three reasons: the abundance of contrasting ideas, the appearance of the name Angel commented on earlier and finally, the (mis)use of anadiplosis.

At the onset of the poem, while the speaker appears to be at ease with whatever the tú wishes, he also wants to restrict and control her. Later, he associates her with a
beautiful flower only to say that he has grasped on to her "pétalos" and holds her motionless threatening to tear out her "aroma." Finally, the poetic voice says that if the beloved wants, she can leave. However, he never indicates that he physically lets go of her. While it is clear that he asserts an almost despotic control on his beloved, many of his actions are plainly contradictory and do not seem to make sense. This sense of confusion created by the text exemplifies the postmodern "falta de resolución," referred to earlier and keeps language, not thematic concerns, as the focus of the poem.

Another important aspect is the utilization of the name "Angel" within the text of the poem. In doing this, the poetic voice is trying to emphasize that the speaker of the poem is just that, a speaker, not to be confused with the poet. This being the case, the poem challenges the idea that the poet himself is the poetic voice. By consciously using the name "Angel" for the door, knowing that the poet's name is Angel, the reader must think of the two concepts as two distinct entities, not as one. Also important is that the mention of the author's name inside his own work challenges the notion of a literary voice versus a "real" voice. Because of this, the reader must reevaluate his/her perceptions about the limits of textual voices as well as those that are outside of the text. Finally, the idea of
privileging or giving more (hierarchical) value to a textual voice than to a non-textual voice must also be considered. When these aspects are taken into account it is clear that the poem raises a variety of questions and issues which all point towards its self-reflexive postmodern nature.

After the use of the poet's own name in the text, it is perhaps the repetition of the word "haces," between the first and second stanzas, which is most notable. The first two times the word is used verbally and the last time it is used in its plural nominal form, haz, a bundle of sticks. As a poetic technique, this is known as anadiplosis, "a figure of word repetition that links two phrases, clauses, lines, or stanzas by repeating the word at the end of the first one at the beginning of the second. . . [and] is the mechanism of concatenation and is the usual vehicle for the rhetorical strategy of climax" (Princeton 71). As the definition of anadiplosis indicates, it is generally employed for a specific reason or to generate a specific poetic effect. Although supposedly the use of this technique is to "link" phrases together, here, it comes after the poetic voice has interrupted the rhythmic sequence of the first three anaphoric lines and drastically changed the thematic content, (from a reprimand to praise) in the transition from lines four to five. In this way, the device
accentuates the disrupted, contradictory nature of the poem much more than any kind of "link" between the two stanzas. Clearly, it seems that the poet does not quite adhere to the normal usage restrictions for this poetic technique. In addition to what was just mentioned, he also uses two words that are semantically different, albeit visually and aurally similar. Furthermore, since one of its functions is to indicate the "climax" of a poem, this suggests that right after, "haces. / Haces haces," would come the high point of the poem. On the contrary, however, the entire poem is extremely anticlimactic ending in the unequivocal option offered by the poetic voice. Additionally, as Patrick LeCertua points out, "the meaning of haces de leña (colloquial for sawing logs or sleeping) evoke a lazy lover amusingly: she is snoring" (166), further undermining the idea that this precedes the poetic "climax." In short, the speaker has obeyed no guideline for the use of anadiplosis and in doing so has not achieved the traditional poetic effect associated with this device.

At the end of the poem while the universal notion of love as a compromising and risky endeavour is present, it has been communicated in a very innovative way. Clearly, the use of language and poetic technique seems to be in the foreground, and the message indeed is "situada hacia atrás en el lenguaje" (Debicki 60). This is a reflection of the
emphasis on the "linguistic process" mentioned earlier. Ironically, while the poetic voice seems to want to control the beloved, the very language that he uses to describe this, seems to be far from under his domain.

In the selection "Eso era amor" (241) the speaker presents a poetic dialogue between himself and his beloved. In order to highlight the verbal exchange that occurs, the poet employs punctuation (hyphens) and italic print, however, as shall be shown, there seems to be little correlation between the questions asked and the responses offered.

Le comenté:
-Me entusiasman tus ojos.
Y ella dijo:
¿Te gustan solos o con rímel?

-Grandes,
respondí sin dudar.
Y también sin dudar
me los dejó en un plato y se fue a tientas.

The scene presented is so strangely absurd that it forces the reader to grasp on to anything at all in order to try and make sense out of the short composition. Debicki suggests that the dialogue is "a potential love (or seduction) plot [that] has been cast in terms of a restaurant scene" (Discovery 76). This is quite feasible...
considering the question of the tú, ¿Te gustan solos o con rímel?, typical of the kind a waiter may ask a customer. Also reinforcing this idea is the "plato" mentioned in the last line.

The rhythmic pace of the poem is very rapid due to the short lines and the series of preterite verbs, "comenté," "dijo," "respondí," "dejó" and "se fue." This creates the impression that both personae of the poem are speaking and acting quickly and without much thought. The tone of the selection is very matter of fact and it is not until the reader finishes the poem that the tragic consequences of the tú’s sacrifice are perceived. However, the more the reader tries to go back and explain and integrate each poetic line in order to arrive at some sort of cohesive interpretation of the poem, the sooner he/she realizes that the task is futile. Makris explains why:

the text itself does not invite or support a serious reading. As González implies, a ‘serious’ reading would make the sentiments in the poem too maudlin, so the speaker mocks them as well as the protagonists. Both the woman and her companion are the products (or figments) of the ludic imagination of a speaker who witnesses a scene, reacts to it and then presents it to the reader as
an esperpentic or grotesque distortion of a typically romantic, sentimental encounter. (41)'

The title of the poem "Eso era amor," the restaurant scene, and the coquetish tone of the speaker are all distortions of a "typically romantic, sentimental encounter." The title seems to suggest a nostalgic poem about what love used to be like, but obviously this is not the case. A restaurant, or bar, used as the setting for a suitable place for an amorous rendezvous is a cliché, and the words of the speaker are clearly, "a conventional romantic declaration, but one so conventional and trite that it evokes a parody of love rather than love itself" (Debicki Discovery 76).

Interestingly, the parody achieved by the poetic voice is realized by exploiting the fallibilities of the communication process and language, not by making fun of the poetic characters or love itself. In fact, absurd as it may be, the tragedy of the tú's final actions is a powerful image and calls to mind a heroic and noble sacrifice of love. What the speaker does do, however, is poke fun at the attempts at verbal exchanges of the lovers' absurd discourse.

The dialogue of the poem begins as the poetic voice compliments the eyes of the tú. This comment is what ultimately inspires the beloved to give the speaker her
eyes. In effect, the tu's actions are based on her overly literal interpretation of the flirtatious words of the speaker. He says one thing, but this is not understood by the tu. The question that she asks, and later, the poetic voice's response, make it clear that true communication and more importantly understanding is not achieved. The nonsensical ambiguous words of the two personae contrast with the definitive and concrete actions of the tu.

Obviously, the consequences of this absence of communication are serious as the end of the poem illustrates when the tu quite literally removes her eyes leaving them for the speaker. As the poem ends, it is apparent that the speaker's attempt to use a meaningful discourse of love has ended in disaster.

As previously mentioned, the title of the poem creates expectations for the reader that are not fulfilled. After the poetic voice painstakingly emphasizes that the poem portrays a dialogue between two people, neither one makes themself understood and no real communication occurs between them. The poet's diminished faith in language is reflected by his speaker's inability to express his amorous sentiments. The poem ends on a tragic note as the visual darkness that the tu experiences, "se fue a tientas," metaphorically represents the emotional void in which the speaker has been left as a result of his failed discourse of
love. Also of note, is the fact that the poem ends, but there is an acute sense that there has been no closure or resolution.

As has been shown, the emphasis of the poetry in this collection has clearly been on the innovative use of language and poetic artifices constituting the selections of Breves acotaciones para una biografía. This does not, however, indicate that the notions of theme or "asunto" disappear completely, but rather, that they are a bit more challenging to identify. In terms of the discourse of love various elements have been revealed. First of all, the lyrical and intimate verse of a contemplative poetic speaker is gone. The speaker's communication is now impersonal and matter of fact. The exclusivity of love and sexual intercourse has been underscored again, and the speaker's relationship with the beloved has changed as he seems to reveal that he would like to control her, but his own language and actions contradict his intentions. The fact that the speaker's conception of the tú seems a bit undefined is a reflection of his own inner sense of contradiction as he grapples with his own revelation that the amorous discourse can at times be completely inadequate for communication between individuals. In the section that follows, it will be shown how a sense of nostalgia
prominently surfaces in the discourse of love of González’s second stage of poetic development.
4.2. **Procedimientos narrativos**: Parody and Nostalgia

After spending almost two years traveling in both Mexico and the United States, where he gave readings of his poetry and attended conferences, in 1972 Angel González began the first of his various positions as a visiting professor in different American universities. This same year he also published his seventh book of poetry, *Procedimientos narrativos*. This collection, like the one that preceded it, is relatively brief consisting of only eleven poems. Just as there was an autobiographic flavor in the collection studied in the last section, here again, Debicki observes that many of its selections are the "materia prima de la que se construyen los poemas" (AG 65). Along this same vein, LaFollette Miller points out how González's residence in the United States effected his work citing the words of the poet himself, "Me proporcionó una temática nueva y me incitó a tratar algunos temas que hasta entonces no había tratado. Con el distanciamiento creo que mi obra se hizo más personal" (43).

What continues to be evident in *Procedimientos* is the tendency of the poetic speaker to use, "alusiones, intertextualidades, y procedimientos perspectivales y lingüísticos, [o sea] toda una gama de experiencias y significados" (Debicki AG 65). That is to say, many of the
postmodern techniques highlighted in the previous chapters are enhanced and continued to be developed in this work. Since these techniques, in and of themselves, are not particular to this work, this section will broaden the focus of the analysis to take into account the almost constant nostalgia that the speaker expresses in the discourse of love of this text.

While the evocation of nostalgia in the poet's amorous discourse is important for this study, it does not, in any way minimize the fact that poetic genre and the literary endeavour in general are being questioned and parodied throughout González's 1972 collection. The title of the work alone suggests that the traditional notion of poetry is indeed being challenged as LeCertua observes:

The title suggests an approach to poetry characteristic of prose narrative. It downplays poetic genre and satirizes it. We become aware that we are to read something other than poetry, such as a stock market report, board room minutes, or other dense statistical narrative. (138-139)

The self-reflexive disposition of many of the selections in this work is readily apparent. In fact, by merely perusing the titles of some of the poems, both its metafictional and satirical nature become very clear as the following titles suggest; "Realismo mágico" (254), "Ciencia afflicción"
(259), and "Final conocido" (257). As the titles, and the following poetic analysis will show, literature, in its various genres, movements and clichés, has been placed squarely in the spotlight.7

The first poem of the work is entitled, "Empleo de la nostalgia" (247). While the reader may easily distinguish its autobiographical roots with some of the events of González's life, what is more important is the artistry that the poem displays. Debicki has accurately described this selection as a parody "de las tradiciones de la lírica amatoria" (AG 66). The first stanza is as follows:

Amo el campus
universitario,
sin cabras,
con muchachas

que pax
pacem
en latín,
que meriendan
pas pasa pan

con chocolate
en griego,
que saben lenguas vivas
y se dejan besar
en el crepúsculo
15 (también en las rodillas)

y usan

la coca cola como anticonceptivo.

The selection begins with the overstated and melodramatic verb, amar. This word, which is generally employed to describe the sentiment felt towards an endeared person, is utilized in reference to a university campus. This produces an ironical tone from the onset which is quickly enhanced by the lines, "sin cabras, / con muchachas." By first stating what there is not, "sin," the speaker later highlights what there is, with its opposite "con." The mention of young women on a college campus is nothing out of the ordinary, however, the word "cabras," which typically would make their home in a "campo" not a "campus," initially seems to be a halfhearted or silly attempt at humor. It is not until one continues reading the poem that the image can be contextualized with the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations. Having first used the word "campus," which is decidedly Latin sounding, the phrases, "pax / pacem" and "pas pasa pan" come next. These words, "phonetically mimic and recreate the legitimate Latin declension because they create the same impression in the reader" (Makris 55). It is the combination of all of these elements that work together to "capture a bucolic pastoral mood" (54), recalling and parodying the theme of "beatus ille" (Debicki
By alluding to the presence of young ladies, goats (typical of the flocks tended by "mozas fermosas"), kisses in the twilight and an occasional "latinazo," the love poetry typical of the Renaissance has been evoked and at the same time parodied in González's poem. Furthermore, the images just mentioned are in stark contrast to the more contemporary language and notions expressed later in the stanza, "coca cola como anticonceptivo." By mentioning this schoolgirls' myth of wishful contraceptive practice, the poetic speaker has simultaneously presented and juxtaposed both modern day language and images with Renaissance motifs in these few short lines.

At the same time, two thematic dimensions are discussed: sexuality and the academy. As Makris explains, there is a simultaneous quest for "carnal knowledge as well as learning" (54). As the stanza ends, the poetic speaker exploits the semantic ambiguity of the preposition "en," as it is used with the verb besa. In effect, he proposes various ideas. First of all, the hour of twilight, is considered to be suitable for kisses. Also, knees are a suitable place to be kissed. And finally, since this preposition has been paired with the knees, it could even suggest that one or both of the poetic characters are kneeling.® The poem continues:
Ah las flores marchitas de los libros de texto

20 finalizando el curso

desahojadas

cuando la primavera

se instala

en el culto jardín del rectorado

25 por manos todavía adolescentes

y roza con sus rosas

manchadas de bolígrafo y de tiza

el rostro ciego del poeta

transustanciándose en un olor agrio

30 a naranjas

Homero

o semen...

The unusual positioning of the words on the printed page and the use of two different fonts underscore the speaker's attempt to once again simultaneously present two distinct concepts or ideas. This has various effects on the reader as he/she tries to understand what the speaker is trying to communicate. Debicki points out:

Después de haber experimentado la comicidad de la primera parte, tiene que quedar sorprendido {el lector} por el aparente cambio de tono, y no saber hasta qué punto tomar en serio la nostalgia del
The reader is skeptical or perhaps unsure of what, if anything, can be taken at face value in the poem. Furthermore, it is left up to him/her to choose how to read the selection thus emphasizing the importance of his/her collaborative role in the poetic process. One can proceed by reading the italicized lines sequentially, by reading the the regular print sequentially or by reading the poem line by line interspersing the two. Regardless of the option selected, after the entire stanza is considered, the reader realizes that the images from both parts combine with and reflect upon one another in a reciprocal relationship that rereading reveals.

This analysis will first consider the italics. Line eighteen presents the first of many images constituting nostalgic memories of the poetic speaker. The stanza begins with a melancholic sigh as the poetic voice recalls the practice of pressing flowers between the pages of heavy text books. The fact that these flowers have been "desahojadas" suggests that perhaps they were used in the romantic adolescent game of chance, "she loves me, she loves me not."
As the poem continues, Makris observes that the last few italicized lines, "transubstantiate these visual, sentimental images (notice the biblical resonances) into an olfactory one as the flowers and/or the students' hands (the textual reference is ambiguous) acquire the bitter smell of oranges or semen" (57). Ironically, by ending the stanza with the phrase, "un olor agrio / a naranjas / . . . / o semen," the nostalgic mood established initially is disrupted by the abrupt and surprising mention of semen.

While a bitter pungent smell is indeed associated with some species of citrus, an orange is normally both sweet smelling and tasting. Also, being a brilliantly colored fruit usually peeled and eaten with one's hands, both the image itself and the act of eating an orange can be viewed as an experience that stimulates many of the human senses. By having earlier mentioned "chocolate," "coca cola," and now "naranjas" (three common dietary staples of a college student) the poetic speaker includes yet another image associated with taste as well. This third human sense could be added to Makris' observation that, "the synesthesia contained within this transformation of the visual to the olfactory, alludes to how memory functions: a particular smell, sight or sound triggers a series of associations which surrounded a past experience" (57). Furthermore, since it seems unlikely that the bitter odor referred to
applied to the oranges, upon reflection, the image of, "un olor agrio / a . . . / semen," can be related to the stained adolescent hands mentioned earlier, a clear suggestion of masturbation. This, of course, would round out the assault on the human senses that have already been alluded to by Markris. While indeed associated with youth, the topic of masturbation is a bit discordant for the typical reader and almost destroys the nostalgic tone which had been previously achieved and developed. This makes the reader speculate on the sincerity of the poetic voice and makes him/her wonder if the lines that follow will return to the more light-hearted playfulness of the first stanza.¹⁰

The lines in normal type on the lefthand side of the page highlight that although the "curso" is ending, spring is just beginning. With this new season comes new life, roses will sprout up in the rector's garden and new students will arrive for the beginning of another scholastic term. As the poetic voice seems to know, for the academic, student and professor alike, the completion of one particular phase, a quarter, class or season, does not always signify a definitive conclusion. On the contrary, endings often times represent new beginnings for those immersed in university life; Winter Quarter ends and Spring Quarter begins, the study of the Iliad ends and the Odyssey begins, winter ends and later springtime begins. By capitalizing on the
different connotations of these ideas and images the poetic voice is able to effectively communicate the transitional nature of college life. At the same time, he underscores the passing of time with the alliterative use of ro sound, "roza con su rosas / . . . / el rostro." In this way he creates a constant, rhythmic sequence, like a clock ticking, and achieves an almost hypnotic auditory effect. With the pronouncement of the name of the famous and reputedly blind poet, "Homero," the poetic voice successfully links this stanza to the first one emphasizing once again the idea of ancient times and academics. The refined "culto jardín del rectorado" and the roses suggest a place propitious for a romantic rendezvous, and the cultured, subtle evocation of these images directly contrasts with the more mundane stained hands, chalk and semen mentioned in the italicized lines.

As this last statement makes clear, it is virtually impossible to consider the two sections as different parts. Indeed, it is their combined effect, the "nostalgia culta" of the non-italicized lines with the "realismo casi vulgar" of the italicized lines which results in the production of, as Debicki states, a "nostalgia irónicamente socavada" (AG 68). While the reader perceives the strong nostalgic tone underlying the second stanza he/she is not convinced of the sincerity of the poetic speaker. He could be, after all,
simply continuing the ironic description evidenced in the first stanza. Thus, the reader must cautiously proceed as the selection continues:

Todo eso será un día
materia de recuerdo y de nostalgia.

35 Volverá, terca, la memoria
una vez y otra vez a estos parajes,
lo mismo que una abeja
da vueltas al perfume
de una flor ya arrancada:

40 inútilmente.

Here the poetic voice evokes a future time, "será," as he speaks from his own present, and speculates on the nostalgia that he will someday feel.\(^\text{13}\) The phrase, "todo eso" refers back to the images discussed earlier in the poem which are now described as "materia de recuerdo y de nostalgia." In this stanza it seems as though the poetic speaker has abandoned the ironical tone he utilized earlier as he speculates on the limits and futility of remembering as a way to recover and relive the past. This is metaphorically compared to a bee trying to find nectar in an uprooted flower. There is a continuation of the synesthesiac triggers (to borrow Makris' term) of memory, the buzzing of a bee, the aroma of a flower and the
sweetness of nectar, all of which seem to evoke the remembrances of the poetic voice. Curiously, in this stanza the speaker appears to be discontent or depressed as he ponders the *inutilidad* of memory. Later, however, his mood changes as he concludes the poem on a rather optimistic note.

*Pero esa luz no se extinguirá nunca:*

*llamas que aún no consumen,*

...ningún presentimiento
puede quebrar las risas

45
que iluminan

*las rosas y los cuerpos*

y cuando el llanto llegue

*como un halo*

*los escombros*

50 *la descomposición*

*que los preserva entre las sombras*

*puros*

no prevalecerán
serán más ruina

55 *absortos en sí mismos*

y sólo erguidos quedaran intactos
todavía más brillantes

*ignorantes de sí*

esos gestos de amor...
The final stanza returns to the same two-part structure of the second and permits the simultaneous consideration of both the past (italics) and the future (roman type). The poetic voice metaphorically refers to his memories as "luz" or "llamas" that will never fade. His recollections are of "las rosas y los cuerpos" and are described as a "halo." This last image both continues the use of illuminative symbols and reinforces the positive and even divine nature of "esa luz," or his memory. In effect, when the speaker chooses to remember the events of the past he can focus exclusively on his pleasant positive memories, "que los preserva entre las sombras / puros." Just as light represents the good memories the shadows represent the bad ones that the speaker does not wish to recall. The adjectives of the last three italicized lines grammatically refer to the roses and bodies but also reflect the attitude which the poetic speaker has assumed. By focusing only on the "good times" of the past he has adopted an attitude of "ignorance (or in this case absence of memory) is bliss." This is underscored by the words "absortos," and "ignorantes," and by his own actions, "sin ver más nada." It seems that he has consciously chosen to ignore the negative past and concentrate only on his pleasant memories.

The non-italicized section is quite revealing as well.
At first, it seems to have an almost apocalyptic tone as it tells of the coming disaster characterized by the word "llanto." The first lines, "...ningún presentimiento / puede quebrar las risas," can be read both sequentially with the other lines in normal print or interspersed with the italics. If read sequentially (44,47) the lines reveal the opposite images of risas/llanto and establish a contrastive relationship of positive and negative similar to the images of light/shadow in the italicized lines. Due to their placement on the page, the "risas" can also be related with the positive "rosas y los cuerpos," of line forty six and in this way enhance and preserve the cheerful positive association of these images. This cannot be done, however, with line forty seven. In this instance, to associate "llanto" with "halo" would subvert the interpretation of this last image as positive or divine. In this way, the poetic speaker effectively complicates and draws attention to the process of reading and interpreting the poem.

On the other hand, line forty seven can be read sequentially (47,49,50) and would then suggest that the words "escombros" and "descomposición" appear as examples of the collapse and destruction implied in the "llanto." These two words, along with "ruina" emphasize the despair to come and at the same time recall the fall of the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations alluded to earlier. Lines fifty
three and fifty four are also problematic, "no prevalecerán / serán más ruina," as the subject of the two conjugated verbs is ambiguous, with the very different options being "risas" or "escombros" and "descomposición." This creates suspense for the reader as the possible message being conveyed is either, "las risas... no prevalecerán" or "los escombros y la descomposición... no prevalecerán." One option is quite optimistic while the other is very unfavorable. Nevertheless, the poetic voice resolves this tension in the last few lines as he states that it is the "gestos de amor" or presumably the "risas" which will prevail "intactos / todavía más brillantes." The final note of the selection is the rather simplistic and clichéd idea of "love will conquer all," recalling once again parody of traditional love poetry advanced at the beginning of the poem.

In "Empleo de la nostalgia" the poetic speaker has presented the reader with a barrage of themes, tone, images and ideas. From his ironical recollections of university life and romance to an apparently serious meditation on the utility of human memory and time, he seems to conclude that only the "gestos de amor" will prevail. In effect, the poetic voice ends the selection by metapoetically satirizing these overtly sentimental notions typical of only the most hackneyed love poetry. The results achieved by the poet in
his use of paradox are different due to the tone of the specific stanza, ironical and silly at first and nostalgic at the end. Repeatedly, the different sounds, smells, tastes and visual images have been highlighted as part of a synesthesiac process which immerse the reader in a state of melancholy and "subraya el proceso seguido por el hablante-poeta, que <<emplea>> la nostalgia como proceso, casi como un juego, en un esfuerzo por tomar en cuenta diversas posturas ante la realidad (la que vive y la que recuerda)" (AG 68). As the reader finishes the poem he/she can conclude that the parody of love poetry with which the poem begins, reappears with the last reference "gestos de amor," but here it is much less acute.

As was mentioned earlier and illustrated in the last section, poetic technique is obviously in the foreground (synesthesia, alliteration, parody) as González's speaker simultaneously evokes the ideas of love and nostalgia through, "intertextualidades, las mezclas de niveles, y los juegos de perspectiva. . ." (Debicki AG 68). By utilizing these techniques the reader himself/herself is thus immersed in "una realidad compleja, irresuelta, [que le hace al lector] experimentar por su propia cuenta los enigmas de estos recuerdos, de los ecos literarios que suscitan, tal vez, de todo recuerdo amoroso" (68). The poetic speaker of Gonzalez's poem ends the poem with the corny romantic
notion that "love conquers all" but the creative way in
which the message has been communicated makes the text
innovative and unique. While traditional, formulaic love
poetry is the target of a joke, at the same time González
successfully illustrates that it is still very possible to
create an effective, contemporary poetic composition by
expanding on the lover's discourse, now viewed in an
entirely new way.
4.3 Muestra, corregida y aumentada, de algunos procedimientos narrativos y de las actitudes sentimentales que habitualmente comportan: Semantic Indirection, Mimesis and Love

The above mentioned work is González’s eighth book of poetry and consists of thirty six poems separated into five different sections. It is, according to Debicki, perhaps the most important collection of his second poetic period. Benson, in his study of Muestra, suggests that the leitmotif of the work is the unexpected effects that time exercises on humankind, a notion already seen in some of González’s earlier books of verse. Both critics agree that the present collection represents a "compendio o muestrario" of the variations that postmodern poetry demonstrates. From the onset, the reader knows that he/she has been confronted with an innovative and interesting work as the verbose title cleary illustrates. LaFollette Miller points out:

it seems to indicate that the book is a collection of poems based not on experience but on conventional literary categories. . . By presenting the volume as a catalog, González underplays poetry as an imitation of experience and emphasizes poetry’s role in transforming literary
conventions from the onset. Despite its precise, scientific appearance and its seemingly referential, descriptive function, the title violates literary norms. . .and therefore cannot be taken literally. (144)

Naturally, the effect of this rather matter of fact title will be greater for the reader who is not familiar with those of González’s last three works, all of which were hardly lyrical themselves. Even so, the reader who has followed this poetic trajectory will nonetheless recognize "el maravilloso título dieciochista" (Benson 42) as both a continuation and exaggeration of the metapoetic bent evidenced in the poet’s earlier book titles.

A tendency towards metapoetry, as is further underscored by the third section of the collection entitled "Metapoesía," is not the only postmodern characteristic evident in the collection. Debicki points out that many of the selections portray a "mezcla de enfoques y de niveles. . .[y] ejemplifica[n] muy bien las tensiones <<postmodernas>> que subyacen en el libro" (74). As this consideration of Muestra will illustrate, the presence of these "tensiones postmodernas," are a vital part of the poet’s discourse of love. To assist in the study of these textual tensions, the theoretical contributions of Michael Riffaterre will be employed. He refers to these postmodern tensions as
"semantic indirection," and explains that indirection, "is produced by displacing, distorting or creating meaning" and results in the threat to "the literary representation of reality, or mimesis" (2). As shall be explained, the poetry of Muestra that manifests an amorous discourse reveals the poetic voice's use of semantic indirection. In so doing, these poems challenge the reader's notion of mimetic reality and offer instead a less probable, but nonetheless, poetically rich vision of the world surrounding the speaker.

The first section of the collection is entitled, "Poemas elegíacos." It appears at first as though González has begun his work with selections of one of the most traditional poetic genres. These classical poems, which usually employ a formal, ceremonious, tone and diction are meditations on either death or love. The Spanish elegiac tradition has been well established and as Benson explains, "No hay duda de que es un tema difícil para el poeta moderno, ya que ha sido tanto un clisé de la poesía romántica y de otros escritores más modernos como Antonio Machado y Juan Ramón Jiménez" (44). However, as the reader perceives almost immediately, González pretends no blind obedience to classical forms nor to Spanish literary tradition in this work and, in spite of the difficult task of working with a clichéd theme, he provides new and
creative poetic compositions surprising and challenging the reader at every turn of phrase.

The first poem to be studied from this section is entitled "A mano amada" (272). In and of itself, the adverbial expression constituting the title can be interpreted as lovingly or tenderly. Yet, there is much more to be considered. Debicki suggests that the title is actually a, "sustitución de la frase común <<a mano armada>> por <<a mano amada>>" (73). This claim is substantiated as the reader proceeds with the poem and encounters symbols and images which intensify and enhance both the notions of love and being armed. In effect, by using an altered colloquial phrase the poetic voice has communicated two, normally unrelated, ideas. Riffaterre, refers to this kind of practice as, "displacing, when the sign shifts from one meaning to another, when one word "stands for" another." (2)

The text of the poem is as follows:

A mano amada,

cuando la noche impone su costumbre de insomnio,
y convierte
cada minuto en el aniversario
5 de todos los sucesos de una vida;

allí,
en la esquina más negra del desamparo, donde
el nunca y el ayer trazan su cruz de sombras,

los recuerdos me asaltan.

10 Unos empuñan tu mirada verde,
  otros,
  apoyan en mi espalda
  el alma blanca de un lejano sueño,...
  y con voz inaudible,
15 con implacables labios silenciosos,
  ¡el olvido o la vida!,
  me reclaman.
  Reconozco los rostros.
  No hurto el cuerpo.

20 Cierro los ojos para ver más hondo,
  y siento
  que me apuñalan fría,
  justamente,
  con ese hierro viejo:
25 la memoria.

The language of the first two stanzas has two very different and pronounced effects. To begin with, since the first line is an adverbial expression, an expectation of a suitable subject and verb to complete and compliment the phrase is created. This expectation is not met until line nine when
it culminates in the idea that, "A mano amada...los recuerdos me asaltan." Another important aspect is that the language used by the poetic voice seems to slow down and intensify the passing of time as it condenses a lifetime of experience in "cada minuto." The verb *imponer* implies that the poetic speaker is the victim of both the night and the memories that accompany his insomnia. While the word "aniversario" usually has festive implications, here no such tone is present. Nonetheless, this word is important as it is one of a series measuring or marking time, "noche," "minuto," "aniversario." Clearly, the first stanza acts to encapsulate a temporal moment of insomnia that the poetic voice is experiencing.

As line six begins the second stanza it refers back to the moment of sleeplessness expressed earlier by the poetic voice. However, instead of utilizing the suitable temporal referent, such as *entonces*, to recall the instant just described, the poetic voice employs the spatial referent "allí." In what follows it is the idea of space, not time as noted before, that is reinforced by employing first a word that would typically be used to describe a city street, "esquina," and later the spatial adverb "donde." After the poetic speaker has presented references to both time and space, the two seem to merge in lines seven and eight, "donde / el nunca y el ayer trazan su cruz de sombras." The
words, "donde" (spatial), "nunca" and "ayer" (temporal) emphasize how time and space intersect, like the lines of a cross, where the point of temporal/spatial unity for the poetic speaker becomes the moment/place in which "los recuerdos me asaltan."

In this poem, memories take an active role as metaphoric thieves or assassins attacking the poetic voice. As Debicki notes, "el ataque de la memoria implica no tanto las armas del asesino como el recuerdo de un ser querido" (73). In this way, the poem simultaneously describes love and armaments. Furthermore, it is also clear that the images that have been created are most definitively literary and not mimetic representations of reality. This supports what Riffaterre states, "representation may simply be altered visibly and persistently in a manner inconsistent with verisimilitude or with what the context leads the reader to expect" (2). This becomes more and more evident as the poem continues. In lines ten and eleven the words "unos" and "otros," refer to the memories now metaphorically confronting the poetic speaker as a vision of the countenance of his beloved. The fact that her face is described as "verde" is credible within the context of the dark scene described and the insomnia of the poetic speaker. All of these elements point to the fact that he is dreaming or having a nightmare. ¹⁸ Later, this idea is
intensified by the lines, "apoyan en mi espalda / el alma blanca de un lejano sueño." Once again, the poetic voice uses another example of "displacing," here replacing the colloquial *arma blanca* for "alma blanca." It seems that the speaker is surrounded by memories as if they were the mists of a dream in which he hears the ultimatum, "¡el olvido o la vida!" Both the punctuation and the italics highlight the importance of this apparent threat to the poetic voice. Benson interprets these lines as, "un chiste, un juego de palabras (‘¡el dinero o la vida!’)" (51), and LeCertua, also seeing the humorous side of the pronouncement, maintains:

The center of the argument in the poem surrounds a *paronomasia* in which repeated words have a similar but not an identical sound: ¡el olvido o la vida!. These words uttered in the wakeful stage of sleep give the speaker two choices to avoid the despair of being alone with his memories. Each choice is similar in its effect. The pun draws the meaning of oblivian and life together ironically. Either the speaker extinguishes the nightmare of his past through the death of sleep or forgets it through life. (166-167)

Indeed, that which LeCertua refers to as *paronomastic usage* is precisely what has been identified here, in Riffaterian
terms, as semantic indirection. In the last few lines of
the poem, the speaker decides not to hide from his memories,
"no hurto el cuerpo," but rather chooses to "ver más hondo,"
recalling and perhaps trying to understand the past in spite
of the unpleasantness it causes him, "que me apuñalan fría,
/ justamente, / con ese hierro viejo." While it is apparent
that the memories of the beloved are painful, the speaker is
incapable of simply forgetting her. As Debicki states,
"para él los recuerdos amorosos son destructivos, y el
olvido es un tesoro que estos recuerdos le roban" (74). For
this reason a sense of despair is communicated in the poem
as the poetic voice lies awake remembering a lost love.
As the reader finishes reading the poem and recalls that it
is supposedly elegiac, he/she can truly appreciates how the
contemplation of love offered here is quite an innovative
departure from the treatment of the amorous in a typical
elegiac poem. González has quite effectively renovated a
clichéd form of expression by giving it a postmodern twist
of semantic indirection.

The presence of this element makes this poem unique.
By capitalizing both on what the language of the poem
states, "a mano amada," with that which is not stated but
rather understood, "a mano armada," the ideas of both love
and armed assault are presented. In retrospect, the images
that reinforce and recall the idea of love ("aniversario,"
"tu mirada," and "alma blanca") are actually fewer and more abstract than those that recall the bandits ("mano amada," "noche," "esquina más negra," "hierro viejo"). While these concepts may present the reader with more interpretative difficulties the idea of love has been explicitly stated and therefore has a strong textual referent. Likewise, the idea of being armed, implied but not explicitly stated in the title of the poem, is represented by very direct transitive verbs which are usually associated with the holding or grasping of a weapon, "empuñan tu mirada," "apoyan en mi espalda el alma blanca" and "apuñalan. . .con ese hierro viejo." Naturally, the so-called weapons that the "recuerdos" wield are visions of the past. Since both ideas, love and assault, are simultaneously presented it is nearly impossible to ignore one line of interpretation and focus on the other, instead both must be considered. This can be substantiated by Riffaterre's observation that:

This seesawing from one sign value to the other, this alternating appearance and disappearance of significance, both in spite of and because of unacceptable features on the plane of mimetic meaning, is a kind of semiotic circularity characterizing the practice of signification known as poetry. (166)
The poem continuously teeters between the different interpretive possibilities created by the displacement of "mano amado," "alma blanca," and "el olvido o la vida," and thereby achieves semantic indirection. González, thus, presents a literary rather than a mimetic vision of reality. The text remains open and unresolved as Debicki underscored when referring to the postmodern tension evident in this text.

In "Inmortalidad de la nada" (275), the poetic speaker seemingly proposes to address the well-known theme of "el amor que puede conquistar el tiempo," as Benson points out (53). However, once again, while engaged in the process of expressing this idea, González creates a poetic text full of conflicting tensions and indirections. To borrow the words of Riffaterre, the entire poem is constructed upon the notion of "ungrammaticality," a usage of "distorted or deviant grammar or lexicon" (2). Although it is a relatively short selection, it requires numerous and careful readings and re-readings:

Todo lo consumado en el amor
no será nunca gesta de gusanos.

Los despojos del mar roen apenas
los ojos que jamás
5 -porque te vieron-, 
jamás

se comerá la tierra al fin del todo.

Yo he devorado tú
me has devorado
10 en un único incendio.

Abandona cuidados:
lo que ha ardido
ya nada tiene que temer del tiempo.

There are two principal images in the poem, nothingness, and immortality achieved through sexual love. Most of the other images in the poem are related in some way to one of these two ideas. In line one the poetic speaker employs the past participle, "consumado," and evokes the notion of carnal love. In turn, the sexual act recalls, among other things, the creation or procreation of the human species and also erotic desire. This last aspect will be retaken later in the analysis. The idea of new life is immediately contrastive when linked to "gusanos," a rather unpleasant image reminding the reader of the end of life, burial, decomposition, or in other words, "la nada." The comment that "el amor / no será nunca gesta" is also relevant. First of all, it recalls the epic literary tradition in which certain literary characters have been
given an almost immortal status in the minds of some readers, and secondly, it brings to mind the chivalry, heroism and gallantry so often associated with those kinds of texts. In this case, however, love is clearly not an heroic emotion. The speaker disrupts the verisimilitude of these lines, and those that follow, by using the nonsensical image/phrase of "gesta de gusanos," a clear indication of Riffaterrrian ungrammaticality.

The second stanza makes it even more evident that the poem in no way presents a "literary representation of reality, or mimesis" (Riffaterre 2). While some of the individual words can be sequentially related to others, the poem as a whole resists any coherent, linear interpretation. This becomes clear as the reader begins to try to decipher the rest of the poem. The word "despojos" from line three recalls both the idea of the "gesta," the booty gathered up by the victors from a battlefield, and also the worms, "restos mortales, cadáver" (193). Later, when the image is considered as "despojos del mar" it reminds the reader of a vision of the flotsam seen after a shipwreck and reinforces the idea of being cast adrift alone in the "nada."

The poetic speaker then goes on to describe the "despojos" as an animal chewing eyeballs. The absurdity and incoherency of this image can be explained by what
Riffaterre calls, "distorting, when there is ambiguity, contradiction, or nonsense" (2). As the reader grapples with and tries to make sense out of the poetic lines he/she also fights with his/her own feeling of interpretive ineptness (nothingness?) as the words on the printed page continually obscure repeated attempts to make intelligible the message. Later, in this same stanza, the mention of "ojos" coupled with the infinitive, ver, emphasizes the idea of vision and the process of seeing. On a metaphoric level, this intensifies the thematic tension intelligence/ignorance, since seeing often represents a spiritual act symbolic of understanding. Lines four through seven are a distorted version of the colloquial phrase, "Lo vi con estos ojitos que se ha de comer la tierra," which ironically is commonly used to establish credibility or certainty. After all, it seems that nothing can be taken for granted as being certain in this poetic text. The repeated use of the word "jamás" and the expression "al fin del todo," keep the idea of the "nada" ever-present in the mind of the reader. By the time one has reached the end of the second stanza it is undeniable that the poem is indeed wrought with Riffaterian ungrammaticalities making any representation of mimetic reality an impossibility.

In the stanza that Benson has highlighted as the one where the poetic voice "conjuga verbos" (53), the poetic
voice describes how both the yo and the tú have achieved a carnal union. Using the verb devorar and the noun "incendio," the speaker returns to the notion of eroticism alluded to earlier. By repeating the verb twice, and emphasizing the pronouns, "yo", "tú" and "me" the notion of the two lovers consumating their sexual love, "en un único incendio," metaphorically underscores passion, further extended and enhanced by images of heat in lines eleven and twelve. At the same time, the poet re-establishes the notion of nothingness and destruction evident earlier in the poem as the speaker/lover experiences and comes to comprehend the fleeting nature of the sexual act.

The familiar command to abandon care, or to not worry, begins the last stanza and is followed by the assurance that, "lo que ha ardido / ya nada tiene que temer del tiempo." In other words, since the love between the poetic personae was just described as an "incendio" it is clear that it has nothing to fear from the passing of time, perhaps, because this "único incendio," is itself only temporary.

Usually, the passing of time results in the eventual death or nothingness of a human being. In this poem, it is proposed that sexual love resists this inevitable temporal flow towards nothingness, presumably because of the procreative capacity of an individual as he/she leaves a
part of him/herself after his/her own death with the
continuation of life in the child. That which is sometimes
thought to be only fleeting, sexual gratification, is, at
one and the same time, portrayed to be both temporal and
have a lasting impact, "El amor transitorio del hombre
individual se revela como la más permanente de las esencias"
(53).

As demonstrated, immortality and the "nada" are the
main ideas presented throughout the poem and there are a
number of semantic indirections that repeatedly can confuse
and befuddle the reader. It is impossible to ignore one set
of images, those which represent "la nada" for example, to
focus exclusively on those which represent the acquisition
of a type of immortality. It is as Riffaterre says: "The
reader's manufacture of meaning is thus not so much a
progress through the poem and a half-random accretion of
verbal associations, as it is a seesaw scanning of the text,
compelled by the very duality of the signs" (166). Among
these dualities are immortality/nothingess, fleeting desire/
lasting love and destruction/creation.

After studying these two poems what is certain is that
they are both challenging, innovative poetic compositions.
Neither offers a representation of any sort of mimetic
reality yet both communicate very real ideas about love.
The notions of the memory of a lost love as painful and that
of sexual love/procreation as a way to resist human mortality are common poetic themes. It is as Debicki states, "sin destruir los temas tradicionales del libro... los poemas de Muestra [son] como vehículos e índices de un proceso de descubrimiento emprendido por su autor y continuado, a lo largo del tiempo, por sus lectores" (78). Without a doubt, it is how the poems have been written and how they communicate to the reader that is of the foremost importance. This is reflected by interpretative effort demanded by the reader who must, like the poet, grapple with love and the language used to express this emotion at every turn. Naturally, this process is complicated as a result of the characteristically postmodern semantic indirection and tension which are present in the poetry of this collection. Even upon their conclusion, the poem/text remains open and the process of discovery alluded to above, continues for the reader.

In all three poetic collections studied in this chapter the poetic speaker successfully has expressed his amorous discourse in new and creative ways. Whether it be by using creative language and poetic technique, parodying traditional love poetry or employing semantic indirection, González's works have shown themselves to be innovative and quite effective in projecting new ideas and nuances in his discourse of love. Of primary importance is the fact that
the tú, who earlier was seen as the transformative force with the discourse of love, has been replaced by the word, language itself, which is now the agent of transformation. This is not an indication that love has disappeared by any means, but rather a sign that the word, now has a predominant role in the creation and propagation of amorous discourse. As has been highlighted, many of the techniques that he utilizes are emblematic of a postmodern aesthetic, and thus, as Debicki observes, "al desbaratar nuestra tendencia habitual de deslindar <<realidades anecdóticas>> de <<elaboraciones poéticas>> o de <<temas filosóficos>>, nos sacan de nuestros prejuicios de la <<modernidad>> y abren camino al mundo de la <<postmodernidad>>" (AG 70). The reader must put aside all preconceptions and notions about love and literature as he/she considers the evolution of the discourse of love in González’s poetry. As this dissertation continues, the poet’s reflections on his past amorous experiences and his coming to terms with love as both an eternal and temporal emotion, will be considered as they are manifested in his last two poetic collections.
1. See Debicki (AG 53-55) and LaFollette Miller (Politics 16-17).

2. Makris explains, "In Gonzalez's poem, the reflexive use of "correrse" reinforces the text's obvious sexual connotations. . . however, in Latin American usage, the reflective verb "correrse" means "to run away scared," and in Vallejo's lexicon, "no me corro" is synonymous with valor and bravery" (201). She later cites Juan Larrea's edition of Vallejo's Poesía completa, Barcelona: Barral Editores, 1978. This work provides a brief dictionary of usage and lists "me corro" as synonymous with "me muevo," "me cambio" or "me mudo" (Makris 218).

3. Patrick LeCertua points out that these first lines echo the "Spanish musical form of cante jondo" (165).

4. The poet himself has explained the following about the poem, "el chiste ha sido una forma de liberarme de sentimientos que no podría expresar de otra manera, sin incurrir en lo patético" (Introduction 24).

5. The speaker's use of the image of "ojos" is interesting, as Debicki points out, as they suggest the Góngora poem entitled, "La más bella niña" (Discovery 76). In that poem, the word "ojos" is a term of endearment for the beloved, "la más bella niña / de nuestro lugar, /hoy viuda y sola / ayer por casar, / viendo sus ojos / a la guerra van" (Antología poética 85).

6. Debicki states, "A partir de 1972, irá a los Estados Unidos como profesor visitante a las Universidades de Nuevo México, Maryland y Texas" (AG 53).

7. I have chosen to focus on only one poem of this short collection. The theme of love also appears in the selection entitled "Fábula y moraleja" (260), but I interpret this poem as illustrative of fraternal love, not the romantic love that I have been studying in this dissertation.

8. Benson describes this as, "la estilización paródica, de la declinación de la palabra "paz" en latín y de los géneros del adjetivo "todo" ("pan") en griego" (Voces 19).

9. I am aware that the preferred way to say kneeling is "de rodillas," but I still feel that this idea is projected by the language of the text.

10. Debicki also makes this observation (AG 67-68).
11. Makris maintains that this alliteration both slows the pace of the poem and creates a certain sadness (56).

12. According to boys’ boarding school wisdom, one of the side effects of masturbation is self-inflicted blindness. This would be yet another example of how these lines can be related back to those that came before.

13. This is very similar to what the poetic speaker does in an earlier poem, "Otro tiempo vendrá distinto a éste," from Sin esperanza con convencimiento. This technique has the effect of creating a sense of present, future and past. See 2.1 of this dissertation.

14. The titles of the various sections of the work are as follows: "Poemas elegíacos," "Poemas épicos y narrativos," "Metapoesía," "Poemas sin sentido," and "Notas de un viajero."

15. The exact date of Muestra’s publication is hard to define as Debicki explains, "Su primera versión, titulada Breve muestra de algunos procedimientos . . ., aparece en 1976 la versión <<corregida y aumentada>> se publica en 1977 y luego pasa, sin título (por errata), a la tercera edición de Palabra sobre palabra en 1977. En la edición de Palabra. . . de 1986, se vuelve a incluir el título" (AG 70).

16. This theme was especially important in Sin esperanza con convencimiento.

17. The definition of elegy comes from the New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetics (322).

18. These lines also recall some similar thematic and linguistic elements found in Federico García Lorca’s "Romance sonámbulo."

19. This has been noted by Debicki (AG 73).

20. In his important article on this work Benson notes various intertextual relationships between "Inmortalidad de la nada" and other sources including: the Bible, Neruda’s Residencias, Dámaso Alonso’s Hijos de la ira and Dante’s Infierno (Muestra 53-54).

21. This is included in the definition offered by the Larousse: diccionario usual (193).

22. Benson makes this observation in a footnote in his article, "Muestra" (54).
Angel González's only poetic publication during the 1980's was *Prosemas o menos*. This collection first appeared in an incomplete version in 1983 and was later augmented to include a sixth section and a total of fifty nine poems in 1985.¹ In the same year that the complete version of *Prosemas o menos* was published, González turned sixty years old, a well established poet as well as a scholar.² While perhaps approaching the twilight of his literary career, the verse found in this, his ninth poetic collection, is both a continuation and an enhancement of the vibrant and innovative poetry seen in his earlier work. Just as in *Muestra*, the poet continues to ponder the passing of time, a fact explaining in part how, "a lo largo del libro sentimos el esfuerzo del hablante-poeta de enfrentarse con su temporalidad, y de encontrar posturas que le permitan seguir adelante y aseverar el valor de la vida a pesar de sus limitaciones" (Debicki AG 85). While many of the poetic techniques evidenced in his earlier collections are again apparent in this work (the emphasis on the poetic process, irony, and intertextualities) these elements "se ven ahora controlados por este hablante irónico pero también..."
idealista" as Debicki observes (86). It is precisely the sense of control of the poetic medium, mentioned above, that is emblematic of the mature and well-defined poetic voice resonating throughout the collection. Again, as Debicki points out, "Sigue funcionando por lo tanto como comentarista e intérprete, igual que en otros libros de la segunda época. Pero revela una personalidad más constante por una parte, e introduce por otra más detalles de su propias experiencias" (86).

Keeping in mind his previous collections, it is no surprise that the title of the work, Prosemas y menos, is metapoetical. In general terms Gonzalo Sobejano explains that a prosema is "definible sencillamente como '(pequeño) poema prosaico'" (85). From the onset, by supposedly pretending to minimize the importance and quality of the poems of this collection by highlighting their prosaic nature with the label of "prosema," González’s ironical usage of language and irreverence towards established poetic genre becomes evident. In as much as the amorous discourse is concerned, for the first time ever the poet dedicates an entire section of a work to his thoughts and experiences of love. This is the first indicator of the importance of organizing or ordering the poetry of this collection. As the reader studies the eight poems of "Poemas amatorios" he/she witnesses how the poetic voice
expresses his amorous ideas in a variety of ways. By manipulating tone, using slightly altered popular refrains or songs and at times employing extremely lyrical verse, González's poetic speaker captures the many dimensions of this important human emotion. An aspect of this collection already alluded to, which will be studied with some detail, is the effect that the sequencing or ordering of the specific poems has on the reader. In the case of "Poemas amatorios" it seems that the poet has strategically placed his poems so that the underlying ideas and/or tone evident in one selection will carry over into the next. Sometimes this is done to continue the development of similarities and at other times to create a surprising contrast.

The love poetry of this collection is very representative of the entire work. Once again, Debicki has commented that these poems, "en su variedad reflejan precisamente, la perspectiva del hablante de Prosemas o menos, que constantemente baraja sus deseos idealistas con percepciones irónicas (y hasta cínicas) de la realidad" (99). As the consideration of this poetry continues, both the humorous playful side of the poetic voice as well as his serious, introspective, lyrical side will be revealed. The attitude of the poetic speaker can be summarized in the following way:

La actitud de este hablante de los poemas
<<amatorios>> es otra versión de la del hablante típico de todo el libro: un hombre y un poeta contemporáneo de amplia perspectiva, que contempla la inquietante realidad de su transitorio y a menudo absurdo universo, valiéndose de la ironía y de todos los recursos posibles de su lenguaje (culto y popular) para enfrentarse con él y lograr sobrevivir. (Debicki 100)

Naturally, with the presentation of such a variety of experiences and ideas about love, the role of the reader is a critical component to the interpretation of these poems. After all, it is he/she who must synthesize, evaluate and try to understand the multifaceted evocation of this emotion expressed and analyzed by the poetic voice. Given the fact that the perceptions and investigation of the amorous are varied in this collection, one may recall that this was also the case in González’s first work, Aspero mundo, written almost thirty years earlier. Even though the poet is now more experienced in both love and life, it appears that he has still not been able to acquire a complete understanding of either. A sampling of the most important love poetry of Prosemas reveals this broad perspective manifested by the poetic speaker.

The first poem to be studied is that initiating "Poemas amatorios" and is entitled "Colegiala" (379). This title
word usually signifies a young female student or an unexperienced, naive girl. After a first reading of the selection, it appears as if the poem recalls an episode from the younger days of the poetic speaker about one of his first real, or perhaps imagined, amorous encounters with a young lady. While love per se is not mentioned, the selection offers a believable portrayal of what could have been one of the speaker's first experiences with romance as an adolescent.

De besos y abrazos
no nacen muchachos,
pero tocan a vísperas.

Como avispas: picantes
5 y enojosas
enaguas blancas entre negro y negro
(y rosa y rosa muslos hacia el alba
casi azul de tus ingles),
cuando corres.

10 ¡Aire! ¡Aire!
(El viento frío y azul la tarde.)

Dicen
que te dejas besar en los portales
y abrazar la cintura.

15 ¡Aire! ¡Aire!

Me callaré tu nombre,
pero escucha:
de besos y abrazos
no nacen muchachos,

20 porque no eran los míos.

Having mentioned a young girl in the title, the poem goes on to underscore the idea of youth with the popular refrain of "De besos y abrazos / no nacen muchachos." This phrase, which could well be a piece of practical parental advice about the limits and possible consequences of a youth's first sexual activity, centers the reader squarely in the world of a teenager. Indeed, a version of this phrase, "Besos no hacen chicos, pero tocan a vísperas," is explained in Leon Murciego's Los refranes filosóficos castellanos, as, "las consecuencias que suelen traer los retozos de la gente joven," and is catalogued under the subheading "Besos (Lo peligroso de los)" (183). The rhythmical, rhymed nature of this elementary warning is quite likely both to remain in the mind of the reader and also to bring a smile to his/her face as he/she detects the
juvenile attitude of the poetic voice of the poem.

The third line can be understood idiomatically as, "but you are on your way," when read within the context of the refrain implying that the progression from hugging and kissing could well escalate to more serious and less innocent amorous activities. However, when the words of the phrase "tocan a vôisperas" are examined outside of the confines of the idiomatic context there are even more interpretive possibilities. For instance, the word "vôisperas" indicates that the hugs and kisses mentioned are quite likely to be exchanged in the evening hours. As alluded to before, the word can also signify to be on the eve, or expectantly waiting, and thus creates a sense of anxious anticipation of what is to come next, both in the poem and in the youthful amorous experience. The very common verb tocar, which appears here with an undefined subject, "tocan," is quite ambiguous. The subject of the verb could be "besos" or "abrazos," or both, or it could represent the third person plural being used impersonally. It could even be a reference to the "Colegiala" and a possible companion as they encounter each other in the evening hours.

This same phrase of "tocan a vôisperas," also refers to the bells rung by the church at the evening hour to announce the vesper mass or prayers. This evening vigil, has many
has many cultural implications that are important to this poem. First of all, a sly teenager could well use the pretext of the "obligation" of evening mass, to plan a nocturnal rendezvous with a would be companion. Nothing would be more simple than to use the bells as a mutual signal to meet each other. This could well be to participate in the "paseo de los novios," to meet after classes in the "colegio" or, as the poem suggests, perhaps something a bit less innocent.

On a strictly religious level, the vesper office of the clergy consists of songs, canticles, prayers and hymns recited in the evening hours. In this way the hour of, "vísperas," can also be related to the breviary and the prayers said during the divine office. Theoretically, by praying this evening office, one develops a heightened spiritual and religious awareness. It is precisely this element, a heightening of awareness, albeit not necessarily religious, that the teenagers experience as the reader fluctuates between the sacred and the profane in this poem. In this way, a normally calm religious ritual has been linked to the much more exciting and amorous "ritual" in which the youthful lovers are engaged.

In any case, as line four begins mentioning the phrase "Como avispas," one may suppose that the poetic speaker is developing a simile. Interestingly, by using two words with
phonetic similarities, first "a vísperas" and now "avispas," the poetic voice continues the cadence of the poem established at the onset and also maintains the same light-hearted tone. The adjectives "picantes / y enojosas" would normally be associated with the wasp highlighting its bothersome nature and potentially painful stinger. Nonetheless, in this case these descriptive words could also be applied to the multi-layered skirts that a young girl might wear, the white interior undergarments and the black folds of a skirt or dress. After all, both would be visible if she ran or skipped or even coquetishly walked during the evening "paseo." Here, the multiple folds of the clothing of the "Colegiala" would be "picantes" because of their abrasive texture rubbing against her legs as she attempted to rush away and "enojosas" because they would make this exercise difficult.

In any case, the sight of an exhuberant and vibrant young girl skipping along with her young companion is bound to cause a strong and immediate physiological effect in an adolescent teenage boy. This excitement is further underscored by the mention of the image of wasps. The atmosphere which the teenagers occupy feels like it is literally charged or buzzing with energy and excitement.

The parenthetical lines seven and eight reveal some intimate details of what the speaker perceives to be hidden
underneath the skirts of the young girl. It is important to keep in mind that the description offered by the poetic voice is not necessarily based on his previous knowledge and is quite likely the overactive imagination of an adolescent male speaker. In any case, from the point of view of a possible companion of the "Colegiala," the "enaguas" could well be considered "enojosas" because they hide what he wants to see and might frustrate his overeager, groping adolescent hands.

Later the mention of "muslos" and "ingles" enhances the erotic or sensual aspect of the speaker's wandering eyes and active libido. The poetic voice describes the reddish hue of the girl's legs as well as the bluish whiteness of her upper thighs. The word "alba" can signify both dawn and the color white, and aids both in the description of the girl's legs as well as establishing a contrastive chronological progression ("tarde'-"alba") where a youthful and heightened sexual attraction quickly displaces innocence. Additionally, since the "alba" is the beginning of a new day one can also interpret this word to mean the beginning of the speaker and the young girl's sexual attraction to each other. Furthermore, the use of the possessive adjective "tus" and the conjugated verb "corres" emphasize that the speaker is referring to a specific and well known young lady. Given the poem's title, the image of a romantic
evening rendezvous between a young couple can be visualized and the reader can suppose that their embraces have been interrupted by the departure of the "Colegiala."

Keeping in mind that the idea of adolescence has been present from the onset, the reader can logically interpret that the "Colegiala" has come to the end of her curfew, "tocan a visperas," and now must quickly end her amorous reunion and run home. The exclamation of "¡Aire! ¡Aire!" recalls a similar cry of "¡Fuego! ¡Fuego!" and creates both a sense of emergency and the idea of a shortness of breath. Surely, in the mind of a young girl who has just broken curfew, her dilemma is an emergency. Also, this could be an allusion to the shortness of breath experienced during erotic activity and sexual excitement on the part of both of the young lovers. The cold wind is both a contrast to the heat of passion and a welcome remedy for the gasping lungs of the girl, and even the excited poetic voice. The word "tarde," which in addition to indicating tardiness, is also another reference to time as "a visperas," "alba," "tarde" continue to reinforce the girl's race against the clock as she hustles home.

In the fourth stanza, the poem explicitly comments on what the reader has already learned to be true. Here the subject of the kisses on the doorstep is presented as common knowledge, and the impersonal "Dicen," makes it sound as if
it were gossip. Later, the repetition of the cries for air work to create suspense about the possible outcome of the poem and emphasize its melodramatic nature. Since the verbs or nominalized forms of besar and abrazar are repeated three times throughout the poem, it is clear that these are the activities upon which the young poetic speaker has been focusing.

In the last stanza, the poetic voice underscores his apparent interest in the events of the poem but now abruptly reveals himself to be a non-participant in the amorous exchange that he earlier described. He matter-of-factly allows both the "Colegiala" (and by extension the surprised reader) to know that he has not been the one giving her the hugs and kisses that she has been receiving, "porque no eran los míos." The last three lines of the poem begin once again with the refrain, but end with the explanation that the amorous actions did not amount to anything because they weren't from the speaker. If one understands these hugs and kisses to be symbolic of love, the poem ends with the statement of the very traditional idea that, the spurned lover vows that his love is superior to that of any other. While this is a commonly seen motif in love poetry, the poetic language and technique employed have prevented it from appearing cliché. However, it is also likely, that the poetic voice has purposely included a poem about displays of
affection as the first in a section of "Poemas amatorios" in order to underscore the difference between and the separation of sensuality and love. After all, while there is perhaps the hint of a reprimand in the last stanza, there is no prolonged lament or pledge of a vendetta on the part of the speaker. In effect, he seems only slightly affected, relatively unmoved, forgiving and surprisingly mature. It as if the young poetic speaker has learned one of his first lessons about romance and love and it is this idea that the reader remembers during further re-readings of the poem.

With the idea of a lover's rendezvous so key in the development of "Colegiala," the reader is also reminded of the same motif seen earlier in the poem entitled, "I. Inventario de lugares propicios al amor." While some of the same imagery and ideas were employed there as well, the "paseo de novios," references to the church, and the caresses of love, a very different tone was evident. While in the earlier poem, the focus was on the oppressive nature of Franco's Spain as an impediment for love and its expression, here, the speaker seems to be looking back on adolescent love as an exciting but somewhat confusing emotion that he does not fully understand even in the present. When reading "Inventario" the reader quite likely had a feeling of sympathy for the speaker and resentment towards the regime. In "Colegiala," however, the pervasive
feeling is one of nostalgia as the poetic voice seems to be looking back and remembering his youth.

In fact, upon further reflection, the reader, like the speaker of the poem, has essentially played the role of a voyeur observing the young couple and recalling the past. This is indicated by the assertion that the kisses given "no eran los míos" suggesting that the speaker could have been watching the entire event of the afternoon and evening encounter of lovers indulging themselves in this display of affection. Seeing these youngsters in love could have well reminded the aging speaker of his own days of youthful loving. Just as the scene of the poem occurs in the evening, the speaker too, is in the twilight of his life, watching and remembering the pleasures of youth and love. After all, as indicated by the poem, the speaker does indeed seem to have a perspective that is much more sophisticated than that of a teenager. The line "no eran los míos" helps to establish this temporal distance and also the speaker's own non-participation in the amorous encounter. What he does do, however, and in this the reader accompanies him, is vicariously and voyeuristically experience and re-experience the awakening of the expression of love, sexual drives and the libido.

The poem that immediately follows seems to describe the same poetic speaker twenty or thirty years later. The
selection entitled, "Canción, glosa y cuestiones" (380) comes after "Colegiala," and resembles the initial poem in both its use of light hearted humor and its preoccupation with the relationship between love and sensuality. Once again, love is not mentioned and interestingly enough the selection reveals almost a complete lack of emotional content. If "Colegiala" can be considered a first attempt at alluding to the differentiation between sexual activity and love, here the poetic voice offers an exaggerated no-holds-barred representation of the division between the two:

Ese lugar que tienes,
cielito lindo,
entre las piernas,
ese lugar tan íntimo

y querido,
es un lugar común.

Por lo citado y por lo concurrido.

Al fin, nada me importa:
me gusta en cualquier caso.

Pero hay algo que intriga.
¿Cómo
solar tan diminuto
puede ser compartido
por una población tan numerosa?

15 ¿Qué estatutos regulan el prodigio?

What is paramount in the selection is not the comically vulgar content that it suggests, but rather the poetic voice’s use of poetic language and technique. Just as in the first poem, he begins the selection with an intertextual referent. Here, it is the slightly changed lyrics to the popular Mexican love song, "Cielito lindo." In this version, the poetic voice foregoes all subtlety and destroys any idea of the romantic, idealized love presented in the musical text by his crass reference to the genitalia of the tú. He later contradicts himself by first referring to the woman’s sexual organs with words like "íntimo" and "querido" and then stating that it is "un lugar común," which he goes on to explain is frequently visited. Just like in the first poem, the poetic voice is not the exclusive companion of the tú. Ironically, and in a much more pronounced way than in the previous poem, this does not seem to bother him in the least, "Al fin, nada me importa: / me gusta en cualquier caso." By later referring to having sex with the woman as sharing a space, "solar," with many others, the poetic voice clearly points to the fact that for him there is indeed a stark division between sexual activity and love. This clarification, although implicit, fully
develops one of the ideas alluded to in the earlier poem.

The absurd questions that appear in the last stanzas employ a standard bureaucratic language, "¿Qué estatuos regulan el prodigio?" which contrasts with the vulgar day-to-day words preceding it. As Debicki notes, "la realidad a la que se alude (la mujer, su sociedad, el lenguaje de su mundo y del hablante mismo) forma un mundo pedestre, ridículo y cursi" (99). When studying the first two poems of "Poemas amatorios" in sequence, this last one appears to be the progression or adult perspective of the similar idea seen through the eyes of an adolescent in "Colegiala." When read one right after another, the reader can detect the commonalities between the two, both thematic and in the use of humor at the expense of propriety.

The third poem of "Poemas amatorios" is a short untitled selection that acts as sort of a lyrical aside as the reader continues with this section. It is replete with traditional imagery and language, metaphorically equating flowers with women and referring to the age old themes of fidelity and discreteness in love.

Del heliotropo,

más discreto

que el girasol,

pero no menos firme en su fidelidad;

5 que a nadie vuelve el rostro, despectivo,
y lo mueve el amor,
y sin embargo
otorga a todos el don de su perfume;

del heliotropo,
10 esquiva amiga,
aprende. (381)

This is quite a contrast with the predominantly humorous, almost whimsical tone established in the first two poems. Its placement in the section does indeed serve as a break in what seemed to be an establishing pattern and can be likened to a cleansing of the palate before one continues dining a different class of food or in this case, reading a different kind of poetry. Naturally, it also keeps present the idea that love can manifest itself in variety of often times contradictory ways even though it is being considered, supposedly, by the same poetic speaker.

In "Más fuerte que el amor" (382), the selection reveals that love is not impervious to change. After a first reading of the poem, it becomes evident that there are clearly two images, an emotion and a substance, which are indeed stronger than love.

Quehacer de acero: dura, dura, dura.

No la hermosura, que yo vi primero,
sino el leve destello de amargura
que, ya desvanecida la hermosura,
5 brilla en tus ojos de color acero.

Tan sólo el odio en ellos dura, dura.

The poetic composition begins and ends with the anaphoric use of "dura, dura," and is made up of six endecasyllabic verses with consonantal rhyme. The first verse begins by mentioning the task or job, "quehacer," of steel. Obviously, this hard, resistant metal is both tremendously strong ("fuerte" of the title) and made to last. The words, "Quehacer" and "acero" are very similar phonetically and seem to create both internal rhyme and rhythm continued in the other half of the verse with the repetition of "dura."

This word, which can be read as a verb describing the longevity of steel, can also be interpreted as an adjective, meaning hard or severe, which simultaneously refers to the tú who is spoken of in verses two through five, and steel itself. Here, the verses portray the vanishing beauty of the speaker's beloved and the "amargura" replacing it. The words "destello" and "brilla" remind the reader of the sheen often associated with metal and later the color grey is compared with the steely colored eyes of the tú. As the last verse reveals, after the "hermosura" fades away only hatred remains and just like cold, hard steel, it too is
stronger than love and lasts much longer.

There is a definite tone of resignation evident in "Más fuerte que el amor" and this is continued in the short poem "Madrigal melancólico" (383) sequentially following it. The poem is prefaced by a verse of a song, "Se me olvidó que te olvidé... (De un bolero de Lolita de la Colina)."

En tu mirada vi un destello raro,
en parte de aprensión, también de alivio,
cuyo sentido comprendí más tarde:
recuerdo inesperado de un olvido.

In this selection the poetic voice speculates on the effects of remembering and memory. The language employed, much like the preceding poem, is constituted largely by antithetical terms, "aprensión/alivio," "recuerdo/olvido." While it also uses the same endecasyllabic verses, its rhyme is assonantal in verses two and four. Although not as severe in tone as "Más fuerte" it continues to demonstrate the same melancholic attitude much in the way that "Canción, glosa y cuestiones" preserved and continued the tone of "Colegiala." Just as the first two poems were interrupted by a more lyrical very distinct composition, the nostalgic and almost depressed tone of the "Más fuerte" and "Madrigal" is broken by the appearance of the sixth poem of this section.

After a rather serious consideration of the love/hate relationship expressed in "Más fuerte que el amor" and the
ambiguity of memory's functional capacity in "Madrigal melancólico" the title of the next piece, "Todo amor es efímero" (384) seems to indicate that this poem also will continue in the same vein. However, after scanning this brief poem the reader realizes that this selection does not offer a limited view of love as its title might at first indicate, but rather portrays and develops the most personalized and serious view of love offered thus far in the collection.

Ninguna era tan bella como tú
durante aquel fugaz momento en que te amaba:

mi vida entera.

In this concise composition the poetic voice essentially and antithetically defines "efímero" as "mi vida entera." The love upon which the speaker reflects is completely sincere and lasting. Indeed, it appears that having been able to share his love and life with the tú has been so wonderful that time has almost literally flown. With the adjective "entera," it is evident that only the end of his temporal existence can terminate the love he feels for his beloved. The poem is set in the past, as the imperfect verbs and use of the demonstrative pronoun "aquel" indicates, and seems to be a fond memory. The curious element of the poem is not so much in its idealistic
evocation of love but rather the fact that as Debicki comments, "se salva de un posible sentimentalismo porque se presenta desde la perspective de un hablante que se da perfecta cuenta de sus propias limitaciones" (100). This is the mature controlled poetic speaker that was mentioned at the onset. Also important are the great differences that are evident in this poem and the first two commented on earlier. The effect that reading this poem has after having followed two rather bleak and depressing selections is much stronger than it would have been had it followed the less serious first selections. Debicki underscores this point:

Habilitado para tomar en cuenta, para precisar el efecto de este poema, el sitio que ocupa en el libro. Al venir después de <<Canción, glosa y cuestiones>> y de otros poemas no muy idealistas, su final resulta aún más soprendente. Se ejemplifica aquí el efecto logrado varias veces en el libro mediante la anteposición de poemas de diversos enfoques. (100)

Having followed "Más fuerte que el amor" and "Madrigal melancólica" the poem appears as a powerful counterpoint to the themes of hatred and melancholy. Curiously, had it appeared after "Colegiala" and "Canción" it would have been quite anticlimactic and hard to take seriously.

The following poem, "¿Sabes que un papel puede...?"
(385) is a four line selection recalling a love letter not written. The first line appears to ask an unidentified tú an innocent but at the same time complex question:

¿Sabes que un papel puede cortar como una navaja?

Simple papel en blanco,
una carta no escrita
me hace hoy sangrar.

The poem explains that it is a letter not written, or words not said that cause pain and wounds. This notion also recalls the difficulty of the creative task, especially when it deals with attempts at writing one's amorous feelings on paper. While a very simple message, it puts into words the feelings of an enamored individual who opens a mailbox hoping to find a promised letter from a loved one but instead finds the box empty. Yet, if viewed from another perspective, perhaps, the speaker never expressed his emotions to his beloved in a love letter and in this way his own inaction, "me hace sangrar." It is quite likely that due to the mention of love letters not sent and the suffering experienced by separated lovers or a love that is not mutual, that the reader will be reminded of romanticism at its most typical. Indeed, this is a prelude of the next poem of the section.
Not suprisingly, this selection, the section's last, is entitled "Carta" (386). Once again, it becomes clear how the poet seems to have painstakingly ordered his love poems. While this poem parallels the form of a letter with a formulaic salutation and two stanzas of "information," it does break from the mold in that it does not include a line of farewell.

Amor mío:

el tiempo turbulento pasó por mi corazón
igual que, durante una tormenta, un río pasa bajo un puente:
5 rumoroso, incesante, lleva lejos
hojas y peces muertos,
fragmentos desteñidos del paisaje,
agonizantes restos de la vida.

Ahora,
10 todo ya aguas abajo
-luz distinta y silencio-
quedan sólo los ecos de aquel fragor distante,
un aroma impreciso a cortezas podridas,
y tu imagen entera, inconmovible,
15 tercamente aferrada
-como la rama grande
que el viento desgajó de un viejo tronco-
a la borrosa orilla de mi vida.
The extended simile following the salutation describes the "tiempo turbulento" that the speaker experienced in terms of a raging river during a storm. The notion of the river's force, "lleva lejos," and destructive nature, "peces muertos, / fragmentos desestados del paisaje, / agonizantes restos de la vida," are clearly emphasized. By virtue of the fact that the poem mirrors the epistolary form, alludes to love, refers to a tragic storm in hyperbolic terms and mentions death all point to its romantic subtext.

The second stanza is set apart both structurally and temporally from the first as it begins by marking a distinction in time with the word "Ahora." These lines describe the aftermath of the emotional storm, "aguas abajo," in which the image of the tú still remains. This image, along with the rotting branches carried by the river literally "hang on" in the mind of the speaker. While he reflects on his past life, indicated by the use of the word "aquel," it is also made clear how the past now effects the present of the yo. Clearly, the image of the tú has transcended time and appears to exist in the present. Her description as "inconmovible," a designation of constancy and firmness, contrasts with the speaker's own life which is portrayed as undefined and hazy. The use of the word "orilla" could imply that the speaker's life is coming to an
end. Perhaps, the motivation of the speaker writing this "Carta" was to once again consider the turbulent relationship that he experienced with the tú. While he seems to have "survived" this stormy episode of his life, he has not been unaffected. It is precisely this notion, that in a love relationship there are residual emotional effects on those involved, which is enhanced and described in greater detail in the last poem of Prosemas.

Apart from the autonomous section of love poetry just commented on, the only other poem that reveals a lover's discourse is "Artritis metafísica" (394). The thematic content of this selection, which is in the section "Biografía e historias," was prefaced by that of "Carta." In this more extensive poem, the poetic voice reveals the very real and serious consequences that the bumps and bruises of a love affair have had on him. Even though the poem's message is serious, González indulges himself in humor as he offsets this undertone.

Siempre alguna mujer me llevó de la nariz
(para no hacer mención de otros apéndices).

Anillado
como un mono doméstico,
5 salte de cama en cama.
¡Cuánta zalema alegre,  
qué equilibrios tan altos y difíciles,  
qué acrobacias tan ágiles,  
qué risa!

10 Aunque era un espectáculo hilarante,  
hubo quien se dolió de mis piruetas,  
lo cual no es nada extraño:  
en semejante trance  
yo mismo  
15 me rompí el alma en más de una ocasión.

Es una pena que esos golpes  
que, entregados al júbilo del vuelo,  
entonces casi no sentimos,  
algunas tardes ahora,  
20 en el otoño,  
cuando amenaza lluvia  
y viene el frío,  
nos vuelvan a doler tanto en el alma;  
renovado dolor que no permite  
25 reconciliar el sueño interrumpido.

En esas condiciones no hay alivio posible:  
ni el bálsamo falaz de la nostalgia,
ni el más firme consuelo del olvido.

The first stanza is the poetic speaker’s comical self-evaluation of his lack of willpower and control with regards to women. While the first line portrays how a mother might grab a child, "me llevó," the parenthetical second line seems to point to a much more adult way of leading one around, and not necessarily by one’s mother. The idea of the poetic voice’s apparent complacency in being guided through life by women and his own sexual drive is further developed in the next lines where he describes himself as a trained and tethered monkey leaping from bed to bed. His admitted promiscuity is caricaturized and he is made to look ridiculous in the third stanza where he describes his activities and endeavours in terms of gymnastic abilities. While this may at first appear to be flattery of his own sexual inventiveness and prowess the pejorative image of the primates mentioned earlier never quite disappears.

It is not until lines ten and eleven where the speaker adopts a different tone. The word "aunque" acts as a transition from the talk of the "espectáculo hilarante" to more serious ideas. While identifying no one in particular the poetic voice asserts that all of the fun that was had, did not come for free. While at times he was responsible for causing pain and sorrow, "hubo quien se dolió de mis piruetas," he was by no means immune from the consequences
of his actions, "me rompí el alma en más de una ocasión." It is at this point in the poem when the speaker begins to reveal the realities and effects of love relationships on himself.

In the fifth stanza the speaker reflects back on his younger days when the results of love did not seem quite as painful. By using the collective "sentimos" he reveals that this was not only for him but also for his youthful companions as well. However, with the advent of autumn, both seasonally and the twilight years of the speaker's life, the effects of such rigorous amorous activity aggravate his "artritis metafísica." This malady, brought about by the memories of the speaker and the mentioned cold rain of autumn, result in the metaphysical and emotional "dolor" of the poetic voice making sleep impossible. Having said this, the poetic voice reveals that there is no remedy for his pain and remorse since love's wounds are resistant both to nostalgia and forgetting. Love is serious business for the poetic voice and its consequences are both important and lasting in his own life.

From the onset of the consideration of this collection it has been clear that there is a great deal of variety in the way that the discourse of love is expressed and evoked. At the same time, however, there does seem to be a kind of organizing principal utilized in the presentation of this
varied and ever-changing emotion. As the analyses of the selections have indicated, a sequential ordering of "Poemas amatorios" seems to reflect a thematic pairing of the poems later broken by lyrical asides. Thus, the reader has witnessed a specific pattern: two poems distinguishing between love and sex using a light hearted tone and humor, a lyrical break, two poems focusing on the end of love, memory and sadness, another lyrical break, and finally, two poems about love as it is expressed, or not expressed in writing. The final poem focused on the long lasting consequences and effects that love can have on an individual, the underlying thematic matter presented by "Carta," the last selection of "Poemas amatorios." For the most part, the noteworthy poetic techniques evidenced in this collection appear earlier in González’s writing and were examined in preceding chapters of this dissertation (intertexts, irony, humor, metapoetry, perspective, etc.).

Debicki has called this collection the, "Ejemplo máximo de la poesía de la <<postmodernidad>>, [que] configura una realidad lingüística y humana que nos invita a vivir en ella y a extenderla, hasta que llega a ser parte de nuestra más íntima existencia" (104-105). While the collection is a solid example of the poet’s postmodern verse, it is also further testimony to the presence of and the importance of the discourse of love in González’s later poetry. In many
ways these poems represent a retrospective look on the speaker's amorous experiences of the past. Interestingly, love has proven to be so elusive and difficult to comprehend that thirty years after having begun his interrogation of this emotion and its consequences, the poetic voice still continues to grapple with this important concept.

As of today, Gonzalez's last book of poetry is entitled *Deixis en fantasma* (1992). This short book, consisting of seventeen poems, has been included in the 1994 edition of *Palabra sobre palabra* but as of yet, none of the poems have been commented on with much detail. The title of the work attracts the attention of the reader almost instantly. The word "deixis" is from Greek and denotes "the pointing or specifying function of some words (as definite articles and demonstrative pronouns) whose denotation changes from one discourse to another" (Merriam Webster's 304). That is to say, the mutable nature of language and meaning is underscored from the onset. Having said this of the first part of the title, LaFollette Miller's interpretation of the second part is relevant in that here, "'en fantasma'...[is] a word play on "en persona" [in person]" (Note 3 191). Once again, the name of the collection is metapoetical in nature and is a sustained comment on the unstable and nebulous nature of language and meaning. As for the poetry that follows, Luis García Montero states in his article
"Impresiones de Angel González:"

Los nuevos poemas de Angel González se plantean una vez más el tema del paso del tiempo, la herida que dejan los sueños, la desnudez lesionada a la que deben enfrentarse los seres humanos, una vez conocido el final de las promesas cuando las ilusiones antiguas se contrasten con la realidad.

While not a deviation in any respect from his earlier books, a tone of resignation and an apparent acceptance of an eventual end of one's own existence becomes evident. Although, as Montero notes, some dreams are never fulfilled and do become lost forever, nevertheless, here, González optimistically portrays love as an emotion transcending both time and even death itself.

This is especially evident in "No creo en la Eternidad" (420) and "Ya nada ahora" (422). As the title of the former makes painfully clear, the poetic speaker is aware of his temporal limitations. Here, as he speculates on the nature of the passing of time he affirms that only love will remain when he is gone.

Mas sé que el tiempo es cónico
y reaparece por la espalda
sobresaltándonos de pronto
con sus inútiles charadas.
5 ¿Te amaré ayer?

¿Te amo hoy en día?

¿No te amé acaso, todavía, mañana?

No creo en la Eternidad.

Mas si algo ha de quedar de lo que fuimos

10 es el amor que pasa.

The poem begins with the assertion that time is rounded or cyclical. While this would seem to indicate a certain regularity or predictability, time as a phenomena still has a way of surprising the speaker as is emphasized with the phrases "reaparece por la espalda" and "de pronto" as well as the verb sobresaltar. Clearly, the effects of time are unavoidable and signs of its passing, "inútiles charadas," are seemingly glimpsed around every turn.

In the second stanza, the poetic speaker seems to engage in his own "useless" verbal charade as he manipulates the temporal dimensions of the word amar with a variety of impossible time constraints. Line five positions a future verb tense squarely in the past while line seven pairs a past tense verb with a referent to the future. Only line six, "¿Te amo hoy en día?" is a temporally concordant question. It is both interesting and significant that the speaker's interrogation of time is offered by using the verb to love. Furthermore, as these almost silly questions have
shown, love does indeed seem to be immune to the changes that the passing of time generally implies. When he later proclaims that he does not believe in "la Eternidad," ostentatiously represented with a capital "E" which draws attention to its grandiose and indisputable advent, he then realizes that only love will be able to prevail and remain when he and his mate are gone, "si algo ha de quedar de lo que fuimos."

Line ten is an exact intertextual referent to the last line from Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer's "Rima X." In that poem, love is portrayed as a force of energy altering the physical surroundings of the speaker. In a similar fashion, here, in González's poem, love is also seen as a dynamic force, "pasa," but in this case instead of altering the physical surroundings of the speaker, it transcends time and humankind's existence. Clearly, it is no coincidence that the verb pasar, usually used with time, is used here with "amor" to underscore its impervious and lasting nature.

The final poem to be studied, "Ya nada ahora," is also the last selection of the Deixis en fantasma. This creates the allusion that it is the last poem written by the poet. In the case of this dissertation in which all the poetry has been studied from the collected works in Palabra sobre palabra this notion seems even more intensified. While there is no way to substantiate that this poem might be the
last one written by González, after having read a collection of more than four hundred pages of poetry, there is a tendency, on the part of the reader, to want to have this poem be the closing note, not only to the collection, but also to the poet’s work viewed as a whole. As the text itself portray, there is a certain sense of closure readily evident:

Largo es el arte; la vida en cambio corta como un cuchillo
Pero nada ya ahora

-ni siquiera la muerte, por su parte inmensa-
5 podrá evitarlo:
exento, libre,
como la niebla que al romper el día
los hondos valles del invierno exhalan, creciente

en un espacio sin fronteras,

10 este amor ya sin mí te amará siempre.

The first part of line one, "largo es el arte" could refer to the commonly held idea of the longevity of the artistic creation. This is intensified by the next part of the line which has a similar construction and proposes, as a
counterpoint, that "la vida en cambio corta." By using two antithetical terms, both of which can be used to measure time, largo/corto, the speaker underscores that while life will fade, one's art will not. As the reader continues it becomes clear that unlike the word "largo," the word "corta" can also be interpreted as a verb. This puts a certain sting to the idea that life will indeed end or be cut short.

Line three is the first part of a pronouncement interrupted by lines four and five which states, "Pero nada ya ahora. . .podrá evitarlo." Just what the pronoun "lo" refers to remains unclear. However, when the last line of the poem is read, "este amor," can be identified as the nominal referent. In short, the poetic voice asserts that nothing will be able prevent his love from continuing on after his death. While human existence seems ephimeral, human love is not. The tone of the poem is not resignation but rather confidence in that nothing will be able to effect the love he has and has had for the tú, "este amor ya sin mí te amará siempre." His love, which grows endlessly with or without his living physical presence is "exento, libre" and thus not to be limited by death imposed on human beings.

The simile of his love expanding like the morning mist suggests the ideas of newness, purity and vitality. In this case, the immensity of death seems to be no match for the all-enveloping nature of love. In this last discussion
about time, life, art and love the speaker affirms that time only ends life, while both his art and his love will continue to remain. This idea is a continuation and an enhancement of the idea earlier presented in "No creo en la Eternidad."

The love poetry found in *Prosemas* looks back at the life and love(s) of the poetic speaker. *Deixis*, on the other hand, is a look ahead to that time when the poetic voice is gone and only his love remains. This is most certainly an optimistic note upon which to end a poetic career. As these last two collections of Angel González reveal, the poet never strays too far from thinking about love. While the amorous discourse of these last two books is certainly of a similar vein to that seen earlier, the importance assigned to this emotion reaches its greatest heights in his last work. While González's own poems have shown from the onset that he is a poet interested in writing about the amorous, he does not come to any specific conclusions about love, have a regimented and clear-cut understanding of love, or even be able to define exactly what love is. Rather, through his poetry and his amorous discourse the poet establishes, develops and ultimately recognizes the multi-faceted and complex nature of this human sentiment. Coming to terms with human mortality, the writer, after careful and painful soul searching, learns
that his art and his love will remain although he himself is by no means immortal.
1. It was included in the 1986 edition of Palabra sobre palabra.

2. See References. Especially notable are González's studies of Juan Ramón Jiménez, Antonio Machado, Generation of 1927 and Gabriel Celaya.

3. According to LaFollette Miller, "It is difficult to do justice to González's title in a translation. The invented word "prosemas" contains both "poema [poem] and "prosa" [prose]. The word could also be divided into "pro" [pro] and "semas," a possible Spanish version of "semes," or signs. Finally, the ending "-mas" combines with "o menos" to form the Spanish phrase "más o menos" [more or less]" (Note 2, 191).

4. Sobejano goes on to discuss the prosema as a poetic genre.

5. This refrain appears slightly altered in the Refranero general ideológico español, compiled by Luis Martínez Kleiser of the Real Academia Española and published in 1953. The refrain is found under the heading "Besos" and appears, "Besos y abrazos no hacen muchachos; pero tocan a vísperas" (80).


7. The verse to which González makes reference is as follows:

Ese lunar que tienes,
cielito lindo,
junto a la boca.
No se lo des a nadie,
cielito lindo,
que a mí me toca.
CONCLUSION

The different poetic techniques found in Angel González's amorous poetry clearly indicate the same postmodern tendencies that are also evident when other aspects and themes of his poetry are examined. His creativity in using the specific genre of the love poem as a springboard for personal introspection, social commentary, artistic parody of hackneyed love poetry and an inquiry into linguistic skepticism is indicative of the ever-changing nature of his work as a whole. As LaFollette Miller observes,

González's play with spheres of discourse, . . . , allows him to raise some of the fundamental issues associated with postmodernism - the distance between art and life, the incorporation of artworks by other artworks, questions of roles and of the identity of the self - as well as to carry out his own appropriation of the cultural texts and images of the past using the ironic and playful approach characteristic of postmodernist works. (136)

As the present dissertation has shown, within this "play with spheres of discourse," the discourse of love is both representative of, and continues to highlight a postmodern aesthetic.
In a time in which many artists and critics alike have chosen to focus their work exclusively on the erotic and sexual, González has been more measured in the breadth of his focus and his consideration of these and other important aspects of love poetry. As demonstrated here, this poet uses the traditional genre of love poetry and revitalizes and renovates the very notions upon which it has been constructed and manifested over the years. In this way, González establishes a criticial discourse within his poetic discourse of love, which both scrutinizes and redefines a type of poetry that can now be viewed in distinctly postmodern terms.
REFERENCES


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