

Re-reading *Cecilia Valdés* and *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra*:

Searching for the “*Mulatta Bildungsroman*”

by

Heather Bishop

Under the Direction of Lesley Feracho

ABSTRACT

In this thesis, the traditional *Bildungsroman* novel is re-conceptualized in order to consider *Cecilia Valdés* by Cirilo Villaverde and *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra* by Jorge Amado, two Latin American novels which portray the lives of two mulatta women of Cuba and Brazil. The thesis will focus primarily on whether or not, we as readers of Latin American fiction can look to find novels, such as these, as representative of the development of a mulatta character of Latin America. Also considering Cirilo Villaverde and Jorge Amado, the reader will be able to explore the successes and failures of a white male author to create a developing *bildung* character.

INDEX WORDS: *Cecilia Valdés* o *La Loma del Ángel*, *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra*, Cirilo Villaverde, Jorge Amado, mulatta, woman of color, Latin American literature, *Bildungsroman*

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DEDICATION

O sol quando nasce é para todos.
-Portuguese Saying

Para mis padres, hermanos, “mi negro” y
mis abuelos que han ido al cielo.
Los amo y adoro para siempre.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
CHAPTERS	
I. Introduction: The <i>Bildungsroman</i> genre and The Mulatta Protagonist	1
II. <i>Cecilia Valdés</i> : Cirilo Villaverde’s “Mulatta <i>Bildungsroman</i> ” (Re-visiting Cecilia Valdés as the Tragic Heroine of Cirilo Villaverde).....	6
III. <i>Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra</i> : Self-discovery and The Failed <i>Bildungsroman</i> Narrative.....	24
IV. Conclusion: The Continued Search for the “Mulatta <i>Bildungsroman</i> ”.....	40
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	43

CHAPTER I

Introduction:

The *Bildungsroman* Narrative Genre and the Mulatta Protagonist.

There exists no strict, inviolable definition of the term *Bildungsroman* anymore than there does of any literary genre. Probably the image that comes to mind most readily when we see or hear the term *Bildungsroman* is one of an innocent young man ready to step into the world to learn the lessons that life has to offer him. This image corresponds quite closely to many of the *Bildungsromane* that have been written since the eighteenth century. But like any stereotypical image it is over simplified. Most of the heroes of the traditional and modern *Bildungsromane* are indeed young men; but if young men were the only category of human beings eligible for heroship in a *Bildungsroman*.(3)

Susan Ashley Gohlman 1990

I begin with this quote by Gohlman to introduce my interest in the topic of this thesis. This short passage from Gohlman's *Starting Over: The Task of the Protagonist in the Contemporary Bildungsroman* captures the idea that started my study of the "Mulatta *Bildungsroman*." As I began to analyze the points that she raises in her text, I began to think of Latin American literature, specifically Afro-Latino Literature. This led to my question regarding the protagonist of color and his/her ability to be a *bildung* character. After re-visiting the *Bildungsromane* genre, I decided to focus on a the mulatta character and her representation in the Latin American novel, specifically two protagonists generally considered "tragic mulattas." My focus here was to question the possibility of a marginalized Other, such as the mulatta, to be represented in a *Bildungsroman* novel. Just as Gohlman discusses the general *Bildungsromane*

characteristics and defining terms that seem to exclude those characters who are not “young, male, and innocent” to fulfill the conquest, I demonstrate in this thesis the exclusion of the mulatta protagonist.

As a scholar of Latin American studies, my focus is mainly on the comparative literature of Spanish and Portuguese-speaking America. In my research of the past two years, I have focused on Caribbean literature of the Spanish Antilles and Brazil. Within this broader facet of Latin American literature, my interests have always been connected to the representation of the woman of color and how these representations are realized in life situations. This thesis does not stray from these themes, but rather, incorporates them all into the purpose of this study: to search for a space where the mulatta protagonist can take part in the *Bildungsroman* genre. As I began my investigation, I looked to Gohlman’s assessment that:

In brief, then; these are the most common ingredients that the educated reader associates with the term *Bildungsroman*: a young hero (usually male), a wide range of experiences, and a sense of the ultimate practical value of these experiences in the later life. Judging from the frequency of usage of this term in articles, essays and reviews, we can only assume that the genre most assuredly exists and that the term *Bildungsromane* may be applied to any novel that contains the above-named ingredients. (4)

By considering these “ingredients” of experience, development, and sense of harmony, I set out to find a novel whose protagonist is a mulatta, and who, through a range of experiences, uses her newly-found knowledge to develop in her society and to become a mature subject. The novel I have chosen to best demonstrate these qualities are *Cecilia Valdés o La Loma del Ángel*, the 1882 Cuban novel by Cirilo Villaverde.

The concept of a “mulatta *Bildungsroman*” is a new reading that has never been explored per se. Therefore I felt it necessary to also use a novel to contrast the main “ingredients” of a *Bildungsroman*, in order to give readers an example of the antithesis of the “mulatta *Bildungsroman*” The work chosen for this portrayal is *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra*. Published in 1972 by Jorge Amado, *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra* is a Brazilian novel that is well-read in both Brazil and throughout other parts of the world.

By using both novels as examples of either a “mulatta *Bildungsroman*” and its opposite, I present to readers of Latin American literature a new perspective that allows narratives to be revisited in order to analyze other possible interpretations of the “tragic mulatta.” By providing an example of a novel that cannot be read as a *Bildungsroman*, I also explore the parameters around our readings of certain works, so as to determine which novels consisting of mulatta characters can be read as a heroine of a *bildung* narrative and which can not.

Both novels used here have been read and critiqued by large audiences. Each novel demonstrates the societal restrictions of the mulatta protagonist that cause her to act, or in the case of *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra*, to react. The two main protagonists of the novel are both represented as symbols and images of their respective countries which have deemed the mulatta as object, stereotypical, and the idealized sexual body. In order to contrast the subjectivity and stereotypical aspects of both novels, I also consider it important to acknowledge the implications of a white male author creating a mulatta protagonist, and the possible reading as a *Bildungsroman* narrative. With the textual aspects of the works, I compare and contrast the two authors, Villaverde and Amado, to demonstrate the stereotypes and sexual subjectivity of each white male author toward the mulatta protagonist.

In order to prove my thesis that *Cecilia Valdés* is an example of the bildungsroman and that *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra* is not, I use textual examples from each novel that represent four important elements: conscious (or unconscious) development; the ability of the protagonist to voice and/or to alter her state in society; and, also but not least, the ability of the protagonist to realize through her apprenticeship and experience, (two characteristics found in the *Bildungsroman* genre), a sense of being. Just as Gohlman analyzes works where the protagonists "... differed in age, experience, and cultural background (xi)," I use *Cecilia Valdés* and *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra* to re-consider the relationship between the German prototype, *Wilhelm Meister*, of the *bildung* narrative and my proposed "mulatta *bildung*" character. As Gohlman notes:

Goethe, whose *Wilhelm Meister* is generally regarded as the prototype of the *Bildungsroman*, developed a definition of Bildung which suggests that personal growth cannot be restrained arbitrarily by fixed rules of conduct. His definition includes the idea of reciprocal growth or change in which the individual and his environment are engaged in a process of mutual transformation, each shaping the other until the individual has reached the point where he or she experiences a sense of harmony with the environment. (x)

My analysis will consider the textual differences between the mulatta character and the prototypical *bildung* character in three main areas: gender difference, the subject's racial background, and cultural differences. As a result, I demonstrate the possibility of the mulatta to be a *bildung* character. With *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra*, my analysis demonstrates how these same elements (i.e. development through apprenticeship, self-discovery, sense of harmony) that do not allow for its mulatta protagonist to be considered a *bildung* character.

Because of the various afore-mentioned differences between the mulatta and traditional male *bildung* character, the mulatta protagonist does not have the potentiality to reach “a sense of harmony” within her environment, as the white male hero was once thought to have. My analysis of both novels will incorporate various critical models. My critical framework and definition of the *Bildungsroman* genre is gathered from Susan Ashley Gohlman and Cristina Ferreira Pinto. I use to analyze *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra* the critical works of Ellen H. Douglass and Susan Canty Quinlan. My conclusion is that the mulatta protagonist experiences her *bildung* processes through distinct life circumstances, incomparable to the traditional *bildung* character, creating, instead of a harmony with her society, an understanding of the image of who she is at the novel’s end.

In the next two chapters of this thesis, I introduce the historical context of *Cecilia Valdés* and *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra* and the biographical information of Cirilo Villaverde and Jorge Amado. I then turn to each text to give examples of what a “mulatta *bildung*” narrative should and should not consist of. My main focus here is to demonstrate through textual examples the protagonist’s growth, development, “sense of harmony with one’s environment”, and last but not least, the protagonist’s ability to self-identify. In this thesis I present a perspective that allows for a re-reading of novels that portray a mulatta protagonist. With evaluations of works that have been studied before, like *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra* and *Cecilia Valdés*, and further readings of those novels yet to come, I hope to present a new perspective for the mulatta protagonist. The perspective allows readers to view her as part of a *bildung* narrative, where she attempts to find selfhood in a society where many times she is relegated instead to a tragic ending and an inability to find self neither through her life experiences, an apprenticeship, nor a sense of harmony within her society; in other words, the failed/truncated *Bildungsroman*.

CHAPTER II:

Cecilia Valdés: Cirilo Villaverde's *Mulatta Bildungsroman*

(Re-visiting *Cecilia Valdés* as the tragic heroine of Cirilo Villaverde)

As discussed in the opening chapter, the search for the mulatta *bildung* character has to begin in a novel which first consists of a mulatta protagonist. *Cecilia Valdés* is an example of this type of novel. As we will see in the beginning section of this analysis, *Cecilia Valdés* captures the life of a young mulatta in nineteenth century Cuba and her development within this society. Involving itself with motifs of slavery, Cuban race relations, and other cultural aspects of early Cuban culture, this literary work by Cirilo Villaverde opens up the discussion and further analysis of the *mulatta Bildungsroman* and its existence, not only for itself but for other works that have yet been read as “*Mulatta Bildungsroman*” narratives. The analysis of this work will address the complexities of a white male author's creation of a protagonist who is a woman of color.

Cecilia Valdés or *La Loma de Ángel* is one of the most renowned novels of Latin America's literary history. The final edition of *Cecilia Valdés* written by Cirilo Villaverde in 1882 is considered one of the most accurate accounts of Cuba's nineteenth century history (Luis 1990). Also considered an abolitionist novel, *Cecilia Valdés* portrays the slave society that Cuba relied on for more than a century. Between these fictional pages the reader can perceive the landscapes and scenery of Cuba's capital, Havana, the history of the people, along with Cuban culture of this time period. The novel reflects upon the repressive years when Vives governed the island and the realities that Cuban citizens lived at that time.

The novel began as a short story to be published in *La Siempreviva*, a local magazine in Havana in 1839. It was originally 25 pages and divided into two parts. This story, also entitled *Cecilia Valdés*, tells of a young and exceptionally beautiful mulatta who mindlessly ventures through the streets of Havana. It has been stated that the Cecilia Valdés of this story is an actual young woman who Cirilo Villaverde knew from 1826-1827.¹ This short story reflected not only the idealized beauty that Cecilia possessed, but also her talents in singing and dancing. As mentioned before, the narrative is broken down into two parts:

... en la primera, la protagonista- que recuerda a la Gitanilla de Cervantes-entra en la casa de una familia rica, donde las muchachas la presentan a sus padres. Luego Cecilia regresa a su humilde casita, donde la abuela le cuenta la historia de una niña andariega que se fue a pasear con un joven seductor, desapareciendo la niña para siempre, pues el joven era el diablo en persona. En la segunda parte, Cecilia es seducida por el hermano de las muchachas de la casa rica; éste la viste con sedas y ella se deja seducir por el oro. Termina el breve cuento con la desaparición de Cecilia, lo que causa la muerte de la infeliz Chepa, su abuela.

(Lamore 15)

During this same year, Villaverde would publish the first novelesque edition of *Cecilia Valdés*. It would contain more of Cuba's culture and would actually carry two titles, that of *Cecilia Valdés* and that of *La Loma del Ángel*. Requested by one of Villaverde's close friends, Don Miguel del Portillo, the new *Cecilia Valdés* would include commentary about the festivities that occurred each year on the 24th of October in commemoration of San Rafael. This is the reasoning behind the second title *La Loma del Ángel*, -the place in Havana where the festivities took place. This

¹ See pp. 14-15 of the Jean Lamore Ed. Of *Cecilia Valdés* or *La Loma del Ángel* for a more in depth exploration of this relationship.

edition would also categorize the novel as *costumbrista*, a genre greatly created and read during the nineteenth century in Latin America. In 1879 a second version of the novel was published. This second version, of the 1839 publication, continued to portray various facets of Cuban culture:

Cecilia Valdés, the novel by Cirilio Villaverde first published in 1839 and expanded with the addition of a second book for the 1879 edition, is still the most consequential examination of Cuban national traits in the character of the mulata en Cuban popular culture. (Ruf 88)

Along with the first published short story and these two later editions, *Cecilia Valdés* or *La Loma del Ángel* became Cuba's most dominating novel of its respective time period. Actually, during the years of 1836 until 1849, the bulk of the novel, *Cecilia Valdés* or *La Loma del Ángel* that we know today, was created. In the prologue of the Jean Lamore edition it reads that: "casi toda la producción literaria de Villaverde fue realizada entre 1837 y 1846, es decir durante la etapa en que la narrativa cubana fue más fructífera (13)." It is important to note that during this same period, the *Bildungsroman*, as mentioned in the introduction, continued with its innovations begun in the eighteenth-century. This development, without question, is important in the history of *Cecilia Valdés* because it too is a novel of development and self discovery. Considering this blossoming period in the Cuban literary period, it is no surprise that *Cecilia Valdés* or *La Loma del Ángel* became a literary classic. Nevertheless, this will not be the final edition that we as readers know of today.

In 1882 the final edition of *Cecilia Valdés* or *La Loma del Ángel* was completed and published. This edition, according to Lamore, would be the most astounding yet. In the literary world and studies of Latin American culture, this edition would receive great literary and cultural

acolades. Continuing with the topic of the beautiful and sensual mulatta, Cuban tradition and history, this last edition would also bring into perspective the slave society that during this time period, prevailed in Cuba. It would also be considered an anti-slavery novel, one that surpasses its contemporaries in the abolitionist movement. This edition would encompass all of these aspects mentioned and more:

Si las primeras versiones de *Cecilia* eran fundamentalmente anécdotas amorosas <<ambientadas>> en forma costumbrista, la versión definitiva es una gran novela antiesclavista. Pero es mucho más que esto: al introducir al lector en la sociedad de los mulatos, Villaverde confirió a su novela la dimensión de una obra fundada de lo nacional. (Lamore 17)

The definitive version of *Cecilia Valdés*, although continuing to portray Cuba's idealistic national mulatta, created more in depth the main protagonist incorporating more history and greater *costumbrista* elements. Not only is the topic of slavery represented in the novel, but equally we see the historical and changes of the *criollo* and mulatto contributions to Cuba:

Ya había utilizado en sus novelitas el tipo de la mulata hermosa y sensual, pero la Cecilia de 1882 aventaja a todas las anteriores. El personaje le permite centrar su historia en el mundo de los mulatos libres de la Habana, por el decenio de 1830-40, es decir en el periodo que procedió a la famosa Conspiración de la Escalera. Al mundo de los mulatos, Villaverde contrapone el de los blancos ricos a través de la familia Gamboa. En la versión definitiva, realiza un corte vertical en la sociedad cubana de la época para presentar todas las capas que la componían, incluyendo la más inferior, es decir la de los esclavos, tanto los de la ciudad como los del campo. (Lamore 10)

Within the pages of the definitive version of *Cecilia Valdés*, the reader can create a mental image of the actual occurrences in Cuba at this time during the 1830s. One can also visualize the cruelty and barbarity of the slave society active in Cuba. Throughout the novel, the reader encounters historical characters in Cuban history such as: Don Francisco Dionisio Vives, Gabriel de la Concepción Valdés (better known as Plácido), and Claudio Brindis (a famous Cuban musician). As William Luis states in *Literary Bondage: Slavery in Cuban Narrative*, the final version of *Cecilia Valdés* was considered a simulacrum of Cuban society: “The short story and the first volume of *Cecilia Valdés* describe aspects of nineteenth century Cuban society, but the definite version of *Cecilia Valdés* offers a complete picture of Cuban slave society” (100). The notable distinction between the first publications and the definite version of 1882 is that the latter is most definitely an anti-slavery novel. Throughout the 1882 edition, not only are we as readers introduced to the perceived, beautiful mulatta that Cuba prides itself in, but also the bellicose system of a slave society and the treatment of Cuba’s most numerous population at this time, the Africans. As Luis further states: “Blacks and themes of slavery, so important in the definite version of *Cecilia Valdés*, are not present in the short story and appear as only a marginal element in the novel. The only nonwhites mentioned in the versions of 1839 are urban mulattos (106).” He also explains that: “Villaverde was influenced by Del Monte and the early antislavery works, and his *Cecilia Valdés* was the last antislavery novel to be published before the emancipation of Cuban slaves in 1886” (103).

As suggested here, Villaverde, along with his contemporaries of antislavery novels such as Del Monte, was interested in portraying the negative sides of slavery. Nevertheless, this interest came with problems. During the publication of the 1882 version, Villaverde was exiled in

the United States and actually completed the novel there. The introduction, once again of the Jean Lamore edition, states that:

El tomo quedó sin continuación y sólo en 1882 fue cuando en Nueva York, tras muchos años de exilio, se publica la edición definitiva de *Cecilia Valdés*, que a pesar de presentar algunos aspectos communes con la primera, ofrece cambios sustanciales de forma y de contenido, que hacen de ella la novella más importante de la literature cubana y una de las más interesantes del siglo XIX latinoamericano. (16)

Cecilia Valdés characterizes not only the protagonists of an anti-slavery novel but also contains the elements needed to categorize it as a great literary work. As a result of a repressed country under military control, writers such as Villaverde had to be cautious of any negative sentiment against slavery. Being from a very prominent family of educated people, Villaverde belonged to the small bourgeoisie class in Cuba. And although owning slaves himself, he recognized at a young age that slavery was not a beneficial institutional system for Cuba, but merely a hindrance that would cause racial interferences throughout the island.

The importance of the 1882 version and its antislavery motif proves to be useful in this study of the “mulatta *Bildungsroman*.” It is beneficial, not only because the protagonist is a mulatta, but also because she is a character who aspires to more than her society gives her. She tries to realize her need to change not only herself, but also her society.

In order to question the validity of *Cecilia Valdés* as a *Bildungroman*, the representation of the mulatta must be contextualized. To relate Cecilia Valdés to the traditional *bildung* character, one must consider her heroic activities and her development from childhood to her place as a woman in society. The concept of an authentic voice must be questioned and analyzed,

so as to provide the textual possibilities of Cecilia Valdés as a female protagonist who can stand on her own. The contrasts and comparisons that I will demonstrate between Cecilia Valdés and the traditional *bildung* character sets-up the fundamental differences that are necessary for the exploration of the *mulata Bildungsroman* and its final application to this novel.

Considering Cuban culture and Cuban history, the representation of the mulatta is an interesting and important theme to consider in literature. The presentation of the mulatta is greatly discussed, not only in literary examples, but throughout the various facets of Cuban culture. She is not only the country's representation of the mixture of races, ethnicities, and cultures, but is also seen as an object of pride that we hear so often in today's music and other references to Cuba. Take for example the following quote:

Tropicana is still one of the most lavish nightclub spectacles in the world and retains from pre-Revolutionary days the suggestion of wealth and leisure, the glittering excess, the colonial-infected costumes revealing yards of bare skin, and the idealization of the mulata. (Ruf 86)

This idealization that continues to categorize the Cuban mulatta began, for many, in the novel created by Villaverde. Within the pages of the work, one cannot refrain from attempting to picture the 'exotic' woman of Cuba and her sexual escapades, that are so many times the only representation that she is given. Today the mulatta remains as a high point of Cuban national and cultural history. She is still portrayed as the image that represents Cuba's population:

La mulata constituye el sincretismo, la conciliación de dicha contradicción, que se da en el plano tanto familiar como nacional. Se convierte así en personaje central, no sólo del drama social, sino de su representación literaria y, por último, en la

fuelle que nutre el discurso pigmentocrático decimonónico, ya sea éste económico, político, o literario (Rosell 17).

Cecilia Valdés is a *mulata* of great beauty and *mulatesque* features. In other words she can dance, sing, and has *un cuerpo perfecto*. She is the mulatta that Cuba uses to represent its hybrid population of blacks (Africans), white (Spaniards), and the Indians. From colonization until contemporary times, Cuba has prided itself on being a hybrid nation, one that realizes its full potential to represent the Latin American racial *mestizaje*. Up until the present, the mulatta has been made spectacle and an idealization of Cuban culture. As Suzanne Bost mentions: “Phaf argues that *Cecilia Valdés* marks the emergence of the mulatta as a Caribbean stereotype and that this novel acts as defining model for the nineteenth century” (106). Considering Cuba’s historical facts, the desire to be independent from Spain (like most other Latin American countries) created a need for a new identity from its mother country. Cuba formed this separation by creating differences that it held from Spain. One of these main differences was the mulatto population. At this time, the idea prevailed that there were no pure-blooded white Cubans, but that everyone was a mixture. Villaverde, beginning in the very first versions of the novel portrayed this sentiment, accommodating the racial mythology of Cuba: “The much-discussed nineteenth-century Cuban novel *Cecilia Valdés* embodies this tension between racial fluidity and oppressive hierarchies, and it played a central role in the formation of Cuban mythology” (Bost 90). *Cecilia Valdés* represents the ideology of *transculturation*² and the changes that Cuba saw within its racial structure during the nineteenth-century.

² *Transculturation* signifies constant interaction, transmutation between two or more cultural components whose unconscious end is the creation of a third cultural whole- that is, culture – new and independent, although its bases, its roots, rest on preceding elements. The reciprocal influence here is determining. No element is superimposed on the other; on the contrary, each one becomes a third entity. None remains immutable. All change and grow in a “give and take” which engenders a new texture. (Morejón 1982)

Yet, although it seems that Cuba prides itself on *transculturation* and racial *mestizaje*, it has never, nor can it fully claim to now, embraced all of its roots-specifically those of Africa. Cuba, along with many other Latin American countries, has gone through processes of whitening its population through so-called acculturation in order to “bleach,” or whiten, the “darker” populations:

El proceso del blanqueamiento ha generado el mito de que, al menos en términos psicológicos, Cuba es una nación mulata. La noción de mestizaje, de acuerdo con Kutzinski³, tiene su origen en el miedo a la africanización del país y aunque, en cierta forma, es una celebración a la diversidad racial, al mismo tiempo niega las divisiones reales que existen en la sociedad ... sería erróneo analizar superficialmente el papel de la/el mulata/o dentro del proceso de blanqueamiento, sin tomar en cuenta las condiciones políticas y sociales que la empujan a éste.

(Lamore 16)

This unsettled issue is the leading mechanism for this study-the personification of the *mulata* and her possibility as a *bildung* character. To better question the qualities of a novel such as *Cecilia Valdés*, one must consider how the author has created the character. In the novel she is compared to Cuba’s patron saint *la Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre*. And, although Cecilia is not “bronzed-colored” like the patron saint, she does represent the idea of mixture and *transculturación* that has been prevalent in Cuban identity in the nineteenth century up until the present. As Bost further states:

The mulatta/o became a dominant cultural symbol to reflect the fusion of black and white. According to Kutzinski, Cuba “encodes its national identity in the

iconic figure of the mulata- that of the Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre, the coppery Virgin of Charity who is Cuba's patron saint- not to mention in the countless images of mulattas that have been circulated in the island's literature and popular culture for roughly the past two centuries. (102)

Like Cecilia, the mulatta is mysterious and idealized by her male companions. Cecilia represents the free and roaming young woman who is always seen in the street with a flowing dress, revealing the tiniest bit of bare skin that creates an illusion of sex and mischievousness.

In order for Villaverde to create the perfect symbol of the Cuban mulatta, he had to consider the characteristics that represented beauty at this time in Cuba. He had to create the "perfect" woman that would best symbolize Cuba and her people. Villaverde had to focus on the mysterious features of Cecilia Valdés that would ever so slightly create the fascination as a woman of mixed race. Nevertheless, she had to be a woman of perceivable beauty, who at this time was the mulatta of very fair skin or the white woman. Villaverde later had to keep in mind that the majority of his readers would be men and that in order for them to maintain interest, there had to be a "dashing female heroine" to fill the pages. In the text, the reader will note that Cecilia is a *mulata* with an exoticism that conveys an intense sexual presence. Cecilia, even as a child, grabs her community's attention because of her unexplainable beauty and vivaciousness, particularly during the first part of the novel: "pero de cualquier manera eran su belleza peregrina, su alegría y vivacidad, que la revisitaban de una especie de encanto, no dejando al ánimo vagar sino para admirarla y pasar de largo por las sobras de su progenie" (Villaverde 73-4). Villaverde later describes Cecilia as: "una muchacha de unos once a doce años de edad, quien, ya por su hábito andariego, ya por otras circunstancias de que hablaremos en seguida,

³ For a more indepth study of sexual exploitation of the mulatta see Vera M. Kutzinski's *Sugar's Secrets: Race and the Erotics of Cuban Nationalism*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1993.

llamaba la atención general” (Villaverde 72). Villaverde spends a great amount of time describing the beauty of Cecilia Valdés, especially in the first parts of the novel. He presents these colorful descriptions to entertain his male readers, the majority of the literary community:

Cuando Villaverde elaboró el personaje de Cecilia Valdés en los primeros capítulos de su novela, lo hizo sabiendo perfectamente que gustaría a los lectores masculinos, en la medida en que Cecilia reunía los principales rasgos que conformaban una imagen ya mítica en esa época: la de la mulata ardiente y sexual, a la vez mujer fácil y mujer fatal. (Lamore 36)

The fact that Villaverde felt the need to objectify Cecilia Valdés in order to attract male readers, allows one to understand the further positioning of the mulatta in Cuba at this time. As shown in the novel, mulattas were thought of as objects to look at, yet, not heard. A further example to demonstrate Villaverde’s elaborate descriptions of Cecilia is the following:

Era su tipo el de las vírgenes de los más célebres pintores. Porque a una frente alta, coronada de cabellos negros y copiosos, naturalmente ondeados, unía facciones muy regulares, nariz recta que arrancaba desde el entrecejo, y por quedarse algo corta alzaba un si es ni es el labio superior, como para dejar ver dos sartas de dientes menudos y blancos. Sus cejas describirían un arco y daban mayor sombra a los ojos negros y rasgados, los cuales eran toda movilidad y fuego. La boca tenía chica y los labios llenos, indicando más llenas y redondas y un hoyuelo en medio de la barba, formaban un conjunto bello, que para ser perfecto sólo faltaba que la expresión fuese menos maliciosa, si no maligna. (Villaverde 73)

The examples given so far are of an adolescent and blossoming Cecilia. Nevertheless, the reader recognizes early in the text that Cecilia is the beautiful mulatta who symbolizes Cuba. She is practically white, but yet “exotic” enough to capture the attention of her male counterparts in the novel. These following representations allow us to question the ability of a white male author to create a protagonist of color that can act as a *bildung* character. Yet, considering the literary time period of Cirilo Villaverde, there also has to be an understanding of his own cultural milieu concerning women of color and of *women* in general. Nevertheless, what can one say about the representation of Cecilia as a character and then as a heroine? Can the reader only consider her a tragic *mulata*? Is it possible to deem *Cecilia Valdés* as a *bildung* narrative, with an intent so formulated in the portrayal of an attractive protagonist? After carefully examining examples of Cecilia’s childhood to womanhood, I conclude that *Cecilia Valdés*, as a beginning step, is representative of the “mulatta *Bildungsroman*.” This conclusion can be seen especially in the last chapter of the novel.

Cecilia Valdés is the greatest literary reflection of the symbolic *mulata* in Cuban culture. Not only is she the beautiful and statuesque woman of mixed heritage, but she is also a reflection of the consequences of a one-sided slave society that Cuba held during this period. As an illegitimate child she enters into society doomed to be a failure: “Cecilia Valdés nace de una realidad sociohistórica: el mestizaje considerado como inferior e inferiorizante.” (Lamore 41) At an early age, Cecilia goes to an adoption center where she is given the name Valdés in order that she not to be considered an illegitimate child. Although Cecilia is the daughter of a rich man, she must still maintain her place as a *mulata* with no ties to the bourgeoisie or the high cultural aspects of white Cuban Creole society. Like the traditional *Bildungsroman*, *Cecilia Valdés* follows the idea that:

[T]he desire for self-improvement, the need to adapt to varying social circumstances in a world of change, and the ever-present aspiration to belong to the middle-classes, all lead to increasingly complex characterisations that can be subsumed under the notion of “development”(Rau 3).

In what might be considered today as a trivial reason, Cecilia Valdés learned as a young girl that to secure a future for herself and for her offspring she would have to marry a white man. This marriage would be her only hope for achievement in life:

La cabra, hija, siempre tira al monte. Tú eres mejor nacida que ella. Tu padre es un caballero blanco, y algún día has de ser rica y andar en carruaje. ¿Quién sabe? Pero Nemesia no será nunca más de lo que es. Se casará, si se casa, con un mulato como ella, porque su padre tiene más de negro que otra cosa. Tú, al contrario, eres blanco. ¿Por qué no? De menos nos hizo Dios. Y has de saber que blanco, aunque pobre, sirve para marido; negro o mulato, ni el buey de oro. Hablo por experiencia ... (Villaverde 86)

Just as Cecilia’s grandmother explains to her in the novel, the aim of the *mulata* woman (in literary examples and life circumstances) was to marry a white man in order to “better the race,” in Spanish, *adelantar la raza*. This goal can be seen as an example of self development. And although not characteristic of the traditional *bildung* narrative and the development considered in such novels employing Goethe’s definition of the *Bildungsroman*, it is characteristic of an upward move in society. However, one must realize that the ‘development’ of a mulatta in Cuban society was incomparable to the ‘development’ of men, in earlier and/or eighteenth century literature. Even as we consider more contemporary novels, the practicality of finding the same development between a protagonist of color and the white male protagonist is impossible. As

Gohlman mentions , “probably the image that comes to mind must readily when we see or hear the term *Bildungsroman* is one of an innocent young man ready to step into the world to learn the lessons that life has to offer him”(3). The education that Cecilia Valdés receives in the novel, although not formal, is an education that allows her to realize the complexities of her situation in a slave-based society. Therefore like the traditional male *bildung* character, Cecilia Valdés steps into the world to learn the lessons that life has to offer her. She uses her experiences to attempt to change, not only herself, but other women in her same position. Take for example when Cecilia must listen to the governor define her place and situation in Cuban society: “Bien dicho. Confeemos que nuestros refranes encierran gran fondo de sabiduría. Confesemos también que nuestras mulatas, generalmente hablando, son frágiles por naturaleza, y por el deseo, ingénito en las criaturas humanas, de ascender o mejorar la condición” (594). Cecilia Valdés will consciously act at the novel’s end to demonstrate that she is more than the stereotypical mulatta.

Although Cecilia is tragic in the sense that her ending is truncated and not “successful,” according to the more contemporary definition of the *Bildungsroman* narrative, she is still a *bildung* protagonist for: “... it no longer matters for a *Bildungsroman* whether or not its hero or heroine actually achieve self-fulfilment or social integration” (Rau 3). She is an example that we can use to either study the *bildung* mulatta character to come, or evaluate those mulatta protagonists that exist in earlier works, such as *Cecilia Valdés*. Because Cecilia attempts to “develop” within her societal parameters and change her surroundings, she can be recognized as a character that voices and acts against her inequalities. As explained in the introduction, the *Bildungsroman* genre also allows for the possibility to fully “develop” into an active member of society when there are outside restrictions present. Let us revisit for a moment the main idea of the *Bildungsroman* genre:

A typical scenario of the traditional *Bildungsroman* traces the progression of the adolescent as she/he develops the realization of individual potentiality. This realization is combined with a more mature outlook on moral responsibilities. This awareness culminates in the hero's acceptance of the necessity to conform to the whole in order to become part of it. This is not a loss of self, but an integration into society's mainstream for the common good. The collective person is valued more than the individual. (Quinlan 78)

In *Cecilia Valdés o La Loma del Angel*, Cecilia develops into a woman who, although not desiring to be accepted in her society the way she would like, learns to alter her place in society. Her actions become a model and a changing force for not only Cecilia but other women of color in the same predicament. In *Cecilia Valdés*, the development of the novel's protagonist is greatly restricted by her society; nevertheless, Cecilia does not allow these restrictions to control her voice and her desire to change. She becomes an "orgullosa y vengativa mulata ... oveja de hecho, se transformó en Leona" (363). As we have seen, the position of the mulatta in Cuban society, although valued in some aspects, was quite calamitous in reality. As a historical novel, Cecilia's romanticized life is restricted to the reality of the mulatta in Cuba at this time. According to the definition set forth in *Literary Encyclopedia*, in order for a novel to be considered a *Bildungsroman*, it is not necessary for the hero/heroine to be successful in the development of their character: Anglo-American criticism in fact provides for greater variation

Within Anglo-American literary criticism, however, the elastic definition of "novel of development" is still quite common and regarded as useful, because the notion of development accommodates a range of discursive fields; but it also loses the entire historic and cultural specificity of the original idea. (2)

My thesis examines this idea - of a ‘development’ that is pluralistic in definition and possibilities. When using the term development in relation to the mulatta, once again we must consider the realities of her situation:

[s]egundo as expectativas que a sociedade tinha em relação à mulher, portanto, seu “aprendizado” se daria dentro de um espaço bem delimitado. O “mundo exterior” responsável pela formação do herói do “Bildungsroman” seria, no caso da protagonista feminina, os limites do lar e da família, não havendo margem para o seu crescimento interior. (Pinto 13)

To take this quote a step further for the case of the mulatta and even in most aspects of protagonists of woman of color (i.e. the protagonist of Toni Morrison, Barbara Cade Camara, and Maxine Hong Kingston), home and place as mother in society is impossible to achieve. It was not even achievable for the Cuban *mulata* to marry and prepare a home during the early nineteenth century. She was too proud to marry a black man because she would disrupt the process of *blanqueamiento*; yet, she could not marry a white *criollo* because it would be a *salta atrás* for his family and society. Given her historical context it was impossible for the mulatta to further her ‘self’ in order to move up in society. The mulatta’s development can only be defined by advancements of the (*heroína mulata*) through sexual escapades and relations with the white man. If we consider this possibility, then Villaverde’s *Cecilia Valdés*, while problematic, is a heroine of a *bildung* narrative. Cecilia attempts to obtain the utmost control that she can for her time period, by falling in love and later fathering the child of a white man. She also realizes at the novel’s end that in order to break her cycle as the tragic mulatta she must act. Cecilia Valdés decides it is necessary to have Leonardo killed. When she manipulates Jose Dolores to kill

Leonardo, his death represents the termination of the white male's exploitation of the woman of color. At the moment of Cecilia's realization that she cannot be Leonardo's wife or mistress, she "takes matters into her own hands:"

...la muerte de Leonardo constituye la destrucción de toda la familia esclavista, pero podemos ir más lejos y señalar que es el aniquilamiento de una tendencia que favorece el dominio y explotación de una raza por otra. No constituye la utopía de una armonía racial, pero sí logra que la voz de la subyugada sea escuchada.

(Lamore 59)

If we as readers look at *Cecilia Valdés* in these terms then we see that she is a true personification of the *Bildungsroman* character. Despite the fact that Cecilia does not reach the "development" characterized as "successful" in the traditional male *Bildungsroman*, she did develop in all *her* possibilities. The concept of self-fulfillment can now be seen as plural instead of being defined according to the definitions of the prototypical *Bildungsroman* novels. Nevertheless, I am still able to follow Goethe's main direction in characterizing the *Bildung* protagonist and Gohlman's analysis that in the *Bildungsroman* narrative, "the individual becomes type: the experiences become symbols. In the autobiography the author and the hero have identical points of view; in the *Bildungsroman* the author creates an ideal which allows for symbolic interpretation (16)." Villaverde uses *Cecilia Valdés*, although not in an autobiographical sense, to represent the "symbolic interpretation" that male exploitation should be ended in Cuba and that the hierarchy of the patriarchal society should be questioned. The advancements that Villaverde creates for his protagonist are realistic for the mulatta of the nineteenth century. The criticism that designate Cecilia as only a tragic mulatta and her 'development' as truncated must be re-visited to consider the protagonist and her limitations. The novel must be re-read to pay closer attention to the

changes and developments that she consciously makes towards the novel's end to prove that, although a stereotypical image of her society, she attempts to prevail and change her circumstances. The textual examples of Cecilia's development into womanhood and her endeavor to change the position of the mulatta at the novel's end must be included in our contemporary readings to understand the *Bildungsroman* characteristics of *Cecilia Valdés*.

CHAPTER III

Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra:

Self-Discovery and the Failed *Bildungsroman* Narrative.

To continue our search for the *mulata bildungsroman*, we move to a more contemporary work, *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra*. Published in 1972, this novel continues the “great epic of a female cordel heroine” (I place these terms in quotes to denote that all can be questioned) who through her adventures, although ridiculously dramatic and tormented, proves to be seemingly heroic at given times. The novel is considered a portrayal of magical realism, and comedy:

In 1971, working on his novel *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra* (*Tereza Batista, Home from the Wars*), a strange mixture of realism, magic and comedy. His [Amado] friends and family appear throughout and are guests at the main character’s wedding. Multiple narrators interrupt with rumors and tales of Tereza, as if she were real, but werewolves, headless mules and other fantastic creatures appear. Superstition, voodoo and Afro-Brazilian gods play important roles. (Shirey 1997)

Although this above synopsis mentions some important details of the novel, it leaves out others which need to be noted. For example, Shirey has mentioned that the novel incorporates Afro-Brazilian gods, superstition, fantastic creatures and the like which are all quite prominent in Jorge Amado’s other literary works. What Shirey, among others, have failed to mention is that

Amado also has incorporated sexual stereotypes of the woman of color, romanticized views of the poor and black populations of Brazil, and, according to critics like Quinlan, child pornography. These latter elements will be vital to our decision whether *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra* can possibly be considered a *mulata Bildungsroman* with a female protagonist such as Tereza. I will, as with Cecilia, consider Tereza's place in society and the defining characteristics of a *bildung* character, as well as whether or not Tereza has a voice in her society or if she is merely an image without agency. Throughout her adventures does Tereza better herself and those around herself and those around her, or is she a character that never changes? All of these questions and concerns will lead me to decide if Tereza is a *bildung* character. For a better understanding of *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra* I will begin by introducing the author and his previous works.

Jorge Amado is one of Brazil's most-read writers of our contemporary period. He is one of the most translated and renowned authors of Latin America, forming part of its canon: "In his lifetime Jorge Amado has published 32 books that have been translated into 48 languages. He will soon appear in the *Guinness Book of World Records*, as the world's most frequently translated author" (Lynn 47). Being well-known, (in and out of the literary world), as a spokesperson for Brazil, especially his own state Bahia, Amado creates novels that portray, what he believes to be, Brazilian cultural "norms" and "realities." As Giorgio Marotti relates in *Black Characters in the Brazilian Novel*:

Even in the vast field of Brazilian literature and the history of Brazil itself, Jorge Amado represents something much more than a writer, however illustrious and famous he may be. Amado is one of those historic figures, in the classic sense of the word, whose presence and influence have made themselves felt in modifying

the way of life and thought of his own country. Jorge Amado is the great writer who, without losing any of his art, has managed to be popular, emerging definitely from the tight circle of cultured readers. His novels, taken up by the cinema and still more by television, have become daily topics even for those who have never picked up a book. In other words, Jorge Amado marks a decisive turning point in Brazilian literature. (Marotti 325)

There can be much debate about what Marotti has suggested. We can all question as contemporary readers of Latin American fiction Jorge Amado has in fact many negative attributes in his claim to represent Brazilians of color and women. Bobby Chamberlain also notes that Amado reached mass media acclaim through television and movies in the latter part of his literary career (Chamberlain 1990). Seen through mass media, his popularity across social classes has created criticisms that direct our attention towards Amado's stereotypical objectifications of his characters. These criticisms point to those objectifications that Amado utilizes and sends through mass media to other countries. This popular acclaim that Amado receives, although positive for him, allows damaging stereotypes to travel throughout the world, creating problematic stereotypes for Brazilian women. For this reason, Latin Americanists' readings of Amado have represented the cultural and racial complexities that he presents in his novels.

Considering Jorge Amado's desire to portray his land and his people, it is no surprise that his ties in the literary realm of Brazil came from his strong belief and social activism in the communist party: "the early novels and novelettes were marked by social consciousness and often by strong political commitment" (Chamberlain 97). From the beginning of Amado's literary vocation in literature, his works incorporated social and political motifs. Amado's very

first job as a young journalist actually came with his childhood during the years of depression and economic strife in the “backwoods” of southern Bahia, a common place for his novels’ plots:

He would preserve many of his memories and tales of others’ memories of these early years in his later fiction, along with the experiences of his youth among the poor and marginalized of Salvador and the Bahian interior. Indeed, such violence, whether spawned by the cacao wars, wrought by severities of climate and disease, or perpetrated upon the poor by a landed elite, was to make an inedible imprint on his works from the very beginning. And it was to remain a watchword of his fiction until the present day. (Chamberlain 1)

These motifs are found in many of Amado’s early works such as: *Suor*, *O pais do Carnaval*, *Cacau*, *Jubiabá* among others. During this period, Amado’s works were lucid in their communist message and the author’s definition of both his and his adversaries’ social injustices. Amado was able to incorporate his political views in his work, especially during the 1930s when the socialist party was active. He would later contribute to the world’s proletarian novel. As Chamberlain states:

[Because of] his works on the neonaturalistic and proletarian fiction of the 1930s in Europe and The United States, Amado was highly praised as a spokesman for the poor, the downtrodden, the underdog of society, much as novelists like Steinbeck, Erskins Caldwell, and Michael Gold were in this country [U.S.]. Books such as *Cacau*, *Jubiabá*, *Terras do sem fim*, *São Jorge dos Ilhéus*, and *Seara vermelha* focused on the lives of rural peasants and the abuses brought about by the traditional land tenure system of the Brazilian interior. Many of them dealt

with such matters of land struggles, boomtown violence, drought, epidemics, banditry, migration, and messianic religious movements. (Chamberlain 16-17)

There were also those novels that focused on societal problems of Salvador, Bahia's capital:

Other works, such as *Suor*, *Jubiabá*, *Mar Morto*, *Capitães da areia*, and the trilogy, *Os subterrâneos da liberdade*, decried the hardships of the urban proletariat and lumpenproletariat of the Bahian Capital or other cities. Among the topics they treated were slum conditions, corruption, racism, juvenile delinquency, and the exploitation of workers. Many culminated in victorious strike scenes or similar demonstrations of popular strength. (Chamberlain 16-17)

Throughout the beginning phase of Amado's literary production, proletarian novels were the great source of acclaim and distress for the Brazilian author. Because of his affiliation with the communist party, the Brazilian dictatorship often attempted to censure Amado's literature. Regardless, Amado was able to incorporate socialist points of view in his writing and to relay his beliefs in the communist party. Like other proletarian authors of the 1930s, he successfully (although this may be argued by some critics) used his literature to further his political career as well as the mind set of his fellow contemporaries.

For further discussion of Amado's literary protest, I look once again to Marotti in order to see how earlier (and contemporary) readers have regarded Amado's work as a driving force for social change or acknowledgement of Brazil's social problems:

This is why we say that the works of Jorge Amado represent the long march of hope. Hope on man and his destiny, the hope that overcomes the defeat of the individual to realize itself in the victory of those who carry on the fight. The hope

of the man who no longer confines himself within the narrow, selfish limits of his own ego but accepts and recognizes himself in his companions, in his brothers. Hope in a tomorrow and in a future no longer the work of Providence or Destiny but the fruit of the struggle of men who finally recognize each other as equals.

(326)

Although one senses that Marotti places Amado on a pedestal where he can do no wrong, an argument quite debatable, there are those critics that argue that he attempts to portray a sense of hope in his writings not only by portraying marginalized persons in Brazilian society, but also by simply giving them a space that many other Brazilian authors have not done. In his analysis of Amado Marotti continues to note that, “of the many choices open to him, Amado made perhaps the best: a return to life, to his roots, to mulatto Brazil, to the joy of life” (335). Nevertheless, we also must realize as readers that in these early novels where political and social realism are dominant, that the characters created by Amado are flawed and stereotypical of the reality. One possible explanation is that Amado may also be a product of his society and may have created these problematic characters through cultural and societal biases that he had internalized. All in all, Amado only pretends to bring life to his Afro-Bahian roots while in reality he continues to characterize them stereotypically.

The second phase of Jorge Amado’s literary career, although still characterized as representative of his southern Bahia, is more light-hearted and comical. In many ways, we can consider this era of his literary period as satirical. As Chamberlain explains, “as the author matures, greater emphasis was given to esthetics. Popular culture and Afro-Bahian religious ritual were deftly woven into the novelistic text. Amado became known not only for the crudity of his scenes and dialogues but also for the lyricism of his prose” (92). The novels belonging to

this second phase are those that have given him world wide acclaim for his literary contributions. Continuing with aspects of southern Bahian culture, with an emphasis on Afro-Bahian culture, Amado creates satirical worlds where he merges realistic and fantastic elements to re-create a Bahian society. He would also continue to use great numbers of caricatures to portray his characters:

From the start of his literary career Amado likewise relied heavily on caricature to draw social types that prevailed in his novels. Through the issue of this device, these early novels were powerful and serious, they were not very sophisticated. Most of them had simple plots and repetitive themes; the language was realistic, direct and full of slang; his characters were either good and poor or evil and rich, with little variation. Amado was criticized by some intellectuals for using his novels to advance his own political leftist political beliefs. (Shirey 39)

Chamberlain also states that, “characters often assumed cartoonlike proportions as the author comically exaggerated their salient physical or psychological behavioral features at the expense of less notable traits (18). Other Amado analysts note that through caricature, he created chaffing bourgeoisie characters and overly-heroic characters “representative” of the proletariat classes. With these satirical caricatures, he was able to express his personal sentiments about the upper and lower economic classes of Brazil, creating the former very negatively and the latter more positively. These characteristics are noted in novels such as: *Gabriela, cravo e canela: crônica de uma cidade do interior* (1958) and *A morte e a morte de Quincas Berro D’água* (1959). Although Amado created these characters “with little variation” (Shirey 39), to criticize the bourgeoisie classes of Brazilian society and to demonstrate the inequalities prevalent during these time periods, I see these overly romanticized characters, not only as homogenous and non-

changing, but also as enforcers of the already existing stereotypes of the marginalized groups of Brazil.

The third and last phase of Amado's literary period is the one that is most critiqued by contemporary readers; *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra* falls into this category. Other novels (including *Gabriela, cravo e canela: Crônica de uma cidade do interior*, *Dona Flor e seus dois maridos: História moral e de amor* (1966), *Tenda dos milagres* (1969), *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra* (1972), and *Tieta do Agreste: Pastora de cabras ou a volta da filha pródiga, melodramático folhetim em cinco sensacionais episódios e comovente epílogo: Emoção e suspense!* (1977) et. al) produced during this last period are characterized as "best-sellers," novels that Amado formulated to situate himself as a "popular" writer. During this period, Amado would achieve his wish to be "popularized;" at this time in his literary life the majority of his works would be translated and he would receive a plethora of awards and acknowledgements. Nevertheless, novels such as *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra* and *Dona Flor e seus dois maridos: História moral e de amor* become targets for new-found criticisms that Amado would receive. Many of these criticisms were that his novels continually romanticized poverty and Brazil's marginalized populations. Among these marginalized peoples are the representations of the women of color, the concentration of this thesis.

It is vital to mention that Amado's early works can also be criticized for having stereotypical female characters. Nevertheless, it was the last novels that feature female protagonists as major characters of the plot. In analyzing representations of these latter works, we see that although Amado pretends to portray the female protagonist as positive, he falls short by creating characters that are demeaning to the image of women - especially the woman of color. In response to Marotti who says that: "Since writing *Suor*, Amado has known how to

create courageous, free and independent women” (335), my question to this statement is when and in it what novel?

To begin, I will re-visit the definition of a heroine, and what that means to a contemporary novel like *Tereza Batista*. Beginning with Marotti’s description of such a person as “courageous, free, and independent,” I would like to emphasize that the heroine in question must realize her courage and use it to better not only herself but the world around her, no matter how large or small. Next, for a heroine to be free, she must be able to exercise free will and be able to control her future. This possible heroine must be able to voice her opinion freely and be aware of this act. Independence directly correlates to the last two adjectives described; without being able to live on her own terms, the “heroine” is really unable to develop fully as a character because her existence always depends on others. Unfortunately, in the search for a “mulatta *bildung*” character, Tereza Batista fails in lieu of the fact that she contains none of the three characteristics used here to define a heroine.

I begin with the first- her courage. Amado gives Tereza several moments of heroic deeds, such as when she is the school teacher for the poor children; when she administers the strike for the prostitutes; and, when she becomes a nurse during the *bexiga negra*. One example of this seemingly heroic act is when Tereza stands up for a woman who is being subjected to violence by a male character:

No mesmo instante desprende-se Tereza Batista dos braços do poeta Saraiva e marcha para o casal:

-Homem que bate em mulher não é homem, é frouxo...

Esta em frente ao galalau, ergue a cabeça e lhe informa:

... e em frouxo eu não bate, cuspo na cara.

A cusparada parte; Tereza Batista, treinada na infância em brinquedos de cangado e de guerra com petulantes moleques, possui pontaria certa, mas dessa vez, decida a altura do indivíduo, erra o alvo-o olho de remela e velhacarua-, o cuspo se aloja no queixo. (9)

These seemingly heroic deeds almost make the reader believe that she will eventually have an opportunity to become a fulfilled protagonist and possibly a *bildung* character. Unfortunately, as one reaches the end of the novel, the realization sets in that this will not happen. At an early age Tereza is faced with a reality that she cannot control when she is sold to a rich landowner who has an uncontrollable desire to have her as one of his child concubines:

[H]avia um quarto assim na casa da roça, outro na casa da cidade, atrás do armazém. Quase idênticos, destinados ao mesmo prazeroso fim: as núpcias do capitão Justo com as donzelas recolhidas por ele em suas buscas e encomendas. Preferia as novinhas, quanto mais nova melhor, recomendava, e exigia cabaço comprovadamente virgem. (78)

This section of the novel continues to express Capitão Justo's desire to have young girls as his sex toys, of which Tereza will be his favorite because she would be the most challenging: "sendo um esportista, o capitão preferia naturalmente aquelas que ofereciam certa resistência inicial. As facéis, com maior ou menor conhecimento e prática, não lhe davam a mesma exultante sensação de poder, de vitória, de difícil conquista" (79). Upon seeing Tereza for the first time, Capitão Justo knew that he would buy the girl from her aunt and uncle who showed no concern for her well-being. Many times even Tereza's uncle, Rosalvo, daydreams of having a chance to be with her:

Um nó de raiva estrangula e garganta de Rosalvo: ah! Um sonho acalentado tantos e tantos anos, vendo-a crescer, formar-se dia a dia, adivinando-lhe a beleza rara, reprodução para melhorar do que fora a mãe Marieta, um esplendor, e a tia Felipa, nos tempos de moça, um desvario, a ponto dele, Rosalvo, tirá-la da vida e casar-se com ela. Ha quanto tempo vem contendo a pressa, acumulando essa ânsia, preparando seus planos. (70-1)

From the beginning of *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra*, Amado creates very weak female characters that have no voice in their own lives and no purpose for living except to be someone's wife or whore. For this reason, many may visualize Tereza as the most heroic protagonist of the novel when she does not submit in silence. Even after being sold to Capitão Justo she continues to rebel against him so as not to be raped:

-Não me queme, não faça isso, pelo amor de Deus. Nunca mais vou fugir, peço perdão. Pelo amor de sua Mãe, não faça isso, me perdoe, ai, me perdoe!

Sorriu o capitão ao constatar o medo nos olhos, na voz de Tereza; finalmente! Tudo no mundo tem o seu tempo e o seu preço.

Nevertheless, she finally has to give in so as not to be burned by Justiano:

A menina estava atada de cordas, deitada de barriga para cima. Justiano Duarte da Rosa sentou-se no colchão diante das plantas nuas dos pés de Tereza. Aplicou o ferro de engomar primeiro num pé, depois no outro. O cheiro de carne queimada, o chiado da pele, os uivos e silêncio de morte.

Depois de fazê-lo, o capitão a desamarrou; já não eram necessarias cordas e vigilância, cabra no corredor, fechadura na porta. Curso completo de medo e respeito, Tereza por fim obediente. Chupa, ela chupou. Depressa, de quarto e de

costas. Depressa de pôs. Sozinha no mundo e com medo, Tereza Batista, argola no colar do capitão. (118-19)

This section not only demonstrates how crudely Amado, in great detail, portrays the sexual abuse of a young girl without any remorse, but also that Tereza started off with a negative position in life, to which she submits by allowing Capitão Justo to eventually own her and control her every move. It is also wise to point out here that by saying that, I do not mean to imply that Tereza had much choice in the matter; as a child her physical and mental strength could not compare to an adult such as Capitão Justo. As a young, naïve, and innocent child of mixed race, to maintain her virginity and to stand physical abuse for doing so, is quite an act of survival.

After two years of surviving the Captain's punishments, becoming a clerk at the captain's store, a maid at the captain's house, and any other act of slavery one can imagine, Tereza feels that she has fallen in love with another man. However, the young man with whom she falls in love does not know how to consider her as a woman. In comparison to Cecilia Valdés, Tereza cannot be seen as a woman capable of being a wife or as a mother: "com Tereza, porém, é diferente. Nem esposa nem mãe de filhos, sequer amásia o xodó de rendezvous, simples moleca, que respeito podia dedicar-lhe o capitão?"(172). Although the "new love" in Tereza's life seems to be confused in his relationship with her he cannot help but realize that his emotions are strong due to her physical beauty. Throughout the novel, Tereza is identifiable by her mysterious and statuesque physique. For example, in this same chapter, Amado describes Tereza as: "os seios, dos seixos de rio molhados de água a longitude das pernas e coxas, o ventre terso, as ancas roliças, a bunda ainda adolescente numa ostentação de opulência" (172). He creates images of her with words that echo the feelings of a man idealizing a woman of "classic" beauty. Sadly

however, Amado never allows Tereza to comment on how she feels as a woman being characterized by only her physical characteristics. Amado objectifies and “exoticizes” her throughout the novel.

Although one can imagine Tereza as a legend and a figure in her society’s literary *cordel* tradition, she is also a young girl who does not recall anything from her childhood except that, “...não há de chorar, guerreiro não chora nem na hora da morte”(111). As the novel progresses, one sees that although Tereza utilizes this saying as encouragement for her everyday struggles, she never acknowledges her acts as courageous. In other words, she does not realize that she may be heroic. Tereza follows the stereotypical patterns of a mulatta who dances samba in the night clubs to arouse her male onlookers. Nevertheless, we, as readers, do not have sufficient evidence to view any development of Tereza as a woman or citizen of her society. During this stage of her life, she has no voice, even when she stands up to men who beat on women, she retreats back into her “mulata image” of being pretty but not heard. She admits to not being a courageous woman, but merely someone who hates to see men beat on women. This act is almost primitive in that it does not demonstrate any psychological self-awareness that possibly relate to an ideology of survival.

As a writer, Amado does not focus on these seemingly heroic acts, (such as standing up for other women), but focuses more on the sexualized aspect of rape, abuse and the physical traits of Tereza. For example, the author explains that the origins of Tereza Batista are not known, implying that she is a mysterious woman with an uncertain past- an orphan mulatta with no family or friends. Much like Cecilia Valdés however, Tereza is also seen as a symbolic figure for Brazil. As a country which for so long has continued to portray an image of miscegenation, Brazil prides itself on having a “racial democracy,” where color is not problematic. Although

these ideas are now changing in Brazil, at the time of *Tereza Batista* this ideology was quite prominent: “[d]espite official and popular acceptance of the ideology of racial democracy since the 1930s, whiteness continues to be viewed as the ideal for many Brazilians” (Caldwell 227).

To further demonstrate this concept, Marotti suggests that:

Tereza Batista who from a thousand adventures and a thousand misfortunes is born again eternally virgin and ready to love and live perhaps a Brazilian symbol— from slavery to hope? Perhaps. Or perhaps the story is a fable of the character of the woman in a slave-owning and male-chauvinist world who, on the long march of suffering and servitude, finally claims the right to choose and give herself freedom. (341)

Although both readings are possible, the question remains as to how Tereza “claims the right to choose and give herself freedom.” Even upon finishing the novel we are unable to verify any exact moments where Tereza is free to decide for herself. The reality provided by the text shows that she merely reacts to her societal pressures that constrain her in a place where she is and will never be free to leave.

I, along with critics like Douglass and Quinlan attest that: “though Tereza may *look*, at some moments and to some people, like a figure of the warrior maiden, she certainly does not *think* like a warrior” (Douglass 101). In actuality:

It is hard to believe that the character of Tereza Batista ever achieves a right to choose, or that her freedom is possibly secured when she earns money by selling her body, either through prostitution or through semi-nude cabaret dancing. Marotti’s logic would lead one to conclude that Tereza is the hopeful symbol of slavery. It is doubtful that works like *Tereza Batista, cansada de*

guerra can possibly be said to accomplish this most basic of socialist ideals: freedom. Amado does not describe Tereza in a way that presents a person capable of free choice and self knowledge. (Quinlan 199)

Tereza never becomes a woman on her own terms. She instead is an example of a protagonist who survives all of her circumstances. Although this survival may allow Tereza to escape hard times and to simply make it to the next day, she never finds “true happiness” or freedom, Even when she falls in love with Januário, she faces the turmoil of only being his lover, and never being able to have the respect of being his wife.

Tereza Batista, is much like Cecilia Valdés, but more tragic in her reality. She is no more than a protagonist of mixed race who is deemed mysterious, beautiful, and symbolic of her country. She is an example of the overly sexualized woman that has been characteristic of Brazil since works like *Iracema* . Douglass notes that:

Yet even as Tereza resembles the stereotype of the beautiful and benevolent prostitute, she also recalls another, less conventional, image of womanhood: the “warrior maiden” figure defined by her refusal to remain within the perimeters of activity and identity prescribed for persons of her sex. (84)

The “Warrior maiden” characteristics are those that allow us even for a second to question whether or not Tereza can be read as a true heroine and/or a *bildung* character. Her moments of courage are so-well described and seem so heroic that for a moment we believe that Tereza has finally arrived at a sense of self-realization. Yet, unfortunately this sense of self-realization does not allow Tereza to develop into an independent nor free citizen of her society.

From the first page to the last, the “bronzed-cabocla” never comes to recognize a sense of self. Through her struggles and hardships, she never uses her experience to question her place in

society nor does she question what it means, to not only be a woman, but a woman of color in a society like that of Brazil. These textual examples of non-development, non-apprenticeship, and loss of selfhood conclude that a protagonist like Tereza cannot be considered a *bildung* character nor can *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra* be considered a *Bildungsroman* novel..

CHAPTER IV

Conclusion:

The Continued Search for the “Mulatta *Bildungsroman*”

According to Peng-Chia Feng in *The Female Bildungsroman by Toni Morrison and Maxine Hong Kingston: A Postmodern Reading*, female writers of our contemporary literary period use *Bildungsroman* narratives in order to give a space where women-of-color can develop and find their identity. As Feng explains, using Bonnie Hoover Braendlin’s definition of the *Bildungsroman* genre:

The emphasis of a *Bildungsroman* on repressive environmental factors, on the process of disillusionment necessary for personality change and maturity, and on the possibilities for transformations offered by individual choices makes it an attractive genre to modern women intent on expressing female awakening new, self-identified identities. (77)

I focus on this analysis by Feng, to again raise the point that the *Bildungsroman* novel is possible for not only the traditional white male character, but also those marginalized protagonists representative of society. Nevertheless, unlike the *Bildungsromane* of Morrison and Kingston, the two authors that are considered in this novel are white males. They are both responsible for creating a woman-of-color, specifically mulatta, while not directly having any personal experiences to use as a guide. This problematic reality found in *Cecilia Valdés* and *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra* is that of the sexualized and objectified image of the mulatta.

Although I have proven in this study that *Cecilia Valdés* can certainly be read as a *Bildungsroman*, there are still stereotypical representations that flaw the mulatta protagonist's image as a woman who can stand on her own. Despite the stereotypes there is still sufficient evidence, as I have shown in Chapter II, of Cecilia Valdés' ability to be considered as a *bildung* character because of her use of her development, through experience, to find self and an understanding of her place in society.

On the other hand, *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra*, proves to be an example of a mulatta protagonist who never "awakens" and discovers a sense of self. Tereza Batista is a woman who merely exists and goes through her literary life as a character that never realizes her place in society. She never allows herself to question what it means to be a woman nor an individual.

In contrasting these two novels, I allow for a separate reading of the *Bildungsromane* novel and its ability to be a "conduct literature" and a "development literature" for the mulatta character. My goal was to prove that, although the mulatta protagonist differs greatly from the traditional *Bildung* character, she too is able to develop, learn through "apprenticeship" and realize her place in society. Cecilia Valdés experiences an awakening; at the novel's end she realizes her situation in the patriarchal society. After realizing that she has for so long been restricted as sexual object for man's desire, Cecilia changes her reality. Although she attempts to learn through experience a conduct that mimics the white Cuban woman, she realizes that she can never succeed. In the end only by murdering her lover (and brother) will she not only free herself, but the other mulatta women of her society as well. Despite our ideas of woman and of what we as postmodern readers deem success stories, Cecilia Valdés triumphs in the end. She finally becomes a heroine in her own right.

The second novel that I presented is the opposite in its development of the main protagonist. Amado's *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra*, although suffering and surviving many hardships, never realizes what it means to be a woman. Her "aprendizagem" throughout the novel does not develop into a changed character that matures. Tereza never questions her situation in society, yet, she reacts to the calamitous occurrences around her. From beginning to end, Tereza Batista allows patriarchal figures to control her future. Even when she pretends to be heroic and tries to save others, she does not realize that she cannot save herself. Through overly sexual images of Tereza Batista, Jorge Amado creates a mulatta that does not live up to his demonstration of a warrior-like protagonist. Instead she is an example of an objectified protagonist who is not created to be conscious of herself nor her surroundings. *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra*, as an example of the failed/truncated *Bildungsroman*, represents what we as women-of-color today critique in order to question the idea of agency.

As an introduction to the "mulatta *Bildungsroman*," I hope this thesis has been groundbreaking in the way we as readers will come to view the representation of the mulatta. Just as I proved what the "mulatta *bildungsroman*" entails with *Cecilia Valdés* and the failed *Bildungsroman* that *Tereza Batista, cansada de guerra* is, I hope that I have ultimately allowed the reader to re-think and re-consider novels that involve a mulatta protagonist.

Literary criticism, a key role in our development as scholars, should allow us to question, consider, and use already existing criticism to develop new and or revised literary theories. This was the purpose of this thesis-to open a discussion of the representation of the mulatta protagonist and to find a place for her in the *Bildungsroman* genre.

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