

FAULKNER'S PRESENCE IN LATIN AMERICAN LITERATURE

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(Resumen)

Existe un cierto consenso crítico por el que William Faulkner es considerado el novelista americano más grande del siglo XX. Faulkner no sólo dejó su marca en la literatura americana sino que también dejó un legado para escritores de toda la literatura mundial. El impacto de Faulkner en la literatura europea moderna ha sido documentado con amplitud pero mucha menor atención ha sido dada a la presencia de Faulkner en la literatura latinoamericana. En efecto, la influencia de Faulkner en una generación de escritores latinoamericanos fue frenada. Los escritores que formaron la vanguardia llamada "El Boom" -por ejemplo, Juan Carlos Onetti, Carlos Fuentes, Mario Vargas Llosa, Gabriel García Márquez- afirman que Faulkner dejó una huella innegable en el espíritu literario de Latinoamérica. La presencia y la recepción de Faulkner están conjuntados en el homenaje de Vargas Llosa "Faulkner en Laberinto" (1980): Escribía en inglés, pero era uno de los nuestros.

"Faulkner es uno de los nuestros; pertenece
a nuestra herencia cultural"
--Carlos Fuentes

The most recent confirmation of Faulkner's extraordinary presence in the development of modern Latin American fiction comes in Mario Vargas Llosa's A Writer's Reality (1991). Vargas Llosa, an eminent novelist and astute literary critic, not only offers his literary autobiography but also assays the coming of age of Latin American literature. Significantly, the writers who formed the vanguard called "The Boom", the literary explosion that took place in Latin America in the 1960's, made a twofold discovery.

They discovered European and American masters--preeminently Faulkner, and they discovered a new literary terrain and new voices to express the vast complexities, ambiguities, incongruities and contradictions of the Latin American experience. Vargas Llosa recalls the genesis of his first novel, The Time of the Hero, and his discovery of Faulkner:

William Faulkner is another writer who had an influence on the writing of The Time of the Hero. He has had an enormous influence on Latin American literature, and I discovered his work when I was finishing my university studies. I remember that Faulkner was the first writer I read with a paper and pen, trying to decipher the structures, the formal creation in his novels. By reading Faulkner I learned that form could be a character in a novel and sometimes the most important character --that is, organization of the perspective of the narration, the use of different narrators, the withholding of some information from the reader to create ambiguity. I was fascinated with this extraordinary mastering of the structure of a fictional work. I suppose this is also visible in my first novel. The organization of the story reflects some kind of

fascination with these formal possibilities of the narrative form, the discovery which I owe to Faulkner.¹

Indeed, the lessons of the master are visible in Vargas Llosa's first novel and his expressive gratitude broaches the larger issue of Faulkner's influence on a host of Latin American writers. Vargas Llosa also speaks for a generation of Latin American writers, assuming the plural voice, he marks Faulkner's profound impact and the admiration that was shared by his contemporaries. Moreover, Vargas Llosa pinpoints the nexus and striking commonality that would lead some writers, namely Carlos Fuentes and Gabriel García Márquez, to claim Faulkner as uno de los nuestros ("one of our own") and as part of their cultural heritage:

There are, of course, many reasons for a Latin American writer to be influenced by Faulkner. First is the literary importance of Faulkner's work; he is probably the most important novelist of our time, the most original, the most rich. He created a world as rich as the richest narrative worlds of the nineteenth century. But there are more specific reasons for which Faulkner has such appeal in Latin America. The world out of which he created his own world is quite similar to a Latin American world. In the Deep South, as in Latin America, two different cultures coexist, two different historical traditions, two different races—all forming a difficult coexistence full of prejudice and violence. There also exists the extraordinary importance of the past, which is always present in contemporary life....Out of all this, Faulkner created a personal world, with a richness of technique and form. It is understandable that to a Latin American who works with such similar sources, the techniques and formal inventions of Faulkner hold strong appeal.²

The appeal of Faulkner's multifaceted exploration of history and culture, his tragic vision, and his novelistic virtuosity was far-reaching. However, the scope of Faulkner's influence and the extent of his presence in Latin American fiction have not been adequately measured. As recently as 1989 in Journeys Through the Labyrinth: Latin American Fiction in the Twentieth Century, Gerald Martin argued that "the rather grand story of Faulkner's relation to both the French nouveau roman and the Latin American nueva novela remains to be told."³ Setting aside the nouveau roman, I concur with Martin's contention, and this survey endeavors to inform and present part of the grand story.

This conspectus starts with Jorge Luis Borges, the most anglophilic Latin American writer. To our interests, Borges was a great admirer of American literature and he was instrumental in introducing American writers to Latin American audiences. He masterfully translated Whitman's Leaves of Grass, and his critical writings on Emerson, Hawthorne, Poe, Melville and James remain unsurpassed in Latin America. His reception and dissemination of American writers are exemplified in his treatment of Faulkner.

Between 1937 and 1939 Borges reviewed The Unvanquished, Absalom,

Absalom!, and The Wild Palms. Of The Unvanquished, he wrote: "There are some books that touch us physically like the nearness of the sea or the morning. This—for me—is one of them." In his review of Absalom, Absalom!, Borges accurately paired

Faulkner's two greatest novels: "Absalom, Absalom! is comparable to The Sound and the Fury. I know of no higher praise." And his review of The Wild Palms has a ringing conclusion: "That William Faulkner is the leading novelist of our time is a conceivable affirmation."⁴ The last is indeed high praise, especially coming from a writer who was completing the astounding Ficciones, one of the great works of fiction of the twentieth century. Although The Wild Palms is not one of Faulkner's major works, it has a special bearing; Borges's translation (Las palmeras salvajes, 1941) was a watershed in inter-American literary confluence. Emir Rodríguez Monegal, Borges's biographer, marked the historic moment:

The importance of this translation for the new Latin American novel was considerable....Borges's translation was not only faithful to the original's English but created in Spanish a writing style that was equivalent of the original's English. For many young Latin American novelists who did not know enough English to read the dense original, Borges's tight version meant the discovery of a new kind of narrative writing. They had, in Borges, the best possible guide to Faulkner's dark and intense world.⁵

At first glance, it seems odd that Borges, the lapidary stylist and concocter of gnomic metaphysical tales, would champion Faulkner's dense and often woolly narratives. In the light of his appreciative reviews and notes on Joyce, Kafka and Woolf, Borges's enthusiastic reception of Faulkner is understandable. Borges admired mastery of language, intrepid experimentation, and the bold strokes of the modernist writers. In Faulkner, he saw a writer who took risks, boldly experimented with narrative structure, and was uncompromisingly committed to the craft of fiction. However dissimilar in styles and themes, Borges and Faulkner share the common bond of original and uncompromising artists who influenced not only their national literature but left a legacy for writers from all quarters of world literature. To his credit, Borges stood at the door to welcome Faulkner and expressed an admiration to be shared by a generation of Latin American novelists and major figures such as Juan Carlos Onetti, Carlos Fuentes, Mario Vargas Llosa, and Gabriel García Márquez.

Borges was not the first celebrant of Faulkner's work; the distinction belongs to a lesser figure. The honor of the first translation and first critical essay on Faulkner goes to the Cuban writer and critic, Lino Novás Calvo. Novás Calvo was also the first Spanish-American critic to pair Hemingway and Faulkner ("Dos escritores norteamericanos" 1933), to reflect the bifurcation in modern American prose, and to establish lines of influence: those who admired Hemingway's chiseled prose, those who admired Faulkner's intricate language and techniques, and those who admired (like Novás Calvo) both writers but for different reasons. The consensus, however, is that Faulkner exerted the greatest influence on Novás Calvo. In 1951 (before the advent of Carlos Fuentes or Gabriel García Márquez) Salvador Bueno claimed that Novás Calvo was the Latin American writer most influenced by William Faulkner. In response to Bueno's statement, Novás Calvo said: "I have Faulkner in my blood."⁶ Such hyperbolic statements aside, it is indisputable that Novás Calvo's "El demonio de Faulkner" (1933) initiated Faulkner studies in Latin America. Although Novás Calvo

defended Faulkner against the charge of "neurotic morbidity" and argued that Faulkner's tragic vision was often misunderstood: "But what they call neurosis in Faulkner is, precisely, his most sublime and singular quality: the profound and sustained artistic tension that is communicated to the reader from the first to the last page." Moreover, Novás Calvo focused on Faulkner's technique, stressed the adjectival term--"Faulknerian"--as a singular mode of fiction, and he paved the way for Faulkner's reputation as a writer's writer: "...technique and language perfectly match his subject matter. Faulkner is Faulkner in all aspects of his work."⁷

"El demonio de Faulkner" was followed a year later by Novás Calvo's translation of Sanctuary (Santuario). The exacting task of translating Sanctuary plausibly led to an appreciation for the language and intricacies of Faulkner's prose. James East Irby's La influencia de William Faulkner en cuatro narradores hispanoamericanos, the best comparative study of Faulkner and Novás Calvo, advances La luna nona y otros cuentos (1942) as the start of Novás Calvo's experimentation with Faulknerian techniques. Specifically, Novás Calvo used the "witness" narrator that Faulkner employed in "A Rose for Emily". Incidentally, Novás Calvo's appreciative reading of "A Rose for Emily" is also a benchmark. "A Rose for Emily" has been the most popular and far-reaching of Faulkner's short stories; its impact extends to Fuentes's gothic novela, Aura, and García Márquez's short stories in Los funerales de la Mamá Grande. Irby concludes his comparative analysis by giving Novás Calvo his due as one of the most knowledgeable and responsive readers of Faulkner; it was a confluence that yielded positive results: "An examination of his work demonstrates, without a doubt, that the influence of Faulkner, like all true influences, corresponds to a profound, underlying commonality and performs a positive function, contributing to the substance and strength of Novás Calvo's work."⁸

In contrast, Juan Carlos Onetti's early work is often signaled out as the most negative example of Faulkner's influence. One critic has noted: "At the stylistic level much of Onetti's complexity is not original. It stems from the acknowledged influence of other writers, particularly Faulkner."⁹ Luis Harss and Barbara Dohmann in Into the Mainstream: Conversations with Latin American Writers are equally caustic:

Onetti is echoing a master who has had an enormous influence on him: Faulkner. The influence is conscious and deliberate, and Onetti sees no reason to apologize for it. But it is sometimes embarrassing to the reader. Un sueño realizado is made of tortuously long and graceful Faulknerian sentences that contribute to the cloistered atmosphere of the book but because of an excess of imitated mannerisms--intricate modifiers, pleonastic subclauses, redundant adjectival expanses--sometimes seem affected.¹⁰

That Onetti greatly admired Faulkner is incontrovertible. He affectionally summarized his respect in "Requiem por Faulkner" (1962). Chiding newspaper obituaries as insufficient homage, Onetti eulogized Faulkner as "one of the great writers of the century" and compared Faulkner's mastery of the English language to Shakespeare's. Onetti took the occasion to entertain the question--"Who is the most

important North American novelist of our times?"--and raised the Hemingway-Faulkner issue. Predictably, Onetti chose Faulkner. Noting the many years that Faulkner's work was ignored and how he manly suffered ignominious neglect, Onetti avers that Faulkner, as man and writer, was one of a kind. Onetti closes his eulogy with a simple "gracias"--and it stands as one of the most heartfelt expressions of gratitude from one writer to another.¹¹

No doubt, the moody Uruguayan writer found a kindred spirit in Faulkner and he shared the American writer's tragic view of humanity. Rodriguez Monegal observes that "Faulkner greatly influenced Onetti in what can be called a vision of the novelistic world, a manner of looking at relationships between characters and the world that surrounds them."¹² Congruent with this novelistic vision, they shared a concern with fiction-making, with the multiple ways of shaping and telling a story. Corina Mathieu-Higginbotham's comparative study of Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily" and Onetti's "La novia robada" finds a kindred relationship rooted in an intellectual affinity between the two writers in respect to a perception of reality and in the use of similar techniques to foment artistic creation.¹³

Curiously, Onetti later became part of a quarrel over Faulkner's influence. James East Irby and other critics had claimed that José Revuelta's novel, El luto humano (1943), shows the influence of As I Lay Dying. The Mexican novelist testily rebutted that he had not been influenced by Faulkner, but admitted the influence of Onetti¹⁴ One could force a quibble: if Revueltas esteemed Onetti and Onetti deemed Faulkner his master, then Revueltas was indirect heir to the Faulkner legacy. Granting Revuelta's disclaimer, Faulkner's presence is nonetheless discernible in the writers who revolutionized the Mexican novel.

In a relatively short span of time--say, from Agustín Yáñez's A filo del agua (1947) to Carlos Fuentes's La muerte de Artemio Cruz (1962), the Mexican novel surged to prominence. Al filo del agua (a Mexican idiomatic expression for the anticipation of a storm) was itself a harbinger. Fuentes, a beneficiary of Yáñez's groundbreaking work, establishes Al filo del agua (The Edge of the Storm), 1963) as the seminal work in the development of the modern Mexican novel. Other knowledgeable readers confirm Yáñez's exceptional contribution: "Al filo del agua, Yáñez's masterpiece, marks a turning point in Spanish American fiction, primarily because it combines for the first time a variety of avant-garde literary technique....Al filo del agua is one of the several works of the 1940's that channeled Spanish American fiction into the mainstream of world literature."¹⁵

Yáñez's themes in Al filo del agua were not new: the conflict between social norms and personal freedom, the clash between outmoded institutions and human nature, the reactionary forces of church and government versus evolutionary change. Yáñez's sterling accomplishment was that he told a story of the Mexican Revolution (a traditional concern of the Mexican novel) in a radically different way. Eschewing hackneyed documentary realism, Yáñez's borrowed the structure of Dos Passo's Manhattan Transfer and experimented with stream-of-consciousness techniques. Yáñez's absorption of avant-garde techniques is dramatically evident in the non-chronological sequences and abrupt shifts from one plot-line to another; in fact, it is

a precursor of Juan Rulfo's celebrated novel, Pedro Páramo (1955), which also has had its Faulknerian interpreters. In effect, Al filo del agua is a psychological novel; unprecedented in the Mexican novel, Yáñez's expertly employed interior monologue to render individual psyches and the collective consciousness of a rural town, to forcefully depict the cause and effect of fear, oppression, repression, and the suffocating weight of tradition and history.

Since Yáñez never admitted reading or being influenced by Faulkner, critics can only speculate on connections: "...the exact point of literary contact between Yáñez and Faulkner cannot be ascertained, but is highly likely that Yáñez learned of Faulkner through the Revista de Occidente, and the contact with the latter's novels was through the Librería Font which Yáñez and other young writers frequented."¹⁶ More intrepid, Magali Fernandez's "Análisis comparativo de las obras de Agustín Yáñez y William Faulkner," a comparative study of Al filo del agua and As I Lay Dying, provides close textual analysis to buttress the argument that Manhattan Transfer was not Yáñez's sole model and inspiration.¹⁷ Less speculative, by 1947 Joyce, Woolf, Faulkner and other practitioners of stream-of-consciousness fiction were well-known in Latin American literary circles. Directly or indirectly, Joycean and Faulknerian avant-gardism reached Yáñez and he reciprocated with a unique recasting. Yáñez's major novel is "Faulknerian" in its stream-of-consciousness rendering of a people beset by a dying social order but holding on to the past as they are thrust into the whirlwind of the twentieth century.

Carlos Fuentes's appreciation is much easier to measure because of his extensive critical writings on Faulkner and the numerous interviews or articles where he discusses influences on his work. Notably, Fuentes has been the most vocal commentator on the predicament of Latin American literature and the necessary resolution: "We Latin American novelists live in countries where everything remains to be said, but also where the way to say all of this has to be discovered....The central task of discovering the profound or latent reality behind the world of appearances can only be carried out by the invention of new and adequate techniques."¹⁸ In his call for a protean literature that could capture the total reality of Latin America, Fuentes found inspiration and a valuable model in Faulkner.

In the early 1960's and during the nascent period of his novelistic career, Fuentes wrote a brilliant essay on Faulkner: "La novela como tragedia: William Faulkner." Disclosing his knowledge of American literature, Fuentes accurately placed Faulkner in the tradition of Poe, Hawthorne, Melville and the literary current that countered dreamy optimism and idealistic components of the American Dream. When Fuentes's article initially appeared in Siempre, a Mexico City cultural magazine, it was titled "Entre el dolor y la nada." The culling of the resonant lines from The Wild Palms--"Between grief and nothing I will take grief"--is a clue to Fuentes's valuation of Faulkner. Fuentes would boldly state: "William Faulkner is the first North American writer for whom the elements of tragedy--the consciousness of separation--come from within American society." This tragic sense, he argues, is Faulkner's attraction for the Latin American writer and the reason for his enormous influence. Faulkner's greatness was his ability to transcend regionalism and create universal literature, especially when

he gave voice to "the unvanquished" and invested them with tragic humanity:

That's why Faulkner's work is so close to us Latin Americans; only Faulkner, from the literature of the United States, only Faulkner, from that narrow world of optimism and success, offers us an image common to the United States and Latin America: the image of defeat, of separation, of doubt, of tragedy.¹⁹

Fuentes would reiterate this essential point in his major work of criticism, La nueva novela hispanoamericana (1969): "In Faulkner, through his tragic search for all not said (of impossible writing) was born the myth of man unvanquished in defeat, violation, and anguish."²⁰

The most interesting part of Fuentes's critique is his assessment of Faulkner's attempt to say everything, even the impossible. Covering a wide range of works (Sanctuary, Absalom, Absalom!, Light in August) and revealing his attentive reading, Fuentes examines Faulkner's luxuriant language and highly rhetorical style. He converts "Dixie Gongorism" (Allen Tate's sardonic tag for Faulkner's style) into a boon. Fuentes deems it an honor to be compared to Góngora and he is pleased that the baroque connects the greatest Spanish poet of the 17th century with the greatest American writer of the 20th century. Fifteen years later, Fuentes would reaffirm this common ground and would claim Faulkner as part of Hispanic culture: "Faulkner is one of our own, he belongs to our cultural heritage....Faulkner's language is a baroque language, a cultural legacy that we share with him."²¹

Fuentes also offers a succinct examination of Faulkner's experiments with narrative time and he astutely recognizes one of Faulkner's greatest accomplishments. He underscores that history is never was for Faulkner; in his novels everything is in the present, everything is now. Fuentes refurbishes what Faulkner himself had said about history and narrative chronology: "There is no such thing as was. To me, no man is himself, he is the sum of his past. There is no such thing as was, because the past is. It is part of every man, every woman, and every moment. All of his and her ancestry, background, is all a part of himself and herself at any moment."²² In other writings, Fuentes would aphoristically echo Faulkner: "There is no live present with a dead past. And there is no live past without a language alive in the present."²³

Significantly, Fuentes wrote "Entre el dolor y la nada" when he was writing La muerte de Artemio Cruz (The Death of Artemio Cruz, 1964), the work that brought him membership in "The Boom" and international recognition. La muerte de Artemio Cruz manifests that Fuentes had learned Faulknerian lessons on narrative time and existential chronology. Like Yáñez, Fuentes retells the story of the Mexican Revolution and the tragic history of modern Mexico in a fragmentary, stream-of-consciousness manner. Fuentes's most novel experiments were to juxtapose history and myth, and create multiple levels of reality by fragmenting the narrative into three voices. Using first person, third person, and the twist--the first person familiar voice (tu) as an accusatory communal voice-- Fuentes touches base with Faulkner. The novelistic strategem is to make the past part of the present, the present expressive of the past, and to bring into this scheme a "collective voice" representative of a

greater historical reality. His inspiration, Fuentes admits, was Faulkner's collective narrative point of view:

I also read Faulkner and his use of the collective "we." "A Rose for Emily," for example, is narrated by a "we." In fact, I think that all of Faulkner's novels are narrated by a collective voice. So for me the "tu" was totally important as a recognition of the other, as a stylistic means to recognize the other, it is perhaps the Mexican people—the collective voice—that speaks to Artemio Cruz saying "tu, tu, tu."²⁴

The collective voice is not the only Faulknerian trait in La muerte de Artemio Cruz. The stream-of-consciousness passages—disjointed syntax and seemingly incoherent sentences, multiple voices streaming through the narrative, the fusion of the present with multiple levels of the past, and the attempts of characters to find meaning or finding non-meaning in the human shards of history—are quite similar to the Quentin Compson monologues in The Sound and the Fury and Absalom, Absalom!. In effect, there is ample evidence that Fuentes was attentive to the lessons of the master, he learned to admix history and myth, time and human consciousness, and to channel the process through anguished memory. Fuentes's tour de force and his attempt to break new ground in the Mexican novel were not universally acclaimed, his detractors protested that La muerte de Artemio Cruz is too contrived, too consciously experimental, and the Joyce-Faulkner imprint is too obvious. Indeed, the merits of La muerte de Artemio Cruz are debatable, the case, here, is that Fuentes in his avowed search for "new and adequate techniques" found valuable means in Faulkner.

Another writer of Fuentes's generation also wrestled with "el demonio de Faulkner." He would become the fourth Nobel laureate from Latin America and the most celebrated and widely read contemporary Latin American writer. Gabriel García Márquez would also become the writer most closely associated with Faulkner and the subject of numerous comparative studies. Cien años de soledad (1967) / One Hundred Years of Solitude (1972) and the subsequent laureation generated a tidal wave of literature on García Márquez. The critical industry continues unabated. A useful bibliography and George McMurray's fine conspectus on the voluminous criticism can be found in Critical Essays on Gabriel García Márquez (1987). To date, Harley D. Oberhelman's The Presence of Faulkner in the Writings of García Márquez (1980) is the most ambitious and sensible comparative study.

Since 1950, when García Márquez wrote a column for El Heraldo (Barranquilla, Colombia) and petulantly wondered if Faulkner would suffer the same fate as Joyce and Woolf in being denied the Nobel Prize, García Márquez has had a long and often stormy literary marriage with Faulkner. Two selections from countless interviews illustrate two aspects of the relationship. The first expresses García Márquez's view on Faulkner's impact on Latin American literature; the second expresses his imperative disengagement from Faulkner's influence. Conducted a few months after the publication of Cien años de soledad, García Márquez's conversation with Mario Vargas Llosa is noteworthy for several reasons. There is a

standing caveat that García Márquez's comments in interviews should be approached with skepticism. He has often contradicted himself, retracted previous statements, and he can be playfully tricky with interviewers and the media at large. Vargas Llosa, however, is an exceptional interlocutor. His massive critical biography, Gabriel García Márquez: Historia de un deicidio (1971), is a basic text in the study of García Márquez's work, and we can rest assured that García Márquez respects Vargas Llosa's engaging questions.

Vargas Llosa: Do you think, from a point of view of form, from a technical point of view, that contemporary Latin American writers owe a greater debt to European and North American writers than to Latin American writers of the past?

García Márquez: I think that the greatest debt the new Latin American novelists owe is to Faulkner....Faulkner is part of all novel-writing in Latin America....I think that the great difference between our grandfathers and ourselves, the only distinctiveness between them and us, is Faulkner; it was the only thing to happen between the two generations.

Vargas Llosa: And to what do you attribute Faulkner's invasive influence? Is it because he is the most important novelist of our times or simply because he had such a personal, brilliant and redolent style, which has been so imitated?

García Márquez: I think it is method. The "Faulknerian" method is very appropriate to narrate Latin American reality. We unconsciously discovered this in Faulkner. That is, we were living this reality and we wanted to write about it and we knew that neither European nor traditional Spanish methods would serve, and suddenly we found the Faulknerian method most appropriate for writing about this reality. Actually, it is not that strange because I cannot forget that Yoknapatawpha County banks on the Caribbean Sea; so in a way Faulkner is a Caribbean writer, in a way he is a Latin American writer.²⁵

El olor de la guayaba (1982), a series of conversations with Plinio Apuleyo Mendoza, García Márquez's occasional collaborator and life-time friend, is remarkably candid. García Márquez vents irritation because critics harp on Faulkner's influence on his work, but he adds that he does not mind because Faulkner is "one of the greatest novelists of all time." Mendoza asked: "In spurning Faulkner's determining influence, aren't you committing parricide?" García Márquez countered with his most truculent statement on Faulkner: "Perhaps. That's why I have said that my problem was not how to imitate Faulkner, but how to destroy him. His influence had screwed me up."²⁶

García Márquez's maturation as a writer clearly entailed a liberation from Faulkner's influence. Unlike Onetti and Fuentes, García Márquez was not greatly

attracted to Faulkner's tragic vision; his epigonic stage was marked by his fascination with the "Faulknerian method." Oberhelman's diligent research convinces that García Márquez had "familiarity with a vast amount of Faulkneriana at a time when he was about to begin La hojarasca."²⁷ The critical consensus is that La hojarasca (1955) is García Márquez's most Faulknerian work. Translated as Leaf Storm (1976), García Márquez's first novelistic venture starts the Macondo saga (a fictive creation often compared to Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County), and he employed multiple narrators to recount the shifting events of the story. Critics contend that the narrative structure of La hojarasca—a "we" narrator and three first-person narrators—was borrowed from As I Lay Dying and are quick to point out that it also tells a convoluted story of a burial. Not surprisingly, it was decried as imitative work and consequently a failed first novel: "La hojarasca is the work of an insecure writer....It is the work of a novice, written under the influence of other styles and other novelists. One of these styles, and the most influential, belongs to William Faulkner."²⁸ More expansively critical, Harss and Dohmann argue that García Márquez was overwhelmed by his discovery and he was not yet expert enough to command Faulknerian techniques:

If La hojarasca is a failure, it is largely because it is written in a borrowed idiom that never becomes a personal language. Its interwoven plots and subplots, overlappings and backtrackings, its involuted time play, are all more or less perfunctory devices that defeat the purpose they might be expected to serve.²⁹

The deprecation of García Márquez's apprentice novel ironically evokes Faulkner's response to the criticism that Mosquitoes was a very bad early novel: "I'm not ashamed of it, because that was the chips, the badly sawn planks, that the carpenter produces while he's learning to be a first-rate carpenter."³⁰ La hojarasca was put together with rough-hewn planks, but it was an instructive stage in García Márquez's novitiate and a necessary step toward exorcizing Faulkner's presence.

García Márquez's next novel, El coronel no tiene quien le escriba (1961) / No One Writes to the Colonel (1969), was the point of departure; he junked rhetorical baggage borrowed from Faulkner and set out in new directions. At this point, his apprenticeship was directed by his other master. Students of García Márquez's early work invariably note the Hemingwayesque shift: "No One Writes to the Colonel is narrated in linear form by an objective, omniscient narrator in a pared-to-the-bone, transparent style reminiscent of Hemingway."³¹ Biographical materials corroborate the Faulkner-Hemingway counterpoise. Vargas Llosa recounts how García Márquez assiduously read Hemingway in the years between La hojarasca and El coronel no tiene quien le escriba, and with fruitful results: "The prose style of La hojarasca has undergone a vigorous reducing cure and technique has been radically simplified. Faulknerian bad habits have disappeared. 'I battled them reading Hemingway,' jokes García Márquez."³²

García Márquez poignantly assessed his two masters in "Gabriel García Márquez Meets Ernest Hemingway." This journalistic piece merits an extended note because it appeared after Oberhelman's study and it is not listed in McMurray's or other bibliographies. It is an affectionate reminiscence of the day in 1957 when he

saw Hemingway walking down a Paris boulevard and the 28-year old journalist was too awestruck to greet Hemingway and express his unqualified admiration. García Márquez's excursion into nostalgia prompts recollections of his two great masters and their profound, but disparate, influences on his literary life: "My great masters were the two North American novelists who seemed to have the least in common. I had read everything they had published until then, but not as complementary reading--rather, just the opposite, as two distinct and almost mutually exclusive forms of conceiving of literature." García Márquez acknowledges Faulkner's achievement, but muses that it is difficult to learn from Faulkner because he was too wildly original and the "nuts and bolts" of his fiction are a mystery, a secret gone to the grave with Faulkner. He concludes that Faulkner was a supremely inspired writer, whereas Hemingway was the better craftsman and therefore the better teacher:

Hemingway, by contrast, with less inspiration, with less passion and less craziness but with a splendid severity, left the screws fully exposed, as they are on freight cars. Maybe for that reason Faulkner is a writer who has had much to do with my soul, but Hemingway is the one who had the most to do with my craft--not simply for his books, but for his astounding knowledge of the aspect of craftsmanship in the science of writing.³³

This, of course, is hindsight and it does not necessarily controvert García Márquez's earlier panegyric: "When I first read Faulkner, I thought: I must become a writer."³⁴ The Faulkner and Hemingway epigonic stages were both transitory, and García Márquez went on to forge his inimitable style in the spectacular One Hundred Years of Solitude. In the halcyon days when he lived in Barranquilla, García Márquez and other young writers respectfully called Faulkner el viejo ("the old man").³⁵ García Márquez is now el viejo; he, too, has influenced a generation of writers and has received the flattery of imitation. A welcome offshoot of García Márquez's fame and the general interest in Latin American literature which he has immeasurably furthered is the recognition that Faulkner inspired, provoked and influenced to a considerable degree the evolution of contemporary Latin American fiction.

The greater emphasis has been given to major figures such as Yáñez, Onetti, Fuentes, Vargas Llosa and García Márquez, writers who changed the course of Latin American fiction and brought it to the forefront of contemporary world literature. However, lesser known writers, either because their works have not been translated and disseminated in North America and Europe or because they have been overshadowed by the magisterial writers of "The Boom," to varying degrees also bear the mark of Faulkner's influence. The Faulkner stamp is visible in Pedro Juan Soto's early short stories and the Puerto Rican writer's first novel, Usmaíl (1959), is thematically and stylistically wedded to Faulkner's Light in August. Phyliss Z. Boring's "Usmaíl: The Puerto Rican Joe Christmas" (1973) underscores the crucial point that "Soto's work is not a superficial imitation of Faulkner....It is an example of good literature inspired by Faulkner's example."³⁶ Along with García Márquez's exemplarity, Alvaro Cepeda Samudio's La casa grande (1962) and Héctor Rojas Herazo's Respirando el verano (1962) sustain John Brushwood's assessment that

Faulkner has had "an overwhelming influence" on the Colombian novel.³⁷ From another quarter, Mercedes M. Robles persuasively argues the case that the Chilean novelist, Manuel Rojas, studiously read Borges's translation of The Wild Palms and discovered in Faulkner's novel the technique with which to present parallel, juxtaposed stories in Punta de rieles (1960).³⁸ Lastly, the Cuban writer, Reinaldo Arenas, confirms the extraordinary impact of Faulkner's monumental novel, The Sound and the Fury; Arena's first novel, Celestino antes del alba (1967), employs Faulkner's narrative technique, including the use of an idiot as narrator.

From the banks of the Rio Grande to Patagonia, from the hinterlands to metropolises, and across the vast geographical and cultural expanse of one continent and part of another, Faulkner left an indelible imprint on the literary spirit of Latin America. The recipient and Faulkner's presence are summed up in the conclusion of Vargas Llosa's homage, "Faulkner en Laberinto" (1980): Escribía en inglés, pero era uno de los nuestros. "He wrote in English, but he was one of our own."³⁹

NOTES

1. Mario Vargas Llosa, A Writer's Reality (Syracuse: Syracuse U P, 1991), 51.
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3. Gerald Martin, Journeys Through the Labyrinth: Latin American Fiction in the Twentieth Century (London: Verso, 1989), 172.
4. William Faulkner: Three Reviews," Borges, A Reader, eds. Emir Rodriguez Monegal and Alastir Reid (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1981), 92-94.
5. Emir Rodriguez Monegal, Jorge Luis Borges: A Literary Biography (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1978), 372.
6. Salvador Bueno, "Nuestros colaboradores," Américas, 3 (1951): 2. Translation mine.
7. Lino Novás Calvo, "El demonio de Faulkner," Revista de Occidente, 39 (1933): 98-102. Translation mine.
8. James East Irby, "La influencia de William Faulkner en cuatro narradores hispanoamericanos." Thesis: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1956, 16. Translation mine.
9. M. Ian Adams, Three Authors of Alienation (Austin: U P of Texas, 1975), 39.
10. Luis Harss and Barbara Dohmann, Into the Mainstream: Conversations with Latin American Writers (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 193.

11. Juan Carlos Onetti, "Requiem por Faulkner", Requiem para Faulkner y otros artículos (Montevideo: Arca Editorial, 1975), 164-167.
12. Irby, "La influencia de William Faulkner en cuatro narradores hispanoamericanos", 79. Translation mine.
13. Corina Mathieu-Higginbotham, "Faulkner y Onetti: Una visión de la realidad a través de Jefferson y Santa María", Hispanofila, 61 (1977): 51-60.
14. Luis Mario Schneider, "Revive la polémica sobre José Revueltas", Conversaciones con José Revueltas, ed. Jorge Ruffinelli (Xalapa, Mexico: Universidad Veracruzana, 1977), 96-97.
15. George R. McMurray, Spanish American Writing Since 1941 (New York: Ungar, 1987), 31-32.
16. Joan Lloyd Hernandez, "The Influence of William Faulkner in Four Latin American Novelists," diss., Louisiana State U, 1978, 48.
17. Magali Fernández, "Análisis comparativo de las obras de Agustín Yáñez y William Faulkner," Homenaje a Agustín Yáñez, ed. Helmy R. Giacomani (Madrid: Las Américas, 1973), 296-317.
18. Carlos Fuentes, "Situación del escritor en América Latina," Mundo Nuevo, 1 (1966): 5-21. Translation mine.
19. Carlos Fuentes, "La novela como tragedia: William Faulkner," Casa con dos puertas (Mexico: Editorial Joaquín Mortiz, 1970), 52-78.
20. Carlos Fuentes, La nueva novela hispanoamericana (Mexico: Editorial Joaquín Mrtiz, 1969), 19. Translation mine.
21. "Dialogo con Carlos Fuentes," Simposio Carlos Fuentes, eds. Isaac Jack Levy and Juan Loveluck (U of South Carolina, 1978), 215-229.
22. Faulkner in the University, eds. Frederick L. Gwynn and Joseph L. Blotner (New York: Random House, 1959), 84.
23. "Discurso inaugural de Carlos Fuentes," Simposio Carlos Fuentes, 13.
24. "Dialogo con Carlos Fuentes," 224.
25. Gabriel García Márquez y Mario Vargas Llosa, La novela en América Latina: Dialogo (Lina: Carlos Milla Batres Ediciones, 1968), 51-53. Translation mine.

26. Gabriel García Márquez, El olor de la quayaba: Conversaciones con Plinio Apuleyo Mendoza (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1982), 66-67. Translation mine.
27. Harley D. Oberhelman, The Presence of Faulkner in the Writings of García Márquez (Lubbock: Texas Tech U P, 1980), 23.
28. Michael Palencia-Roth, Gabriel García Márquez: La línea, el círculo y las metamorfosis de mito (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1987), 33. Translation mine.
29. Harss and Dohmann, Into the Mainstream, 323.
30. Faulkner in the University, 257.
31. George R. McMurray, "The Threat of 'La Violencia'," Critical Essays on Gabriel García Márquez, ed. George R. McMurray (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1987), 80.
32. Mario Vargas Llosa, "García Márquez de Aracataca a Macondo," Nueve asedios a García Márquez. Mario Benedetti y otros (Santiago, Chile: Editorial Universitaria, 1971), 126-146. Translation mine.
33. Gabriel García Márquez, "Gabriel García Márquez Meets Ernest Hemingway," The New York Times Book Review (July 26, 1981), 1, 16-17.
34. Harss and Dohmann, Into the Mainstream, 322.
35. The "Barranquilla group" was a coterie of young journalists and writers who caroused in bars and brothers, endlessly discussed literature, and passed among themselves the latest translations of Faulkner and Hemingway. It included García Márquez, Alvaro Cepeda Samudio, Germán Vargas and Alfonso Fuenmayor. They are fictionalized as Aureliano Buendía's friends in the last pages of One Hundred Years of Solitude.
36. Phyllis Z. Boring, "Usmañ: The Puerto Rican Joe Christmas," College Language Association Journal, 16 (1973): 324-332.
37. John S. Brushwood, The Spanish American Novel: A Twentieth Century Survey (Austin: U P of Texas, 1975), 334.
38. Mercedes M. Robles, "La presencia de 'The Wild Palms', de William Faulkner, en 'Punta de rieles', de Manuel Rojas," Revista Iberoamericana, 45 (1979): 563-571.

39. Mario Vargas Llosa, "García Márquez de Aracataca a Macondo," Nueve asedios a García Márquez. Mario Benedetti y otros (Santiago, Chile: Editorial Universitaria, 1971), 126-146. Translation mine.