CORRESPONDENCIAS: THE INTERTWINING LETTERS, LIVES, AND LITERATURE OF JORGE CARRERA ANDRADE AND PABLO NERUDA

by
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ABSTRACT

Catherine Alicia Ingram:
Correspondencias: The Intertwining Letters, Lives and Literature of Jorge Carrera Andrade and Pablo Neruda
(Under the direction of Juan Carlos González-Espitia)

Although much has been written about Pablo Neruda and Jorge Carrera Andrade independent of one another, this dissertation is meant to investigate their lives and literary careers as two associated realms that, as opposed to being isolated, were intertwined and connected. This connectedness reveals itself in their poetry and results in many striking similarities in the poets’ literary creation. Furthermore, this dissertation examines the personal correspondence that the poets exchanged and therefore the epistolary genre. The poets’ personal letters are analyzed as literary texts alongside a discussion of the genre.

In chapter one, I briefly introduce this study examining the dual meaning of correspondence that will be addressed in this dissertation. In the second chapter, I carefully examine the lives of Neruda and Carrera Andrade, revealing the shocking similarities that exist among the two writers. The third chapter is an examination of the poets’ literary production and the way that their common themes manifest themselves in their poems. The fourth chapter is an analysis of the personal correspondence of the two poets that I found at the University of New York at Stony Brook Special Collections Department. The seven letters that I analyze reveal the development of the major themes in the men’s poetry and uncover the poets’ personal relationship, proving that in addition
to having very similar lives and works, the two men did influence one another. The letters also serve as literary texts that warrant the examination of the critic.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>INTERTWINING BIOGRAPHIES</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>CORRESPONDING POETRY</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>EPISTOLARY WRITING AND THE POETS’ LETTERS</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General characteristics</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Case study</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Themes</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This dissertation reveals the correspondences that exist among two twentieth-century South American poets; Jorge Carrera Andrade and Pablo Neruda. According to the Oxford dictionary, the definition of correspondence is twofold: “1) a close similarity, connection or equivalent; 2) communication by exchanging letters with someone *letters sent or received.” The double-meaning of this word has served as the foundation for this dissertation. I will prove that the poets corresponded on two levels: in regard to clear parallels in their autobiographies and their poetry, as well as by means of connecting and exchanging through their personal letters. As opposed to being isolated realms, their lives and literary production reflect the connections that their letters furthermore reveal. Hence after exposing and considering these associations and communications, the multiple correspondences that exist among the two South American poets will be apparent.

Pablo Neruda and Jorge Carrera Andrade both lived full lives as able politicians, noteworthy representatives of their countries, avid explorers of the world, eager scholars, alert observers of nature, and passionate poets. The similarities that the two poets shared are striking in regard to their lives and work. These two men shared not only a personal relationship, but a life perspective, a common vision for the present and future of South America and for the world, as well as many other similarities that this dissertation will reveal. Nobel Prize winner and highly acclaimed Chilean poet Pablo Neruda is perhaps
one of the most talented and well know Hispanic writers of all time. His lines are filled with passion and feeling as he shared the barest of his emotions and his observations of the world in which he lived. Jorge Carrera Andrade is currently of less fame, but possessed a comparable talent. The Ecuadorian was able to paint fantastic and vivid images in the minds of his readers and transmit, through poetry, his experience of life.

The poetic creation of these authors has driven through time, walls, barriers, and continents to reach the whole world. Both men documented their life experiences with their poetry, leaving humanity with written testaments of their lives and capturing on paper their innermost feelings, desires, and beliefs. With each turn of the page and with each new discovery—as one studies how these two men passed their time writing, traveling, and embracing life, while suffering great hardships along the way—the great similarities that exist among the two poets seem more and more striking.

Before engaging in the major themes and topics of this dissertation in more detail, it is important to note the personal relationship that Neruda and Carrera Andrade shared mainly through their letters, something that I will refer to frequently in this study and in much more detail in Chapter 4. Carrera Andrade and Neruda’s biographies are not isolated realms; the appeared coincidences in their visions are the consequences of their similar experiences, and also their intertwining paths. It was precisely their seemingly connected lives that intrigued me and led me to believe that some proof of the poets’ relationship must exist. After numerous days of research and suspecting a relationship among the authors, I found several sources that mentioned that Neruda and Carrera Andrade might have met when they were both in Europe, but I could not find any concrete evidence. I managed to contact a critic who had written of this supposed
meeting to find out if she had uncovered any hard evidence, but unfortunately she had not.\(^1\) I was finally led to the University of New York, Stony Brook, where in their special collection on Carrera Andrade they had numerous boxes, each containing hundreds of letters written or received by Jorge Carrera Andrade. In searching the indexes of the letters, not surprisingly, I discovered seven letters that the two men had exchanged; the original copies were there in the library. On October 19, 2004, the letters were photocopied and sent to me. The letters that the two men exchanged have never been published or written of before now.

These letters confirm that my original feeling was correct and provide evidence that the two men did meet, and they did discuss poetry, politics, their countries, and life in general.\(^2\) They shared their poems and their views, and they simultaneously affected one another. Besides seeking one another’s opinion, and sharing their work, they also asked for favors, and were well aware of the power and influence that the other had. In addition to the letters, I have since found two interviews where Carrera Andrade mentions Neruda and their relationship. There is also a short passage in Carrera Andrade’s *El volcán y el colibrí*\(^3\) that mentions Neruda and some of the activities that the two men had engaged in while in Paris. Their relationship, that points to many of the poets’ similarities, and the nature of these parallels, has been merely touched on until now. Thus this dissertation sets out to expose in more detail their correspondences.

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\(^1\)Sarah Wyman, author of the Literary Biography article on Carrera Andrade, responded to me in an email on October 10, 2004 that she had found no such evidence.

\(^2\)The specific content of these letters will be referred to in more detail in chapter 4.

\(^3\)Henceforth, *El Volcán* will stand for *El volcán y el colibrí*
In my research I found that the references comparing these two poets are scattered, but some fragments do exist. For example, in Enrique Ojeda’s study, Jorge Carrera Andrade: Introducción al estudio de su vida y de su obra, he mentions that in 1949 an issue of the British journal Adam International Review was dedicated to Carrera Andrade (277). Coincidentally, he shares that the year before an issue had been dedicated to Pablo Neruda. Later he reports that shortly after there was a recital of poetry for Carrera Andrade, where poet and critic G. S. Fraser confirmed, “la característica de la poesía del señor Carrera Andrade es su rica atmósfera y un estilo más controlado que el de Neruda” (qtd. in Ojeda 277). This information confirms that the poets were mingling with the same literary circles and were both catching the eye of the public at the same time. Furthermore, the two poets were grouped together in a short anthology, Three South American Poets, from the year 1942, but the volume did not include any introductory information that compares the two authors, or that justifies why they were even included together in the collection. Another example is an article written by Peter Beardsell in 1977, “‘Hombre planetario’ and ‘Alturas de Macchu Picchu.’” Two types of collective identity,” that compared the two poems, but did not offer any further comparisons or explanations. It does show, again, that those who were reading Neruda at the time were also more than likely reading Carrera Andrade, and that the work of both poets was circulating as they were gaining critical attention. This is obviously a topic that deserves the attention of the literary critic. Similarities of this degree among prominent poets need to be signaled to further understand the overall poetic evolution of the time as well as the common influences and trends on writers of the same period.

There are various reasons that will be explained for the commonalities among the two
men, but one is definitely that the two men shared similar experiences and were exposed to many of the same things in their lives, including one another’s poetry.

The purpose of this study, then, will be to reveal in the first half (chapters 2 and 3) the many notable similarities in regard to the lives and poetry of the two men. In the second half of this work I set out to examine the poets’ personal letters, analyzing many of the same themes that are present in their poetry, all the while making an argument for the consideration of the letters as literary works themselves. Therefore, my analysis of the poets’ works extends beyond their poetry to include their personal letters as well. A technique for examining this type of writing will be formulated, as this is an area of criticism that has been disregarded.

Thus, in chapter 2 of this dissertation, I will reveal the resemblances in the biographies of Neruda and Carrera Andrade. Among the many correspondences that exist include the poets’ childhoods in the lush surroundings of their lands, their early desire to write poetry, and to both manage to first publish at a young age. The poets then moved to the capital cities of their countries before heading off on journeys that would take them from places like the Far East to Europe and the United States. Both men would eventually end up in Spain before the Civil War and would find solidarity there among the fighters of the Republic. In due course the poets would return to be politically and socially involved in their own countries; they would be active members of the communist (Neruda) and socialist (Carrera Andrade) parties and would serve consular and other diplomatic posts all over the world while still continuing to write poetry. Later in life, the poets would always travel and would continue to write, but would repeatedly return to their homelands as they found their ultimate inspiration there. As politically and socially
committed men, the two poets would both suffer opposition from their countries’
politicians and other parties, and would at some point be exiled because of their beliefs.
Interestingly enough, both men would never give up and would always return to their
native lands. In their last years before dying, both poets would return to their birthplaces
to find a peace that they had always sought. As a result of their similar life experiences,
common pursuits and overlapping influences, both men would eventually develop very
similar poetry throughout their lives.

The corresponding poetic evolution of Neruda and Carrera Andrade will be
discussed in chapter 3 of this work, where I will address the major themes of their lyric,
as well as their literary visions. A grand majority of the topics that the men embraced are
shared by the two of them. For example, both men write very often of the solitude that
infected them for a considerable part of their lives. This theme will be presented with
examples from their poetry that substantiate this preoccupation. Another theme that
persists is the poets’ reactions to the contemporary society, considering, for example,
things like capitalism, modernity, and politics, as well as the conditions of the lower class
or workers of the civilization. Next, the two men embraced their own countries and their
native South America, providing insight in regard to the history of their people, as well as
their natural surroundings. Furthermore, Carrera Andrade and Neruda never stopped
being spectators of nature, and this is a theme that persistently shows up in their work.
Both poets additionally went through a phase where they became observers of all objects.
The men wrote “odas” and “microgramas” to everyday items and therefore nothing is
spared their poetic appetites. Later, as the men’s poetry evolved, they both turned to a
belief in the unity of all things and faith in universal man. The poets became a voice for
all people and the rays of their solidarity shine in their late poems. Eventually the poets’ optimism about the future also surfaced in their work. The men did not lose hope in regard to their expectations for their native lands and for the world. Ultimately Carrera Andrade and Neruda wrote as men who had traveled extensively and had become acquainted with the world in which they lived as they continually questioned and experienced life. They had hoped to be representatives for their people and observers of the world, and this is indeed what they accomplished through their poetry.

Many of the themes that Neruda and Carrera Andrade embraced in their lives and their poetry are mentioned or alluded to in their letters. Through their letters, not only do we gain knowledge of the underlying themes that appear throughout the poetry of the two authors and see how they were wound into their daily lives, but the letters also offer a different means to express their same desires.

Chapter 4 of this work will be an examination of the letter as a literary work and will result in a close reading of the letters of Carrera Andrade and Neruda. There are many reasons why I decided to dedicate the second part of my work to the poets’ letters. After finding their personal correspondence at the University of Stony Brook and reading very closely, I began to see literary qualities in the missives that have continually been observed in other forms of literature. In addition to providing important autobiographical information, as well as a valuable historical and cultural context, the texts served as yet further incidences where parallels in the poets’ literary creations could be observed. After this close examination, I became convinced that the missives themselves were quite literary. The argument in favor of the “literariness” of the letters, thus, becomes central to the first part of chapter 4, as I aim to include and analyze the poets’ letters just as I do
their poetry. I am clearly not the first person to think of a letter as a literary work, but I feel that this is an area of writing that has been neglected by many modern critics or thought of as purely autobiographical in type, when in reality the language used can be just as rich and poetic as in other forms of literature, and the motives for writing just as diverse. As I will demonstrate, the voice of the letter-writer is not necessarily the genuine voice of the author, and the words need to be analyzed to determine what is really being said. In conclusion, the attention to modern day letter writing is scattered and inconclusive and the consideration of the letter as a literary work produces deeper insight than what can be deemed from a superficial study of the writing form.

My aim, then, will be to attempt to bring organization and structure to a variety of studies that have been conducted in recent years on letter writing and its qualities. I will prove that the letter is a literary work by indicating its common elements, many of which point directly to its literariness. The elements of the type of writing that will be observed, besides the fact that the epistle is culturally and historically specific, are: the illusion of straightforwardness that the letter upholds; the underlying motives of the letter-writer, like the use of the letter to strengthen social ties, network or to ask for favors; the unique language that is present, usually involving hidden suggestions and at times a particularly respectful or complimentary language; the private versus public nature of the letter; the identity that is created and the voice that is presented; the figurative language that is used; the space that is created; the letter as a vehicle for causing social change; and the missive to fill a void or connect with other beings. In analyzing these common characteristics of the letter, I am able to organize and unify many critical works and therefore stress the

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4See the first section of chapter 4 for a discussion of the critical attention devoted to letter writing as a literary act in recent years.
place that letters should have in literary criticism. Just as one needs to be aware of what makes a poem a poem and what makes it literary, one must also know what characteristics a letter possesses that make it an example of literature.

The second part of chapter 4 will be a presentation of Carrera Andrade and Neruda’s letters and a close examination of the unique aspects of this type of writing that can now be observed. I will analyze the texts paying particular attention to all of the characteristics mentioned in the first part of the chapter, as well as considering the autobiographical study and context from chapter 2 and the literary development of the authors that was explored in chapter 3. Using the letters as my case study, I will apply my analysis of epistolary writing to them, while treating them as literary texts. This close examination of the letters will involve a more profound reading and will reveal information not observed during an initial study. The themes from the letters that can also be observed in the men’s poetry will furthermore be exposed, such as their solitude, politics, their altruism and sincere concern about the future of their countries and their continent, their travels, and their delight in the little things in life. Thus the dissertation will come full circle: the correspondence of the two poets will further reveal their correspondences.

Initially the strong parallels in the lives and work of these two representative poets caused me to want to write this dissertation. I believe that the contributions made to literature by these two men should not go unnoticed, and the fact that they shared so many commonalities is quite significant. Moreover the fact that the poets’ work is tied so closely to their lives, means that the reader now has access to a wealth of information about the social and historical context in which the poets lived. Furthermore, after
discovering Neruda and Carrera Andrade’s personal letters, I believed that the missives deserved attention for their literary qualities, and this caused me to question the missive in general. With the consideration of letters, the literary critic now has access to a source that can be just as valuable as other works for its literary qualities, as well as for the information that it provides the reader. I believe that it is imperative to now consider one’s letters alongside his other works to achieve a more comprehensive assessment of his literary creation as a whole. In examining the published work and biographies of Pablo Neruda and Jorge Carrera Andrade, as well as their personal letters, I believe to have conducted a sound and complete examination of their many correspondences.
CHAPTER II: INTERTWINING BIOGRAPHIES

Throughout their lives and careers Jorge Carrera Andrade and Pablo Neruda were true witnesses and observers of their times. They were constantly in motion and actively involved in the world around them. They were enthusiastic travelers, often making journeys on behalf of their own nations, and diplomats to a variety of countries, at times sent to negotiate or lobby for important causes. They were avid politicians, fighters of various causes, and observers of the world. All the while they were offering their writings to a public that was anxious to read them, and people listened to their messages as they believed they could benefit from what the poet-diplomats had to say. Neruda and Carrera Andrade walked down many city streets and traveled to a wide range of different countries, eager to observe and experience all that they could in a lifetime. A focused study on the major life events and the poetic development of both authors will reveal many prominent similarities in the lives of both men. These strong parallels will be exposed first in regard to their biographies, focusing on their early years, their travels, their involvement in politics, and in societal matters, their developing worldviews and their intimate feelings and beliefs. In comparing the two men’s most important life events and revealing their many parallels, I do not attempt or claim to offer an exhaustive
study of their lives; rather I aim to expose the men’s correspondences and to focus on their similar life experiences and events.\textsuperscript{5}

When looking at the work of both Carrera Andrade and Neruda, many critics agree that the life events of both authors cannot be separated from an analysis of their literary production.\textsuperscript{6} Their biographies, therefore, can greatly enrich and clarify a study of their works. Carrera Andrade declared, in \textit{Mi vida en poemas},\textsuperscript{7} “Mis poemas son visuales como una colección de estampas o pinturas que integran una autobiografía apasionada y nostálgica. En cada uno de mis poemas hay múltiples elementos biográficos y se despliega la geografía real de nuestro planeta” (9). He also stated, in an interview in 1972 with W. J. Straub, that his mission was to “interpretar las apariencias del mundo y descifrar el lenguaje de las cosas para darlas a entender a los otros hombres, contribuyendo de esa manera a que la vida humana sea digna de vivirse” (310). In another interview with Rubén Barreiro Saguier in 1965 he declared that “El poeta debe ser solidario de los destinos colectivos. Debe ser el portavoz de su pueblo” (4). Both poets agreed that the function of poetry should be to serve as a representative and speaker for the people and to be a “witness” and “interpreter” of their times. This means that as the men went through their lives, their personal life experiences would be continuously reflected in their poetry, which they would both come to share with the rest of the world.

\textsuperscript{5}For a very detailed and comprehensive study of Neruda’s biography see Teitelboim’s \textit{Neruda} and Hernán Loyola’s impressive \textit{La biografia literaria}. In regard to Carrera Andrade, see Enrique Ojeda’s \textit{Jorge Carrera Andrade: Introducción al estudio de su vida y de su obra}.

\textsuperscript{6}The great majority of critics on these two poets write of the strong influence that the men’s biographies have on their work. Some examples will be cited in chapter 3 from Nerudian critics, Hernán Loyola and René de Costa, and Enrique Ojeda for Carrera Andrade.

\textsuperscript{7}MVP will henceforth signify \textit{Mi vida en poemas} written in 1962.
Jorge Carrera Andrade was born September 18, 1903 in a Quito neighborhood, living among both the whites and “mestizos” of the city and the indigenous people who lived on the nearby Panecillo hill. From a young age, he was constantly reflecting on the social reality of his surroundings, trying to understand and decipher the class and racial differences of the people in his city and those of his parents: his mother being very conservative and religious and his father being a liberal lawyer who would later defend the rights of the indigenous people against wealthy landowners. Very significant were his frequent trips to his family’s large country estate in El Batán, where Carrera Andrade first developed a strong bond with nature and was first exposed to the social realities of the era. It was on the estate that he witnessed the misery of the Indians that dwelled there. The political situation in Ecuador at the time also had an effect on the poet. Sarah Wyman states, “Although Carrera Andrade often idealizes rural life and childhood innocence, his early memories include direct observation of human need and political violence” (69). He witnessed at the age of eight a bloody revolution and the overthrow of liberal president Eloy Alfaro, whom he later saw assassinated and paraded down the streets. Throughout his childhood, he observed the instability of his country in the coups and daily disruptions that prevented people from living in peace. Consequently, at this early stage in life, he was already beginning to think politically. He was identifying with the people of his country, especially the less fortunate and underprivileged, something he would do for the rest of his life.

Many miles to the south in Parral, Chile, Neftalí Ricardo Reyes Basoalto was born on July 12, 1904, just months after Carrera Andrade. Shortly after Neftalí (Pablo Neruda’s real name) was born, his family moved to Temuco, an extremely lush region of
Southern Chile, surrounded by rivers, lakes, mountains, waterfalls, and rich vegetation. Similar to the experience of Carrera Andrade, Neruda grew up in this fertile environment where his fondness for nature flourished. Eliana Rivero states, “Throughout his whole life his childhood in southern Chile influenced his poetry, the geographical background taking on thematic importance. In his mature verses it became the substructure of his entire way of seeing and interpreting the world” (249). The natural world that surrounded the poet in his youth had perhaps one of the greatest effects on Neruda and his poetry; the lush region of Southern Chile, “la selva austral”, forming “el núcleo fundante de su imaginario poético” (Loyola La biografía 41). There are many times when Neruda has written in prose or spoken about the power of this natural world. He affirms in his memoir, “...Bajo los volcanes, junto a los ventisqueros, entre los grandes lagos, el fragrante, el silencioso, el enmarañado bosque chileno . . . una nación de pájaros, una muchedumbre de hojas . . .Quien no conoce el bosque chileno, no conoce este planeta.” (43). Ironically it was Neruda’s father who would expose the young boy to the magical sights on the South because of his job with the railroad. Neruda recalls, “Viajé muchas veces por los ramales en esta casita de mi padre que se detenía junto a la selva primaveral, selva virgen que me reservaba los más espléndidos tesoros, inmensos helechos, escarabajos deslumbrantes, curiosos huevos de aves silvestres” (qtd. in Loyola La biografía 40).  

Neruda’s mother died two months after he was born, which could have been a contributing factor to the poet’s initial and subsequent feeling of solitude, although the

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8Neruda’s relationship with his father was strained because of his belief that his son should not write poetry. His father was openly against this act and even stopped sending Neruda money as a young college student because he was furious with his son (Loyola Ser y Morir 65).
void that Neruda felt was indeed filled by his father remarrying Trinidad Candia Marverde, a kind and gentle woman whom the poet referred to as “la mamadre” (31).\textsuperscript{9} Neruda was known to be a lonely boy as he grew up, even though accounts from and about his relationship with his sister, Laura, prove that he was quite loquacious, well adjusted, and outgoing around those that he was close to.\textsuperscript{10} He was also relentlessly observing the world around him. Loyola states that initially it is Neruda’s egocentrism that brings him to care about all of the world, and all of its objects, “Es la centralidad del Yo lo que consentirá a Neruda, paradójicamente, la verbalización de su irrenunciable interés, de su voraz apetito, de su pasión desenfrenada, en suma, de su amor sin límites hacia nuestro planeta, hacia nuestro hábitat, hacia los seres y objetos que lo pueblan, que lo poblaron y que lo seguirán poblando” (30-31). Neruda’s love and concern for humanity and for life will be continuously transmitted through his poetry, something that I will refer to many times throughout this study.\textsuperscript{11} On June 30th, 1915 Neruda, only ten years old, writes his first poem contained within a postcard to his stepmother (Loyola \textit{La biografía} 28-32). The postcard as a form is fitting, as Neruda would spend the rest of his

\textsuperscript{9}Hernán Loyola claims in \textit{Neruda: La biografía literaria} that he personally believes that the death of Neruda’s birth mother did not have the impact that other Nerudian critics have observed. He writes, “Y ello debido – principalmente – al silencioso amor y a los cuidados que recibió de doña Trinidad” (31). He also states that Neruda’s mother did not die of Tuberculosis, as many critics have claimed, but rather of a heart attack (23).

\textsuperscript{10}Loyola cites accounts from Laura that Neruda was always asking her questions and that he was very kind (32-33). One vivid memory of Laura’s was when she would be with the young Neruda while he was sick in bed and he would ask that she go to the window and tell him what she saw in the street, which fascinated the young poet. She recalled, “Me pedía que le dijera todo lo que pasaba en la calle, sin saltarme nada, ni lo más insignificante. Yo le decía, por ejemplo: ‘Allí viene una indiecita que vende ponchos, al otro lado hay cuatro chiquillos jugando.’ Me cansaba, pero él era incansable en esto de lo que pasaba fuera y yo tenía que volver a hacer de vigilía y contarle y contarle” (originally quoted in Teitelboim 133-134). This is significant as Neruda never outgrows his desire to absorb all that is around him and reflect on these observations.

\textsuperscript{11}Carrera Andrade, too, shared an intense love for humanity and for all of life’s creations, a similarity that is apparent in his poetry as well.
life directing his writings – many of which will be actual letters – to an audience that he yearned to reach. The postcard signals Neruda’s natural desire to correspond with others – through letters or poetry – a desire that I will develop more in chapter four of this study.

In 1920, at the age of sixteen, Neruda met Gabriela Mistral, who was the headmistress of a school in Temuco. The two would be friends for life. Nine years later, Carrera Andrade would also meet and become friends with Mistral. In 1921, Neruda moved to Santiago to study French literature. Carrera Andrade would also learn French, and both writers eventually became fluent. Neruda left his childhood behind free from the political unrest that Carrera Andrade had suffered, but this by no means prevented him from entering the world of politics: he just did so at his own pace. The political views of both men would come to be very similar and would contribute to their collective views of life and humanity.

At the age of nineteen, both poets published their first books: Carrera Andrade in 1922, with his Estanque inefable, and Neruda in 1923 with his Crepusculario. The early poetry of both men deals with similar themes: those of nature and love, but also a vague sadness that would grow to eventually explode as the poets matured. The feeling of solitude that runs throughout both of the poet’s works emerged at this time, out of this initial sadness. While Rubén Darío and “modernismo,” and the French symbolists influenced the initial writings of both men, they quickly rejected these movements.

In 1924, Neruda won much attention and fame for his Veinte poemas de amor y una canción desesperada. The grand collection of poems of love and loss is perhaps the

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12 At the age of 16, Neruda is already interested in “lecturas anarquistas” and readings. Loyola discusses Neruda’s early attraction to anarchism and politics in his La biografía literaria (76-77).

13 Veinte poemas will henceforth signal Veinte poemas de amor y una canción desesperada.
most published and reproduced collection of any Latin American verse, having been translated into twenty-four languages (Wyman 251). This book of verse is of importance to this study because of its launching of Neruda’s theme of solitude, which Crepusculario had already introduced. There are several incidences where we can see the poet’s solitude in these powerful poems, and the fact that the last poem of the book ends with a descent into sadness and loneliness is key. He starts poem 17 declaring, “Pensando, enredando sombras en la profunda soledad/ Tú también estás lejos, ay más lejos que nadie.” Later he writes, “La furia triste, el grito, la soledad del mar,” to show that solitude is something that is beginning to surround him. He concludes with the second to last line, “Pensando, enredando lámparas en la profunda soledad.” The change from “sombras” to “lámparas” is significant as he is still holding onto a ray of hope. Poem 20 contains the lines, “Puedo escribir los versos más tristes esta noche/ Pensar que no la tengo. Sentir que la he perdido.” The sense of aloneness that the lines evoke is powerful. His last poem in the book (“La canción desesperada”) ends with the line, “Es la hora de partir. ¡Oh abandonado!” He chooses the word “abandoned” to conclude this poem and the whole collection of poems. This usage of such a negative, yet moving, word proves his sense of great solitude. For Neruda, the lines serve to foreshadow what was to come, as the dark landscape of anguish and nothingness was just on the horizon with Residencia en la tierra.

In time, both Carrera Andrade and Neruda coincidentally felt a desire to leave their countries. Carrera Andrade left Ecuador for the first time in 1928; Neruda left Chile

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14The topic of solitude is one that was strongly tied to both poets and was a unifier of many of their works. In this dissertation, the theme will be explored in reference to the men’s biographies, poetry, and their personal letters.
in 1927. Both men’s first journeys would launch a life of travel to many far away places. The time that both men spent abroad would prove to be extremely significant in the development of their poetry and their views on life. Among other things, these travels would be the catalyst for the growth of the feeling of solitude that was to cloak both men for some years. Their time away would also add to the profound love and devotion they had for their own countries, as many times that they were abroad the poets were doing so in the name of their native lands, holding consular and diplomatic posts. The similarities of the two poet’s lives from this period on are striking, in terms of their travels, personal experiences abroad, involvement in politics and, of course, their literary careers.

When he set out in 1928, Carrera Andrade’s plan was to attend the Fifth International Congress in Moscow, representing his Socialist Party. In Ecuador, he had previously helped to found the Socialist Party and acted as its general secretary.\textsuperscript{15} He edited and printed an underground paper, \textit{Humanidad}, and founded \textit{Antorcha}, writing prolifically for both. He was a combat journalist, participated in the uprising that ended in popular massacre November 15, 1922, and was eventually arrested by the police and imprisoned. Shortly after, in 1923, he held a conference in Quito commemorating the National Festival of Chile, giving a speech on democracy. In 1928, during his travels, Carrera Andrade lived for months in relative poverty, passing through Panama and Trinidad on his way to Moscow. It was at this time that he claims to have fallen in love with the story of “los Negros.” He wrote in \textit{Latitudes}, “\textit{Hombres de Occidente y de Oriente se han lanzado como aves de presa sobre el continente americano, donde indios y negros sufren una esclavitud sin nombre. Cuando se lleve a cabo la liberación de estas razas, el Nuevo Mundo entrará en su periodo constructivo.” The relevance of this

\textsuperscript{15}Neruda would become a member of the Communist Party July 8, 1945.
statement will be seen later in this study when studying how Carrera Andrade also
incorporates these feelings of solidarity with “indios” and the “negros” into the
formulation of his worldview and his life perspective. He then traveled to Berlin and
Hamburg, living and working with the transitory manual laborers while developing a
concern for the working class and eventually becoming troubled over the effects of the
industrial society. Later, the poet lived in Barcelona, where after working and taking
classes at the University of Barcelona, he was off to France. Carrera Andrade would
eventually receive a bachelor’s degree and a licentiate in social science. In France he
also made many new contacts, including Peruvian political leader Haya de la Torre and
poets César Arrayo, César Vallejo (who Neruda would get to know a few years later),
and Benjamín Carrión. This was also the time that he met Gabriela Mistral and
established a friendship with her. After five years of travel abroad, the poet finally
returned home in 1933 not knowing what to expect.

His time away was very remarkable for the poet because although conditions were
bad, and he would be a witness to many distressing scenes, his poetry would still remain
positive during the initial time that he was away –although this is short-lived– as evident
in his Boletines de mar y tierra (1930). Ojeda states of his poetry from this volume:

Esta poesía feliz, regocijo en las formas y los colores, este
culto por la transparencia, hay que proyectarlos sobre la
visión de la Europa de finales de los años veinte que
Carrera Andrade conoció y describió en Latitudes: la
Europa que apenas repuesta de la Guerra mundial, se
debatía en los rigores de la bancarrota general, la de las
hileras de desocupados, la del hambre, las huelgas, motines
y violentas represiones. (126)

The conditions that existed in Europe during these years are important to remember, as
this was the historical context that would come to negatively affect the poet. His not
being negatively affected initially could be due to various factors, primarily the fact that he was a young and adventurous 24 year-old when he embarked on these travels. Ojeda states, “Hay que proyectarla también sobre el fondo biográfico del poeta en Europa. Su juventud y la oportunidad de viajar por el paisaje y la cultura europea compensaban los sinsabores de la aventura y hacían llevaderas las incomodidades de la pobreza y la extranjería” (126). Beardsell writes that “…on his first departure from his homeland, foreign countries lured him and offered him opportunities to discover new things. Travel was initially one expression of his search for meaning, holding the promise of possible answers” (124). As time passed, though, Carrera Andrade became more and more moved and disturbed by what he lived and observed. According to Beardsell, “Then came a growing sense of alienation in the great cities of those countries, and his dislike of their artificial way of life; and this was accompanied by a steadily intensifying solitude and awareness of the transitory nature of all things” (124). Ojeda states that “Una conciencia de aislamiento ensombreció la original alegría de su recorrido europeo, dejándole un sabor de desencanto” (176). Carrera Andrade asked himself in his MVP, “¿Cómo fue desapareciendo gradualmente esa euforia vital de mi primera época para dar paso al sentimiento de soledad de las grandes ciudades?” Here we see the budding of the profound sense of solitude that grows inside the poet, and the feelings of loss, loneliness and anguish that stayed with him throughout his life. Wyman affirms, “His feelings of abandonment fostered the recurring theme of soledad (solitude or loneliness) that powers the majority of his lyric work” (70, author’s parenthetical comment).

Carrera Andrade began writing abroad, mostly wrestling with the condition of modern man and his own solitude. Many of these poems were published in his El tiempo
manual (1935). Ojeda declares, “El agudo sentimiento de la soledad que iba a penetrar y expandirse en su obra de madurez se hacía presente, por la primera vez, en los versos de El tiempo manual” (164). The poems of this volume, among other themes, testify to the advent of anxiety and to the loss of the poet’s initial security. Here his sense of solitude could have come from his physical estrangement from his country, but one is also led to believe that he suffered from the interior abandonment or spiritual impoverishment that afflicts contemporary man (Wyman 70). Ojeda states of his El tiempo manual: “iba a mostrar que la vida contemporánea, considerada apoética por razón de su mecanicismo y sus turbulencias sociales, era tema fecundo para su canto y digno de un poeta que, antes que otra cosa, quería interpretar la realidad del mundo” (142). Ojeda makes an important point here, as later we will see that Carrera Andrade will constantly try to interpret the world through his poetry. Bearsell adds, “Of the various factors contributing to this feeling of solitude one of the most significant has been the influences of life in the large industrial cities of Europe and the U.S.A.” (124). His travels to big industrial cities ended up leaving the poet in this dark mental state surrounded by the same type of solitude Neruda would experience. Carrera Andrade himself acknowledged this when he said, “En Berlín, París, Londres y Nueva York se fue acentuando mi convencimiento de…la victoria irremediable de la soledad” (qtd. in Beardsell 124). He also stated, “…mis viajes por Europa y los Estados Unidos, mi descubrimiento del dolor, de la miseria y de la vida colectiva desarrollaron poderosamente estas influencias, completando mi experiencia vital” (MVP 26). As he walked city streets, he was surrounded by masses of people, yet he felt ever more alienated and alone as he observed
the misery and coldness of the large cities. The poem “Soledad de las ciudades,” which speaks to this theme of solitude, will be addressed later in this study.

Carrera Andrade began to form at this time his belief in the connectedness of the world and of mankind. If conditions like this existed in Europe, what was to prevent them from happening in Ecuador? According to Ojeda, after Carrera Andrade had been in Spain for some time, “se convirtió en testigo apasionado de la escena política y social y siguió el curso de los acontecimientos con tanto mayor interés cuanto que veía en las agitaciones del pueblo español un preanuncio de las que podrían sobrevenir en su propia patria” (136). Carrera Andrade lived in Spain from 1930-1933, and it is during these years – as he witnessed the rise of the conflict that would develop into a civil war – that his passion for social change truly began to intensify.\(^\text{16}\) Of this Ojeda writes, “En los días de su llegada a Barcelona, Carrera Andrade fue testigo de huelgas y desórdenes callejeros . . .” and as a result he could not contain himself from getting passionately involved (136).\(^\text{17}\) The social re-awakening that the poet had is described by Ojeda:

El sentimiento de ‘solidaridad con el pobre’ que había nacido tempranamente en él a vista del indio de América y había inspirado su ardiente actividad social, retornaba con nueva fuerza de representación ante la efervescencia de las multitudes proletarias de que Carrera Andrade era testigo en su peregrinar por Europa (164).

Ojeda states that this was the initial period of his “descubrimiento del hombre” (170).

Carrera Andrade affirmed in Boletines de mar y tierra that, “Las ciudades se hablaban a

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\(^{16}\) Neruda’s years in Spain during the Civil War would also initiate in him the desire to help others and would inspire an interest in politics.

\(^{17}\) As a result of his time in Spain and his observations, Carrera Andrade wrote “La república en España” which would appear first in Repertorio americano (and later in Latitudes) and Cartas de un emigrado, written in 1932. He also wrote “Carta al General Miaja”, later as part of España heroica. Neruda would also write several poems that dealt with the defeat of the Republic, including his famous book España en el corazón later incorporated in Tercera residencia.
lo largo del aire. Descubrí al hombre. Entonces comprendí mi mensaje” (23). The poet declared in his *Edades poéticas*,\(^{18}\) “Era la época del movimiento obrero y de las convulsiones sociales, la época que he llamado ‘El tiempo manual’” (XV). These themes were projected in his work, “Entre las imágenes de la lucha social y entre los cuadros fugaces de la vida popular de las ciudades traté de encerrar en mi serie de poemas de *El tiempo manual*, un sentimiento de solidaridad humana y de unidad universal” (XV).

Carrera Andrade’s “universal man” theory and his ability to feel solidarity with all men (a theory that emerged in his youth from observing the social situations in Ecuador, particularly with the native people) flourished during these years and later would become a major theme in his poetry.

Upon ending his journey, Carrera Andrade published two prose works worth mentioning again, as they refer directly to themes that would resurface throughout his life: *Cartas a un emigrado* (1933) and *Latitudes: Viajes, hombres, lecturas* (1934). The first work comments on the exploitation of Ecuador’s Indians as well as the conditions in Spain; while the latter documented his first impressions of Europe “in the grip of industry and of the sadness of its people, cut off from nature” (Wyman, 70). In this work, he also blamed the machine for the spiritual decline of Europe, explored the modern idea of “the masses,” and the ideological ironies of people following Hitler and Mussolini. The fact that cities were becoming modernized contributed greatly to the feeling of solitude, an idea Carrera Andrade clearly tried to capture –people felt surrounded by large crowds, but ironically felt more alone and isolated in a further technological and less personal world. With this modern culture rose the consumer society, which Carrera Andrade

\(^{18}\)EP will henceforth signal *Edades poéticas.*
depicts in many of his poems. In his “Las Terrícolas,” for example, the speaker of the poem refers to the greed of the people who are “sin ojos para ver nubes o flores, / sólo nutridos de oro, / incapaces de oír la música del mundo.” He continues claiming that the “terrícolas” “echan al mar las llaves del planeta, / desconocen el lirio, / todo ponen en venta hasta el claro de la luna.” In describing this modern “reino de los cielos con máquinas volantes” and “reino de las músicas mecánicas / y Casas Idénticas,” Carrera Andrade is truly in his element; as an observer of the planet he ingeniously perceives the arrival of modern times as social regression. It is the replacing of nature with steel, countryside with cities, and crafts with mass-produced consumer goods that disturb the poet, along with the solitude that the modern age magnifies.

Neruda’s travels took him to more remote countries like Sri Lanka, India, Singapur, Taiwan, and Indonesia to cities like Buenos Aires, Paris, Tokyo, Barcelona, and Madrid. Neruda embarked upon his first major journey in 1927 when he was appointed honorary consul of Chile to Yangon in the Union of Myanmar (then Rangoon, Burma). This trip, like Carrera Andrade’s, would prove to be crucial in its contribution to his literary career and life experience. For Neruda, the first part of his journey through the East turned out to be a combination of chaos, poverty and oppression. Also like Carrera Andrade’s experience after his first years of travel, anguish, despair, and a sense of alienation followed Neruda everywhere. It is during this time that he truly sank into a hole of absolute solitude. The poet confessed in a letter to Laura dated November 11, 1928, “creo que cualquier día hare mis maletas y me iré aunque corra el peligro de morirme de hambre. La vida en Rangoon es un destierro terrible. Yo no nací para pasarme la vida en tal infierno” (qtd. in Loyola Residencia). He later added in his
Memoirs, \textsuperscript{19} “…the Orient struck me as a large hapless human family, leaving no room in
my conscience for its rites and gods. I don’t believe then, that my poetry reflected
anything but the loneliness of an outsider transplanted to a violent, alien world” (84).
Eulogio Suárez states of this period, “Entre 1927 and 1932 su soledad se acentúa;
aumentan sus pesares” (67). Living in a state of poverty, Neruda turned to alcohol,
poetry, and women as his only escapes. In 1929, he attended a gathering of the Indian
National Congress in Calcutta, yet as Rivero states, “The vast crowds only added to his
developing feelings of alienation and loneliness” (251). Supposedly overtaken over by
his solitude (1930), he married María Antonieta Haagenar Vogelzanz in Jakarta, a union
that would only last a few years. The innocent and love struck poet of Veinte poemas
with his lucid and romantic verses had all but vanished from the face of the Earth.
Consumed by anguish, Neruda wrote in a letter to his friend Héctor Eandi: “Nadie hay
más solo que yo. Recojo los perros en la calle, para acompañarme, pero luego se van los
malignos” (Suárez 67). He also admitted in his Memoirs, “My dog and my mongoose
were my sole companions” (90).

Neruda confessed in Memoirs that in Sri Lanka, “I learned what true loneliness
was, in those days and years in Wellawatte\textsuperscript{21}” (91). It was these years that Neruda truly
felt alienated due to his stay in foreign lands, his poverty, and his loneliness and his verse
changed to reflect this pessimism and negativity, as he searched for a way out. This was
the time that Neruda wrote many of the poems that would comprise his three volumes of

\textsuperscript{19} Memoirs is the English translation of Neruda’s autobiography Confieso que he vivido.

\textsuperscript{20} Carrera Andrade, suffering the same feeling of alienation, expressed a comparable sentiment in
his EP: “Mi vida misma no tenia ninguna importancia para los hombres. Nadie se acercaba a mi puerta
sino los gorriones, portadores de mensajes celestes. Nadie sino los golondrinas, las gaviotas. En esos días
nació mi Biografía para uso de los pájaros” (XVII).

\textsuperscript{21} Wellawatte is a neighborhood in Colombo.
Residencia en la tierra: the first covering a period from 1925 to 1931, the second from 1931-1935, and the third from 1935-1945. Loyola asserts that it is the mental state of the poet that needs to be addressed in examining his Residencias, “La notoria unidad de atmósfera poética que el libro exhibe, demuestra que el drama interior de Neruda, registrado en sus poemas, viajó con el poeta hasta el Oriente para agonizarse allí en un nuevo contexto biográfico” (Ser y Morir 82-83). Amado Alonso asserts in his book Poesía y estilo de Pablo Neruda that “En Residencia en la tierra ya no encuentra dónde refugiarse de la angustia, porque la angustia lo llena todo” (15). In his youth, Neruda would seek refuge in writing about love or nature, but now he is totally desperate and has no way out. He is left with his own loneliness and despair. Suárez comments in his book that Residencia en la tierra is populated by destruction “empezando golpe a golpe, dolor a dolor, frustración a frustración, en los patios interiores del alma poética de Pablo Neruda” (66). Amado Alonso argues in his studies that from the very beginning Neruda had embarked on a journey from “melancolía a la angustia” (15). In Veinte poemas we saw the first signs of his melancholy in his early poetry; starting with Residencia, we begin to see, “el dolor realmente infinito” (Alonso 15). All that exists for the poet now is the “nostalgia y la melancolía, con su ancla en los recuerdos y su tristeza de ausencia, la soledad, el ansia en la desesperación, la angustiosa congoja del naufragio total” (Alonso 18-19). The impact of Neruda’s alienation and anguish in his Residencias continues to be studied vigorously today as indicated by Jim Harrison in the introduction to his English edition of Residencia en la tierra published in 2004:

But earlier in his life, in his twenties, when he began Residence on Earth he was trapped in a variety of minor consular posts in the misery of Rangoon and Burma and other remote outposts. It is lucky for us that he hadn’t been
dispatched to a place he would have loved like Paris. He was lonely and well beyond desperation but with an energetic anguish that sent him on the inner voyage of *Residence on Earth* (xiv).

The poet admits in his *Memoirs* that his life was full “of solitary contemplation in markets and temples. This was the most painful period for my poetry…The street became my religion” (86). Neruda also shows signs that even the act of writing poetry could not save him from his anguish and solitude, although it was a vehicle for trying to deal with the agony that overcame him. He confessed in a letter to Eandi (11 de mayo, 1928):

A veces por largo tiempo estoy aquí tan vacío, sin poder expresar ni verificar nada en mi interior, y una violenta disposición poética que no deja de existir en mí, me va dando cada vez una vía más inaccesible, de modo que gran parte de mi labor se cumple con sufrimiento, por la necesidad de ocupar un dominio un poco remoto con una fuerza seguramente demasiado débil. No le hablo de duda o de pensamientos desorientados, no, sino una aspiración que no me satisface, una conciencia exasperada. Mis libros son ese hacinamiento de ansiedades sin salida. (qtd. in Suárez 69)

He also acknowledged in his *Memoirs* that “Solitude, in this case, was not a formula for building up a writing mood but something as hard as a prison wall; you could smash your head against the wall and nobody came, no matter how you screamed or wept” (91).

Neruda sums it up in a letter to Chilean writer González Vera admitting, “Yo sufro, me angusto con hallazgos horribles, me quema el clima, maldigo a mi madre y a mi abuela, converso días enteros con mi cacatúa, pago por mensualidades un elefante . . . (qtd. in Loyola *Ser y Morir* 84).

Another noteworthy characteristic of his *Residencias* is his writing as “a true poet of matter” (Rivero 253) in which Neruda still seems to be constantly observing the
external world and all of the objects that are contained in it. He states in a poetic manifesto that he published in the year 1935, “Sobre una poesía sin pureza,” “Es muy conveniente, en ciertas horas del día o de la noche, observar los objetos en descanso: las ruedas . . . los sacos, los barriles, las cestas . . . etc.” Wyman writes that “‘La cosa’ is the central element of Carrera Andrade’s poetic world. His credo, ‘Las cosas o sea la vida,’ equates the reality of things with life itself. The notion of life existing in the present moment of concrete objects . . . is specified in a variety of poems” (72). Loyola affirms that Neruda was called to write about all objects, as well as his inner anxieties, stating, “Las cosas, los dolores, los esfuerzos humanos, el transcurso mortal del tiempo en todo lo que a su alrededor existe o deviene, todo lo llama, lo apura, lo exige, le pide que lo cante” (Ser y Morir 94). Despite his being completely engrossed in his solitude, there are some poems (very few) in his Residencias where optimism prevails. In many of these works, pure matter is described untainted by cosmic disharmony or urban decay. These poems that exalt the natural world and its elements foreshadow Neruda’s eventual return to a less hermetic and more direct poetry, like that to be found in his elemental odes, where he shows his love for the pristine elements of life. It is critical to remember that although Neruda’s poetry is pessimistic with his Residencias, he does not give in to desperation. Loyola affirms, “. . .pero jamás se abandonará Neruda a la desesperación.” Loyola writes of a “tenaz voluntad de sobrevivir,” and a “persistente anhelo de plenitud” (86) that will never disappear.

22This characteristic is also very unique to Carrera Andrade throughout his literary career. Both poets are constantly observing the world around them and writing about it and the objects that make it up, a theme that I will explore later in more detail.
Neruda went to Spain as the Chilean consul to Barcelona in 1934; the city where Carrera Andrade had been living just one year earlier.\(^{23}\) There he discovered the people’s cause in the Spanish Civil War and was reunited with his friend Federico García Lorca, whom he had first met in Buenos Aires in 1933. Carrera Andrade also personally knew and admired García Lorca, whom he had met while residing in Spain. At the end of the year, Neruda was transferred to Madrid as consul, and for the first time in his life he reached out to others, discovering solidarity, dedicating his time, energy, poetic inspiration, and money to the Spanish Republican cause. This is significant as it later contributes to his vision of humanity and his desire to be involved in politics and to better the world; a desire that Carrera Andrade had had for some time by now.\(^{24}\) Neruda helped to found a literary review called _Caballo verde para la poesía_ (a celebrated avant-garde journal for the arts in 1935) and became friends with many other poets like Rafael Alberti, who were active members of the Spanish Communist Party.

Despite the efforts of the Republic, civil war broke out in 1936. Lorca was murdered and Neruda, having moved to Paris, took an active part in the defense of the Spanish Republic. In 1937, he founded the Hispano-American Aid Group for Spain (along with César Vallejo) and published his _España en el corazón_, which contains some of his most powerful poetry, depicting the tragic acts of the war and, of course, the murder of his friend García Lorca. In the same year he took part in an international writers’ conference to support the Spanish cause.\(^{25}\)

\(^{23}\) Carrera Andrade had been appointed Ecuadorian consul to Spain in 1930 and was there until 1933.

\(^{24}\) Carrera Andrade was quite involved in politics by this time. In 1923 he had already been named Secretary to the Ecuadorian Socialist Party which held its first congress in May of 1926.
During this time Carrera Andrade returned home in 1933 and lived in Ecuador for about a year, teaching at the Mejía National Institute while working to strengthen the United Socialist Party. Then he was appointed consul to Peru in 1934 and subsequently consul to Le Havre, France from 1934 to 1938. Carrera Andrade’s second time in France turned out to only add to his feeling of “soledad y desaliento” (Ojeda 150). He confessed in a letter in 1935 to Enrique Azcoaga: “Gracias por su buen mensaje que ha venido a hacerme compañía –siquiera por unos momentos– en este otro desierto de Normandía sin sol y sin libros” (qtd. in Ojeda 151). In another letter to Torres Bodet he confessed, “Tres, cuatro meses, no sé cuánto tiempo ha durado mi crisis de soledad en un pueblecito cercano” (qtd. in Ojeda 151). In his collection of poems, Rol de la manzana, also of 1935, his poem “Guayaquil” shows this silence and solitude: “Nada dicen los portales,/ las canoas de la ría/ y el Astillero sin nadie/ Tan solo una sombra blanca,/ una voz que habla en el viento/ y una luz en las persianas” (118). The poem “La Habana” from the same collection shows one of the reasons for this solitude: the construction of large cities that were consuming the individual. The poem captures this idea of the modern city: “La Habana cuenta sus frutas/ y planta sus chimeneas,/ inmensas cañas de azúcar./ Emigran los cocoteros./ Se van el ron y la rumba/ y crecen los rascacielos.” The theme of destroying nature while constructing cities is one that Carrera Andrade and Neruda both embrace, and it is an idea that we see in particular in Carrera Andrade’s poem “Soledad de las ciudades.”

25I will refer to this congress in my analysis of the letters in chapter 4, as it is confirmed in the 1937 letter that Neruda wrote Carrera Andrade and the former invited the latter to join. In this letter Neruda also expresses his desire for Carrera Andrade to come to Paris so that they could spend time together and discuss poetry and politics.

26This poem will be analyzed in detail in chapter 3.
It was during this time, while Carrera Andrade was living in France, that the two poets most likely first met. When Neruda made it to France in 1936, Carrera Andrade happened to be there. In Paris, the two poets became acquainted and would meet frequently to discuss their views on life and their work.\textsuperscript{27} As their letters demonstrate, the two men had started a relationship that would last for many years. They would never fail to read one another’s work and they would write each other letters (starting in 1937) exchanging ideas about, political views, poetry, invitations, information, favors, and contacts, (all to be revealed in chapter 4).

In regard to the poets’ personal lives, in 1935 Carrera Andrade married a French woman, Paulette Colin Lebas and his first child, Juan Cristóbal, was born in 1937. This marriage would only last ten years. The poet would re-marry another French woman, Janina Ruffier des Aimes, in 1951 and would have a daughter, Patricia, in 1952. His second marriage would last until 1975. It is very interesting to note that both Carrera Andrade and Neruda were divorced twice and that both men had married foreign women.\textsuperscript{28} Neruda had separated from his first Dutch wife, María Antonieta Haagenar Vogelzanz, in December of 1936, after six years of marriage. His separation from Argentine Delia Del Carril, his second wife, was in 1955. The difference is that Neruda eventually meets Matilde Urrutia (1951), to whom he had fallen deeply in love and with whom he would spend the rest of his life.

\textsuperscript{27}Neruda and Carrera Andrade tried many times to see one another, as their letters demonstrate. Although their letters never confirm an actual face to face meeting, this was confirmed in an interview with Carrera Andrade with the lines, “Conozco personalmente el poeta. En varias ocasiones nos hemos encontrado en Paris y en otros lugares. . . .” Their relationship was also confirmed with the publication of Carrera Andrade’s autobiography (see p. 25).

\textsuperscript{28}Both poets not only spoke fluent French, but they were enamored with the country and its people. Carrera Andrade translated many French poets into Spanish, and he sought to have many of his works translated into French by prominent poets.
After their time in Paris, both men started another phase of travel holding consular positions in various countries. Carrera Andrade went to Yokohama, Japan, where he was general consul from 1938-1940, and then after a visit to his country, to San Francisco, California where he held the same position from 1940-1944. His time in Japan turned out to be intense for the poet as he witnessed a struggle within the country. Upon arriving, he felt the intensity and gravity of the situation. He later wrote in *El volcán*, “En el muelle de Yokohama nos esperaba una visión distinta: Soldados, policías, funcionarios del Imperio, que deseaban hurgar nuestro equipaje. . . .” He continues, “El ambiente era el de un país en guerra” (122). Later he recalls, “La guerra era como el tifón de septiembre que barría ciudades y campos, arrancando de raíz miles de árboles y haciendo volar las techumbres en el aire polvoriento” (139). Often able to see the positive in any situation, Carrera Andrade observed that while the political situation was bad at the time of his visit, he was fascinated by the people and the customs of this place. He recalls, “El Japón fue para nosotros la revelación de un mundo ignorado. Desde el primer día nos atrajeron las costumbres niponas. El país limpio y lleno de color, como recién pintado, era un encantamiento de los ojos” (123). The poet stayed in Japan until he was forced to leave in 1940.

Carrera Andrade went to the United States for his second trip optimistic about the time that he was going to spend there. He wrote in a letter to Bolívar Paredes on May 2, 1941 stating, “Estoy en plena ‘reconstrucción de la alegría,’ como si dijéramos, y esto lo

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29 Carrera Andrade was in Japan during the Second Sino-Japanese War. Full-scale war between the Empire of Japan and the Republic of China started in 1937 and ended with the surrender of Japan in 1945.

30 Here Carrera Andrade is comparing his arrival to Japan with the trip that he had just made to the United States.
Carrera Andrade had received the news while he was in San Francisco that his country had entered another round of battles with Peru over land. Very concerned and unable to keep quiet about the conflict, he wrote “Ecuador Sheds its Blood for Democracy” in English to awaken the North American people to the sacrifice that his country had made. The political fervor of the consul was strengthening at this time, as he remained very interested in not only his country, but in international affairs as well.32

Since the attack on Pearl Harbor in December of 1941 confirmed the United States’ preoccupation with the World War, Carrera Andrade wrote in his autobiography, “El Ecuador quedaba sin protección alguna posible, mientras los Estados Unidos se aprestaba para su propia defensa y pedían el respaldo de todas las naciones del Continente. San Francisco vestía su coraza y adquiría un aire militar que perduraría a través de los años” (144). Carrera Andrade saw in these conflicts a way to improve the future for all people through awareness and action. Ojeda states, “Fiel a los ideales de toda su vida, veía en este conflicto una oportunidad de edificar un mundo nuevo inspirado en principios más...”

31Neruda was also impressed and inspired by Whitman, and wrote several poems to the poet including “Oda a Walt Whitman.”

32 Carrera Andrade did three things to convey his international concerns worth mentioning here: 1) To express his solidarity with France, he spoke on behalf of the country to Eleanor Roosevelt at a meeting that she had with him and other Latin American consuls in San Francisco; 2) He wrote “Canto a las fortalezas volantes” to show his enthusiasm for the forces that were combating world war (published in 1945); 3) He published a series of articles about World War II in the journal “El Telégrafo” of Guayaquil in 1941.
humanos y justos” (243). Invited to join the Free World Association, Carrera Andrade responded in a 1942 letter,

Me considero verdaderamente honrado con su proposición de que yo vaya a integrar el Consejo Latino Americano de ‘Free World Association’. La acepto con profundo entusiasmo, movido por mi convencimiento de que todo escritor de nuestra América tiene un grave deber que cumplir, en esta hora: despertar la conciencia pública . . . (qtd. in Ojeda 244).

He later goes on to speak in the same letter of “construcción de un mundo nuevo, de un orden nuevo, en que la humanidad unida voluntariamente haga posible una vida más justa. . .” (244). These lines foreshadow some of his greatest poetry still to come that dealt with the idea of universal man and hope for a bright future. The consular position that the poet held was demanding and required his constant attention. In thinking back to those years, Carrera Andrade later wrote in 1947, “El cónsul interviene en los programas de radio, en las lecturas y conferencias universitarias, en todos los actos significativos de la política exterior o de la cultura” (qtd. in Ojeda 244). The busy years that Carrera Andrade spent in California would be the subject of his 1943 letter to Neruda, inviting him to come to Berkeley. The two men were becoming aware at this time that they shared a common vision and that they both aspired for similar things in their lives; also they were learning that they could help one another with this mission, as their letters demonstrate.

Carrera Andrade continued to experience a profound sense of solitude during his travels. He wrote, “La soledad en más aguda en medio de las lenguas extranjeras y los

33These beliefs about the unity of all men and things and the possibility of a better future also come to be main themes for Neruda.
gestos extraños de unos hombres que han perdido toda comunicación, toda ligadura entre ellos […] (MVP, 23). He also stated in his EP,

La soledad es ciertamente la desembocadura final de nuestro planeta. Es igualmente el material de que están hechas todas las cosas. Es madre de los elementos y de las formas efímeras. El río es una soledad de agua. El viento, una soledad errante en el espacio. Todo es una afirmación de la gran soledad de la tierra. (XIX)

As Carrera Andrade was traveling the globe, he was never free from his solitude, as can be observed in his poetry.

It had also been during these years that both poets suffered the deaths of their mothers. Neruda’s stepmother passed away August 18, 1938 which caused the poet great suffering. Carrera Andrade’s mother died in 1939 and left him in a state of complete loss and anguish. He wrote in a letter three months after his mother’s death,

Me llegó su generosa carta cuando me hallaba en plena travesía por el mundo del dolor y de la sombra donde me debatía buscando, a caídas y tumbos, la resplandeciente huella de mi madre, de mi venerada Santa cuya partida me dejó para siempre solo en este desmantelado puerto de la tierra. La muerte de mi pobrecita ha sido como el naufragio final de mi juventud, como una súbita inundación de sal y lágrimas en que se ha ahogado definitivamente mi corazón y en que se ha hundido toda la arquitectura de humo que yo había construido con inútil esfuerzo (El volcán 209-210).

He concluded that “Nada en el mundo es comparable a esta salvaje agonía” (210).

Carrera Andrade was 36 and Neruda was 35 at the time of this loss.

In the meantime, Neruda had returned to Chile and renewed his political activity while traveling throughout his own country until 1938. In 1939 he would start another round of consular positions; first he was back in Paris as special consul. Shortly after, he returned to Chile only to leave again for Mexico to be consul there in 1940. During the
two years that Neruda was in Mexico he would not only get to know the country and the people well, but he would also visit the United States and various other countries like Guatemala, Panama, Cuba, Colombia and Peru before heading off to Europe. His visit to Peru in 1943 was significant. It is at this time that he marveled at the wonders of Machu Picchu. This visit to the great Incan ruins would inspire him to write later “Alturas de Machu Picchu” which would be part of his famous work *Canto general*, and that he would offer to Carrera Andrade to be published for the first time in Spanish. It was also during these years that Neruda would write two letters to Carrera Andrade and refer to his travels, poetry and politics. He would also express his desire to meet with Carrera Andrade. From 1943 to 1949, Neruda lived for large periods of time in Chile and was very active in politics. He was elected to the senate and joined the Communist Party in 1945, and in 1946 he published an article in “El Nacional” in 1947 defying censorship in his country, for which he was pursued by the police and expelled from the senate. Eventually he had to flee the country in 1949 to live in Mexico. The year 1950 was an important one for Neruda, for it was this time that he published *Canto general*, a collection of poems about the American continent, its nature, people, and historical destiny. Out of the 231 poems, many are political but others have deep undercurrents of love for his native soil and continent. With this work we finally see the bright side of

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34Neruda encloses “Alturas de Machu Picchu” in a letter to Carrera Andrade that will be studied in chapter 4.

35All of the contents of the letters will be discussed in more detail in chapter 4.

36On February 5, 1948 the courts ordered the poet’s apprehension to process him for offenses against the President. Neruda avoided persecution by remaining out of sight and under the protection of close friends until he fled the country.
Neruda that had been fighting for so many years against the darkness. Optimism prevails in this song to America.³⁷

Carrera Andrade also returned to his native country in 1947. After a short stay, he was appointed envoy extraordinary and plenipotentiary minister of London, and he represented Ecuador at the Third General Assembly of the United Nations in Paris in 1948. After another brief visit home, he was off again to Paris, where he would live on and off for many years. In 1950, he became the permanent Ecuadorian delegate to UNESCO. By this time both men had become very active in politics and in representing their countries abroad, and this meant that they were almost always traveling.

There are many important events worth mentioning here in regard to the poets’ later years. Both poets would hold very high positions in representing their countries; after resigning from his position with UNESCO because of political affairs in his own country, Carrera Andrade would become the Ecuadorian delegate to the United Nations in New York in 1958. In 1960 the President of Ecuador named him ambassador for Special Mission to Chile, Argentina, and Brazil and he participated in the successful negotiation of the Treaty of Rio de Janeiro. He was off to Venezuela in 1961 to serve as ambassador, and then to France to serve the same position in 1964. In 1966 he was named Minister of Foreign Relations by President Otto Arosemena, and after leaving this post because of turmoil from the political right, he was off to teach in the United States.

Neruda had been actively involved in three presidential campaigns for Salvador Allende (candidate of the Socialist Party) in 1952, 1958, and 1964 respectively, as well as many activities within the Chilean Communist Party, before he himself was a candidate.

³⁷This work will be referred to in more detail in chapter 3.
for President in 1969. After hearing that Allende would run again, Neruda abandoned his candidacy and once more took part in Allende’s 4th presidential campaign. Both poets would also meet world leaders; for example Neruda met twice with the President of France, Georges Pompidou, and with Fidel Castro (before he rose to power) at Cuba’s Caracas embassy in 1959, and Carrera Andrade met numerous heads of state through his position as ambassador.

In their later years, the poets’ similarities persist. Both Neruda and Carrera Andrade were recognized by prominent universities in the United States for their continuous literary efforts, as well as their dedication to improving their countries and the world; Neruda received honorary degrees from Yale (1961) and from Oxford (1965), while Carrera Andrade was named Distinguished Professor at SUNY Stony Brook in 1969, and gave conferences on Latin American poetry and his own work at Vassar College in 1970 and Harvard in 1971. Besides their service and their work, the men participated in International Poetry festivals world-wide, they attended congresses and they both seemed to constantly return to Europe, in particular to Paris. Neruda went to Paris almost every year of his life from 1949 to 1972, while Carrera Andrade had lived in the city from 1951-1958 and then again from 1964-1967. He would return in 1971-1975. Both men took part in organizations for peace; Neruda in the Peace World Congress and Latin American Peace Supporters Congress and was furthermore awarded the Stalin Prize for Peace in 1953. Carrera Andrade had numerous positions within peace organizations, 

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38 September 4, 1970 Salvador Allende finally became President of Chile.

39 Both poets were members of the PEN club (which originally stood for "Poets, Playwrights, Essayists and Novelists," but now includes writers of any form of literature, such as journalists and historians), and participated in Poetry Festivals and conferences in Europe and the United States. Neruda attended the First Poets World Reunion in June of 1965 in Europe and Carrera Andrade participated in the Festival of International Poetry organized by the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. in 1970.
including the Free World Association, the United Nations and UNESCO. As far as their literary achievements, both poets were recognized around the world for their poetry. Carrera Andrade won numerous awards including the Isle Saint-Louis Prize from the French government in 1951 and the “Eugenio Espejo” prize from the Government of Ecuador in 1975. This year he would also be nominated for the Nobel Prize in literature, but he never did receive the award. Neruda did win the prestigious Nobel in 1971, along with many other awards.

There were many opportunities after the year 1947 (the date of the last letter that seemingly has survived) that Neruda and Carrera Andrade were in the same place at the same time, and it is very likely that they met frequently; for example the two poets had many chances to meet in Paris. In July 1951, when Carrera Andrade was the UNESCO delegate in Paris (from 1951-1958), Neruda was also there. Neruda would travel to Paris almost every summer, so the two poets had numerous opportunities to see one another. In 1958, it is known that Neruda and Carrera Andrade often met. The former recalls in his El volcán that Neruda had sent a “mensaje de adhesión,” along with other writers, in regard to Carrera Andrade’s recent poetry and his departure from Paris to the US. He continued,

Neruda llegó a París de paso, en compañía de Matilde Urrutia. . .Nos vimos muchas veces en el departamento que había conseguido Pablo en la ribera derecha del Sena . . . Desde las ventanas del departamento, situado en el piso más alto, se veía el jardín enclaustrado como el fondo verde de un pozo sin agua. Nuestras conversaciones con Pablo, casi siempre junto a la ventana, abordaban los temas apasionantes de la poesía, la política, y el destino de nuestros pueblos (229).
He furthermore mentions other activities that the two poets did together; “paseamos por algunas calles de la ribera izquierda y acompañé al poeta en una visita a la Unesco. . .

Otro día recorrimos la Isla Saint-Louis y cenamos en un restaurante típico, frecuentado tradicionalmente por los escritores sudamericanos” (229). Many other times the poets probably met; Neruda was in Chile in 1960 when Carrera Andrade was sent there for a special mission. In 1965 Carrera Andrade was in France when Neruda visited in March and again later the same year. Although there are not any more letters from these years, it is very plausible that the two men remained in contact and continued to meet.

The amount of travel that the two poets embarked on in their last 25 years is extraordinary. They served consular positions, took an active role in their own countries’ politics, and continued to write. Neruda traveled just about every year of the last twenty years of his life, and often he would visit a great amount of countries in one year. For example, in the year 1951 he visited Italy, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Mongolia, China, and Switzerland. Carrera Andrade would travel continuously as well, although he lived in Paris from 1951-1957, and later in the US from 1968 to 1976. This life of exile and returns affected both men immensely. Carrera Andrade confessed in his MVP,

Soy un hombre del Ecuador, que ha tratado de conocer el mundo para desenvolver en él su vida como viaje. Al recorrer la tierra he recorrido al mismo tiempo mi vida y, en estas alturas de mi existencia, puedo afirmar que he hecho ‘un buen viaje’. He vivido para ver. Sabiendo que, además de otras cosas, el universo es presencia, he intentado formar un registro de las realidades del mundo, vistas desde la ventana de mi conciencia. (9)

These poets, although they feel that their travel was meaningful and important, still never lost sight of their homelands. Carrera Andrade, after his initial twenty-five years in
Ecuador, had been in almost permanent residence abroad before his final return in 1976, just two years before he died. He talked very often of his constant travels and of his deep feelings for Ecuador. His life had been lived in exile, but his career had been in service to his beloved country, like that of Neruda. He once wrote, “Sí, siento pesar por mi ausencia del Ecuador que nunca fue realmente voluntaria sino determinada por las condiciones especiales de mi vida. Mi primer viaje fue en cumplimiento de una designación del Partido Socialista y los viajes que le siguieron fueron en busca de trabajo o dentro del Servicio Diplomático” (qtd. in Beardsell 33). He returns again and again to this notion that his travels were almost always in service to his country and to his Party. After reading his verses about Ecuador, one is convinced of his deep connection with his motherland. He frequently writes of the “influjo de la naturaleza Americana, más exactamente de la Sierra del Ecuador donde hay los valles más altos del mundo y donde el aire es tan diáfano que parece dar una apariencia más concreta a las cosas” (Ojeda 118). In the prologue to his Cartas de un emigrado he writes, “Como el caracol que lleva su casa a cuestas, yo llevo conmigo mi paisaje andino, por donde quiera que vaya” (5).

He continues:

Sin embargo de que cielos, mares y climas diferentes me han dejado su marca de sol y sal cósmica, y de que ciudades y puertos distintos han disuelto una parte de mí mismo en su rumor de acero y hierro, no he perdido mi cimiento ecuatoriano y, por el contrario, la soterrada voz hecha de lamento indígena, de Sierra y de vida sencilla, ha multiplicado en lo más hondo de mí su patético balbuceo (5).

Neruda also felt this strong connection with Chile his whole life. He wrote in 1972, after a life full of travel, “. . . for some reason or other, I am a sad exile. In some way or other, our land travels with me and with me, too, though far away, live the longitudinal essences
of my country” (qtd. in Allende dedication). Neruda felt deeply for his native Chile, and this strong tie with his country was ever felt in his works.

Although the constant life of travels in which the two men lived, as much politicians as poets, had resulted in many negative effects, both men gained a wealth of knowledge and insight through their journeys that translated into illuminating and powerful verse. There is no doubt that the poets’ visions would have been completely different had they never ventured out and sought to literally explore the world in which they lived. Their constant travels made it even more important that the two men could communicate with others through all of their writings, and especially their letters, which served as their link to other men around the globe.

Neruda died unexpectedly on September 23, 1973, just two weeks after Augusto Pinochet had taken over Chile as dictator and Salvador Allende had been murdered. Carrera Andrade also died unexpectedly on November 7, 1978. Both poets wrote carefully crafted autobiographies, yet another noteworthy similarity. Carrera Andrade’s El volcán y el colibrí was published in 1970. Neruda’s Confieso que he vivido (translated as Memoirs) was finally published in 1974, a year after his death. Their lives were so important to their works, as I have shown, that they both felt that they should compile these autobiographies to construct a discourse for their lives while still alive and to fossilize the intimate details of their days.

Carrera Andrade referred to himself as a “peregrino del arte y de la justicia” (qtd. in Ojeda 170), an appropriate title for a man that had spent his whole life in service to his

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40Both poets suffered two divorces, intense solitude, times of relative poverty, and estrangement from their children. In Neruda’s case, his only child had not survived and Carrera Andrade had failed to really get to know his offspring because of his relentless dedication to his country and work as well as his travels abroad.
country and to his writing. Both poets were seekers of justice and wanted to bring warmth and happiness to others through their poems, while at the same time promoting change in their countries and abroad. The themes that they addressed through their poetry have already been signaled in these pages, but will be examined in more detail in the next chapter.
CHAPTER III: CORRESPONDING LITERARY PRODUCTION

As my analysis in chapter two verifies, both Neruda and Carrera Andrade led exceptionally dynamic lives that are absolutely inseparable from their poetry, a fact that the two poets have continuously reminded us of in their essays, interviews, and autobiographies. Therefore I have not attempted to separate the two, but rather have chosen to examine their lives alongside their poetic creation. Agreeing with this perspective, Hernán Loyola writes of “la fundamentación autobiográfica que es una constante habitual, un rasgo válido para toda la obra de Neruda. . . .” He adds, “Este enraizamiento en el acontecer del poeta resulta casi un axioma permanente en la construcción lírica nerudiana (“El ciclo” 49). René de Costa also reveals this conviction, stating that, “Neruda’s poetry consistently finds its unity in his personal experience” (13). He maintains, “The erotic exaltations of his youth, the somber introspections of his lonely period in the Far East, the deep feeling of social commitment after the Spanish Civil War are not mere stages. Rather, they are part of a continuum in which the author, moving through time and space, experiences the world from a constantly changing perspective” (14). Enrique Ojeda notably asserts the same in regard to Carrera Andrade; that the greatest characteristic of his poetry is that his poems are autobiographical:

Pero la amplia variedad de la experiencia literaria de Carrera Andrade, a la que enriquecieron incansables lecturas y continuos viajes, halló unidad en el carácter biográfico de su poesía. Su propio autor ha llamado repetidamente la atención sobre este hecho, que por lo demás es evidente, y ha mostrado en sus dos ensayos
It is clear, then, that the only way to do justice to the poetic creation of both poets is to examine their lyric, while never losing sight of their personal experiences. In comparing Neruda’s poetry with that of Carrera Andrade, thus, I will focus on the themes that the two men embraced, which consistently reflect their life experiences and the historical-social context to which they belonged. Hence this effort reflects my attempt to note the poets’ subjectivity in face of the objective factors concerning history, society and other important life events.

The resemblances in the poetry of the two South American authors, and most importantly their corresponding themes, are extraordinary. After examining their intertwining lives in chapter two, their parallel visions and similar poetic matter become more obvious. Furthermore, once recognizing their personal relationship in chapter four of this dissertation, and discovering the poetry and beliefs that they shared, as revealed by their letters, it becomes apparent that the two poets must have influenced one another and this may explain some of their more striking similarities.

After studying and analyzing the works of Pablo Neruda and Jorge Carrera Andrade their first key similarity is both writers’ constant evolution and development as poets. René de Costa asserts, “This dynamic need to change, central to Neruda’s development as a writer, has resulted in a work so vast and varied that it seems to thwart any attempt to synthesize it, to discipline it into a single unifying scheme” (viii). The poets’ dynamism was also a result of their disliking of established literary models and their desires to break the mold. Both poets showed an aversion towards using labels to
study their poetry. Neruda stated, “No me cansé de ninguna disciplina porque nunca la tuve: la ropa usada que conforma a los demás me quedó chica o grande, y la reconocí sin mirarla” (Exégesis y Soledad in OC IV 323-32441). Therefore, my focus in this work, in comparing the poetry of Neruda along side that of Carrera Andrade, will be to look at the poets’ message, as opposed to trying to force them into established categories or labels, or as opposed to focusing mainly on form. Neruda states,

If my poetry has any virtue, it’s that it’s an organism, it’s organic and emanates from my own body. When I was a child, my poetry was childish, it was youthful when I was young, despairing when I was suffering, aggressive when I had to take part in the social struggle, and there is still a mixture of all of these different tendencies in the poetry I write now, which may perhaps be at the same time childish, aggressive, and despairing . . . I have always written from some inner necessity . . . I’m an anti-intellectual. I don’t care much for analysis or examining literary currents, and I’m not a writer who subsists on books, although books are necessary to my life (qtd. in Neruda Selected Poems).

Loyola affirms in regard to his poetic creation, “No le interesaba a Neruda – ni nunca le ha interesado – sentirse sufrir, sino sentirse vivir. Por eso, porque le era imposible aproximarse a la realidad sino con amor, su poesía no podía tener sino un carácter: el de un testimonio” (Ser y Morir 95).

Carrera Andrade relates a similar affirmation in his “Declaraciones,” which he actually wrote to Ojeda in 1968 and the former included it in his book. The poet declares, “Mi ideal poético es componer con mi obra un canto de amor a nuestro planeta, a las cosas y seres que lo pueblan y a la unidad universal” (376). He then writes that the principles of his poetic creation can be summed up in the lines:

1. Hacer mi propio descubrimiento del mundo.

41 Henceforth OC will signal Obras Completas.
2. Expresar el estado de ánimo del hombre del siglo XX que se siente despojado de todo, aunque le queda la belleza del universo.
3. Interpretar la voz de América.
4. Purificar el lenguaje poético.
5. Ofrecer una poesía de lo concreto y lo inmediato.
6. Mostrar la reacción de un hombre americano frente al mundo.
7. Presentar al hombre americano como hombre planetario.
8. Contribuir a crear una poesía auténticamente americana, fundada en la espontaneidad, ya que para mí Europa es el razonamiento, Asia la paciencia y América la espontaneidad primigenia (376).

Thus, Carrera Andrade, like Neruda, was not concerned with following established literary movements, many of them stemming from Europe; quite the opposite, the poet wanted to create his own voice that showed his discovery and love of his country, land, its objects and its people, as well as his love for a universal man. Most importantly, the poet, like Neruda, aimed to be a voice for all people and a witness of his time.

In studying the poetry of Pablo Neruda and Jorge Carrera Andrade it is their themes that I want to explore, as they both aspired to be discoverers and transmitters of information through their poems.42 Thus, I will examine the poets as: 1) victims of solitude and modernity, 2) witnesses and participants in society and politics, 3) interpreters and lovers of their own countries and continent, 4) spectators of the natural world, 5) observers of all objects, 6) believers in universal man and unity among all that is created, 7) optimistic thinkers about the future, 8) and men who have traveled, questioned and experienced life and the world. All of these themes are primary to the

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42In this dissertation I aim to compare Neruda’s and Carrera Andrade’s poetry side by side in regard to the major themes that they both embraced. I do not claim to offer a comprehensive study/summary of all of the poetry that the men wrote. For a detailed description on Carrera Andrade’s poetic phases, Enrique Ojeda’s 1971 book, *Jorge Carrera Andrade: Introducción al estudio de su vida y de su obra* is regarded as the most comprehensive work on the poet. The current literary criticism on Neruda is overwhelming. Greg Dawe’s *Verses against the Darkness* (2006) offers a thorough summary of different critical views.
poetic creation of the poets and are equally represented by both men. In studying these themes, it is essential to view each poet as a true witness of his time.

The chains of solitude that were attached to both Carrera Andrade and Neruda for a substantial portion of their lives serve as true unifiers of the poets. This intense emotion made its way into their poetry at an early date. Neruda stated in 1923, “Es aún la soledad, la solitude, mariposa oscura que se posa en las frentes de esos recién nacidos y los hace jugar toda la vida entre sus dos alas. El mosaico negro que aparece y reaparece en sus vidas que evoco en esta noche silenciosa . . . En todas partes el niño entrístecido que no habla . . . “

Their encompassing solitude, which I frequently referred to in the last chapter, would cloak the poets for many years, fading away at times, only to resurface at a later hour. Many Nerudian critics have written of this intense emotion and the result that it ultimately had on his poetry. Durán and Safir study these effects, stating “his solitude grew like a cancer” (xvii). Greg Dawes pays attention to this development in the poet’s work noting that, “Neruda’s poetry, then became a diary in which he documented subjectively the effects of this solitude on his life” (17).

In regard to Carrera Andrade, Ojeda writes that his poetry reflects, “el sentimiento de desamparo interior que aqueja al hombre contemporáneo” (10). The poet himself in his MVP, who speaks often of “la victoria irremediable de la soledad,” also shares, “La soledad es paradójicamente la mejor escuela de compasión por los que sufren, por los desheredados de la tierra y por todos los seres indefensos” (21). Both poets suffered great solitude, and possibly for this reason they sought the company of others (including one another, as

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43“Figuras en la noche silenciosa – La infancia de los poetas” en OC IV page 319.
44Greg Dawes is a critic who is careful to note that although Neruda was at times overcome by his solitude, he never lost hope. He states that eventually, “Neruda used his suffering to create a better life for himself in particular and humanity in general” (17).
their letters reveal), while spending a considerable amount of time contemplating and being active in the world around them. This may also be a reason that they turned to poetry as a means to reach out to others and escape their conditions. For whatever reason, it was during their times of true solitude that they wrote some of their most moving poems.

Two poems reveal the solitude that the poets felt; both situate the poetic voice in a city where there are people present, but the speaker nonetheless, feels completely alone. Carrera Andrade’s poem, “Soledad de las ciudades” can be compared to Neruda’s, “La pensión de la calle Maruri.” As both poems initiate, the speakers are describing a situation in which they are trapped by walls and beginning to feel a sense of solitude. “Soledad” begins, “sin conocer mi número. / Cercado de murallas y de límites.” The speaker is confined, not only by his physical environment, but also imprisoned by his aloneness. He does not know where his place is in this city, nor does he feel warmth from other individuals. As Neruda’s poem “La pensión” opens, one also gets the sense that the speaker is alone in this city where the people are captives in the walls of their adjoining houses, so close to each other yet unable to feel another’s presence. They do not speak to or even see one another. The poem starts, “Una calle, Maruri./ Las casas no se miran, no se quieren,/ sin embargo, están juntas./ Muro con muro, pero/ sus ventanas/

45This poem will be referred to from now on as “Soledad.” It was published in 1935.

46 I will shorten the title of this poem to “La pensión.” This poem is from the collection, Memorial de Isla Negra, published in 1964. Neruda admits that many of these poems referred to his time in the Far East, as well as other periods of solitude. In this particular case, the poem refers to the apartment where Neruda lived while studying in Santiago in the year 1921. Loyola states in regard to Neruda’s arrival to the capital, “Apenas saliendo de la estación Pablo ve los signos de la miseria y del desamparo social determinados por la crisis de la posguerra mundial y la de las salitreras a nivel nacional. La desolación aumenta al conocer el escuálido rincón de conventillo en que debería vivir, la pensión de calle Maruri 513” (La biografía 101). Although the two poems were actually published many years apart they are referring to the similar periods of time in which the poets were wrestling with the constraints of solitude.
no ven la calle, no hablan./ son silencio.” The reader is left with the impression of a dead city street. Where are the people? The fact that the houses are silent signals that there is a loss of life in the dwellings. This feeling of solitude is later verified when the speaker states in “La pensión,” “Sé que ahora no hay nadie/ en la casa, en la calle, en la ciudad amarga.” In “Soledad” the speaker affirms the same desolate feeling also in direct terms when he says, “No hay norte ni sur, este ni oeste, solo existe la soledad multiplicada.” Both authors are straightforward in creating their image of desolate lonely men. The sentiment of loss that the speaker feels in “Soledad,” saying there is no north nor south, east nor west, is also felt by the speaker in “La pensión” when he later states, “soy estudiante triste perdido en el crepúsculo.” Both speakers are metaphorically lost because of their feelings of alienation and solitude.

Both poems also suggest “imágenes de la soledad.” In “Soledad” we have “el albañil que canta en un andamio,/ fija balsa del cielo,” who perfectly depicts lonely modern man and the “viajero que se sumerge en un periódico”; also a depiction of modern man who is preoccupied and alone. These men are not available to talk to our speaker. He observes them as he looks at the city, but has no contact with them. In “La Pensión” the image of solitude is captured in the lines, “Vuela un papel como una hoja sucia/ del árbol del invierno.” This image only refers to “man” because paper is a product of man and therefore evidence of his existence, but there are no men in the street that the speaker sees. The piece of trash is proof that there are other people around, yet the speaker is still very alone and unable to make contact with other beings.47

47Jaime Concha traces Neruda’s references to wood, and therefore paper, as dating back to the poet’s original relationship with the forests of Southern Chile. To Concha, a piece of paper that has turned into abandoned trash is a symbol of the corrupting nature of men and modernity. He states, “...no habrá dato más patético en el universo residenciarío que una hoja de papel vagando abandonada por las calles.
negative words “sucia” and “invierno” connote a feeling of darkness or sadness and lack of warmth that the speaker of the poem feels. Another image of solitude that is mentioned in the poem is that of the speaker sitting down to write portrayed in the lines, “Abro mi libro. Escribo/ creyéndome/ en el hueco/ de una mina, de un húmedo/ socavón abandonado.” Here we have again, as in Carrera Andrade’s poem, a single man sitting down to act alone and we see him plummeting into a deep, damp, abandoned hole. Clearly the speaker feels as if he were sinking away from life, unnoticed and isolated. The two descriptions of the sky are also dark, which reflects the mood of the poems. Carrera Andrade describes the sky as being “conquistado por la máquina,/ de pliegos de espuma/ desenrollándose hasta el límite del mar” while Neruda describes “la bruma negra” that “invade los balcones.” The overall city scenes are gloomy and melancholic. Both speakers also say that they are prisoners in this world. Neruda writes, “Soy prisionero con la puerta abierta, con el mundo abierto” and Carrera Andrade writes, “Con una luna de forzado y atada a mi tobillo una sombra perpetua.” Why do they feel that they are prisoners? They are prisoners to their own solitude, unable to free themselves from their sadness. The poetic voice in Carrera Andrade’s poem expreses the constant presence of loneliness in his adult years: “Donde estuviste, soledad,/ que no te conocí hasta los veinte años?/ En los trenes, los espejos y las fotos siempre estás a mi lado.” He is very direct in portraying a complete sense of isolation that has enveloped the speaker and follows him everywhere. Carrera Andrade’s poem mentions more modern technological images than does Neruda’s, like “cielos conquistados por las máquinas,” “pianos,” and “el ombligo luminoso de tranvías,” but both cities (whether or not one is

Con ello representa el poeta su visión más desolada del poder corruptor de lo social en el estado presente. Es el bosque humillado en la ciudad pobre y triste: la madera devenida basura” (38).
described in more modern terms than the other) cannot offer the speaker any refuge from his solitude nor can the inhabitants. These two poems are effective in transmitting the sense of solitude that we now know the authors were feeling at this time in their lives.

Although Carrera Andrade and Neruda were burdened with a sense of solitude as they passed through life, both men nonetheless felt that they needed to be the conscience of society, and one theme that they continually revisited was that of the dark side of modernity. The negative effects that technology and the growth of businesses, and therefore capitalism, had on the poets translated into protest in their poems. The power of wealth that was invading the cities and nurturing greed repeatedly left an impression on the South American men. In his poem, “La Standard Oil Co.,” Neruda writes, “Un presidente asesinado/ por una gota de petróleo,” and “un tiroteo/ bajo la luna petrolada” to show the corruption and evil that money and greed were breeding. Man was being challenged by modern society and its technology and at times seemed to be fighting a battle against nature; a nature that was so cherished and revered by both poets. Many of the negative effects of modernity could be seen in the modern city, which bred solitude and sin. Observing this trend, Loyola states, “Sólo que en la gran ciudad la percepción crepuscular del dolor y de la miseria ha sustituido al entusiasmo solar, al optimismo cenital de la fiesta campestre” (La biografía 109). Through their poetry Neruda and Carrera Andrade often expressed their feelings of loss and disappointment in regard to modern times and very often used the city as a starting point.

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48 Both Carrera Andrade and Neruda grew up witnessing transformations all around them in regard to “progress” and development in their countries. Carrera Andrade witnessed this change in Quito, while Neruda did first in Temuco and then in Santiago. Jaime Concha discusses the arrival of modernity to Temuco in particular to how it parallels the arrival of the Spanish conquerors to the same land many years ago, and how this is observed by Neruda (33-47). Loyola also discusses the context of “development” to Temuco during Neruda’s early years (La biografía 52).
Two poems, published within a couple of years of one another, that not only show
the dark side of modernity, but that are very similar in their subject matter and style, are
Carrera Andrade’s “Historia contemporánea”\textsuperscript{49} and Neruda’s “Walking around.”\textsuperscript{50} Both
poems offer chaotic and bleak views of a modern city in which the speaker is residing.
The two poems start out with negative images: In “Historia” we are presented with
smoke: “Desde las seis está despierto el humo.” The image of the dark sky so early in
the morning is anything but refreshing. The tone in Neruda’s poem starts out more
desolate, as the speaker declares that he is sick of living: “Sucede que me canso de ser
hombre.” Next the speaker feels like “un cisne de fieltro/ navegando en un agua de
origen y ceniza” as he walks through the city disgusted by what he sees. The image of
the swan evokes loss and darkness, as well as a corrupting of something otherwise pure.
The speaker in “Historia” also is staggering through the city and pointing out negative
images. He observes that, “bancos conservan el sueño congelado de los vagabundos/ y
los restaurantes aprisionan la calle y la venden.” Then there are “poleas” and “andamios”
that represent modernity and development. Three dark images follow: “Los chicos
suman panes y luceros en sus pizarras de luto/ y los automóviles corren sin saber/ que una
piedra espera en una curva la señal del destino.” Finally, “. . . las máquinas de coser
aceleran su taquicardia de solteronas/ entre el oleaje giratorio de las telas.” These images
of possible death are strangely similar to Neruda’s next lines. The speaker says that it
would be delicious to “dar muerte a una monja con un golpe de oreja” or “ir por las calles
con un cuchillo verde/ y dando gritos hasta morir de frío.” Both poets equate the modern

\textsuperscript{49}Written in 1935 and then published in 1937 in Biografía para uso de los pájaros.

\textsuperscript{50}Written between October and December of 1933 in Buenos Aires and published in Residencia en
la tierra II in 1935 (Loyola Residencia 331). See Hernán Loyola’s edition of Residencia en la tierra in
regard to influences from Joyce and García Lorca on “Walking Around” (219-220, 331).
city with death and foreshadow its arrival. Next in “Historia” it is getting dark; “La tarde conduce un fardo de sol en un tranvía,” while the speaker in “Walking Around” says, “No quiero seguir siendo raíz en las tinieblas.” Neruda’s poem then goes on to signal gloomy and disagreeable images in the city like “casas húmedas,” “ciertas zapaterías con olor a vinagre,” and “calles espantosas como grietas,” while in “Historia” we see “regimientos de frío,” “grupos de vagabundos y mendigos,” “el hombre que muele el cielo en su organillo,” and a place “bajo el auxilio de los puentes/ donde juegan al jardín los desperdicios.” Both depictions of the modern city are unpleasant and dark. The speaker is describing a world in which pleasing things are vanishing; the organ is now grinding music, and the trash is pretending to take the place of the garden. The negativity that these images evoke is very powerful, as we are presented with a transformation from delightful experiences (listening to music or being in a garden) to very distasteful ones.

Finally we see in “Historia” that “. . . sombras crecen más allá de los tejados puntiagudos/ y van cubriendo la ciudad, los caminos y los campos/ hasta ahogar en su pecho el relieve del mundo.” The end is just as bleak in Neruda’s poem where the speaker says that there are “. . . hospitales donde los huesos salen por la ventana,” and “pájaros de color de azufre y horribles intestinos/ colgando a las puertas de las casas que odio.” Neruda’s last images are of “veneno,” and “vergüenza y espanto,” as well as “furia” and “olvido.” The readers are left with two disturbing images which both utilize personification and strange associations. “Walking Around” ends with clothes hanging out to dry; “calzoncillos, toallas y camisas que lloran/ lentas lágrimas sucias” while “Historia” ends with the lines “. . . y sacan la lengua las latas de conserva.” The personified objects not only shock the reader, but also resemble a horror show where the city has turned into a terrorizing place.
The two poems take very negative images from the city, as well as distort modern everyday objects, to show their disgust with the times and the urban centers. Both poets were open about their reactions to modernity and these two poems show that their responses were very similar. They were critical of the industrialized city because of its filth, degradation, poverty and callousness, as well as its display of class struggles and lack of natural beauty. Furthermore, both poets were deeply aware of the isolation that was born in the large industrial city.51

Both poets aimed to be a voice for all those that had no voice. Thus, their socialist/communist convictions are invaluable to uncovering the messages in their poetry. Dawes discusses Neruda’s involvement in politics and the effect that it had on his poetry stating, “The more committed Neruda becomes to left-wing politics, the more realist his poetry becomes; the more insightful his grasp of the social totality and nature, the more extraordinary his ability to communicate that complexity to the reader” (21). Both poets, as they mature as writers and men, develop to write a more politically committed poetry, but the origins of their social/political awareness stem from their youth. Signs of Neruda’s consciousness are apparent in the lines from “Empleado” written in 1921 (when Neruda was only sixteen) that formed part of his “Glosas”52, “Aquí estamos nosotros, nosotros que ya no estamos solos, que somos iguales a ti; y como tú

51In reference to “Walking Around” Concha, too, views the poem as a rejection of the times. He states, “Walking Around formula el rechazo de una sociedad civilizada, de un ámbito social que huele a muerte” (128). He also analyzes the poem in reference to the poetic images of death that abound and their relationship with “el sentimiento de lo humano” (133).

52Neruda’s “Glosas” from 1921, published in Claridad (OC IV 252-258) “trasudan en cambio vehemencia anárquica, militancia y crítica políticas, llamado a la rebelión” (Loyola La biografía 108). Other lines from “Empleado” state, “Y es que no sabes que eres explotado. Que te han robado las alegrías, que por la sucia plata que te dan tú diste la porción de belleza que cayó sobre tu alma.” Loyola affirms, “Estas extraordinarias notas manifiestan la temprana y muy responsable aparición del compromiso político en su escritura. Compromiso al que . . . estará sustancialmente fiel hasta su muerte” (La biografía 108).
explotados y doloridos pero rebeldes.” Later in his poem “Carta a Miguel Otero Silva” Neruda exposes his shift to dedicate his poetry more to societal and class issues. He affirms, “. . . tomé la vida,/ me puse frente a ella, la besé hasta vencerla,/ y luego me fui por los callejones de las minas/ a ver cómo vivían los otros hombres./ Y cuando salí con las manos teñidas de basura y dolores,/ las levanté mostrándolas en las cuerdas de oro,/ y dije: Yo no comparto el crimen.” A deep feeling of solidarity had been born inside the poet and from this time on, Neruda would carry with him always the burdens and struggles of his people, and eventually all men. Carrera Andrade also had socialist beliefs from an early age. Ojeda states, “El socialismo en el Ecuador nació como reacción contra un liberalismo que se perpetuaba en el poder por medios fraudulentos. Carrera Andrade, hijo de padre liberal, se contó entre los primeros y más activos miembros de esta nueva fuerza política y social” (64). An example of his early involvement is his participation in a “utopian” group of individuals with socialist concerns. Ojeda writes, “Carrera Andrade, en su último año de escuela secundaria, se unió a un grupo que bajo el nombre de “Renovación” se proponía promover la transformación social y la dictadura del proletariado; ideal utópico si se considera que en esos días apenas si se podía hablar de obreros y de campesinos en el Ecuador” (65).

Two examples of Neruda’s political convictions are “Catástrofe en Sewell” from section VIII, part xvi, of Canto general and “El pueblo.” In the first poem he writes about the factory workers that are exploited by the new modern capitalist society. The workers in the poem express, “. . .Mientras tanto,/ el ácido nos roe, nos socava,/ entrando por los ríos y la boca,/ por la piel, por las uñas./ De la Casa del Yodo no se sale/ cantando, compañero. . .” The newly reborn awareness and social consciousness in the poet is clear
in his depiction of the injustices that the workers face. Toward the end of this section of *Canto general*, the speaker comes right out and judges the current exploitation and suffering: “No puede ser este derrumbe humano,/ esta sangría de la patria amada,/ . . .esta muerte/ de cada hora.” The speaker of the poem then goes on to say that he represents all who suffer, and even more, all of the townspeople: “Yo me llamo como ellos, como los que murieron./ Yo soy también Ramírez, Muñoz, Pérez, Fernández./ Me llamo Álvarez, Nuñez, Tapia, López, Contreras,/ Soy pariente de todos los que mueren, soy pueblo. . .” Having the poetic voice declare that he has many names and is many individuals at once is a strategy that both poets employ; they do whatever is necessary to get the point across that the speaker is very often identified with all men. Thus the poet’s communist beliefs are clear as the fuel for these lines, and it is during the time of *Canto general* that these beliefs truly inundate Neruda’s poetry.

Neruda furthermore expresses this same deep (communist) concern for all men in his poem “El pueblo.” The voice of the poem speaks out for one man in particular who encompasses all of creation, the Earth and existence. The man “no anduvo ni a caballo ni en carroza;/ a puro pie,” and he “nunca apaleó a ninguno de su especie.” The poem continues, “Era el hombre sin duda, sin herencia/ sin vaca, sin bandera” but “Donde vivió crecía/ cuanto el hombre tocaba.” The universal man in the poem symbolizes all forgotten men that are equally created. The speaker next cries out against the prejudices and injustices that exist among men. He demands, “Creo que los que hicieron tantas cosas/ deben ser dueños de todas las cosas./ Y los que hacen el pan deben comer!” He continues, “Y deben tener luz los de la mina!/ Basta ya de encadenados grises!/ Basta de pálidos desaparecidos!” Finally the speaker says, “Para todas las manos guantes de oro.
Frutas de sol a todos los oscuros!” Immediately after reading these lines it is clear that the poem is rooted in communist convictions, as the voice in the poem wants to portray economic equality for all men. The speaker calls for justice and equal opportunity for all workers.

In Carrera Andrade’s poem “Juan sin cielo” we are also presented with a central figure of a man that has not only been forgotten, but who also represents all men. The speaker says, “Juan me llamo, Juan Todos, habitante/ de la tierra, más bien su prisionero,/ sombra vestida, polvo caminante,/ el igual a los otros, Juan Cordero.” The man in the poem is a worker like the universal man from Neruda’s poem. He says, “Mi propiedad labraba en pleno cielo” and recalls that his, “hacienda era el espacio sin linderos.” One day, though everything changed. With the arrival of modernity, “Mercaderes de espejos, cazadores/ de ángeles llegaron con su espada/ y, a cambio de mi hacienda –mar de flores –/ me dieron abalorios, humo, nada. . . .” Then the speaker becomes “Juan Desposeído” until his death. He writes, “Soy Juan y nada más, el desolado/ herido universal, soy Juan sin cielo.” In this poem, the figure who symbolizes universal man suffers with the arrival of modernity; he is exploited, loses his land, and then dies. Both poets write these poems about the ills of society to speak out for all workers and victims.

Both Neruda and Carrera Andrade also wrote poems in defense of the Spanish Republic after or during the Civil War. As I have discussed in chapter two, this was a time when both poets truly felt solidarity with the Spanish Republic, which caused them to feel a connection with all men. Neruda writes in his “Reunión bajo la nuevas banderas”53 “Yo de los hombres tengo la misma/ mano herida, yo sostengo la misma copa roja e igual asombro enfurecido . . . .” His solidarity resonates with clarity in these

53Published in Tercera residencia.
lines as well as many others written during this time. Loyola states in reference to
Neruda’s poem “España en el corazón,” 54 “El propósito fundamental del poema es la
denuncia del crimen. Neruda, en lo esencial, continúa siendo aquí el testigo que
encontramos en Residencia en la tierra, pero ahora es un testigo furioso, poseído de
cólera, de indignación, de fiebre de venganza” (Loyola Ser y Morir 171). It is precisely
his anger that empowers Neruda to awaken his awareness to this issue and to others. He
continues, “Allí estuvo el punto de partida para la estructuración de una definitiva
conciencia histórica, literaria y política en Pablo Neruda. Allí vivió el poeta una
experiencia de sangre y llamas, por un lado, y una experiencia de fraternidad y de
responsabilidad artística frente a la historia, por otro” (173). Loyola maintains that it was
Neruda’s lived experience that led to his true awakening in regard to politics, societal
matters and history, as well as a sincere solidarity with other men. Dawes highlights the
importance of this poem and the period in general for Neruda, as a time when the poet’s
“realist method and increasing moral and political consciousness become more complex”
(227). He argues:

By “España en el corazón,” with the weight of history on
his soldiers and the working people’s deepest tragedies
fresh in his mind, Neruda tests his own feelings against the
actual sociohistorical reality that he and millions of
Spaniards lived during the war and thereby becomes more
class conscious, more aware of the economic,
sociohistorical, and political factors (227).

Dawes concludes that “Neruda’s principal achievement at this stage is that
he begins to understand class struggle as central to the development of
history” (227).

54 This poem was written at the beginning of 1937 and later published in Tercera residencia in 1947.
Another example of a political poem is Neruda’s “Canto a Stalingrado”\textsuperscript{55} in defense of the Russian city which he read “en un acto antifascista” (Loyola \textit{Ser y Morir} 190) September 30, 1942. Dawes argues, “In choosing Stalingrad and the defense of the Soviet Union, Neruda deepened his commitment to both antifascism and socialism” (235). Loyola notes, “Este poema, escrito en los momentos en que la caída de la ciudad del Volga parecía inminente, contiene versos que testimonian la confianza de Neruda en el triunfo definitivo y la superación de la Muerte en la continuidad de la lucha popular” (190). In response to the fallen city the speaker says “. . . otras manos rojas, cuando las/vuestras caigan, sembrarán por el mundo los huesos de/ tus héroes para que tu semilla llene toda la tierra . . . .” Yet again, Neruda uses his verse to portray his solidarity with the citizens of the dead city. In his poem “Gonzalo Videla” from Part XIII of \textit{Canto general} Neruda shows his strong disapproval of the dictatorship. He affirms, “. . . y en vez de casas frescas y libertad, lo hirieron/ lo apalearon en la garganta de la mina,/ le dictaron salario detrás de una cureña,/ mientras una tertulia gobernaba bailando/ con dientes afilados de caimanes nocturnos.” The image of the Chilean President repressing the forgotten people of his country while dancing at his “tertulia” represent the corrupt governments of his land. Again he writes in defense of the oppressed workers (in this case the miners) who suffer the mistreatment and poor salary mandated by the “dancing” government officials. The two extremes are presented to show the injustices that exist and the poet’s dissatisfaction with the current situation.

Carrera Andrade’s poem “La extrema izquierda” shows his dedication to political verse while also depicting the miner (symbolic of the manual laborer) and the dictator

\textsuperscript{55}Also published in \textit{Tercera residencia}. 

60
In the poem, he writes of the “compañera cigarra” as if it were the working-class representative against the government that is represented by the image of a dictator: “conspira entre la verdura/ contra la humana dictadura.” He then continues, “la cigarra marcha sin rumbo” and “predica y anda./ Es Secretaria de Propaganda.” He ends the poem with a clear message in regard to his political views: “Tienes razón, cigarra obrera/ de minar el Estado con tu canto profundo./ Ambos formamos, compañera,/ la extrema izquierda de este mundo.” Like Neruda, Carrera Andrade used his poetry to speak of his socialist beliefs and transmit them to the greater public. It is interesting to note that the speaker in the poem uses the word “compañera” to show his true solidarity, just as Neruda uses the word to address Carrera Andrade (his compatriot in beliefs and actions) in his personal letter to him (as seen on page 161 of the appendix).

Interestingly, both Carrera Andrade and Neruda wrote poems that seem to be about central rivers in the poets’ capitals: the River Mapocho in Santiago and the Machángara River en Quito; however the poems turn out to be more social than one would expect after reading the titles. Carrera Andrade writes of the río Machángara, “Machángara de menta/ eres mi río/ . . . Aguas de historia y lágrimas de siglos/ mortaja de crepúsculos ahogados.” The river had been a witness to the history of the country which had been painful, and therefore serves as a shroud of forgotten twilights and a bearer of secrets. He then goes on to ask, “¿Van los conquistadores por el río?/ Los penachos ondean en la bruma:/ ¡Oh verde infantería de carrizos,/ morriones de cristal, cotas de espumá!” Again, he evokes the past to express that the river witnessed and aided in the conquering of the city by the Spaniards. He then writes, “Primer dolor y soledad primera/ y primeras preguntas pavoridas:/ ¿La vida es sólo un río hacia la
muerte?/ ¿Acaso viviremos otras vidas?/ Sólo estamos de paso/ ¿para dónde?/ Dime, río Machángara. . .” Carrera Andrade goes on to write in his MVP that it was by way of the bridge over the river Machángara that one entered into the city and into the history of his land. Moreover, this entrance to his capital made him think not only of the conquering of his country by the Spaniards, but also the conditions that existed in the society today – “las muchedumbre descalzas que invocan la protección del cielo como un bálsamo para todas sus miserias . . .” (17). Neruda also writes a poem that addresses the river Mapocho.56 His poem is more dark overall and the message is very clear. The speaker questions the actions of the river right from the start: “Río, por qué conduces/ agua fría y secreta,/ agua que el alba dura de las piedras/ guardó en su catedral inaccesible,/ hasta los pies heridos de mi pueblo?” Like in Carrera Andrade’s poem, the speaker addresses the secretive river about its role in the past. He continues, “Río Mapocho cuando la noche llega. . .oh duro río parido por la nieve,/ por qué no levantas como inmenso fantasma/ o como nueva cruz de estrellas para los olvidados?” What Neruda does differently than Carrera Andrade is that he directly asks the river why he does not do anything. The poet is trying to get across that we all are responsible for correcting wrongdoings, and so he interrogates the ancient waterway. The river serves a perfect symbol for this “non-action” when compared to the people because as it flows repetively throughout the cities, it is incapable of causing real change. The people of the city, on the contrary, can do something, and this is what the poets want: action. They address the rivers for their ability to witness social injustices without acting, so as to address the citizens of the city in the same way. Writing about their native rivers in a social context is just another way that the two poets similarly respond to society. 

56This poem “Oda de invierno al río Mapocho” was written in 1938, but included in Canto general.
cleverly spare nothing accountability for past wrongdoings and aim to awaken the social consciousness of their societies, and thus use the central rivers of their cities to carry this message.

Neruda and Carrera Andrade are both intimately tied to their countries and their South American continent. They persistently write about their lands and take pride in their heritage and richness, as well as ponder the violent control of the Spanish conquerors over the indigenous inhabitants of the time. Both men also write of the South American man as one that is more in touch with nature and his heritage. Inspired by his America, his “continente de síntesis,” Carrera Andrade states that, “El hombre es más barro en nuestra América que en cualquier otra parte del mundo” (MVP 36). Carrera Andrade’s “nuestra América” is what Neruda referred to as he stood in front of Macchu Picchu on October 31, 1943. He recalls, “Me sentí chileno, peruano, americano. Había encontrado en aquellas alturas difíciles, entre aquellas ruinas gloriosas y dispersas, una profesión de fe para la continuación de mi canto” (Memorias VIII). It is key to acknowledge that when both poets evoke the natural elements of their native land, they frequently do so in the memory of the indigenous people that once populated the space and now may have vanished. Remebering this, Loyola refers to the land of southern Chile as “ese fragmento forestal y lluvioso del sur de Chile que coincide con el territorio épico de los indios araucanos: la Frontera” (La biografía 165).

Neruda’s “Amor América (1400)” can be linked to Carrera Andrade’s “Lugar de origen.” Both poems start out by recalling the history of their land. In Neruda’s poem “Amor” he begins, “Antes de la peluca y la casaca/ fueron los ríos, ríos arteriales:/ fueron las cordilleras, en cuya onda raída/ el cóndor o la nieve parecían inmóviles. . . .” The
speaker recalls a time before invasion where the impressive natural world of his continent reigned. “Lugar” also starts out with the speaker exposing his roots. He expresses, “Yo vengo de la tierra donde la chirimoya,/ talega de brocado, con su envoltura impide/ que gotee el dulzor de su nieve redonda.” Both poems then go on to name the flowers, plants, and animals of their native land. In “Amor” we are presented with the “condor,” the “piedra chibcha o sílice araucana,” the “metálica paloma,” the “planta nupcial,” and the “flores zapotecas.” In “Lugar” similar objects from nature are enumerated: the “sustancia de flores,” “plantas,” “pétalos que vuelan,” “el capuli –la cereza del indio interandino,” the “codorniz,” and the “eucalipto de ramas.” Both poems give a brief recap of the land that continues to live on in the heart of both speakers. In “Lugar” the voice affirms, “..son las mansos aliados del hombre de la tierra/ de donde vengo, libre, con mi lección de vientos/ y mi carga de pájaros de universales lenguas.” The lines positively point out the free nature of the creatures of the land as something that is desirable to the speaker, who feels to be part of this creation. “Amor” ends with the speaker showing how the land lives in him and is therefore part of his existence. He says, “Tierra mía sin nombre, sin América, estambre equinoccial, lanza de púrpura,/ tu aroma me trepó por las raíces/ hasta la copa que bebía, hasta la más delgada/ palabra aún no nacida de mi boca.” The poetic voice summons a time before the land was conquered and given a name. This evocation of the forgotten past before the arrival of the Spaniards is common to both of these poets.

Both poets constantly write about the features of their homelands that are so dear to them. Loyola states, in regard to the impact of Southern Chile on Neruda, that no influence had “mayor fuerza y sentido que el mundo natural de la frontera – respirado
desde la más temprana infancia –, con sus bosques y ríos, su noche, su mar y sus trigales” (Ser y Morir 35). An example of this influence is Neruda’s “Oda a la cordillera andina.” He writes, “De nuevo desde arriba,/ desde el cielo/ volando,/ apareciste, cordillera/ blanca y oscura de la patria mía.” The Andes mountains, as well as many other aspects of nature, left an impression on both Neruda and Carrera Andrade, and this is very evident in their poetry.

Neruda was particularly impacted by the lush forest of his native land. He writes in his poem “Yo soy, I” from part XV of Canto general “Lo primero que vi fueron/ árboles, barrancas decoradas con flores de salvaje/ hermosura, húmedo territorio, bosques que se/ incendiaban . . . .” In his ode to the Araucaria, the ancient and awe inspiring tree indigenous to his country, he expresses, “Alta sobre la tierra/ te pusieron,/ dura, hermosa araucaria/ de los australes/ montes,/ torre de Chile, punta/ del territorio verde,/ pabellón del invierno,/ nave/ de la fragancia.” The immense trees are symbols of the poet’s land and heritage, and the speaker yearns to be in the presence of the great creatures. Later he writes, “madre de los espacios,/ lámpara/ del frío/ territorio,/ hoy/ dame/ tu/ luz sombría,/ la imponente/ seguridad/ enarbolada/ sobre tus raíces/ y abandona en mi canto/ la herencia/ y el silbido/ del viento que te toca,/ del antiguo/ y huracanado viento/ de mi patria.” The poem ends with the speaker feeling that he wants to gain from the tree all the qualities that it possesses: “Deja caer/ en mi alma/ tus granadas” and “entrégame/ tu resistencia.” Last he ends the poem with the lines, “Tus armas deja y vela/ sobre mi corazón,/ sobre los míos, sobre los hombros/ de los valerosos,/ porque a la misma luz de hojas y aurora,/ arenas y follajes,/ yo voy con las banderas/ al llamado/ profundo de mi
pueblo!/ Araucaria araucana,/ aquí me tienes!” The tree serves as a unifier of its entire people, and the speaker feels to be at the mercy of such a great life form.

Carrera Andrade, who was ever inspired and influenced by the natural world of Ecuador, also addresses a tree in his poem, “Llave del fuego,” but for him it is the banana tree that he exalts. The speaker expresses, “Te miro, bananero, como a un padre./ Tu alta fábrica verde, alambique del trópico/ tu fresca tubería no descansa/ de destilar el tiempo, transmutando/ noches en anchas hojas, los días en bananas.” The fruits of the trees are “lingotes de sol, dulces cilindros/ amasados con flores y con lluvia” with their “olorosa envoltura.”

Both men, also as part of their life visions, rejoiced in nature, and used their eyes to absorb the entire natural world around them. Loyola states that “. . . la conciencia de su comunión con la naturaleza y, en un sentido más amplio, con el mundo real y concreto que lo rodea” is a “constante de su pensamiento y de su poesía” (Ser y Morir 35).

Neruda affirmed in an article about his own poetry in reference to Memorial de Isla Negra, “En esta obra he vuelto también, deliberadamente, a los comienzos sensoriales de mi poesía . . . es decir, a una poesía de la sensación de cada día” (182). For Neruda, part of his daily observation included a constant admiration of nature. He continued, “Es verdad que está encadenado este libro como un relato que se dispersa y que vuelve a unirse, relato acosado por los acontecimientos de mi propia vida y por la naturaleza que continúa llamándome con todas sus innumerables voces” (182). Julio Cortázar declares, in reference to Neruda’s overall vision in a 1974 essay “Neruda among us,” “The slow, impassioned enumeration of the fruits of the earth given by a sad and solitary man has become today the persistent call to recover those fruits never savored and unjustly lost,
the proposition of a poetry forged at length from word and from action” (86). This movement to “recover those fruits never savored” is one in which Neruda called for all people to rejoice in the moment, in life, and in nature. Cortázar affirms:

Neruda. . .included everything created by nature. He was an insatiable eye returning to original chaos, a tongue running along stones one by one in order to know their tastes and textures, an ear in which one by one the first bird calls entered, a smell which grew intoxicated on sand, salt, and on the smoke of factories (87).

The poet felt that it was his duty to experience the entire natural world and to include these observations and experiences in his poetry. Concha argues that the realism to Neruda’s portrayal of nature is of most importance. He states, “. . . el paisaje pasará a ser en su obra una cifra de la historia. Es primero geografía, con lo cual deja de ser inmediatamente una figuración sensible del alma, al modo romántico” (36-37).

Carrera Andrade also examines and exalts nature. Ojeda asserts that his poetry, aims to “restablecer la unión de aquellos elementos hombre-naturaleza que el racionalismo había separado y devolver al hombre al seno del universo” (12). Thus, the concern is cosmic for the poet, but it is also the miniscule objects of nature that fascinate and beckon him, and in general it is a realistic view of nature that he embraces, like Neruda does. Carrera Andrade, who writes in his poem “Hombre planetario,” “Yo intento comprender los movimientos/ de plantas y animales . . . ,” does precisely this through his poetry; he gets to know all of the creatures of the Earth. Ojeda asserts that his poems “dan testimonio de la misma afectuosa y atenta consideración de los seres del universo, aun de los más insignificantes. El colibrí, la tortuga, el grano de maíz, el moscardón, la nuez, etc. hallan su lugar en esta galería . . . (120-121). Every creature in nature merits equal attention and transforms into verse. Later in the aforementioned
poem, the speaker says, “Eternidad, te busco en cada cosa:/ en la piedra quemada por los siglos/ en el árbol que muere y que renace,/ en el río que corre/ sin volver atrás nunca.” He then proclaims, “¡Escuchad cómo estallan las corolas!/ La abeja celestina/ las entrega mensajes fecundantes./ Los vegetales reptan enlazados,/ se alzan hacia la luz/ con idéntica angustia/ a extasiarse en el reino de los pájaros./ Picos y alas protegen las semillas del asalto mortal de los insectos.” The poet metaphorically paints vivid images of the moment-to-moment life of the tiniest of creatures. Shortly after he affirms, “Seres elementales, plantas, piedras,/ animalillos libres y perfectos:/ fragmentos nada más del puro cántico/ total del universo.” Again, the natural world that surrounds the poet is seen as part of a grand universe that was perfectly created. The rock or stone is also a very powerful image for Neruda, who had written poems like “Las piedras de la orilla” in Canto general before his book Piedras de Chile in 1961. Loyola writes, in notes to Neruda’s Obra Completa, “Las piedras, como ya antes los pájaros y los árboles y la lluvia del Sur, entraron así a formar parte – como protagonistas – del universo personal del poeta” (1388). The critic also analyzes the stone as “lo simple y elemental de la naturaleza” (Residencia 358) and thus Neruda aims to include this elemental object in his works. Both poets did claim to include everything created by nature in their poems, as the natural world was so powerful and precious to them.

Given their love of land and their realistic approach to writing about nature, geography played an important role for both poets. Carrera Andrade writes, “. . .me inicié en la magia verde de la geografía. Nuevas formas, nuevos símbolos me salieron al encuentro. La criatura transparente e infantil de mi poesía tuvo que tragar mucha agua salada y trepar a las jarcias y bajar en cada puerto” (EP XIII). Due to his constant state of
traveling, the poet admits to have been a constant witness to the forms of the outside world. Neruda also wrote of the geography of his land. In reference to his Veinte poemas, the poet writes, “. . . Pero la niebla, la costa y el tumultuoso océano del Sur de Chile, que en este libro adolescente encontraron su camino hacia la intimidad de mi poesía, todavía hoy asedian mi memoria con su jerárquica espuma, con su geografía amenazante” (OC IV 1052). In the last stanza of his poem “Unidad”57 he portrays the speaker surrounded by the immensity and totality of the universe; “Trabajo sordamente, girando sobre mí mismo,/ como el cuervo sobre la muerte, el cuervo de luto./ Pienso, aislado en lo extremo de las estaciones,/ central, rodeado de geografía silenciosa:/ una temperatura parcial cae del cielo,/ un extremo imperio de confusas unidades/ se reúne rodeándome” (16). It seems that no matter where the poets were, they were captured by the natural world around them and this is reflected in their lyric.

Furthermore, both poets were enthralled by small animals of the world, like insects, the bunny, the butterfly and birds. Carrera Andrade proclaims in his autobiography, “Entro, salgo, respiro. Amo, leo, contemplo el viaje de las nubes. Examino el insecto que saquea los tesoros de las corolas. Me atrae el mundo de lo pequeño, pero pienso en la inmensidad” (El volcán intro). Neruda’s lines from the poem “¿Dónde estará la Guillermina?” of Estravagario show the same attention and admiration for tiny creatures. He writes “Yo tenía catorce años/ . . . yo vivía con las arañas,/ humedecido por el bosque,/ me conocían los coleópteros/ y las abejas tricolores,/ yo dormía con las perdices/ sumergido bajo la menta.” Both poets write about the bunny: for Carrera Andrade the creature is a “hermano tímido, mi maestro y filósofo,” a

57This poem was written during the first half of 1927 in Santiago, Chile and then published in Residencia en la tierra. For a thorough analysis of the poem see Concha’s 1968 article “Interpretación de Residencia en la tierra de Pablo Neruda” and Loyola’s 1987 edition of Residencia.
“pequeño buscador de la sabiduría” who “hojea como un libro la col humilde y buena/ y observa las maniobras que hacen las golondrinas.” Neruda observes the creature as one who “. . .va sin cesar procreando/ y no hace caso en San Francisco,/ no oye ninguna tontería:/ el conejo monta y remonta con organismo inagotable.” He adds “Yo quiero hablar con el conejo,/ amo sus costumbres traviesas.” While Carrera Andrade wrote, “Mariposa” as part of his Micrograms, Neruda wrote “Mariposa de otoño” as part of his first work, Crepusculario, and his “Oda a la mariposa” in 1956 in his Tercero libro de las odas. In Carrera Andrade’s poem, the butterfly is “. . .un niño fajado,/ Y cuando pliegas las alas:/ folleto vivo del campo.” For Neruda, the tiny creature is a “mancha volante y llamada” that “ahora se queda parada/ sobre una hoja que la mece.” The inventive metaphor is characteristic of both poets and is apparent here in the descriptions of the tiny entities of the natural world.

Neruda and Carrera Andrade were both fascinated by birds, and for both of them the creatures represented freedom and a pre-colonized South America. Carrera Andrade writes in his poem “Llave del fuego,” “Yo fundé una república de pájaros/ sobre las armaduras de los conquistadores.” He continues, “Yo hablo con el maíz y el guacamayo/ que conocen la historia del diluvio/ cuyo recuerdo nubla la frente de los ríos.” In these lines, it is apparent that the birds are truly South American; they know the story of the conquest, but they still have not been conquered. In another very short poem “Tierra de pájaros” Carrera Andrade writes, “Es América entera/ inmensurable pajarera.” The image of all of America belonging to the birds, again, evokes a sense of a freedom for the poet’s America. Carrera Andrade also entitled one of his books, Biografía para uso de los pájaros. Neruda wrote a whole book about birds entitled Arte de los pájaros as well.
as many poems. In his “Oda a mirar pájaros” he writes, “Ahora/ a buscar pájaros!” The poetic voice then calls the birds, “campeones del aire,” “libres,/ alegres/ voladores y cantores,” “felices/ constructores/ de suavísimos nidos,/ incesantes/ mensajeros del polen,/ casamenteros/ de la flor, tíos de la semilla.” He later says, “. . .os amo. . . .” In these lines, Neruda also refers to the birds’ freedom and their important role in uniting all of nature. Both poets were especially enamored by the delicacy and importance of the hummingbird. Neruda wrote his “Oda al picaflor” while Carrera Andrade has various poems that mention the tiny creature, and he titles his autobiography, El volcán y el colibrí. Carrera Andrade, ever impressed with the flora and fauna of his country, and in particular the extremes stated that in his country “conviven la extrema grandeza – el cóndor andino – y la extrema pequeñez, el colibrí o el pájaro-mosca” (MVP 29). He writes in his poem “Llave del fuego,” “Tierra equinoccial, patria del colibrí/ del árbol de la leche y del árbol del pan!” For the poet, the colibrí is more than a part of his land; it is a symbol of his native Ecuador. In his short microgram entitled “Colibrí” he creatively writes, “El colibrí,/ aguja tornasol,/ pespuntes de la luz rosada/ en el tallo temblón/ con la hebra de azúcar/ que saca de la flor.” The hummingbird pierces the flowers and knits with sugar; an absolutely necessary job for the future survival of the plant. Neruda also writes of the hummingbird in his poem “Oda al picaflor;” “Al colibrí,/ volante/ chispa de agua,/ incandescente gota/ de fuego/ americano,/ resumen/ encendido/ de la selva,/ arco iris/ de precisión/ celeste.” For Neruda the hummingbird is a “semilla del sol,” “fuego emplumado,” and a “minúscula bandera voladora,” but most importantly the bird is a drop of American fire, again representing his continent. Neruda and Carrera Andrade are equally delighted by the tiny creature, as well as many other details of nature. Through
the image of birds, both poets refer to all the elements of nature, no matter how small, as flawlessly created entities that contain with perfection the magnitude of the world.

Two poems that further express the poets’ delight in nature are Neruda’s “Oda a la pereza” and Carrera Andrade’s “Abril.” In both poems, the speaker is enjoying what seem to be the first days of spring, while relaying a sense of freedom and renewal. The speakers of both poems appear to be delighted to embark on a journey outside into the pleasant weather. In “Abril” the speaker says, “Tiempo en que el corazón quiere saltar descalzo/ y en que al árbol le salen senos como a una niña.” In “Oda” the speaker wakes up from a sleepy state and ventures out to explore. The voice states, “. . . me llevó deslumbrado/ y soñoliento/ me descubrió en la arena/ pequeños trozos rotos/ de sustancias océánicas,/ maderas, algas, piedras, plumas de aves marinas . . . .” Both images invite a sense of liberty and growth: in “Abril” the tree is growing breasts like a young girl to indicate its maturity and sensuality, while in “Oda” some of the most elemental objects of nature are registered to suggest renewal and formation: wood, stone and algea. Both poets are inspired by even the smallest insect. In “oda” the speaker of the poem says, “Liberté una abeja/ que agonizaba en un velo de araña,” and in “Abril” the air is “una marea azul/ donde el lento barquito del insecto navega” in “los charcos” and “los mosquitos parece que ciernen el silencio.” Both poems refer to the spring rain that nourishes. The puddles are the proof in “Abril” and in “Oda” we learn that, “A veces/ la niebla se impregnaba/ de luz/ como un topacio,/ otras veces caía/ un rayo de sol húmedo/ dejando caer gotas amarillas.” Both poems show the poets’ abilities to write playful and positive verses about the natural world that they so loved.
Besides their love of the natural world, both Neruda and Carrera Andrade saw the joys in the little things of life and in everyday items.\textsuperscript{58} Their loyalty to the objects of this world is ever impressive and delightful. Neruda, who searched for “la expresión venturosa o sombría de cada día” (“Algunas reflexiones” 182) constantly transforms everyday objects into poetry. This “panteísmo lírico” is according to Loyola “formulado como solidaridad final y recíproca entre todas las entidades materiales” (Ser y Morir 24). De Costa says of his poetry that “the poem acts as a kind of magnifying lens for the reader, helping him to see the importance of humble things. Beauty is found in ordinary objects, just as poetry is to be found in ordinary speech” (15). Neruda writes in the poem “La arena traicionada” from Canto general, “I love you, pure earth, as I have loved so many contrary things: the flower, the street, abundance, and ritual.” The poet later states in reference to his Odas, “Así logré publicar una larga historia de este tiempo, de las cosas, de los oficios, de las gentes, de las frutas, de las flores, de la vida, de mi visión, de la lucha, en fin, de todo lo que podía englobar de nuevo en un vasto impulso cíclico mi creación” (“Algunas reflexiones” 180). Neruda’s odes were born out of this delight in the universe. He affirms, “Otra vez volvió a mí la tentación muy antigua de escribir un nuevo y extenso poema. Fue por una curiosa asociación de cosas. Hablo de las Odas elementales. Estas Odas, por una provocación exterior, se transformaron otra vez en ese elemento que yo ambicioné siempre: el de una poesía de extensión y totalidad” (“Algunas reflexiones” 181).

Carrera Andrade also constantly contemplated the world around him and wrote poetry about all objects. H.R. Hays insists in reference to Carrera Andrade, “He does not

\textsuperscript{58}To demonstrate this fascination with all of life’s objects, one may refer to Neruda’s Odas and Carrera Andrade’s works, Microgramas (1926 and 1940) and Registro del mundo (1922-1939).
need to look for poetic subjects, all of life turns to poetry at his Midas touch” (xxv). Furthermore, Ojeda asserts that the poet has faith “en todas las cosas que integran el coro vital de la tierra” (161). Carrera Andrade declared many times that he is very concerned with the small objects of the world. His credo, as he has stated, is “las cosas, o sea la vida” (MVP 11). He affirms, “Mi mundo giraba alrededor de un eje: el amor a las cosas por sí mismas no por sus reflejos o ecos que despertaban en nuestro intelecto” (12). Later in the same work he states, “Las cosas en mi mundo poético ocupan un lugar central, son verdaderos personajes en sí mismas y constituyen una forma de expresión del enigma universal que el hombre trata de descifrar” (MVP 40). That is, Carrera Andrade believes in a poetry of “extension and totality” as Neruda does, and no object is spared this extension.

When it came to writing poems about objects, the two poets would choose just about anything. The topics are as varied as nuts, spiders, swallows, rats, lemons, chimneys, mirrors, glasses and furniture for Carrera Andrade to socks, atoms, books, lizards, copper, waterfalls, tomatoes, bread and night for Neruda. Both Carrera Andrade and Neruda write poems about clocks. Carrera Andrade writes “El reloj” while Neruda writes “Oda a un reloj en la noche.” Amusingly they both portray the watch as a stonecutter of time. Neruda writes, “El reloj/ siguió cortando el tiempo/ con su pequeña sierra./ Como en un bosque/caen/ fragmentos de madera . . .” while Carrera Andrade writes, “Reloj:/ picapedrero del tiempo./ Golpea en la muralla más dura de la noche./ pica tenaz, el péndulo.” Both men cleverly use the same metaphor to paint an image of the clock busily chipping away the time. When it came to the objects of this world, Neruda
and Carrera Andrade wanted to show their appreciation and delight for all things, and thus, their poetry of plain everyday objects was born.

Besides praising the small things in life, both men identified with not just their country, their people, and their entire continent but eventually with universal man.\textsuperscript{59}

Frank Riess, in his article “The Poet and the Collectivity,” affirms that “Taken as a whole, the \textit{Canto general} constitutes the definitive description of Pablo Neruda, both as a man, and in his relation to nature and to other men.” Later he shows how, “…the poet as an individual becomes the spokesman of, and is identified with, the continent as a whole, through the essential equation Hombre-Tierra, and any others that may be found to exist” (23). Neruda notes this natural development in his own poetry stating, “El escritor joven no puede escribir sin ese sentimiento de soledad, aunque sea ficticio, así como el escritor maduro no hará nada sin el sentimiento de compañía humana, de sociedad” (\textit{Memorias VI}). He further claims in his \textit{Memoirs}, “Perhaps I didn’t live just in my self, perhaps I lived the lives of others” (intro.). He also confesses in his \textit{Memoirs} that he did not always feel this brotherhood or connection among men. While on a journey from Penang to Saigon he admits to having feared being surrounded by strangers and later sums up what he learned, “The poet cannot be afraid of people. Life seemed to be handing me a warning and teaching me a lesson I would never forget: the lesson of hidden honor, of fraternity we know nothing about, of beauty that blossoms in the dark” (81). This idea of fraternity was just coming to the poet during these early years (the 1920’s), but as we have seen, would blossom in his adult life. In thinking about the poetic creation of both

\textsuperscript{59}For an example of this theme as it is manifested in the men’s poetry see the analysis of two similar poems on p. 115-117 of this work.
men in its totality, their belief in a union with all that is living and non-living resonated with clarity. Neruda stated in his Nobel speech,

\[
Y es preciso atravesar la soledad y la aspereza, la incomunicación y el silencio para llegar al recinto mágico en que podemos danzar torpemente o cantar con melancolía: más en esa danza o en esa canción están consumados los más antiguos ritos de la conciencia: de la conciencia de ser hombres y creer en un destino común.
\]

Neruda knew that his life’s challenges, as well as the time he spent conquered by despair and solitude, had been necessary to shed light on his ultimate enduring belief in the connectedness of all men. He defines it himself, in his “New Elemental Odes,” in the formula: harmony with Man and the Earth.

Carrera Andrade refers numerous times to his strong feeling of love for universal man. In his MVP he stated, “Mi primer amor fue la humanidad” (17). He claims that he wrote, “para ofrecer mi visión personal del universo. Mi cosmovisión, aunque reducida, es fruto de mi amor planetario y de mi presentimiento de la unidad universal” (MVP 9-10). In the introduction of his autobiography El volcán he states,

\[
Me contemplo a través de los años, me contemplo vivir. Entro, salgo, ocupo moradas diferentes en la misma ciudad o en distintas ciudades, leo, pienso, amo, transporto mi cuerpo de un lugar a otro, practico la amistad, recorro el mundo, me consuelo del sufrimiento de mis hermanos los hombres. En estos menesteres se va cumpliendo el plazo de mi vida.
\]

Carrera Andrade, like Neruda, believed strongly in not only a brotherhood with all men, but also a union with everything on Earth. His universal man theory comes to fruition in his masterpiece “Hombre planetario.” The speaker of the poem states,

\[
Yo soy el habitante de las piedras
Sin memoria, con sed de sombra verde,
Yo soy el ciudadano de cien pueblos
\]
Y de las prodigiosas Capitales,
El Hombre planetario,
Tripulante de todas las ventanas
Del la tierra aturdida de motores.
Soy el hombre de Tokio que se nutre
De bambú y pececillos,
El minero de Europa
Hermano de la noche,
El labrador del Congo y de la arena,
El pescador de ostiones polinesios,
Soy el indio de América, el mestizo,
El amarillo, el negro
Y soy los demás hombres del planeta.
Sobre mi corazón firman los pueblos
Un tratado de paz hasta la muerte.

Like Neruda, Carrera Andrade held the belief that all men were connected and therefore were united under the title of “brothers of the planet.”

Both poets felt to be intimately part of a universe of people and objects and this vision is what unites them to revel in the creation of all things and to believe that they were made just as every object and live in harmony with all things. Concha refers to this characteristic as “panteísmo nerudiano” where he “expresa la identidad de fondo de todas las cosas, la solidaridad sustancial de lo existente” (qtd. in Loyola Ser y Morir 40-41).

Neruda proclaims in his poem “Mareas,”60 “Crecí empapado en aguas naturales/ como el molusco en fósforo marino:/ en mí repercutía la sal rota/ y mi propio esqueleto construí.” He continues speaking of his creation saying, “hasta que sal y zumo me formaron.” He ends the poem with the lines, “sentí que yo latía como aquello:/ que mi canto crecía con el agua.” All of these lines indicate Neruda’s belief in the connectedness of the universe, and in particular, of man with nature. The lines further indicate the poet’s fascination with marine life and the connectedness and union that he felt with it.

Loyola states “. . .el mar será para Neruda, en adelante, la representación de la eternidad

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60Published in Memorial de Isla Negra in 1964.
sobre esta tierra” (La biografía 68). Carrera Andrade shares this belief in the union of all things. In his poem “Hombre planetario,” he affirms, “Soy hombre, mineral y planta a un tiempo,/ relieve del planeta, pez del aire,/ un ser terrestre en suma.” The poet feels to be formed of all living matter; with his “ojos del trópico,” and “Árbol de Amazonas mis arterias,” he himself embodies nature. The same belief in the connectedness of all men and elements of nature led to a cosmic feeling of grand immensity that we, as humans, are just a small part of the vast universe. Carrera Andrade writes, “Este hecho coloca la existencia del género humano en un plano cósmico. No somos sino granos de arena de una inmensa Obra que se inscribe en la escala de las constelaciones y galaxias. Esta circunstancia nos enseña una lección de humanidad . . .”(MVP 35). The fact that both poets felt to be part of a universe of equally created things, makes them that much more able to open their hearts to love.

Possibly it was their intense love for humanity that also drove both poets to write powerful love poems. Neruda is perhaps most famous for his Veinte poemas and is perceived as an authority on the topic of the love lyric. Carrera Andrade also wrote many very passionate lines about love. An example from his “Hombre planetario” are the lines, “Yo viví sesenta años en un día/ y en una hora de amor sesenta eternidades.” He continues in Part VII, “Amor es más que sabiduría:/ es la resurrección, vida segunda./ El ser que ama revive/ o vive doblemente./ El amor es resumen de la tierra,/ es luz, música, sueño/ y fruta material que gustamos con todos los sentidos.” Later he exclaims, in verses similar to those of Neruda’s “Cuerpo de Mujer,” “¡Oh mujer que penetras en mis venas/ como el cielo en los ríos!/ Tu cuerpo es un país de leche y miel/ que recorro sediento.” Subsequently the voice speaks of his “jornada ardiente hacia el origen” and
writes, “Minero del amor, cavo sin tregua/ hasta hallar el filón del infinito.” In Neruda’s poem we see a very similar image where the speaker of the poem is digging and searching until he finds a treasure from deep inside the earth, “Cuerpo de mujer, blancas colinas, muslos blancos,/ te pareces al mundo en tu actitud de entrega./ Mi cuerpo de labriego salvaje te socava/ y hace saltar el hijo del fondo de la tierra.” Later in Neruda’s poem he, too, compares the woman’s body to milk, like Carrera Andrade. He writes, “Cuerpo de piel, de musgo, de leche ávida y firme.” Both poems also evoke nature while describing the beloved. In Carrera Andrade’s poem the sky penetrates the river like the woman does to him; for Neruda the riverbed is a symbol of his limitless desire: “Oscuros cauces donde la sed eterna sigue.” Drawing on images from nature to illustrate the beloved is also a constant for both poets. Duran and Safir state in reference to Neruda, “...the poet is constant in his identification of woman with Nature, in his use of Nature imagery to describe woman, and in his conception of woman as a vehicle for a return to Nature” (29). Although Neruda was more prolific in his romantic verses, both poets wrote love poems, yet another correspondence in their poetic creation.

The ultimate visions of Neruda and Carrera Andrade are bursting with anticipation and optimism for a future where men will unite, nature will persevere and humanity will prosper. Their hopes and dreams are repeatedly exposed in their poems. Carrera Andrade avows in his “Hombre planetario,” Vendrá un día más puro que los otros:/ estallará la paz sobre la tierra/ como un sol de cristal. Un fulgor nuevo/ envolverá las cosas. Los hombres cantarán en los caminos/ libres ya de la muerte solapada./ El trigo crecerá sobre los restos/ de las armas destruidas/ y nadie verterá/ la sangre de su hermano.” The poet envisions a world in which peace will reign and man will find
harmony in nature. He stated in his MVP, “Las generaciones se suceden, las guerras y los cataclismos destruyen millares de vidas, pero el alba vuelve siempre a aparecer sobre la tierra” (35). Neruda stated as he received his Nobel Prize, “Pero tuve siempre confianza en el hombre. No perdí jamás la esperanza. Por eso tal vez he llegado hasta aquí con mi poesía, y también con mi bandera” (OC V 341). Carrera Andrade and Neruda both remain optimistic about the future and express this hope through their lyric.

Two poems that are typical of both men’s late poetry are “El fugitivo: XII, A todos, a vosotros”61 by Neruda and “Hombre de cualquier tierra”62 by Carrera Andrade. Both of these poems tackle the subject matter of universal man and the connectedness of the universe and nature, two themes that were very unique to these two authors and very present in many of their poems. The two poems start out in surprisingly similar ways. Both address universal man in the first lines and show the speakers extending their hands to all men and heading towards light. “Hombre” begins with the lines, “Hombre de cualquier tierra o meridiano/ yo te ofrezco la mano:/ Te doy en ella el sol americano.” The speaker is recognizing all men and wants to spread light, specifically American light. The speaker in “El fugitivo” proclaims something very similar in the initial lines, “A todos, a vosotros, los silenciosos seres de la noche/ que tomaron mi mano en las tinieblas, a vosotros/ lámparas/ de la luz inmortal, líneas de estrella. . . .” Here, the speaker evokes all men as well and recalls “man” taking his outstretched hand and going towards the light and away from darkness. The “hombre de cualquier tierra o meridiano”

61This poem appeared in Canto general, published in 1950. I will refer to the poem as “El fugitivo.”

62This poem was published in Hombre planetario, published in 1957. Henceforth, I will refer to the poem as “Hombre.”
that Carrera Andrade writes of in “Hombre” is the same that Neruda refers to (using many more words) when he writes in lines 32-42, “A todo, a todos,/ a cuantos no conozco, a cuantos nunca/ oyeron este nombre, a los que viven/ a lo largo de nuestros largos ríos, al pie de los volcanes, a la sombra/ sulfúrica del cobre, / a pescadores y labriegos,/ a indios azules en la orilla . . . al zapatero . . . a ti, al que sin saberlo me ha esperado. . . .” Both poets want to send a message to all their fellow men, not just their friends, family or countrymen, but to everyone. Interestingly, the speakers of the poems feel to be part of this universe. In “Hombre” the speaker says, “Mi mano es de alfarero/ solar, de navegante, misionero y libre guerrero./ Mano de constructor de un Continente,/ mano de techo y puente/ y alfabeto de amor para la gente.” Here, he feels to have been involved in the process of creating life on a daily basis and he feels to be made of the same material as all things. The speaker in “El fugitivo” talks of this creation when he says, “que tal vez soy vosotros, eso mismo, esa miga de tierra, harina y canto./ Ese amasijo natural que sabe/ de dónde sale y dónde pertenece.” Here, too, the speaker is aware of the power of the creation of the universe as well as the fact that he was made just like everything else and is part of this grand process or oneness. Throughout the poems, there are many references to nature. “El fugitivo” mentions “la primavera invencible, “la flor tan pura,” “esa miga de tierra, harina y canto,” “largos ríos,” “la orilla,” etc. “Hombre” presents us with “el sol americano,” “la brava pluma del cóndor,” “selva y montaña,” “el fruto de ambrosía,” etc. Both poems mention the volcano (a natural wonder that is common in Chile and Ecuador and therefore reflects a South American landscape). In “Hombre,” the speaker says, “Te doy volcán y rosas” and in “El fugitivo” the speaker addresses all that live “al pie de los volcanes.” The message of both
poems is clear: the speaker feels part of the universe and wants to recognize this bond, embrace it, and praise it. The speaker in “El fugitivo” expresses in the very last lines of the poem, “a ti, al que sin saberlo me ha esperado,/ yo pertenezco y reconozco y canto.”

He is singing praise to man, his brother, while recognizing that he belongs to this grand order and to the whole world. The speaker in “Hombre” also recognizes his place in this order, offering his hand and praise when he says in his very last lines, “El sol americano/ te lo entrego en mi mano,/ hombre mundial, mi hermano.” Both poets use the “tú” form of the verb to show their closeness or brotherhood with all men. “El fugitivo” refers directly to a brotherhood of men, as does “Hombre” when he says “hermanos secretos,/ a todos, a vosotros. . . .” These poems get right to the point that Neruda and Carrera Andrade wanted to make often in their works; that they were “hombres planetarios,” that they observed and participated in life, and therefore left their marks. They recognized all that was beautiful and good in life while singing praise to it and to all people. These two poems also demonstrate the fact that the both men were socialists/communists and therefore wanted to help the laborer and unite all classes of men.

Carrera Andrade and Neruda were always questioning life and interpreting the world around them, especially as the years past. In Neruda’s poem “Y cuánto vive?” the speaker asks, “Cuánto vive el hombre, por fin?/ Vive mil días o uno solo?/ Una semana a varios siglos?/ Por cuánto tiempo muere el hombre?” For the speaker, questions about life and death abound. The two poets were also constantly discovering themselves. In Neruda’s poem “Muchos somos” the speaker is lost. He states, “De tantos hombres que soy, que somos/ no puedo encontrar a ninguno.” He continues asking, “Qué debo hacer para escogerme?/ Cómo puedo rehabilitarme?” The poem ends with the speaker
wondering if others feel the same. He says, “voy a ver si a las otras gentes/ les pasa lo que a mí me pasa,/ si son tantos como soy yo,/ si se parecen a sí mismos.” Carrera Andrade also raises the same questions, trekking through life wondering, questioning and contemplating his existence as well. He writes in his “Hombre planetario,” “Camino, más no avanco./ Mis pasos me conducen a la nada/ por una calle, tumba de hojas secas/ o sucesión de puertas condenadas.” The lyrical voice is also lost in a chaotic world. The poem continues with the speaker questioning his existence. He adds, “¿Soy esa sombra sola/ que aparece de pronto sobre el vidrio de los escaparates?/ ¿O aquel hombre que pasa/ y que entra siempre por la misma puerta? Me reconozco en todos, pero nunca/ me encuentro en donde estoy . . . Me busco casi siempre sin hallarme. . . .” These existential questions are very similar to those in Neruda’s poems. Both poets question their realities, and wrestle with their thoughts about their own existence constantly trying to decipher this reality that we call life. They explore their own purpose, as well as their multiple selves to depict their restless wonder in regard to these existential questions.

Whether the result was questioning life, or one reason for their love of humanity, the fact is that Neruda and Carrera Andrade were able to see numerous cities of the world and encounter and learn from many diverse people. The life perspective that they gained is something that had to come from true experience. Carrera Andrade and Neruda contemplated the world as avid explorers. As chapter two revealed, they never failed to journey to new places and absorb new sights. In reference to the title of his book, Boletines de mar y tierra, Carrera Andrade states, “Esta es la razón de su título (boletines) anotaciones de viaje, carnet de apuntes, cuaderno de bitácora, itinerario” (qtd. in Ojeda 113). He writes in the same work, “Estoy en la línea de trenes del Oeste/ empleado en el
Registro del Mundo,/ anotando en mi ventanilla/ nacimientos y defunciones de
horizontes/ encendiendo en mi pipa las fronteras/ ante la biblioteca de tejados de los
pueblos/ y amaestrando el circo de mi sangre/ con el pulso cordial del Universo” (34-35).
Carrera Andrade traveled fervently, creating in his mind his archive of the world, which
he felt to be an integral part of the universe in which we live. In another poem from
Boletines, he wrote, “En la nave de veinte cornetas/ embarqué mi baúl de papagayos/
hacia otro extremo de la tierra// . . . Se amotinaron los mares/ y los cuatro vientos/ contra
mi sueño almirante . . . Europa hacía andar con su ritmo de aceite/ los arados mecánicos .
. . Las ciudades se hablaban a lo largo del aire.” The poet spent numerous days aboard
ships to new lands, so it is understandable that these lines made it to his poetry. In
another poem he wrote, “Mi vida fue una geografía/ que repasé una y otra vez” and then
later, “Desde la nieve a la palmera/ la tierra de ciudades ví.” The speaker also refers to
“la seca tierra del toro,” “las bahías” y “sus islas,” and “los más distintos idiomas.” The
great diversity of places that the poet traveled emanates in these lines. From a wide range
of natural habitats to cityscapes and foreign languages, the poet claims to have seen it all.
The speaker ends the poem with, “Vengo del mundo – oh largo sueño! – / y un mapa se
enrolla en mi voz.” In his MVP, the poet states, “me había traído el mundo conmigo”
(33). In this same work Carrera Andrade wrote, “No es por orgullo o cualquier otro vano
sentimiento que he encerrado en breves líneas poéticas mi vida-viaje sino únicamente
para dar testimonio de mi paso terrestre y ofrecer mi visión personal del universo” (9). It
is through this personal vision that his readers can now experience that which he did.
The poet wrote of his constant travels yet also his need to repeatedly return to his native
land, stating, “Mi vida, mi viaje por la tierra se compone de partidas y regresos. Cada
vez que el viento de la nostalgia sopla hacia las oquedades de mi conciencia, se impone el retorno al país natal” (26).

Neruda, who also spent the majority of his life traveling, writes very frequently of his trips and voyages. Like Carrera Andrade, he too is influenced by the plethora of people that he meets and the many places that he visits. Among other things, he gains a world perspective and also begins to question his own perception of things. Loyola states, “Sus viajes por el ámbito del Caribe, a Guatemala, a Cuba, y también la extensión mundial de la lucha por la libertad, condujeron a Neruda a tomar conciencia de la unidad fundamental de los destinos de toda la humanidad” (Ser y Morir 191). In his poem, “Itinerarios” he writes, “¿Por qué, por qué tantos caminos,/ tantas ciudades hostiles?/ ¿Qué saqué de tantos mercados?/ ¿Cuál es la flor que yo buscaba?/ ¿Por qué me moví de mi silla/ y me vestí de tempestuoso?” In these lines, the poet recalls a life of travels and new experiences. Numerous examples exist where the poet mentions foreign lands. For example, in one of his odes he writes, “Yo amo/ las patrias del aceite” and then goes on to speak of the olive trees of Italy and Spain. No place was exempt; the whole world was sampled by both of these poets, who never ceased to voyage and experience all of life.

From writing about social themes and politics, to raising awareness about the beauty of the natural world, the unity of all men, and delighting in the presence of a loved one, both poets ultimately wanted to change the world for the better, therefore hope and optimism prevailed in their works. They also never gave up writing and would write until their last days. Neruda stated in 1964, “no renuncio a seguir atesorando todas las cosas que yo haya visto o amado, todo lo que haya sentido, vivido, luchado, para seguir escribiendo el largo poema cíclico que aún no he terminado, porque lo terminará mi
última palabra en el final instante de mi vida” (“Algunas reflexiones” 182). The poet’s life had been in service to his country and to his poetry to communicate all that he had felt and experienced with the rest of humanity. Neruda later declared in his Nobel speech in 1971,

> En aquella larga jornada encontré las dosis necesarias a la formación del poema. Allí me fueron dadas las aportaciones de la tierra y del alma. Y pienso que la poesía es una acción pasajera o solemne en que entran por parejas medidas la soledad y la solidaridad, el sentimiento y la acción, la intimidad de uno mismo, la intimidad del hombre y la secreta revelación de la naturaleza.

Without losing sense of his solidarity, Neruda had never failed to expertly report on the appearance of the world. He was a master of feeling and a man of action. Carrera Andrade was also an authority when it came to action and observation, as this, too, was his life mission. John Peale Bishop states of the poet, “His purpose. . .is that we should know and understand the world we live in” (preface). He adds, “he has traversed the widest seas and entered into so many strange ports, each the entrance to another country, and set down all he has seen with love,. . . he has given himself so long and generously to breaking down the barriers of incomprehension between country and country,. . . and has had his share in the struggle and exaltation of men everywhere and with them hoped to remake the world” (preface). These two poets shared common worries, delights, and views and ultimately a common mission to know and interpret the world in which we live.

The similarities in the two South American men’s poetry are prominent; when presented with an isolated poem, it is actually quite difficult to decide to which poet it belongs. The lines “Here, at the center, I live/ surrounded by sea birds,” for example,
seem to come from Neruda, but actually they are from Carrera Andrade. Both poets are truly grounded as they observe in awe the strength and beauty of the natural world, in particular the sea. The stanza, “Me rodea una misma cosa, un solo movimiento:/ el peso del mineral, la luz de la piel,/ se pegan al sonido de la palabra noche . . . las cosas de cuero, de madera, de lana . . . se unen en torno a mí como paredes,” appears to belong to Carrera Andrade, given his belief in the connectedness of all things, but it is Neruda’s. The men masterfully wrote of a unity that they felt among all creatures, elements, and objects. The poet who writes, “No permitas que rueden las palabras/ de peldaño en peldaño hasta el estiércol./ Haz huir a los cuervos emisarios/ de fealdad, que mienten en tu nombre./ Tú me darás el arma, Poesía,/ para abolir el reino del Oscuro/ y devolver al hombre el patrimonio/ de luz transformada/ en amor a las cosas del planeta” seems to be Neruda, with his intense devotion to objects, but in reality it is Carrera Andrade. If one asks who was a South American poet-diplomat to serve as ambassador and consul in numerous countries all the while writing poetry, the answer may seem to be Carrera Andrade, but it clearly can be Neruda as well. Who was the South American poet to live in the Far East and experience a profound sense of solitude that is reflected in his poems? Who was the writer that was fascinated by a world of objects? The answer is both poets, Neruda and Carrera Andrade. The remarkable similarities in these two men have been revealed in regard to their biographies and poetry and now it is time to look at their personal letters, which uncover their exchanging of ideas and work, and which also serve as valuable literary texts that offer material as relevant for the critic as any other literary document.
CHAPTER IV:  EPISTOLARY WRITING AND THE POETS’ LETTERS

General characteristics

Throughout this dissertation, I have signaled and examined the numerous correspondences that exist among Pablo Neruda and Jorge Carrera Andrade. Now I will progress to the “private” letters the two poets exchanged which expose the personal relationship that they shared. The letters reiterate, among other things, that the perceived coincidences in their literary production are actually not fortuitous, but rather a result of their mutual exchange of ideas and works. Thus, this new level of correspondence reveals how this reciprocal influence manifested itself in their poetry. First I will introduce and discuss letter writing as a genre and, therefore, a form of literature, exposing its dominant characteristics and revealing commonalities among letters and letter-writers. In initiating this discussion about the genre, I will contest the theory that a letter is a purely biographical source or a strictly non-fictional private text, and I will refer to it as a literary work worthy of study by the literary critic. Subsequently I will closely examine the personal correspondence that was exchanged between Neruda and Carrera Andrade, referring to what has been confirmed about the genre. Aside from determining and considering aspects of epistolary writing that make it unique, I will finally reveal themes from these particular letters that are also present in the poetry of both writers, therefore linking their epistolary texts to their purely lyrical creations that were examined in chapter three of this study.
The fact that Neruda and Carrera Andrade were, indeed, companions and had a personal relationship was proven by the correspondence that I discovered from the Special Collections Department of the Stony Brook Library. These letters have come to be invaluable to my research of the two poets and their private relationship, as well as illuminating in what they reveal about the multiple correspondences that exist among the two men. The seven letters and one telegram are included in totality in the appendix of this dissertation. The telegram is from Neruda and was sent on October 11, 1937. Two of the letters are from Carrera Andrade and five are from Neruda. The first letter that I have is from June 1, 1937 and the last letter is from June 16, 1946. The information gleaned from these letters not only permits the literary critic to be able to decisively reveal the personal relationship, and therefore correspondences, shared among the two poets, but also opens the door to valuable new texts by these authors.

The art of letter writing thus becomes central to my analysis, and there is certainly much to be explored in regard to this universal practice. The letter is an extremely powerful tool; Rebecca Earle argues in Epistolary Selves that, “Letters not only facilitated the development of states and empires, but also, it is suggested, helped destroy them.” An account of past letters, therefore, “might thus embrace virtually all of recorded history” (1). It is a consensus among many historical and literary critics that the letter is a commanding tool in regard to discovering the past, as well as for the autobiographical information that it provides. However, many have not considered the letter as literature. Hence forward, I will refer to the letter as a literary work and

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63 Jorge Carrera Andrade bound his personal and business letters, postcards, and telegrams from friends, poets, admirers, editors, translators and publishers in nine volumes. These volumes have been taken apart, and letters have been sorted alphabetically, then chronologically, for the Stony Brook collection.
therefore less “sincere” than one might deem it to be. Thus in considering the letter’s literariness, I will encourage an alternative strategy to exploring the epistolary.

After investigating the literary aspects of the letter, I am now able to propose various elements that are critical when claiming the letter to be literature. In altering our thinking in regard to the epistle one comes to the realization that it is the “apariencia de verdad” (Guillén 177) that is sustaining these false ideas about letters. The belief in the letter as a purely autobiographical source not only disables the reader and the literary critic, but also allows the letter-writer to manipulate his audience, be it one person or many. The letter-writer has been aware of a centuries-old letter writing code, a mold to emulate, and a general belief in the letter as a transmitter of the true voice of the author. Therefore, letter-writers often follow a set of guidelines in order to win the trust of their audience, to achieve their own goals, or for some other form of personal gain. The letter-writers’ motives, then, arise as the next factor in my argument. Often letter-writers used their correspondence to develop and strengthen social ties, relying on the belief that the more contacts and connections one had, the better his social position. Other times letters were used to network or circulate ones’ own literary or non-literary efforts. The letter has furthermore often been employed to ask for favors. The language that is used, then, becomes very significant in considering the letter as a means to aid in developing one’s own social or professional goals or in achieving some other personal benefit. The close attention of the reader or literary critic is required to discover the hidden meanings and suggestions used, as well as to examine other language techniques, such as the use of flattery and persuasive strategies. The use of the letter to advance one’s social position
also puts into question the “private nature” of letters, a topic that will be discussed at
some length.

Moreover it has been noted that the letter-writer may use the epistle to create a
cracter for himself or an alternative identity. In this chapter, I will examine the letter as
a vehicle for constructing an identity, and I will contemplate the many “voices” present in
letters, a peculiarity that we see in other literary genres as well and that promotes the
theory of the letter as a literary work. A strong argument will be made in considering the
letter to be literary in signaling the figurative language often used in this genre that is
commonly used in many others. The space that is created when one sits to compose a
letter will also be considered extensively, in particular as to how it relates to the literary
author. In this section I will question how the space that the letter-writer occupies is
different when he is pondering his words for his missive, as opposed to when he is
considering them for his essay or even his poem.

Several other aspects of letter writing that can be observed in other literary genres
are very pertinent as well. One element of the letter writing process is the utilization of
the letter to instigate social change. Giving a voice to the writer, the letter has been used
as a transforming and revolutionary vehicle, and at times it has been very successful at
causing a change within the society. Furthermore, I will consider the use of
correspondence to fill a void, to overcome solitude in the midst of a rapidly changing
society – this is especially true of the modern letter – and to connect with other human
beings. Linda Kauffman stated in her book Discourses of Desire, “... Granted then, that
all of literature is a long letter to an invisible other, a present, a possible, or a future
passion that we rid ourselves of, feed, or seek” (17). The idea that one writes in general
to feel less alone and to connect will be investigated here, as well as how it pertains to letter writing in specific.

Additionally, the concept of the letter as a connector of men cannot be ignored. Because of the distance that the letter can travel, in an effort to overcome separation, it can serve as a link to isolated men. The letter can unite and foster a bond of friendship. This possible alliance that the letter can sustain can be very powerful especially in the case of extensive traveling where a friendship would have been otherwise impossible. Finally, I will discuss the almost unanimous belief that letter writing is a culturally and historically specific activity and reveal how this is particularly important for the epistolary genre.

I argue that a thorough analysis of letter-writing leads us to question the “genuineness” of the letter, and as it takes on literary qualities, the perceptive critic must begin to see what a letter is really saying (or not saying) as well as what it exposes. However, even after looking at many prevalent characteristics of letters, it is important to consider that in general the missive has still been viewed by literary critics as non-fictional and autobiographical. Many have not thought of letters as literary works, and therefore this is an area of study that has often been neglected or ignored. An example of this is the critic L. Beltran Almería who in his article “Las estéticas de los géneros epistolares” tries to distinguish between the “carta literaria” and the “carta misiva” presuming that only certain letters can be considered literary – usually just those that are included in the epistolary novel. At times, others have turned to letters just as an enhancement to a given author’s literary creations and have tried to take away from the letters autobiographical information that could help to comprehend or explain primary
texts. Many anthologies of letters have been published proving that these letters should be read as supplemental texts, but the anthologies do not encourage the reader to regard these writings as literary works. Quite the opposite, letters have been regarded as more closely resembling autobiographies or diaries. Readers have trusted that the voice of the letter-writer really is a genuine voice that comes from the author himself. Many books exist, like *Reading Life Writing* by Marlene Kadar, which include and refer to epistles as an autobiographical source. Amanda Gilroy affirms in a special issue of *Prose Studies* that focuses on correspondence, “Yet the heady appeal of the letter to contemporary criticism has not, on the whole, extended to non-fictional letters, which have remained within the parameters of conventional literary history” and that letters have been regarded as an “unproblematic historical source” (122). So the letter has either been regarded as form of life-writing or it has solely been utilized to explain an author’s literary writing. According to Gilroy, both have an erasure. She states, “1) the dialogic construction of identity that is so crucial was ignored and 2) their own textuality was ignored as letters remained supplementary to the literary texts being analyzed.” In considering these factors, Gilroy wants to “destabilize the traditional critical hierarchy and pay attention to real letters” (121). Rebecca Earle argues that “relatively few studies on reading consider letters as a category of readable material” and that “it has become a commonplace to assert that letters in themselves have been neglected by literary scholars and historians (10).

The ubiquitous conviction in the letter as a transmitter of the truth and the revealer of the sincere feelings and thoughts of the writer has existed for generations. Numerous examples exist of literary critics, who when studying the epistolary novel, have examined
why the letter form was used. Very often these critics have come to the realization that
the letter is thought of as a genuine source of the truth; hence the author seeks to attach
verisimilitude to his work and make the character who is writing the letter more
“authentic” and trustworthy. Susan Wright discusses this in her article “Private language
made public” affirming that the author who decides on the letter form is yearning for
language that is “familiar and natural” and “from the heart” (551). She adds that the
letter is powerful in that it reveals the intimate situation of the writer and his here and
now feelings. She argues that these are “immediate feelings, thoughts and attitudes”
(554) and that now the reader does not have to guess or infer things. She brings us into
the “private world” that is portrayed in the letter and says that it is “an authentic
representation of a person’s secular inner life” (559). These beliefs are crippling to the
study of letters and the literary critic must now acknowledge that the speaker in a letter
should not necessarily be trusted as a complete and unbiased reflection of truth, just as
the language that is used needs to be examined as it would be in other literary genres.

The critics that explore letters as literary works, or that speak of letters as
“fiction” as opposed to non-fiction, are sparse, but there are a few. One critic that does
speak of the fictionality of letters is Claudio Guillén who states that the end goal is “crear
una ilusión de verdad, de realidad o de lo que se podría llamar ilusión de no-
ficcionalidad” (MM 286).64 Guillén, who confirms his belief in “the status of the letter as
literature” in his article “Notes toward the Study of the Renaissance Letter” (74) further
argues that letter-writers need not be trusted and that the language used in a letter is full
of figures of speech that are commonly used in other genres. William Mudler is quoted
in Epistolary Selves stating in reference to letter writing, “If not literature itself . . . it

64 The illusion of certain truth that the letter sustains will be referred to in more detail later in this chapter.
represents the beginnings of literature, the stuff out of which the My Antonias are eventually made” (Earle 47). James How would fall into this category with his belief that letters are a form of literature. He proclaims, “First, in that they adopt a variety of literary techniques, the letters I have chosen are a form of literature and as worthy of study as any of the plays, poems, or prose narratives of the period. . .” (2). He asserts that the letters’ literary qualities are “scarcely in doubt” (2). Derrida, in The Post Card, constantly plays with the idea of the letter as an unreliable source of “non-fiction” and a text full of literary qualities. He maintains, “in question is a cipher that I had wanted to be symbolic and secret – in a word a clever cryptogram. . .” (5) and “I am not as alone as I say I am when the complaint escapes from me, or when I still put everything into seducing you” (6). Later he admits, “At certain moments nevertheless, I attempt to explain myself, I call upon a procedure, manipulation, techniques: counterfires, extinctions of voices, fire extinguishers” (4 ). Linda Kaufman raises many questions in regard to letter writing, identifying epistolarity as a “mode marked by the defamiliarization of the distance between fiction and reality” (qtd. Gilroy 121). David Gerber examines the immigrant letter and asserts that the letters are especially problematic in that “we can’t test letters for accuracy and authenticity” (in Earle 37) admitting that social historians (including himself) “lack the systematic approach to dealing with personal correspondence” (Earle 38). Although I am not convinced that Gerber is necessarily getting closer to referring to the letters as literary works, he does question their realism and dependability. Earle mentions in an essay from Epistolary Selves that the letter can be an “intellectual performance or a literary display” (Earle 84). Although the discussion on the fiction of the letter is very scattered, the critics referred to
have at least mentioned the idea or allude to the fact that the letter may be just as much fiction as it is fact. This is visibly a field of research that has not been examined fully, as these writers have merely touched on this topic, and have not explored it in detail.\(^{65}\)

There are many critics who have chosen to write about the “epistolary genre,” but they do this solely in regard to “epistolary fiction”. These critics look at the letter form, in particular in the epistolary novel, as well as discussing other “fictional” letters.\(^{66}\) One of the most famous examples of the epistolary novel is Samuel Richardson’s *Clarissa* (1748). Although it is very interesting to examine the reasons why Richardson and other authors chose the letter form for their novels (rationales like believing that the voice in a letter is a more true voice – something that I am trying to disprove), I will not concern myself much with these “fictional” letters or the “epistolary genre” that some critics refer to when speaking of the epistolary novel.

As I have begun to demonstrate, the critical attention that has been devoted to letter writing is scattered and in need of cohesion. In the remainder of this chapter, I will attempt to gather and give perspective to these critical efforts trying to generalize and give order to disseminated accounts of epistolary writing.

The first point in my argument deals with the pretense that the letter is always a genuine conveyer of the truth. Amanda Gilroy argues in her book *Epistolary Histories Letters, Fiction, Culture* that “the most historically powerful fiction of the letter has been that which figures it as a trope of authenticity and intimacy. . .” (1). The belief in the

\(^{65}\)Although the critics referred to have stated these quotes in isolated incidences, they have not fully developed the idea of the letter as literature in any comprehensive work.

\(^{66}\)I use the terms “fiction” and “fictional” here only to mean that the letters are written by authors who write as if they were from one character to another. Hence, the supposed letter-writers do not really exist and the epistolary relationship is contrived.
letter as the source of non-fiction is not only an oversight, but it has enabled the letter writer to take advantage of his reader by misleading, persuading, suggesting, or insinuating. The reader of the letter has been trained to think of the text as straightforward and non-literary and in some cases this naivety is precisely what the letter-writer needs to accomplish his task. Guillén writes of this in his discussion of the figurative and misleading language that is used, as well as the imaginary character of the letter in his article, “La escritura feliz: literatura y epistolaridad.” He declares, “Pues bien, lo mismo en los géneros epistolares que en las cartas llamadas reales, el impulso del lenguaje y el progreso de la escritura misma han demostrado tener muchas veces consecuencias de carácter imaginario” (184). He refers to the letters’ “tendencia hacia lo ficticional” (Notes 185) as a powerful deception that empowers the letter-writer to basically get what he wants. He continues, “El escritor puede ir configurando una voz diferente, una imagen preferida de su mismo, unos sucesos deseables o deseados, y en suma, imaginados, pero mucho cuidado, dentro del mundo corriente y cotidiano de los destinatarios y de los demás lectores” (MM 185). The idea that the information contained in the letter needs to reside in the realm of reality for the reader is so that the epistolary facade may be upheld. In other words, the letter is a kind of literary writing that in many cases succeeds because of the false assumptions of its non-fictionality. Guillén stresses the idea that Samuel Johnson argues, “There is indeed no transaction which offers stronger temptation to fallacy and sophistication than epistolary intercourse” (qtd. in Notes 185). As a result, it is important to recognize first and foremost when studying the epistle that its past reputation as a “conveyor of truth” is now under attack, and as a consequence, the literariness of the letters can be observed.
Rebecca Earle points out that starting many years ago there was actually a letter writing code that one had to follow. One had to pay close attention to the greeting (it had to follow the code), show respect, and start by inquiring about the health or the general condition of the addressee and then give corresponding information about oneself. If one were going to ask a favor, he should start by offering services to the receiver of the letter and remind him of past favors before actually requesting something of the addressee. To close a letter, it was appropriate to send one’s regards to all of the members of the family—regardless as to whether a personal relationship existed or not—and include regards from the writer’s family. These guidelines have been upheld in numerous manuals on letter writing that have existed for many years. Another component of the model deals with the actual verb tenses that are used—the narrative style. Various critics have looked at verb usage including Susan Wright, Marcos Roca-Sierra and Claudio Guillén. Wright observes the style of letter-writers, affirming that the dominant tense used is the present, past events are spoken of using the present perfect, and the present progressive is used to “portray momentary and spontaneous thoughts and actions” (560). Marcos Roca-Sierra signals that there are really three time frames, “el tiempo de la escritura, tiempo de la narración y tiempo de la lectura” (329). He continues, “los tres entran en juego y podrían formularse en la frase: ‘Te estoy contando lo que me pasó ayer y sé que te está haciendo llorar” (329). The letter-writer often uses these tenses in an effort to prove that his voice is present and authentic and the receiver of the message should have no doubt that it is his “true” self that is being represented. Guillén refers to this saying “the letter provides us with the illusion of a vital present from the angle of the present” (Notes 99). This illusion of truth that is manifested is what concerns me, as it means that the receiver of the letter
will inevitably be mislead or the literary qualities of the letter will be overlooked. Appropriately, the letter-writer is almost always aware of the normal conventions of letter writing and thus his effort to emulate the code is his first weapon on his mission to achieve that which he desires. Needless to say, if his missive did not resemble that of the traditional letter, this could immediately generate doubt in the mind of the reader and put into question that which is being related in the letter or the sincerity of his words and efforts. The attempt to imitate the letter writing code is yet another characteristic that makes the letter more literary, proving that there is actually a mold or formula that one tries to emulate as well as characteristics that can be observed.

Clearly in referring to the letter-writer’s use of the letter, we must now consider his motives. One of the most common reasons to write a letter is with hopes of some sort of social gain. Sir Ralph Verney (1613-1696) knew the importance of sociability saying, “Tis a happiness to keep a fair correspondence with all your neighbors” (qtd. in Earle 17). Whether it was to share work, to create and maintain social ties and networks, or to ask for favors, letters are often employed to help one with his social status. Marcos Roca-Sierra comments on the importance of letters to create and sustain social relations affirming that “social capital, was perhaps the most important benefit to be exchanged . . . it was necessary to have good contacts in order to acquire good contacts” (101). Therefore, one wrote letters to better one’s social position, establish new relationships, meet other people, or to uphold a set of relations. Susan Whyman stresses the importance of letter writing to “maintain social networks” because people’s chances in life were dependent upon connections (Earle 20). In reference to the Verney family letter archive, Whyman reveals that the letters “unveil a dynamic blueprint of the Verney’s social and
political networks” (17) and that the family used letter writing for their own desires, or “to meet their personal, dynastic, and patronage needs.” The letters indeed “influenced the family’s corporate personality” (25). Concejo speaks of the “carta o epístola como medio de integración social” and quotes Alonso de Cartagena when he speaks of the “gusta del <<dulce comercio por epístolas>> para establecer vínculos con las humanistas europeos, divulgar sus conocimientos. . . .” (5). James How argues that letters allowed people to “accomplish a variety of ends, solely through the persuasiveness of their writing.” Because of this, letter-writers were able to become “active participants in key historical events” (2). This also means that any book about the content of letters is also a book about history.67 Earle adds that many times letters were used by people to “devise plausible selves for the development of professional and commercial networks” (2) and that they were used to “cement social bonds” (3). All are aware that the letter is a commanding instrument when it comes to fostering social relationships.

Given the social implications and the motives that the letter-writer may have, one of the initial jobs of the literary critic is to be conscious that the language in a letter may not be as genuine as one may think, and besides from merely following the letter writing code formerly mentioned, exaggerated respectful language is often used to refer to the addressee. Deferential words like “admired,” “sincerely,” and “dear” are used to show the writer’s regard and to compliment the addressee, as well as other admiring language that is utilized as well. Many times a flattering remark is made before one later asks a favor –in this case the complimentary words are used for personal gain– or the pleasing

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67 Although the content of letters varies greatly, it is important to remember that since a letter is especially historically and culturally specific, the subject matter can refer to major social or historical events and this offers an alternative way of reading history. This idea will be discussed later in this chapter.
comments may also be made in an effort to strengthen social contacts and bonds for the writers own advancement. It is always easier to like and offer something to someone who is complimentary, as this makes the receiver in turn feel better about himself, and the letter-writer takes advantage of this. Furthermore, letter writers have been trained to use clichés – one sent friends “humble services” or wished them “joy” at births etc. (Earle 18). This language, again, is recycled from centuries of use and popularity and it is what the letter-writer feels that he needs to say in order to follow suit and look concerned. Naturally, there are going to be many incidences when one needs to give an excuse or reason for taking so long to reply or for merely not writing. This apologetic language can be referred to as a common trope of the letter. Often this takes the form of the letter-writer saying just how busy he has been or giving some other justification for his silence before asking for pardon. This language has existed for many years and is yet another sign of the respect and conformation that can be observed in the epistle. It is the job of the literary critic to decide whether or not the letter-writer is simply following letter writing rules, or if he is genuinely concerned, as well as to what extent the language is his own. If the letter-writer is merely imitating language that he knows should appear in the letter, this may signify that his words are less genuine. In turn, he is constructing a carefully planned work that has its own special language and is in fact more literary than factual.

The somewhat dialogical language used in letter writing is also very unique. Many critics have referred to the letter as a “written conversation,” but the context is so different that I do not wish to refer to the letter in this way. At times the language may seem informal and closer to that of a dialogue, but it is not as spontaneous, as each person
can carefully choose his words with more time than if he were engaged in a verbal exchange. A response is usually delivered but this could be after weeks, months or years of waiting, and this further removes the exchange from that of a conversation. Moreover, often the questions that are asked are purely needed for the letter-writer to appear to follow the code or to feign interest in the life of the addressee. Albeit due to a genuine concern of the letter-writer, the questions are still too far removed from the response to resemble a live dialogue. Furthermore, the words on the page lack the expression and gestures that come with delivery of speech and the implications that these have on meaning; and in place of these signals, the letter-reader now has to deal with the subjectivities of the written word. These subjectivities point directly to the letter as literature, and make the study of the letter more complicated than previously perceived.

In thinking of the letter as a means to achieve social integration, one also must not forget that it may “transgress the boundaries between public and private spheres” (Gilroy 124). In considering what Guillén refers to as the “double intentionality of language in a letter” (Notes 101), the critic must question whether or not the sender or the receiver of the letter would consider its publication or at least share the letters with others, especially if he is convinced of possible social gains. James How states that letters are liable to be read by others (4), and “this exerts significant effects on the writers and readers of the letters” (5). What was once thought of as a private exchange may in fact be very public, and one of the implications that this has on the form is that first and foremost that the letter would instantly become more literary. The letter-writer would be using the letter form and claiming to have one addressee, when clearly his aim would be to reach a larger public. Due to the false pretense that is initiated by such an act, and the immediate
creation of the characters of the “letter-receiver” and the “letter-recipient,” the letter would more closely resemble a work of literature. This point is also strengthened by the fact that many letter-writers publish or allow publication of their own letters. Clearly the information in the correspondence is suitable for a larger public, if not originally intended for one. Amanda Gilroy shares in this perception that many times the published letter is a “public mode of address in the guise of a personal communication,” and that one must be aware of a “potential third reader outside the immediate epistolary exchange” (EH 19).

The possibility of the public nature of a letter brings it closer to resembling literature, and must be considered when attempting to analyze the genre.

In affirming that the personal letter does not dwell comfortably in the realm of the private, James How affirms that it is a “site, neither purely private nor purely public” (14), and this blending of the private and the public is an interesting trait of the epistle. On the one hand we feel compelled to really believe the letter-writer and to try to listen to his unique personal voice, believing that the letter is really destined to who he deems it to be. On the other hand, the critic must realize that the letter-writer may have ulterior motives and other plans for the future of the letter or be quite aware of a larger audience other than the one he signals. Consequently, the reader of the letter should question the supposed private nature of the missive and consider what effect this has on the language that is used to construct a valid interpretation of the letter.

An important element of letter-writing is the possible utilization of the letter form in creating and fostering an identity. For this point it is imperative to consider that the voice in a letter is supposedly the author himself, unlike in other literary genres. In the process of composing a letter many questions surface for the author: How do I present
my life to another person? What do I choose to talk about? How do I define myself?
This construction of an identity is tremendously critical here, as an author of a letter
might very well think that he will be believed no matter what he says. This presents a
unique opportunity for the letter-writer to assume whatever identity he desires. The
trained critic and reader will not be quick to believe that the speaker or the voice in a
letter corresponds with that of the author. Just as we would question the narrator in a
novel, we should suspect the speaker of a letter as well, possibly even more.

Thus the idea that the letter is for “lovers of the authentic” is completely contested
here, as well as the notion that personal letters have often been read as windows into the
soul of the author. Earle argues that personal correspondence allows the writer to
construct a “fiction of self” (2) and, viewed as a means of self-expression, the writer
“constructs personae for themselves as they write” (2). Morales Ladrón states that the
espistolary form presents a series of formal characteristics whose end goal is according to
Guillén “crear una ilusión de verdad, de realidad o de lo que se podría llamar ilusión de
no-ficcionalidad” (286). Guillén also states that a letter can create “otros mundos,”
“ámbitos propios, espacios nuevos, formas de vida imaginadas” (Múltiples 185). Letter
writers know this which means that some could take advantage of this opportunity to
create for themselves their very own character, as one could very well assume that their
words are “straight from the heart.” We must question the ulterior motives and validity
of the voice in a letter. Earle affirms that we see sometimes “different selves emerging in
different epistolary relationships . . . “(82). Moreover Susan Whyman shows through the
Verney family letter collection that they protected their letters “because they knew their
importance” and her argument becomes that “the family used their letters to construct
individual, dynastic, and social identities” (Earle 16). She continues to argue that letter writers show different personalities and relationships through things like spacing, address, style, and penmanship (18). Joyce Carol Oates noted, “Should you doubt that you exist, you only have to write a letter” and “A personality will immediately define itself in the act of writing” (Earle 18). In Bakhtinian terms, the letter “is seen as an activity, an ‘event of utterance’, through which the self is constructed as an identity-in-process” (Gilroy 122) where the self and the other continually define and redefine one another. The use of the letter to create these multiple identities is key aspect that has often been overlooked by the literary critic.

Guillén also spends some time discussing this in his essay “La escritura feliz: literatura y epistolaridad.” He states that a letter has a “personaje” narrator just like other forms of literature, affirming that really there are, “4 actores: el escritor empírico (el yo del autor), el yo textual o voz que se presenta, el destinatario o tu textual, y finalmente el receptor empírico –es quien lee y da vida a la lectura” (189). The two “formas textuales. . .tienden a ser formaciones mentales, o sea aquí, imaginarias” (189). This clarifies that the voice in the letter is not always the voice of the writer, just as is the case with other literary genres. Also, this makes us aware of the fact that the reader of the letter is not necessarily going to be the intended recipient. If a letter writer is thinking that many other people, for example, will read his work then what he says could very well be altered.

Viewed in this way, letter writing becomes a kind of performance where characters and identities are actually more hidden than they would normally be and the lines between fiction and reality are further blurred. The letter-writer might have thought
to have an advantage in assuming that the voice he presented would be trusted completely, or he might have directed his missive to an entirely different audience from the start, as I have stated. Furthermore, the letter may be read out loud by the letter-writer or the receiver of the letter and so staged in this way. Regardless of the specific case, the letter as a performance leads us once again to regarding it as literature.

Now it is imperative to look at the figurative language that so often exists in the letter, thus paying attention to the letter’s own textuality. Linda Kauffman states, “Each epistolary text is a kind of ‘transcript of scraps,’ combining the fictional and the real, inhabiting an inherently intertextual medium” (qtd. in Gilroy 126). In signaling that the language in a letter can be “fictional and real” we are much closer to looking at the letter as a literary work. Amanda Gilroy includes an article by Richard Hardack in her book, Epistolary Histories: Letters, Fiction, Culture, that deals with letters of Herman Melville (1819-1891) and Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864). Hardack observes, “Melville’s letters were a critical part of his artistic expression, and through the correspondence with Hawthorne he discovered or explored imagery and thematics that were important to his fiction” (146). Gilroy states that “Richard Hardack goes beyond the traditional view of non-fictional letters as merely supplementary to the novels or poems of the author in question, their own textuality erased in their deployment as interpretive texts” (EH 17). It is the actual language of the letters themselves that Hardack pays attention to and that has been ignored. Hardack discovers that many of the themes from the letters are often repeated in the mens’ other writings and that the language is at times very similar. Hardack’s statements prove that the letter deserves the attention of the literary critic, as its own language has been ignored.
Several critics have written about Emily Dickinson’s (1830-1886) letters, which are particularly important to my case, as they are extremely “literary” in that they employ the use of literary tropes and are often written just as she would write a poem. In fact, most of her poems were written in letters, and often there is a debate as to whether or not a given letter should actually be called a poem. Gilroy affirms, “Dickinson writes lines in her letters that are poemlike, or become lines in poems” (EH 146) and later recognizes that there are actual poems within her letters. Another example of a crossing of the lines between letter and other forms of literature can be seen in the letters of the English dramatist Sir George Etherege (1635-1692). James How states, “after he turned away from writing drama certain of his letters are almost as entertaining as the best of his plays” (16). Furthermore, it can be observed in reference to Ralph Waldo Emerson’s (1803-1882) letters that they “often contain the germ of material later elaborated in journals and essays” (Gilroy 146). This blurring of the lines between the epistolary and the lyric strengthens the argument in favor of deeming letters themselves as literary works. What makes a writer a literary author at one point and a non-literary author at another? The words are coming from the same mind and are often directed to a similar, if not the same, public as we have seen with the case of Dickinson. Furthermore, frequently the same type of figurative language is used when writing a letter. The poet Paul Celan (1920-1970) described the poem as ‘a letter in a bottle’ (qtd. in Earle 135) thus further mixing the two forms of writing. Earle too blurs the lines between literary forms, arguing, that like letters, “poems too are in route . . . toward something open, inhabitable. . .” (135). She argues that the differentiation between poetry and the letter is further obscured when poets use apostrophe, stating that this is one “feature of lyric poetry that
underscores this difference” (136). All of these references point to the hazing of the boundary between the letter and other genres, and thus the literary qualities of the letter that have been disregarded.

The questioning of a letter’s literariness also drifts into an examination of the space that is created when one sits to write. Emily Dickinson’s personal case helps us to envision the literary author, in particular, as she sits to compose her missive. The letter may also serve as a bridge between two different spaces, uniting as well as distancing them. The letter becomes the mediator of this approximation and distancing. The two spaces are united by the fact that the letter is sent from one to the other—the same piece of paper being physically in two places. However it acts as a distancer because the gap that exists is recognized and emphasized in the very act of writing. As much as one yearns for another and tries to bring him closer through the act of writing, this will always ultimately fail as a means to fully unite. Marisol Morales Ladrón refers to this unique relationship stating, “este juego de presencias/ausencias forma parte de la tradición del género epistolar. . . .” (286). This gap that is created reminds us that the letter is ultimately an unanswered text sent to a public, just as are other forms of writing.

In regard to the language used in a letter, it is of utmost importance to recognize that the words chosen, just like in other writings, are vulnerable to the subjectivity of which all language falls victim. In a missive, however, we are presented with a dialogue that is “half someone elses” as Bakhtin sees it (qtd. in EH 15). Bakhtin recognizes that there are always at least two sides to any correspondence, “Two subjectivities telling and reading potentially different stories, two voices testifying differently in an ‘event of utterance’ through which self and other define and redefine each other” (15). Hence the
subjectivities that are usually present are magnified in the case of letter writing, as there are often at least two readers and writers taking part in the epistolary act. Therefore, the critic has a more difficult battle to face in deciphering the missive and in determining what the speaker is really saying. Guillén reminds us that the words in a letter are full of suggestions, ambiguities, implications, and double-meanings, all the while being subject to different perspectives and contexts (Notes 183). It is these subjectivities that must be examined fully when analyzing letter writing.

The epistle provides an arena in which the letter-writer has a space to voice his opinion and speak out, even in times when he has no other way of reaching another being or a public. This belief in the letter as an instrument of freedom is shared by several critics. Whyman considers this to be the “liberating effects of letters” as “they provided a vehicle of self-expression for the author” (Earle 21). Marisol Morales Ladrón shares in this perspective adding, “Letters are a vehicle for the expression of that which is, for whatever reasons, denied, repressed, silenced by the culture” (295). Therefore the letter can be a needed release for the writer as well as an emancipation that is otherwise not possible to attain. Moreover, the letter has the power to be a “political and often disruptive vehicle” (Gilroy 124). The missive, which has been “castigated as the agent of conspiracy” (EH 11) can serve a great purpose as a conveyer of information and a true instigator of change. Moreover, the letter’s capabilities to provide an author with a voice resemble other forms of literature that also aim to reach out and perhaps cause change.

Furthermore, the letter is a vehicle which gives the individual a voice in response to modernity, which has caused many to feel isolated in an ever changing world. As a result of his or her isolation we see “that the modern poet reaches for the letter mainly to
reduce the strangeness – the solitude of the lyric address” (Earle 58). This is to say that
not only does one write a letter to establish a connection with another, but also that he
may choose a letter over another genre because in the epistolary act alone he may feel
less isolated. With letter writing we also have a claim for the individual and for
individuality (modern society has been criticized for the massification of the individual)
(Earle 45). Utilizing the letter, the individual now has a voice in this chaotic time that we
have come to call modernity. One well-known letter-writer, Dorothy Osbourne, was said
to have used letter writing “as a way of maintaining contact with a rapidly changing city
that both fascinated and attracted her” (How 3). Without the missive this contact could
have been impossible. Imagine one venturing out into the industrial city to try to find
associates, contacts, and friends to casually converse or to speak about things of great
importance. Traveling through the immense city could be an exhausting and very
difficult task. Surely many letter-writers choose to rest in the comfort of their own homes
while maintaining contact with a rapidly changing world.

The letter as a form has been utilized repeatedly by authors to unite with other
human beings, many times in an effort to fill a void, to overcome solitude, or to create
friendships and bonds. Other literary genres, it can be argued, may serve this purpose as
well. For example, a poet might write a poem in an attempt to communicate a severe loss
to an audience, but the act is furthermore amplified in the case of a letter, where a
specific reader is indicated. James How argues that often “letter-writers have many

68 The theme of solitude as it pertains to the letters of Neruda and Carrera Andrade will be
discussed later in this chapter.

69 The fact that the signaled recipient of a letter is not necessarily who will read it or who is even
intended to read it must remain in the mind of the reader.
things in common: they are isolated, down on their luck, and under pressure” (3). He argues that they are disappointed in some way with the actual physical space in which they find themselves and “seek to construct new (epistolary) spaces for their own reasons” (3). “They are all deprived of what they desire and yet firmly believe their letters can make a difference,” and they believe that if they maintain connections by communicating “they can open up spaces within which their desires can be satisfied” (3).70 He adds that it is the very act of opening this space that satisfies their desires. In speaking of these epistolary act, How affirms that they “are spaces of connection providing permanent and seemingly unbreakable links between people and places” (4). James How concurs that the letter is successful as a vehicle to connect. However, I would argue that as the spaces that are constructed do attempt to satisfy the desires of a given letter-writer, often these cravings are not satisfied, hence the steady and continuous efforts of many authors of letters.

Marisol Morales Ladrón believes in the letter as way to connect with other men. She states, “correspondence is, indeed, the cement of friendship: it is friendship avowed under hand and seal: friendship upon bond . . . more pure, yet more ardent, and less broken in upon. . . .” (than personal conversation) (291). Richard Hardack also shares this belief, affirming that “the cords of correspondence, of letter writing, link all men to one another, and turn them into corresponding magnets” (Gilroy and Verhoeven 135). He continues, “Letter writing is imagined as a transcendental act, a way for men to merge with one another through the All or oversoul, creating a whole far greater than its

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70 Two ideas that are mentioned here will also be explored later: 1) that the space that is created when sitting down to write a letter may be more similar than it was once believed to be to those of other forms of literature 2) that the belief in a text to cause social change is a further argument in support of the writing as a piece of literature.
wretched parts. Such physical merger, such longing to transcend identity, produces an entire ontology of intertextuality” (140). He adds, “Letters thus transcend gates and physical borders and leave the correspondents emphatically fluid and thus intermingled” (140). Concejo speaks to this communication when he affirms, “escribir cosas nace de la necesidad humana de comunicarse con otra persona por escrito” (2).

As a result of the distance and separation that they feel, many letter writers want to give the impression of presence and immediacy – what Janet Altman calls simply “the impossible task of making his reader present” (135). One of the stylistic techniques to give this impression is to mimic “the informality of oral speech” and to conduct a “written conversation” (85). To feel less isolated and alone, Susan Wright states, “The writer brings the temporal stance of her addressee into her own temporal world, essentially disregarding the fact that there is a temporal gap between the writing and receiving of letters” (560). This is a common characteristic in many letters. Many times this results in the author of the letter posing questions. Although he clearly knows that he cannot have an immediate response he attempts to mimic a drawn out conversation to feel more of a connection with his addressee or he brings past events immediately into focus, referring to comments from previous letters. He also greets the addressee and comments on things around him as if the other were present.

Amanda Gilroy and Verhoeven argue that one of the most important things to remember in regard to the epistolary genre is that a letter is “historically and culturally specific” (1) and Earle states that “letters show the distinct environments in which they were conceived” (2). Earle argues furthermore that “letters and the letter culture are closely linked to a specific historic context, and shed light on this context” (105). The
context for the epistle may be even more significant than it is for other literary genres. The letter-writer is placing himself (or his character) in an alleged time and place that is very often confirmed. If the letter was actually sent, then there is verification of time and place from the post office on the envelope of the letter. If the cover of the letter did not survive then very often still there is a date on the inside of the letter and many times a place or a reference to a place inside the letter. This makes this information much more readily available to the reader of the letter and thus can serve as powerful aid in analyzing the missive. Therefore, it is important to remember to not isolate a letter from its environment, and to make sure that this context has been fully considered while examining the language that is used.

As a result of this necessary second look at the letter, I can now begin to articulate the elements that are present in the epistle and that cause it to be a literary work, as well as an important form of writing for the literary critic. To review, my argument for analyzing the letter includes an examination of: 1) the way that the epistle easily upholds an illusion of straightforwardness; 2) the underlying motives of the letter-writer, like the use of the letter to strengthen social ties, network or to ask for favors; 3) an uncovering of the unique language that is present, usually involving hidden suggestions and at times a particularly respectful or complimentary language; 4) the private versus public nature of the letter; 5) the identity that is created and the voice that is presented; 6) the figurative language that is used; 7) the space that is created; 8) the letter as a vehicle for causing social change; 9) the letter to fill a void or connect with other beings; and 10) the fact that the epistle is culturally and historically specific. To declare at this point that every letter will speak to or encompasses each and every one of these aspects is erroneous; many
subtypes of letters exist that need further development.\footnote{For example, the love letter is a unique category of the epistle. Many of the elements that I have pointed out are often present, like the use of figurative language, the letter as means to connect with another and fill a void, the space and the identity that are created, the importance of context, etc. Although not all of the characteristics that I identify are seen in the love letter, it should still be considered literature. Just as a poem may not rhyme or have meter, it is still a poem and a literary work.} What I do affirm, after discovering the letter, is that we must always consider the letter to be literature and, therefore, question the straightforwardness of the letter-writer, the motives for writing and the voice that is ultimately presented, as well as explore the language that is employed, just as we would examine these aspects in other literary works.

In proclaiming the important characteristics of the letter and basing my argument on the fact that the letter should be considered literature, there arise at least two distinct possible ways to read this form of writing. One way to read the missive is to count on the voice in the letter corresponding to that of the writer, to believe wholeheartedly that the information exchanged is a reflection of the attitudes and beliefs of the letter-writer, and to think of the letter as a dependable source of non-fictional information. An alternative reading, and one that I am suggesting, is to regard the letter as a problematic writing form that needs to be analyzed, questioned, and decoded. This approach to the letter as literature reveals suggestions, insinuations, allusions, character formations, and symbolic and metaphorical language. I will rely on this alternative strategy for the next part of my dissertation, and therefore employ the elements that I have outlined for my examination.

Case Study

The elements of letter writing that I have summarized will be employed at this time to examine the letters of Pablo Neruda and Jorge Carrera Andrade. This new strategy for tackling the epistolary will highlight key aspects of the letters that may have otherwise been neglected. The first component of my discussion dealt with the
appearance of truth that the letters uphold. In considering the poets’ letters, I am forced to question their sincerity at all times which results in a more profound look at the language used and the underlying motives and purpose for writing. Because both poets were especially erudite, one must assume that they were aware of the letter writing code and knew how to compose a persuasive and well-crafted letter. Also because both men were very talented with the pen, one may believe that they were particularly able to manipulate or persuade. Regardless of the degree of frankness of the letter, as I have stated, the sheer act of questioning their straightforwardness will lead to a more thorough interpretation of the letters. Furthermore it is especially important to ponder this idea when it is a known fact that both letter-writers were already publicly established authors, thus a double appearance of truth exists where the two men were possibly aware that they were influencing or persuading one another and yet upheld this front, therefore mutually taking part in the epistolary facade.

Both Neruda and Carrera Andrade uphold the letter writing code. The letters that they wrote are very traditional in regard to their form. All of the letters have a greeting and a closure, as well as a signature. The letters are brief and all but two of the letters have a specific date. Moreover, several letters are handwritten or are printed on special paper. The authors could have done this to furthermore win the trust of the recipient. The handwritten letter may appear to hold words from the heart and the special paper that Neruda used could give Carrera Andrade the impression that Neruda in his authentic persona was directing these words to him. Additionally, the language that is used resembles that of the letter writing manuals. For example, I discussed earlier the idea that a letter-writer should refer to past incidences of kindness while asking a favor of another.
This reminds the recipient of the letter that the letter-writer has been very helpful in the past and increases his chances that the addressee will accept the proposal. Carrera Andrade does just this when he asks Neruda to consider coming to Berkeley to give a series of lectures on Spanish American poetry. He writes:

> No sabe lo beneficioso que resultaría un viaje suyo a California . . . Talvez podría venir Ud. invitado por la Universidad de California, en Berkeley. He estado ya hablando de esta posibilidad con el profesor Torres Rioseco. Dígame si le interesaría el asunto para proponerle inmediatamente a las autoridades universitarias respectivas. Sé que les complacería mucho una serie de lecturas suyas sobre poesía hispanoamericana o poesía en general.

Immediately after he writes this, he goes on to mention that he was able to find and buy the peculiar variety of shells that Neruda wanted from California and that he sent them to him. He writes, “Tuve la fortuna de encontrar los ejemplares que Ud. me pidió de caracoles escamosos y argonáuticos,” and he then goes into more detail about the list of prices that Neruda also asked him to find. Carrera Andrade reminds Neruda of the fact that he followed through with this favor, accomplishing to find the rare shells that the Chilean poet wanted, to increase the chances that Neruda will now do a favor for him. Furthermore, that Carrera Andrade managed to find the rare shells for Neruda shows that he was willing to inconvenience himself for the poet. Carrera Andrade could have done this because he knew that the more favors he did for Neruda, the more he could expect in return.

The two poets also follow the letter writing form in that they pose questions in their letters and attend to questions from previous letters. Both men are constantly referring to previous correspondence. This is exemplified by Carrera Andrade, in 1943, when he proclaims, “Su mensaje me causó inmensa alegría,” referring to the last message
that he received. The writer, of course, will often ask questions and will have to wait for a response. Many times Neruda asks questions of Carrera Andrade, like when he is thinking of going to California he asks, “Pero cuándo parte Ud?” Obviously, he had to then wait patiently for an answer. The writer must also make sure that he attends to the questions that were asked of him in previous letters, hence many proclaim that the exercise of letter writing resembles a drawn out conversation.\footnote{As I have already stated, my position is that letter writing is not as similar to dialogue or conversation as some critics claim.} Neruda’s lines from a letter written around 1940, “Cuánto agradezco su telegrama que recién recibo en México,” demonstrate his attempt to refer to past events as if they just happened. By doing this he brings the recipient of the letter into his own temporal space, a commonality among many letters. The respectful language that Neruda and Carrera Andrade employed in their letters, that is a conventional part of the letter writing code, will be referred to when speaking of the letter as a means of networking and asking for favors later in this work.

Aside from being literary authors, both men were also becoming devoted politicians. They were open about this in their letters, revealing their new diplomatic positions as they arose and even sharing specific information about their political attitudes. It is known that the words of a politician are carefully chosen (as they need to be) and that they often have an agenda at all times –whether it is out in the open or concealed. This is important to remember when examining their words about political affairs or any other subject matter. It is also known that politicians must uphold strong
ties with other politicians or persons of power, furthermore putting into question the straightforwardness of their words.\footnote{The information from the letters that deals with politics will be referred to more in detail later in this study.}

The next element of letter writing referred to utilizing the missive as an approach to disseminate one’s own writings. Neruda and Carrera Andrade do refer to the spreading, sharing, and even publishing of their literary works, and therefore use letter writing as a form of networking. The fact that they read one another’s poetry is very evident. Neruda often shared his poetry with Carrera Andrade, and it is clear that Carrera Andrade took great interest in reading it. In the 1943 letter to Carrera Andrade he writes, “Le envío por este correo un ejemplar de lujo de mi último poema.” Carrera Andrade was not only receiving the poem directly from Neruda himself, but he was also receiving a special version of the poem. Later in his 1945 letter Carrera Andrade asks Neruda to send him some of his latest unpublished poems to be published with Ediciones Destino. Quite significantly, in his June 16, 1946 letter, Neruda includes a copy of “Alturas de Macchu Picchu,” which had not been yet published in Spanish and which Carrera Andrade was going to have published with Ediciones Destino. This is momentous, as “Alturas,” (published in \textit{Canto general} in 1950) is one of Neruda’s most famous poems, and he was sending it to Carrera Andrade to publish it for the very first time.\footnote{It is said that Neruda began writing the poem “Alturas de Machu Picchu” around September, 1945. He had arrived in Lima, Peru on October 15th, 1943, and later he climbed to know the heights of Machu Picchu. This contact with that ancestral American reality flourishes later in the magnificent poem.} He writes,

\begin{quote}
El poema que te envié en esta ocasión es el más importante que he escrito en los últimos tiempos. Deseo que lo publique en cuatro partes – dada su extensión y de este modo cubra cuatro colaboraciones a 25 dólares, o sea, un total de 100 dólares que me servirán para remunerar a mi secretario por dos meses. Pasados estos dos meses, te
\end{quote}
Neruda knew that this poem would be a great success, as evidenced by his words about its importance to him. He must have known that Carrera Andrade could get his poem published quickly and that it would reach many people. These two examples serve as proof that Carrera Andrade was helping Neruda publish and that there was a productive business that was taking place through their letters.

Moreover, Carrera Andrade has pronounced many times in these letters and in interviews that he is extremely impressed by the poetry of Neruda. He stated in a letter from April 28, 1943, “He estado viviendo tres o cuatro de sus poemas….” The fact that he says that he has been “living” Nerudas’ poems is very significant here. By choosing this powerful word, he seems to want to express that he has been greatly influenced by Neruda even in his daily life. Later in his letter from September 16, 1945, he concludes “Naturalmente, he leído todo lo que usted ha publicado en los últimos tiempos, fortaleciendo mi opinión de que usted, Pablo, es el más grande poeta vivo de lengua española.” These lines show the extent to which he read and supposedly admired Neruda’s poetry. This respect for Neruda was also upheld by an interview with Enrique Ojeda, when Carrera Andrade was asked about his relationship with other South American authors. He starts by saying in regards to Neruda, “…admiro la poesía de Pablo Neruda.” He later states,

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75The fact that Neruda mentions the price that he expects to be paid for sending his poem reminds us of the fact that the two poets were literally in the business of writing and publishing. As two successful businessmen they both knew that they could help one another, and thus their relationship and correspondence was significant.
La poesía de Neruda es rica. Es indudablemente importante en nuestro tiempo… Yo conozco personalmente al poeta. En varias ocasiones nos hemos encontrado en París y en otros lugares. Hemos discutido de todo lo que significa esta poesía que para él es de extrema facilidad. Yo creo que hay muy pocos poetas de lengua castellana que tengan la inmensa fecundidad de Neruda…. (95)

Neruda, too, clearly read the poetry of Carrera Andrade. He writes in his 1937 letter that he wanted to talk about, “su maduro libro que me ha causado verdadera alegría.” He later confesses in a 1940 letter, “Hace tiempo que vengo observando su línea poética. . . .” He also shows that he thinks highly of the writings of Carrera Andrade when he asks him to produce a journal with him and says “si no sintiera gran solidaridad con su trabajo y su persona no le propondría estos proyectos.” This all culminates in the letter from September 1945 when Carrera Andrade asks that Neruda recommend to Editorial Nascimento that his latest collection of poems be published. The cycle comes full circle; the two men both help one another to publish and spread their literary works.

The point is clear, then, from the letters: Neruda read Carrera Andrade and vice versa, and they were both using their letters as a means to circulate their poetry. They were not only keeping up with one another’s literary production, but they were also reciprocally complimenting one another. They were aware of the social position, and therefore contacts, that they each had and they wanted to capitalize on this by sending examples of their latest work to one other. They both believed that the other could only help them on their quest to become well received writers and publishers.

Therefore, aside from the desire to spread and share their poetry by means of actually including poems or mentioning them in the letters, Neruda and Carrera Andrade
also use their letters as a method to foster social ties. They both wanted relations with other writers as evidenced by their involvement in conferences and similar events, as well as collaborating in journals. Their letters speak to this desire to advance their social situation. In his 1937 letter Neruda asks Carrera Andrade to come to an International Writers Congress to be held in Spain. He writes, “Ahora quiero que me diga si le sería posible asistir al congreso internacional de escritores a celebrarse en Valencia, Madrid, y Barcelona.” He persists saying that if he comes he will be very welcomed saying, “. . . lo recibiremos con los brazos abiertos.” Right from the start of their relationship they aim to include one another in literary events. Furthermore, the whole time that the two poets are exchanging letters, they are staying informed about one another and letting the other one know this. Very frequently, both men mention in letters that they know what has been happening in literary circles, as well as with each other’s publications. An example of this is when Neruda tells Carrera Andrade in 1937 that he needs to come to Paris. He writes, “. . . conversemos de todo ello y . . . esto de su maduro libro que me ha causado verdadera alegría.” Again Neruda writes in a later letter, “Porque en N.Y. me han dicho que le han trasladado a Chile, de lo que me alegro a medias ya que según parece, no estare al allí [as quoted] para recibirlle.” Neruda wants Carrera Andrade to know that he is keeping up with him and that he has ties. The men do this to show that they have contacts all over the world and to maintain a connection with one another. Carrera Andrade reminds Neruda of his influence when he invites him to come to speak at Berkeley saying, “He estado hablando de esta posibilidad con el profesor Torres Rioseco. Dígame si le interesaría el asunto para proponerle inmediatamente a las autoridades universitarias respectivas.” Carrera Andrade wants to demonstrate that he knows
important people and has an influence over them. Also when he writes, “No sabe lo
beneficioso que resultaría un viaje suyo . . .,” he is repeating yet again that Neruda could
gain something in the way of contacts by coming to the west coast of the United States.
He strives to assure Neruda of his social authority in an effort to win his trust and
attention, and surely believed that he could benefit from a relationship with such an
influential and active writer. Both men use their letters to improve their social status and
to advance their positions, which is an important element of letter writing that I have
signaled in this work.

The letter has been discussed as a vehicle for the requesting of favors. Neruda
and Carrera Andrade both used their letters to ask favors of one another. Many of these
examples have already been discussed, so I will briefly mention them here. I have
already remarked on the time when Carrera Andrade asks Neruda to come to Berkeley to
give a series of guest lectures. It would surely have reflected well on Carrera Andrade to
show that he had a connection with such a talented and well-known poet as Neruda.
There are many reasons that he may have done this, but indisputably one is to advance
his reputation within the department at the University of California. Moreover, he does
not conceal the fact that he believes a visit to California would also benefit Neruda.
Another example of the use of the letter for personal benefit is when Neruda asks Carrera
Andrade to try to find several rare shells for him and report on their location and prices,
as I, again, have already mentioned. Neruda strikes once more when he suggests to
Carrera Andrade that the two men start a journal together, stating that if they did manage
to carry out such an undertaking then perhaps they should buy the paper in the United
States. He writes, “En ese caso me interesará que hiciéramos una revista entre los dos.
Pero una revista en serio, no una de esas múltiples hojitas que aparecen y se deshilan. Creo que habría que comprar el papel para un año, ahí, en los E.E.U.U.” Neruda knew that Carrera Andrade was living in the US at the time and was hoping that he would have the connections to get paper for a better price than if he were to have to get it on his own. It is interesting to note that Carrera Andrade responds that it is actually not that easy to get the paper that they need. Neruda tried, but ultimately his companion in the United States could not fulfill this request. Carrera Andrade, too, continues asking favors of Neruda. In his 1945 letter, he asks Neruda to recommend that Editorial Nascimento publish a collection of his poems. He states,

Parece que Juan Guzmán Cruchaga escribió a uno de los Nascimento surgiéndole que su Editorial publicara una selección de mis poemas. Guzmán Cruchaga me dice que usted es muy amigo de ese señor y que una indicación suya en ese sentido sería decisiva. Francamente, a mí me gustaría más la Editorial Nascimento que cualquiera otra para una selección de poemas destinados a circular en Chile, Argentina y demás países del sur. Espero su consejo sobre este particular.

Carrera Andrade is first presented with an opportunity because of his association with Guzmán Cruchaga, and now he needs a recommendation from Neruda to secure his publication. This proves that the contacts that he is making are beginning to help him in his rise to fame as an established author. His relationship with Neruda is particularly important, as Neruda was quite well-known by this time and very influential. By 1945, Neruda had already published several works with Editorial Nascimento. Carrera Andrade must have been aware of this, and obviously of his connection, and wanted to capitalize
on his relationship. In the same letter, the Ecuadorian poet cleverly asks Neruda to send him unedited poems to have published under Ediciones Destino, which would clearly reflect well on the publishing company and on Carrera Andrade. This is also to say, “If you help me publish my collection, I will publish some of your latest poems.” Both men knew that the more that they did for one another, the more they could get in return. Whether or not they were actually carried out, both men did use their letters to ask for favors, which is a commonality among many letters.

At this point, it is vital to examine more closely the language that is employed in the letters of Neruda and Carrera Andrade. When asking for favors, it is especially interesting to observe the language that the two men utilize. When Neruda wants help finding shells for his collection he decides to ask Carrera Andrade for assistance. He writes, “Sé que hay muchas tiendas de caracoles en Los Angeles: sería Ud. tan gentil para mandarme los precios de una Tridacna Squamosa especificando el tamaño?” Later he adds, “Mucho voy a agradecerle este encargo porque estoy muy metido en el mundo de los caracoles y ya le mostraré mi colección si pasa por aquí.” Neruda carefully chooses his words when he is asking this favor of Carrera Andrade. He uses the word “gentil” to try to make Carrera Andrade feel that if he does not do it, then he is not as giving and charming as he could be. Furthermore, he cleverly thanks him in advance for doing this favor, saying that shells mean so much to him and that this act would really be appreciated. Last he even goes as far to say that Carrera Andrade could come and

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76 The following books of poems had been published by Editorial Nascimento by 1945: Veinte poemas de amor y una canción desesperada, 1924, Tentativa del hombre infinito, 1926, El habitante y su esperanza, 1926 and on May 12, 1939 he has published the poem “Las furias y las penas.” He then goes on to publish at least three more works with the publishing company before ending up having the majority of his works published by Editorial Losada (at least 22 more works are published by Editorial Losada including Tercera residencia in 1947, Odas elementales in 1954, Las piedras de Chile in 1961, and Memorial de Isla Negra in 1964.)
observe the shells in his collection if he comes to Chile. Clearly Carrera Andrade could not observe Neruda’s shell collection without at least attempting to locate the important shells that the poet seeks. Also, it is as if Neruda is extending a personal invitation to the Ecuadorian poet if he helps him on his quest to find the exceptional shells, therefore aiding him in enhancing his collection. Neruda uses language to persuade Carrera Andrade into following through with his request. Likewise when Neruda requests of Carrera Andrade that he consider heading a journal with him, he then immediately states: “Hace tiempo que vengo observando su línea poética y política y si no sintiera gran solidaridad con su trabajo y su persona no le propondría estos proyectos, menos cuanto que me he negado salvo mucha excepción a dirigir revistas [as quoted].” He attempts to convey to Carrera Andrade that he would not even consider starting and running a journal with most people. Moreover, he claims that it is because he truly feels that they are alike in their views that he wants to work with him and him only. Even if it is true that Neruda felt true solidarity with Carrera Andrade –referring to the many commonalities that have been signaled in this dissertation– the important point is to recognize that he knows where to strategically insert this admiring language (right after he is asking for something). Whether this serves as a reminder to Carrera Andrade or whether this praise is new information to him, it should increase the chance that he accepts the assignment from Neruda, thus helping the former achieve what he wants.

Furthermore, there are many times when both men use respectful language, which is a common feature of many letters, as has been previously discussed. Besides being very appropriate when one needs to ask a favor of another, this deferential language is employed to simultaneously compliment and flatter the recipient of the letter as well as to
show that the letter-writer is educated, sophisticated and polite. An example of this elegant language is when Carrera Andrade writes, “Sinceramente considero como un alto honor el que Ud. me proponga hacer una revista con Ud.” Carrera Andrade wants to express how flattered he is that Neruda has chosen him to take part in the journal, and he also must respond to the words that the Chilean poet directed toward him about not wanting to start a journal with just anyone. If Carrera Andrade had not addressed these kind words from Neruda and responded to them in a similar way, he could have appeared to be discourteous. It was crucial for both men to respond well at this time when they had a budding relationship. Another example of respectful language is when Carrera Andrade writes, “Supe con sincero júbilo su nombramiento de Senador de la República.” Carrera Andrade uses very formal and considerate language to show that he esteems his poet comrade. He continues with very complimentary language about Neruda, pronouncing in regard to the political position that Neruda had recently achieved; “un gran poeta y luchador social de su categoría estaba destinado, en verdad, a ocupar uno de esos escaños históricos. . . .” In the same letter from September 1945 Carrera Andrade adds that he has read all that Neruda has published lately and writes; “fortaleciendo mi opinión de que Usted, Pablo, es el más grande poeta vivo de lengua española.” His compliments are intense and his words are profound, as Carrera Andrade wants Neruda to feel that he holds him in the highest regard possible. Later in the same letter, Carrera Andrade goes on to describe that writers all over the world and especially in Caracas think the same of him. He writes,

Claro que esta opinión no es mía únicamente. Aquí en Caracas, todos los poetas jóvenes piensan lo mismo. La huella suya se ha marcado en la obra poética de toda una generación venezolana. Posiblemente, usted ha hecho
Language is Carrera Andrade’s most powerful instrument. He has achieved his goal with his admiring words; if Neruda does not now believe that Carrera Andrade greatly esteems him, then he never will. It is particularly significant that it is immediately after the use of this extremely reverential language that Carrera Andrade asks Neruda two favors. First he requests that he read the work of a supposedly promising new Venezuelan poet (he encloses a poem by Ney Himiob with the letter) and that he consider writing some introductory remarks about the poet. Next he asks him to think about recommending that a collection of his poems (that is, Carrera Andrade’s) be published by Editorial Nascimento. Carrera Andrade compliments Neruda intensely just before asking two favors of him. Again, I do not want to say that his compliments are empty or phony, just that the poet knows what to say to achieve a desired result. We spot once again respectful language when Neruda writes, “Querido admirado compañero” to start his 1937 letter. Here he comes right out and says that he admires and cares for his comrade poet, leaving nothing up for questioning. Later in 1943 he writes, “. . . pero en vano he esperado una carta suya.” This is a very polite way to say that he really wants to hear back from Neruda, possibly in regard to the favor that he asked of him. Both poets use the Usted form for some time, which also implies that they desire to show respect toward one another.77 A particularly clever way that Neruda uses respectful and formal language is in reference to the shells that Carrera Andrade buys for him. Neruda writes, “Grande ha sido mi placer pero he querido saber si Ud. las ha comprado y en cuánto para enviarle el monto, y si fue un regalo, el más magnífico para mí, agradecerle lo al amigo y al

77Later the poets address this matter and begin using the more informal “tú” form. It is Neruda that initiates this change.
poeta.” Neruda is crafty here in that he ventures out on a limb to assume that possibly Carrera Andrade has bought the shells for Neruda as a gift. It would be difficult for the former to now reply that it was not a present, but rather that he expected to be paid. He continues, “También que no una lista de precios para que no repita su gran gentileza y pueda yo encargar lo que me falta en mi oceáno privado.” Yet again he thanks him for a gift that he is not even sure was really meant to be a present. He ends this letter writing, “Muchas gracias desde dentro,” once more thanking him for this gesture. Neruda is skilled in the way that he manages his words to get what he wants. Both poets use special obsequious and respectful language appropriately, requiring the close attention of the literary critic and proving once again that the letter is a literary work.

Hence, the trading of poems, compliments, and favors, the namedropping, giving and receiving of social contacts, and the invitations to literary events all around the world, as well as guest appearances at influential universities, are all contained in the letters. This covert commerce of intellectual activity and relations is what is overlooked with merely a one-time reading of these letters and many others. It is the close examination of the language that is used that allows the literary critic to not only observe the letter’s literariness, but also to be able to discover what the letter is really saying. The mutual sharing, reading, inviting, supporting, helping, and presumed esteem that the two poets upheld helped them to advance in their political and literary careers.

The letter as a means to foster social ties or to accomplish some other personal gain also puts into question the public nature of the letter. Neruda and Carrera Andrade’s letters have survived decades—some for more than 75 years. It is known that Neruda kept many of his letters and that Carrera Andrade personally bound and preserved his,
and we do know that they made copies of the letters that they sent. This is evident by the fact that Carrera Andrade included the letters that he wrote to Neruda in his collection, meaning that he had a copy of his own of the sent letter. This does not mean that the poets originally meant to eventually publish the letters, but it is significant that they were saved and taken care of. The literary critic must now question whether or not they intended for their letters to be read by others or even published. It has already been proven that these correspondences and connections helped their literary careers, so the question remains if the poets wanted to preserve their letters to show the social ties and associations that they had achieved in their lives. We may assume that the poets were at least aware of the possible future publication of their letters. After all, they were prominent writers and everything that they wrote must have been vulnerable to publication. Regardless of their initial intention, their letters have survived, and they now are being read by many some 65 years later, therefore proving that the letter has been successful once again at blurring the lines between the private and the public. This idea has been discussed in this dissertation and the South American poets’ missives serve as yet another occurrence of the letter crossing this boundary. Furthermore, if the poets had in mind a larger audience than they implied, the argument for the literariness of the letters is strengthened even more.

The letter has been discussed as a vehicle for creating an identity, and I will now examine how this relates to Neruda and Carrera Andrades’ letters. Both men use their letters to paint a picture of their lives for the recipient. What they say is crucial, as it can supposedly reveal a great deal about who they are and what they believe. It has already been argued that the letter-writer often feels that his words will be trusted whole-
heartedly and read as if the letter were a window looking into his soul. This allows the letter-writer to feel confident that he can choose whatever identity he wants, and the recipient will deem it to be true. Thus, a closer look and questioning of the language that is used in regard to the identity that is created will allow the reader of the letter to free himself from being mislead and to achieve an alternative reading. Often times this careful investigation will reveal common characteristics or diverse ways that the letter-writer constructs his identity. Furthermore, the examination of the identity that is created when one writes a letter is bringing the reader one stride closer to treating the letter as literature.

Often the writer of the letter wants to appear to be important and influential, and thus he uses his missive as the perfect tool to establish this identity. One way that he may accomplish this is to seem to be very active and occupied. Both poets want the other to believe that extra time was not something that they possessed. In a letter from Neruda dated August, 23, 1943, he states, “Perdona la brevedad de estas líneas. Estamos en plena lucha electoral. . . .” Neruda inserts himself right into the core of all of the action surrounding the elections in his country and then apologizes for the brevity of his letter to convince Carrera Andrade that he is very important and also to avoid offending his comrade. Neruda again writes about his lack of time and his failure to respond in a timely manner in his 1946 letter. He expresses,

No debe extrañarte mi demora en responder a tu carta, pues hasta este momento, mi correspondencia está incontestada en su mayoría , debido, especialmente a la falta de tiempo que tengo para ello, ya que como tu sabes, a mi actividad literaria se ha sumado desde hace algún tiempo, la labor política que ahora desarrollo.
Carrera Andrade also feels the need to explain his delay in responding. In the letter dated April 28, 1943, he states, “Quise contestar enseguida, pero los acontecimientos adversos me lo han impedido.” Later he adds, “En efecto, las facturas consulares, la ingrata labor, y las preocupaciones domésticas, se han acumulado hasta lo increíble en estas últimas semanas, y a esto ha venido a sumarse la razón mayor para mi silencio. . . .” We must question whether Carrera Andrade was truly too busy to respond in a timely manner, or if he is being hyperbolic. In all incidences we observe a typical literary trope, where the writer is making excuses, and in some cases asking for forgiveness, for being so short or for taking a while to reply. In these situations, the writer is trying to appeal to the “pathos” of the recipient, apologizing and giving an explanation. There are many reasons that one may delay when he should be responding to a received letter, so the offering of an excuse is a way to avoid losing the favor of the letter partner. To simply say that you have not wanted to respond or that you have just been putting other unimportant things first would be ludicrous. The letter-writer must make the recipient of the letter believe that he has truly been too engaged to respond. The writer is also, and more notably, trying to construct a character for himself that says that he is very busy because he is important. The letter is a perfect vehicle for this project.

Another way that letter writers try to show that they are influential is to mention their contacts and to mention that they are privy to what is going on in the literary world as well as with one another. Neruda chooses to write in his 1937 letter that he is among many prominent writers and that they will be attending an International Writers’ Congress. He invites Carrera Andrade to join but hardly gives him enough time to make this a true possibility, perhaps meaning that he just wanted to broadcast that he was
involved. Next he invites his Ecuadorian comrade to Paris to meet with him and chat about all sorts of topics. Neruda is portraying himself as an intellectual who is very active in literary circles in Europe, and who is consequently traveling and mingling with many other writers, perhaps to impress Carrera Andrade. Later he writes, “Porque en N.Y. me han dicho que le han trasladado a Chile . . .,” again referring to his seemingly abundant sources of information. Many other examples have already been discussed in this dissertation in terms of the social contacts that both men boast. Previously I was interested in their occurrence because of what it said about the motives that one has for writing a letter, but it is also significant to examine what this language reveals in regard to the writer creating an identity for himself. Both men knew that they were in control of how they portrayed themselves in their letters, and mentioning their contacts could only help them to create a strong and influential character for themselves.

There are other times when the men simply share their travels and experiences with one another, therefore trying to prove that they are busy, involved, and worldly. Carrera Andrade mentions in his 1943 letter, “Hasta la fecha no sé si voy a quedarme en San Francisco o si voy a viajar a Chile. O si van a trasladarme a Washington como Agregado Cultural del Ecuador. Me hallo en plena vida provisional. . . .” Carrera Andrade does not fail to mention the fact that he is traveling all around the United States and that he could possibly be in Washington with an important new position. Another instance of this is when Carrera Andrade explains in a letter from 1945, “Como usted habrá tenido conocimiento, salí de los Estados Unidos a fines del año pasado y me trasladé a Venezuela con el cargo diplomático de Encargado de Negocios del Ecuador.” Again, he shares his travels and significant title with Neruda, perhaps to exhibit his
involvement in important matters. Neruda takes advantage of the opportunity to tell his companion about his new political position of importance in his 1943 letter. He begins, “Estamos en plena lucha electoral, lucha que reviste hoy caracteres definitivos de vida o muerte. Si las derechas triunfan ahora sería una desgracia, por las consecuencias inevitables: por su permanencia en el poder por largos años o el lógico levantamiento popular.” He wants Carrera Andrade to believe that not only is he very informed about what is going on, but that he is also right in the middle of the action. Next he adds, “Por suerte podemos ser optimistas los que llevamos la candidatura limpia, progresista y honrada de Gabriel González Videla. Hay un inmenso fervor por ella y la recepción que se le hace en todo el país culminó con una verdadera apoteosis en Santiago, el Martes 20 de este mes.” Neruda uses the nosotros form to literally include himself in the action. Then he adds, “Yo soy generalísimo de la Propaganda, lo que significa un trabajo intenso de organización.” Finally pronouncing his post, Neruda is clearly trying to depict himself as an important part of the political situation in his country. He does not want this “intense work” to go unnoticed. In this short letter, he dedicates almost every line to the political circumstances and his views on them, as well as his place within the events. The places that the two poets visit and the titles that they seize are almost always mentioned in the letters. They are public figures and their letters are yet another means to convey their beliefs and spread their agendas.

Two other things that Neruda writes should be addressed in so far as how they contribute to the persona that is being created. In his undated letter he writes, “. . . si no sintiera gran solidaridad con su trabajo y su persona no le propondría estos proyectos, menos cuanto que me he negado salvo mucha excepción [as quoted] a dirigir revistas.”
Neruda writes these words with the intention that Carrera Andrade will feel special that he is being asked to head the journal with him, since he claims that he seldom gets involved with these affairs. Furthermore, these words speak to the identity that he is creating. He wants to make it clear that he would not take part in a journal with just anyone, and this reflects back on him as a man of importance. Last, it is worthy to note that Neruda mentions his interest in shell collecting. He chooses this to be part of his identity, saying “estoy muy metido en el mundo de los caracoles. . . .” Neruda possibly does this to share with Carrera Andrade his more human self and to encourage the former to think of him also as this simple man who loves the sea and all of its creations. The two men had already written about politics, conferences, and journals, but now it was time that Neruda expose his other self to the Ecuadorian poet. Regardless of the actual situation surrounding their comments, both men carefully choose their words and are aware of the persona that they are able to create for themselves for the receiver of the letter. The letter reader, thus, must constantly be aware of the letter as such a vehicle and the fact that the letter-writer is more than likely aware of this opportunity.

In this sense, the letter does not seem to be the vehicle for the intimate feelings of the writer nor for uncovering the depths of the soul. Quite the opposite, the letters themselves seem to be political; they deal with economics, the business of publishing, the exchanging of influential contacts and the overall commerce of having important relationships, the requesting of favors, and the advancement of one’s own position in society and in the literary world. The letter-writer seems to carefully choose his words and take great care in constructing an identity. All of these factors further point to the literariness of the letter.
A key element of letter writing, and a strong argument for the literariness of the letter, is the figurative language that is employed by the letter-writer. In Neruda and Carrera Andrade’s letters, there are numerous examples of figurative and lyrical language that is used. I have already referred to the lines from Neruda’s undated letter, “estoy muy metido en el mundo de los caracoles. . . .” At this time I want to bring attention to these words, as they are very lyrical. What is this “world of shells” that he refers to? He may be referring to all small creatures, or to all of nature. Furthermore, what does it mean to be “inserted into” this “world of shells?” He writes this line as if it were straight from one of his poems, finding an expressive way to say that he enjoys collecting shells.

Neruda also wants his involvement in this world of small things to be known, just as when he writes his poems, in particular his odes. In the same letter he writes, “Hemos sobrevivido con algo cristalino y puro en las manos, pero turbios tiempos se avecinan.” His words are very symbolic; Neruda surely sounds like a poet as he attempts to describe the current political situation in his country, as well as what needs to be done. He uses figurative language, “algo puro y cristalino,” to describe the circumstances. He may be referring to the writings that have survived and the need to write more. The point is that he is abstract in the way that he refers to the state of affairs. Here we also see an example of personification; “tough times are approaching.” In addition, he uses alliteration with the “s” and the “t” to cause the line to sound more musical. Neruda also uses personification when he writes, “Mis planes para regresar a Chile necesitan su respuesta.” He uses these literary devices just as he would in his poetry. Another incidence where figurative language is used is when Neruda thanks Carrera Andrade for the shells, but says that he desires a price list so that he can buy the shells in the future. He writes,
“También quiero una lista de precios para que no se repita su gran gentileza y pueda yo encargar lo que me falta en mi oceánico privado.” Neruda metaphorically and skillfully refers to his shell collection as his “private ocean,” precisely as he would in a poem. In the same letter he writes, “Grande ha sido mi placer,” to express his contentment about receiving the shells. This language is formal, and at the same time expressive. In his 1937 letter, Neruda commences with very lyrical lines. He expresses, “Siempre en espera de escribirle la carta que nunca escribo, que tal vez nunca escribiré a pesar de las muchas palabras que tenemos que deciros.” Neruda is possibly referring to the fact that he has not written the Ecuadorian poet, although he has thought about it and has wanted to do it. He chooses these words to express that maybe there is so much more that he has to say to Carrera Andrade. What is significant is that he leaves it open and is graceful about not having written sooner. Often the poets simply choose expressions and words that are less ordinary for their letters. It is interesting that Neruda writes, “Te tengo muy presente.” Again, this line is meant to be taken figuratively, not literally. The cliché expression would be “pensando en ti,” but Neruda is more original in his choice of language to express that he is thinking of his comrade. Neruda also repeats the “t” sound to achieve a more pleasant effect. Neruda writes, “Con gran cariño le abraza” to close his undated letter, as opposed to a more traditional finish. All of these examples show that Neruda frequently uses poetic and imaginative language in his missives, just as he does in his poems.

Carrera Andrade is also very lyrical in his letters. An example of his figurative language is when Carrera Andrade’s writes that he has been “viviendo tres o cuatro de sus poemas” in reference to Neruda’s latest poems. All of us have been impacted by
something that we read at some point in time and we realize that the words stay with us as we continue to go through life, but Carrera Andrade has a very poetic way of expressing this. If we are not to take these words literally (which we clearly cannot) then why should we take other things that the poets say at face value. Carrera Andrade is also very poetic in his April 1943 letter to Neruda. He writes, “Su mensaje me causó inmensa alegría. Su nombre, su firma de rasgos como relámpagos o raíces sacuden siempre una campanada simpática en el pecho.” His similes flow just as they do in his poetry. Neruda’s signature is like “lightening bolts or roots,” and instead of saying that he is happy to hear from his poet comrade, he describes that he hears pleasant bells in his heart upon receiving his letters. Again in the same letter, he writes in reference to the journal that Neruda wants to start, “Su mano en la rueda de piloto podría, en estos momentos, dar el rumbo necesario a la cultura continental.” Once more, Carrera Andrade chooses a more poetic way to say that Neruda’s role in the matter could be what is needed for the continent. It is also slightly hyperbolic to say that the journal that the two men may start could affect a whole continent. Later in the same letter he writes “. . .después de mucho caracoleo . . .” to describe the fact that he visited many shell vendors to find the sample that Neruda wants. Again he chooses an original way to say something ordinary that can’t be taken literally. Other examples of expressive language exist. When Neruda expresses, “Estamos en plena lucha electoral, lucha que reviste hoy caracteres definitivos de vida o muerte,” he, once again, uses dramatic words to say that the situation is serious. Carrera Andrade continues with his lyricism in his 1945 letter to Neruda. He expresses in reference to Neruda’s impact in Venezuela, “La huella suya se ha marcado en la obra poética de toda una generación venezolana.” Yet again Carrera Andrade chooses a very
poetic way to communicate his comrade’s influence; it is Neruda’s “footprint” that has
left its mark on the Venezuelans. In the same letter, he writes, “Un gran poeta y luchador
social de su categoría estaba destinado, en verdad, a ocupar uno de esos escaños
históricos donde ha relampagueado muchas veces la voz solemne de América.” The way
that the Ecuadorian describes the government position is unique; it is a post where the
solemn voice of America has blazed like lightening. Yet again in the same letter the poet
writes in regard to a young Venezuelan poet, “Su tono lírico tiene un auténtico temblor de
experiencia vital, una segura maestría, una madurez de fruto que pesa en cada imagen, en
cada línea, en cada estrofa.” Carrera Andrade poetically describes the talent of the young
writer with a great deal of expression and feeling, and utilizes images that one would
expect to find in a poem. Instead of just saying that he is a talented poet, Carrera
Andrade masterfully chooses an original and poignant way to express his opinion. It is
clear that the Ecuadorian poet does not want to sound routine in his writing; the
expressive language that he is well-known for is used in his letters, as well as in his
poetry. Neruda and Carrera Andrade’s letters are full of language that is very similar to
their poetry. This language cannot be ignored when examining their letters and confirms
that their missives are, indeed, very literary.
  
  After taking a closer look at the figurative language that is used in the poets’
letters, it is now necessary to examine the space that exists when the two poets sit down
to write their correspondence. Many times this space seems to be consistent with that
which is created when writing poems. Often, as we have just witnessed, we see very
similar language in their letters as we can find in their poems. Throughout this
dissertation I have examined the places that these two poets have traveled, and I have
tried to expose the context that surrounded their writings. Often this context is also the
same for their letters as it is for their poems. As I have stated, the job of the critic is to
examine what really makes the poet different as he sits to write his poem as compared to
his missive. I have come to the conclusion that often the space is more similar than
previously considered, and the lyrical language that both Neruda and Carrera Andrade
used in their letters proves this. As they sit to write their letters they are reaching out to
one another, just as their poems are heading for an audience. The letters are sent and
their poems are published, both leaving their creators and landing in others’ hands.
Moreover, many of the themes that arise in their letters also surface in their poetry which
indicates that the men at many times choose the same subject matter for both forms of
writing. This situation is even further more exaggerated in the case of Neruda and
Carrera Andrade. After all, often a gifted poet cannot help but be lyrical, no matter what
he writes. The consideration of the space that is constructed during the letter writing
process is another important factor to be examined in thinking of the letter as literature
and one that furthers this claim.

Very often literature generates social change. Neruda and Carrera Andrade use
their letters to inspire action and reform, as well as to enlighten one another about
significant social and political events. Many of the examples of the poets’ involvement
in affairs of the state, and within the society in general, have already been discussed in
this work, and the theme of politics as it is reflected in their personal letters will be
discussed further in the next section of this dissertation. Therefore, I will merely signal
some of the important political remarks at this point to demonstrate the use of the letters
to produce a transformation within the society. In his 1946 letter, Neruda remarks on the political situations in Ecuador and Chile and inspires hope and change. He writes,

Espero y lo esperamos todos, que pase pronto este negro período y que vuelvas a representar a tu país, ojalá en Chile; aunque aquí se preparan, por los mismos instigadores de siempre, nuevos golpes en contra de la democracia y la libertad chilenas, que hasta ahora hemos defendido con tanta tenacidad y valentía.

Neruda desires to not only share his beliefs about the political affairs of Ecuador with his comrade, but he also comments on his future appointment. He uses the “nosotros” form to include himself in the action and the politics of his government. He also uses the first-person plural to comment on the effort that he and others have made to defend Chilean democracy. Neruda appears to be engaged and committed to change and he uses his letters to convey these beliefs. From his 1937 letter, it has been discussed that Neruda invites Carrera Andrade to an international congress of writers. This congress titled “Segundo Congreso Internacional de Escritores Antifascistas” took place in Valencia in July and was in support of the Spanish Republic. Many prominent writers were there other than Neruda like Antonio Machado, Miguel Hernández, and Rafael Alberti to rally and support this important cause. Neruda is an avid supporter of the Republic and aims to recruit others to join him on his voyage to different cities in Spain. Again, Neruda uses his letter to spread the word, just as he also writes poems about this tumultuous time in Spain’s history. In his 1940 letter, the Chilean poet notably suggests that the two men start a journal together where they can comment on the political situations of their countries. He affirms, “Pero hoy es diferente el caso. Hay necesidad de precisar muchas cosas. Hemos sobrevivido con algo cristalino y puro en las manos, pero turbios tiempos se avecinan. Tenemos mucho por luchar.” Neruda is expressing that he feels it is their
duty to make their voices be heard. Carrera Andrade responded to that letter in 1943, saying, “Su proyecto es magnífico.” He then goes on to write, “Esta revista es necesaria en estos momentos en que en nuestra América nadie se atreve a decir una palabra responsable. Habría que hacer oír la voz de nuestro Continente. Habría que clarificar ciertas posiciones, explicar ciertas actitudes, demostrar que el espíritu hispanoamericano se halla vigilante.” Here Carrera Andrade replies that he agrees with Neruda about the effect that the journal could have. He is proclaiming the necessity of such a journal to ultimately help the future of Spanish America, and there is fervor in his words. Both men are passionate about the future of their countries. They want to take action, and they use their letters to articulate and circulate these beliefs.

In his 1943 letter, I have already discussed the fact that Neruda talks in detail of the “lucha electoral” that is taking place and speaks of the candidate that he supports, Gabriel González Videla. In closing this letter, he affirms, “. . . pronto tendrás amplias noticias. He pedido a la Alianza de Intelectuales que te envíe ‘Aurora de Chile,’ la revista de la Alianza y una de las más interesantes que salen en Chile.” This is very significant as it speaks to Neruda’s desire to enlighten and involve Carrera Andrade in the exchange of political ideas that was happening through this journal. He felt that the Ecuadorian should be privy to what was happening, so he asks that the journal be sent to him. It is these publications that are capable of causing real change within a society, along with other efforts, and to feel that there are others that support your same beliefs and that there is dedication and zeal in regard to the ideas that are circulating, can inspire revolution. Neruda uses his letter to reach out to his comrade and involve him in the situation. In general, both Carrera Andrade and Neruda employed their letters to educate

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78For more information in reference to this journal see pages 56 and 57 of this dissertation.
one another about the political circumstances of their countries, to exchange ideas about these conditions, and to inspire change in one another. Their letters served to accomplish the same means as their poems, stimulating transformations in the society.

Often the letter has been used, like other forms of literature, to fill a void or to connect. Both poets used their letters to maintain contact with others and to rid them of their loneliness. In Neruda’s 1946 letter he writes, “. . .espero, por lo tanto, mantener más contacto con mis amigos del exterior.” Neruda and Carrera Andrade were constantly traveling, so they relied heavily on their letters to remain in touch with other beings.

Both poets were persistently looking for forums to exchange ideas with others, and their letters served this purpose. Carrera Andrade writes in his 1943 letter, “Me gustaría cambiar ideas con Ud. sobre todas estas cosas.” This demonstrates his desire to see Neruda and to converse about various topics, and therefore exchange ideas. Their aspiration to see one another is also apparent from the letters. Many of these examples have already been mentioned previously, so I will just briefly signal them now. Neruda states in the first letter that he wants Carrera Andrade to come to an International Writers Congress and tells him that he will be very welcomed. He also invites him to come to Paris in the next few days saying that they could discuss the conference, poetry, and “mucho más.” He later writes in his 1942 letter, “Cuando inicié mi viaje pensé en la posibilidad de encontrarnos.” He goes on to state that if Carrera Andrade comes to Mexico he must tell him “la fecha exacta de su viaje y cómo se irá.” He also tells Carrera Andrade that if he comes to Chile he will show him his shell collection. Carrera Andrade encourages Neruda in his 1943 letter to come to the Los Angeles while he is still there. He affirms, “Ni sabe lo beneficioso que resultaría un viaje suyo a California. Aquí
cuenta usted con muchos amigos, con muchas simpatías.” He then states that he could help to arrange that Neruda come as a visitor to the University of California at Berkeley. From Neruda’s 1943 letter he writes that he needs to know Carrera Andrade’s travel plans so that he can make his (based on when Carrera Andrade will be in close proximity). He writes, “Muchas cosas le pedí que me dijera sobre su viaje y en especial si viene o no por este país. Mis planes para regresar a Chile necesitan su respuesta.” Neruda felt the desire to speak and visit with Carrera Andrade and may have even changed his plans if it could have meant meeting with the poet. He closes this letter saying, “Lo abrazo y espero sus palabras y su presencia. Hasta muy pronto, lo espero, y muchas gracias desde dentro, su amigo. . . .” It appears that Neruda did intend to meet with Carrera Andrade and speak of many things. Yet another example is when Neruda writes in his 1946 letter that he hopes that Carrera Andrade will come to Chile. All of these lines show their enthusiasm for wanting to see each other and spend time together and to the reality that they wanted company because they were often times alone. The poets used their letters as a perfect solution to their desire to speak to others and fill a void.

The writers also utilized their letters to build comradeships, and the letters can reveal a great deal about the personal relationship that Neruda and Carrera Andrade shared. Starting with the first line of the earliest letter, from June 1, 1937, Neruda writes “Querido, admirado compañero” to Carrera Andrade. The word “compañero” here has already been discussed in regards to the closeness that it suggests. Not only does Neruda feel drawn to Carrera Andrade, but he feels that he is his comrade or brother. He also writes “admirado.” This may signal the respect he has for his friend. Of importance is
when Neruda asks that Carrera Andrade use the “tú” form with him. In the letter from June 16, 1946, he writes, “Considero que nuestra amistad es bastante como para suprimir el trato de Ud., entre nosotros, y como lo ves, así lo hago en esta carta.” Neruda makes this request because the two men had helped one another, stayed in touch, shared their work and their views, and they felt that they were alike. To further demonstrate this point, the word “amigo” is used numerous times in their letters. I do believe that Carrera Andrade and Neruda felt connected as two South American men with similar lives, ideas, visions, and hopes for humanity. The wanted to hear what one another had to say, they learned from what they heard, and they more than likely were simultaneously impacting one another.

As I have previously argued, it is important to remember that the letter is culturally and historically specific, and that this context should not be overlooked. From Carrera Andrade and Neruda’s letters, there are many references to important historical events, many of which I have previously referred to, that can reveal valuable information about the past. The historical and cultural context can also, however, give the reader great insight as to what was actually being communicated or exchanged. The first is a reference to the International Writer’s conference that was held in Spain in 1937 during the Civil War. This was a time when many writers were becoming outraged about the results and deaths of the devastating conflict, and they were joining other writers from all around the world to discuss the atrocities and the solutions. The context here is vital. It is not that Neruda just wants to see Carrera Andrade or that he solely wants to include him; he is inviting him to a congress that is heavily charged and rooted in politics. This is
a sure signal that he believed from the start that the two men did have similar political views.

Another reference of significance is when Neruda writes in his 1943 letter that he has asked the “Alianza de Intelectuales” to send Carrera Andrade the journal of the group, “Aurora de Chile.” This information is significant, as it speaks to Neruda’s involvement within politics. Neruda founded the Intellectuals’ Chilean Alliance for the Defense of Culture on November 7th, 1939, and then continued to lead and organize the group. The Intellectuals’ Chilean Alliance was an organization whose purpose was to gather antifascist artists and intellectuals around important, social, political and cultural issues. The “Aurora de Chile” journal was released in 1941. The publication’s purpose initially was to support the Chilean presidential candidate Pedro Aguirre Cerda and to coordinate the aid and protection of Spanish republicans in Chile. The references to this group of intellectuals and to the journal open the door to valuable information about Neruda and additionally about the politics and events of the times. In discovering the mentioning of this publication we are able to glean insight into the journal that we would otherwise not have. For example, Neruda writes about the journal that it is “la revista de la Alianza y una de las más importantes que salen en Chile.” Neruda obviously thought highly of the journal and believed that it would represent, for an outsider, the most important happenings of the times. In addition, as we are beginning to understand more about Neruda’s political attitudes, we can clearly assume that the journal is along the same lines, as he is promoting its circulation, and is the founder of the organization that created it. Neruda is, yet again, constantly campaigning for his political beliefs, and he is targeting Carrera Andrade at this time. It is significant to note that Neruda asks the
Alliance to send the journal to Carrera Andrade, and therefore, include him in this political group. All of this discussion gives us a better context to study the publication, and in turn, to analyze the letters and to learn more about Neruda.

It is important that Neruda writes two of the letters to Carrera Andrade while he is in Mexico. The poet arrived to Mexico City on August 21, 1940 with the possession of a consular position. The country amazed Neruda because of the richness and diversity of its geography, the pre-Columbian legacy, and the influence of the presence of reputed Spanish exiles. It is significant to note that Neruda fell in love with Mexico and was so inspired that he wrote many poems about the magnificent country. He said farewell to Mexico in August of 1943. Right before he leaves, he writes to Carrera Andrade and asks the former if he will be able to come to the “grandioso país,” and states, “mis planes para regresar a Chile necesitan su respuesta.” Neruda was truly inspired by Mexico, and I believe that he wanted to share the experience with Carrera Andrade.

Many other references that reveal the historical and political situation of the times are present in the letters like when when Carrera Andrade states, “Habría que hacer oír la voz de nuestro Continente. Habría que clarificar ciertas posiciones, explicar ciertas actitudes, demostrar que el espíritu hispanoamericano se halla vigilante.” With these lines we are assured that these two poets are not going to turn their backs on their countries, or on politics in general, and given the context of these words, we now know that there was surely a lot going on in regard to these South American countries, and the world, for that matter. Moreover, given what we now know about the work and biographies of these two poets, we can affirm that they did spend their lives representing their countries and their beliefs, and aiming to make their voices be heard. In conclusion,
just as it is necessary to investigate the context of poems, novels, or plays, it is also important to examine the context in the letter, and in recognizing this, the literary critic can much more successfully examine these new writings.

Themes

Many of the themes that Neruda and Carrera Andrade embraced in their lives and their poetry are mentioned or alluded to in their letters starting with theme of solitude, that was a major focus in their poetry. Besides speaking to their solitude, among the most important themes are politics, their altruism and sincere concern about the future of their countries and clearly the rest of South America, their travels, and their delight in the little things in life. Through their letters, not only do we gain knowledge of the underlying themes that appear throughout the poetry of the two authors and see how they were wound into their daily lives, but the letters also offer a different means to express their same desires. In discussing the themes from the letters at this time, it is necessary to point out that because the men’s lives, and therefore themes, are weaved continuously throughout their letters, many of the passages in the following section have already been examined or at least mentioned earlier in the chapter. Furthermore, due to the fact that this is a multifaceted and detailed approach to letter writing, often I will refer to the same lines of text more than once to expose the many interpretations and ways of reading them. Thus, at times I have intentionally repeated sections of the letters to display the multiple layers of this examination.

Throughout this study, I have explored the theme of solitude as it pertained to the lives of both poets, and now it is apparent that their letters also speak to this theme. Neruda and Carrera Andrade were seeking out one another; they were trying to establish
a bond and they were filling an empty space in their lives by keeping up their relationship and their correspondence. What better way to try to combat their loneliness than to write letters and to receive them in return. Both poets mentioned countless times that they felt alone and anguished by their solitude. Hence, they sought out others to become part of their lives and the letters prove that. Over and over, both poets mentioned in the letters the possibility of meeting, talking about their ideas on politics and poetry together, sharing travel stories, etc. They truly wanted companionship and they could have looked for it in one another because of their many similarities that I have indicated in this dissertation; parallels in their literary production, the places that they visited, the consular and diplomatic positions that they held, their drive and ambition and their political views, among others. They also could have chosen one another because of the connections that they both had and the fact that they knew that they could each benefit from a relationship with the other. It makes perfect sense that they would be drawn to each other because both of them felt connected and alone at the same time. They were South American men, poets, diplomats, politicians, travelers, etc., but most importantly they were two men ironically joined together by their loneliness. The letters are tangible proof of this solitude. All of the examples that I have cited previously that refer to the two poets’ desires to want to meet with one another and see each other support the argument that they were alone and they were seeking companionship.

In the personal correspondence of Neruda and Carrera Andrade there are numerous times when the poets expose their views or allude to politics. The earliest reference to politics is from the first letter that I have, dated June 1, 1937 from Neruda. Neruda starts off this letter writing, “Querido, admirado, compañero.” The word
“compañero” alone is heavily charged with political undertones. Referring to him as a “comrade” in this context alludes to the brotherhood that Neruda felt for Carrera Andrade because of his similar political beliefs. This language is engaged, showing the fervor of the then young Neruda. It also shows that he feels close enough to the poet to use this language, or at least want to portray that he does. Neruda knew about Carrera Andrade’s political affiliation and vice versa, this being just one more reason that they felt connected. In the same letter, Neruda asks Carrera Andrade if he will be able to come to an international congress of writers and tells him, “No decida nada antes de pensar lo muy bien” and “lo recibiremos con los abrazos abiertos.” Many writers of this time united not only because of their profession but also because they often had similar political beliefs. Neruda wanted Carrera Andrade to come to this conference in Spain for political reasons, among others. Later in an undated letter from Neruda written around 1942, after Neruda has proposed that the two men head up a journal, he states, “Hace tiempo que vengo observando su línea poética y política y si no sintiera gran solidaridad con su trabajo y su persona no le propondría estos proyectos. . . .” This proves that Neruda felt politically linked to Carrera Andrade. In the letter from 1943, Neruda’s sincere interest and involvement in politics is evident when he says, “Perdona la brevedad de estas líneas. Estamos en plena lucha electoral, lucha que reviste hoy caracteres definitivos de vida o muerte. Si las derechas triunfaran ahora sería una desgracia, por las consecuencias inevitables: por su permanencia en el poder por largos años o el lógico levantamiento popular.” With these words, he is revealing his very charged and opinionated view of the political situation in Chile. Later he writes, “Por suerte podemos ser optimistas los que llevamos la candidatura limpia, progresista y honrada de Gabriel González Videla. . . .”
Next, he adds, “Yo soy generalísimo de la Propaganda, lo que significa un trabajo intenso de organización.” Little by little Neruda was getting pulled into the world of politics and he seems determined to share this information with his comrade. Later we see in the letter from Carrera Andrade from 1945 that he congratulates Neruda on his new political position. He states, “Supe con sincero júbilo su nombramiento de Senador de la República. Esta elección popular me confirma en la alta opinión que tenía de la democracia chilena y me dá la medida de la grandeza de su país.” In this letter, Carrera Andrade also shares information with Neruda about his most recent diplomatic position. He states, “. . . salí de los Estados Unidos y me trasladé a Venezuela con el cargo diplomático de Encargado de Negocios del Ecuador.” Carrera Andrade was also becoming very involved with politics, and would partake of a lifelong participation with affairs of the state. In his 1946 letter, Neruda makes yet another comment on the political situations in Ecuador and Chile that proves that the two men frequently spoke of politics and kept up with the political state of affairs of one another’s countries. He declares, “Supimos de tu digna actitud ante el desgraciado viraje de Velasco Ibarra,” quien ha

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79 The Radical Party presidential candidate Gabriel González Videla requested of Neruda to act as his campaign manager. González Videla was supported by an alliance of left-wing parties and Neruda fervently campaigned on his behalf. Once in office, however, González Videla turned against the Communist Party. The breaking point for Neruda was the violent repression of a Communist-led miners’ strike in Lota in October 1947, where striking workers were forced into island military prisons and a concentration camp in the town of Pisagua. Neruda openly spoke in outrage about this repression which resulted in a dramatic speech to the senate on January 6, 1948 called “Yo acuso.” He and his wife went into hiding a few weeks later.

80 Neruda was elected a senator to the Communist party for the northern provinces of Chile on March 4, 1945. Six months later, Carrera Andrade was congratulating him on his new position. Neruda would officially join the Communist party four months later.

81 Velasco Ibarra rose to power in Ecuador after the May 4, 1944 revolt against the rule of Carlos Arroyo del Río, and finally declared himself dictator March 30, 1946. Velasco Ibarra said one thing but did another and eventually lost widespread support, as he threatened the rights of the indigenous people, reinstated the old constitution from 1906 which limited the rights of the people, forced the communist party underground, built prisons for his political enemies, and allied with conservative oligarchies, among other things.
vuelto las espaldas a su pueblo. Espero y lo esperamos todos, que pase pronto este negro período . . .” Later he writes that Chile had been suffering, “nuevos golpes en contra de la democracia y la libertad chilenas, que hasta ahora hemos defendido con tanta tenacidad y valentía.” Both Neruda and Carrera Andrade were advising one another of the political situations in their countries and of their own political opinions, while awaiting each other’s responses. They felt comfortable sharing these ideas with one another because they knew that they were both politically on the same page. They also wanted to show their support for one another, their solidarity, and to spread their own ideas throughout the continent. Furthermore, they recognized how fortunate they were to be able to communicate with someone who thought the same as they did, and so they capitalized on this, by making an effort to keep their relationship alive. Neruda really shows the extent that he became involved with politics in his 1946 letter. He writes that his letters have been unanswered because of, “la falta de tiempo que tengo para ello, ya que como tú sabes, a mi actividad literaria se ha sumado desde hace algún tiempo, la labor política que ahora desarrollo.” Neruda, a Nobel Prize winning poet, had chosen to focus more on his political activity at this time than even his poetry and other writings. His political involvement would last a lifetime, as I have stated, and would even cause him to at one point be a candidate for the presidency of his country.  

The political remarks from the letters of Neruda and Carrera Andrade show that not only were they privy to what was going on in South American countries, but that they also had a sincere concern for their fellow man and their continent, a theme that is very

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82Neruda was nominated as a candidate for the Chilean presidency in 1970, but ended up offering his support to Salvador Allende, who went on to win the election and was inaugurated the same year as the first democratically elected socialist head of state. Shortly after, Allende appointed Neruda the Chilean ambassador to France.
present in their poetry as well. In addition to these remarks, the letters divulge the fact that both men wanted to fight for these beliefs. These aspirations have already been discussed in regard to Neruda asking his comrade to start a journal with him, stating, “Tenemos mucho por luchar.” It has also been seen that Carrera Andrade agrees with Neruda on the matter, and believes that the journal is extremely important for the times stating that, “Esta revista es necesárísima en estos momentos en que en nuestra América nadie se atreve a decir una palabra responsable. Habría que hacer oír la voz de nuestro Continente. . . .” He then goes on to speak of the “espíritu hispanoamericano.” The letters confirm what their poetry proves; that both men had a sincere interest in their native lands. When Neruda is speaking of the upcoming election in his 1943 letter, he declares, “si las derechas triunfaran ahora sería una desgracia, por las consecuencias inevitables. . . .” Neruda illustrates through this letter, which is completely dedicated to politics, that he really is passionate about the situation, and it is his intensity that will translate into some of his best poems about the future of his country and continent. In his 1945 letter, Carrera Andrade refers to Neruda as a great “luchador social” that will occupy a position where the “voz solemne de América” can be heard. All of these lines point to the same conclusion; that the men were fighting for their voices to be heard and to represent and improve their countries. One last example comes from Neruda’s 1946 letter when he states, “Espero y lo esperamos todos, que pase pronto este negro período y que vuelvas a representar a tu país, ojalá en Chile. . . .” Neruda seems to express here that he is concerned about the future of Ecuador as well as that of Carrera Andrade. Later he writes that new challenges are facing his country and “la democracia y la libertad chilena,” which he has fought so hard to achieve. He says, in regard to democracy and to
freedom, “que hasta ahora hemos defendido con tanta tenacidad y valentía.” Again Neruda reports that he is part of a larger entity that is fighting for rights and for democracy. Both poets write of these themes in their letters, just as they do in their poetry. The have long been regarded as “Men of the Americas” for their inspiring and award-winning verse, and now this assertion is also upheld in their letters.

Neruda and Carrera Andrade spent many years traveling the globe and experiencing new places. Often they did this while holding consular positions in different countries, meeting with writers, taking part in conferences and involving themselves in literary journals and other publications. For whatever the reason, our poets found themselves on the move and many times in a constant state of travel. The places that the two men have visited come up frequently in their poetry, as they do in their letters. Neruda and Carrera Andrade are repeatedly sharing their stories of trips to far off lands and asking one another about their travels. In his April 30th 1943 letter, Neruda writes, “Muchas cosas le pedí que me dijera sobre su viaje. . . .” We already know that both men traveled extensively, and now we know that they saw this similarity in one another. Neruda states in a letter from 1942, “Tengo interés en que conversemos, por carta o como sea, sobre su viaje. Yo tengo proyectado regresar este año también.” Neruda knew that he could gain from hearing about the travels of his comrade, as he too could possibly end up in the same lands encountering similar situations. In his 1941 letter, Neruda states, “Si Ud. no viene a México (me parece esencial que no se vaya de este lado sin conocer este grandioso país) dígame la fecha exacta de su viaje y cómo se irá.” The Chilean poet not only wants to know when and how his comrade will travel, but he also strongly recommends that he visit Mexico. Both men use their letters to
converse about their travels. It is also noteworthy that it is possibly this trip to Mexico that inspires Neruda to write some of his most important poems about Latin America (and Mexico) in the works that would comprise *Canto general*. The poets speak of this theme in their poetry and in their letters. In fact, the concept of writing letters coincides perfectly with the lives of Neruda and Carrera Andrade, who spent enormous amounts of time traveling. If it were not for letter writing, they may have had a hard time sustaining any relationship at all with other people, and so their letters nourish them to a certain extent. Both Neruda and Carrera Andrade were witnesses of their times. They were hungry to observe the world that surrounded them, and they took in all that there was to see and experience.

The letters also speak to the poets’ awareness of the little things in the world around them, showing their appreciation and delight in everyday objects. In Neruda’s letter written around 1942, he asks Carrera Andrade if he could locate two specific shells in Los Angeles for him. He writes, “. . . sería Ud. tan gentil para mandarme los precios de una *Tridacna Squamosa* especificando el tamaño?” Then he adds, “Si tienen también un *Argonauta Argo* del mayor tamaño, cuánto?” Finally he adds, “Mucho voy a agradecerle este encargo porque estoy muy metido en el mundo de los caracoles y ya le mostraré mi colección si pasa por aquí.” Neruda’s delight in accumulating shells was obvious from his shell collection that he displayed at his house in Isla Negra, a collection that I was able to see in Chile in the year 2000. The shells that he had obtained from all over the world, varying in size, shape, and color, were scattered throughout his oceanfront home. Neruda capitalized on the fact that Carrera Andrade was in Los Angeles and decided to ask him to send him some information on the shells there. That
Neruda asks his poet friend to do this favor speaks to the nature of their relationship. He felt close and comfortable enough to Carrera Andrade to ask this of him. Carrera Andrade in turn buys the shells for Neruda and mails them to him. He states in his April 1943 letter, “Tuve la fortuna de encontrar los ejemplares que Ud. me pidió de caracoles escamosos y argonáuticos.” This act shows the great effort that Carrera Andrade expended to please Neruda. Neruda replies in his next letter, “He recibido como maravillosa sorpresa dos de las conchas que más quiero. . . .”

Neruda’s shell collecting requires attention now in what else it says about the poet. To answer this, we need to think about the idea of collection in general. Why does one collect things? A primary reason is that one is genuinely enamored with the object, but it is also a way of filling a void. Collecting things can make people feel busy when they are otherwise sad or lonely. Often, people will start collections as a way of passing their time or giving purpose to their lives. Unfortunately, though, when one has a collection with the purpose of trying to fill an empty space (both literally as in a display case, and metaphorically as a space in one’s heart) we know that it is a void that can never be filled through the mere act of collecting. There will always be the hunt and the appetite for more and the collection can never be complete. This idea of collecting to fill a void coincides very well with the persona of Neruda. As a man stricken with a sense of solitude, his collections were yet another attempt to occupy his time and to try to overcome his aloneness. It is quite fitting that Neruda was reaching out to Carrera Andrade and that the former helped him in his search. Carrera Andrade understood Neruda and, although he may have known that it was impossible, he wanted to help him fill that void. It is also very interesting that the whole development of Neruda’s shell
search and Carrera Andrade’s role in it resembles the letter writing process that took place between the two men and can serve as a good metaphor for it. Both were writing letters to also fill a void or combat their solitude, and they helped one another in that mission.

As observed in their poetry, both Neruda and Carrera Andrade were obsessed with living life; they were constantly captivated by the awe-inspiring natural world of their native South America, and they were regularly charmed by the people that they met. Furthermore they were fascinated by the every day objects in life and sang of their delightful presence. Therefore, letter writing seems once again to be an extremely fitting activity for these two men, as the act has been associated with the life-force itself. Earle asserts that “the narrative flow of correspondence is coterminous with life itself” (84) and as Janet Altman says “to write is to live when the letter is literally the only sign of life” (qtd. in Gilroy 84). For both Neruda and Carrera Andrade living was writing poetry, traveling, observing, serving, and corresponding. This inspiration with life that is felt by both poets is present in their poetry, as well as in their letters.
CONCLUSION

I have explored the many correspondences of Jorge Carrera Andrade and Pablo Neruda by signaling the major parallels in their lives and works and by revealing and analyzing their personal letters. I have exposed the prominent themes that the poets employed throughout their poetry and their personal letters; subjects that were born out of their life experiences. I have also examined epistolary writing in general in an attempt to contextualize and effectively study the poets’ letters, uniting many fragmented works of criticism on the topic and offering my own perspective. Last, I have applied this examination to the poets’ letters to achieve a more comprehensive analysis and have rendered the letters literary works.

The bond between these two poets was clear possibly because they felt the connection and the similarities that I have been signaling throughout this dissertation. The fact that they saw these many commonalities in each other is perhaps the key to unraveling the parallels in their literary production, as it can account for many of them. Because of the discovery of this personal correspondence, not only can the literary critic now more successfully study their intertwining lives and works, but he can also study the relationship that they had. Furthermore, one now has access to very enlightening and significant texts by these two prominent authors which deserve the attention of the literary critic and many times parallel the efforts that they were trying to achieve with their poetry. Considering the letter as literature, I have applied this supposition to the
missives of Neruda and Carrera Andrade in an effort that the letter will begin to attract more attention from the literary critic. I was also very aware that I would glean information from the letters that would parallel the men’s poetry, and that the letter would enrich the overall analysis of their literary production. In studying the letters as literary texts, I was able to more fully appreciate and take advantage of the letters for what they are and not be mislead by their traditional form.

All of the two poets’ correspondences point to the fact that the two men did share a connection and a relationship and observing this correlation in one another, it is clear that they influenced each other. After confirming—through their letters— that the poets shared their poetry, for example, the similarities in their mature works cannot be merely the result of coincidence. Affirming that they were constantly reading one another’s latest publications, the two men inspired and impacted each other as they advanced in their careers as poets, as proven by the many parallels in their verse. The men’s letters, thus, support the theory that I had before their discovery in regard to the writers’ mutual influence on one another, and I have aimed to expose this relationship and the similarities that I perceive in a comprehensive way throughout this dissertation.

There are many projects that I would like to pursue in the future in regard to this dissertation. Considering the similarities that exist among the two poets, I believe that there are many more factors that can be compared and researched from this point on, such as the various mutual friends that the poets shared. For example, both poets knew other writers well, such as Federico García Lorca and Gabriela Mistral. They were also both influenced by French poets, as well as North American writers, like Walt Whitman. I would like to explore these relationships and influences in much more detail in the future.
I would also be very interested in looking at the political works of both men, regardless of whether or not they were narrative, especially those that were published in political journals of the time. As the two men wrote poetry and represented their countries, they also contributed to discussions, took part in congresses and meetings, and wrote articles about their political and societal views. A study based solely on these parallel opinions, as they surfaced in their poetry and in their other contributions, would shed light on the historical and cultural context of the time and would explore the political connection that the two men had with one another, as well as with their own countries and abroad.

In regard to the poets’ letters, I would like to compare the missives that they wrote to one another to other letters that the men wrote, thus revealing language that is particular to the ones that I have studied. As well as focusing on the content it would also be very interesting to consider the individuals with whom they communicated and to compare any intersections that arise in their networks of acquaintances, contacts, and friends. These links can further connect the two poets and enrich the study of their many similarities, as well as provide new texts by the writers that merit the attention of the literary critic.

As far as the epistolary genre is concerned, I would like to explore the letter further focusing on the Latin American epistle. Since this is a writing form that dates back to the fifteenth-century discovery of the American continents and origins of Latin America, I believe that the genre can shed light on the historical and cultural formation of the Spanish-speaking nations as well as provide valuable new texts for the literary critic. Just as the chronicles of the new world and letters from Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, for
example, have been studied in literature classes, I feel that other letters need to be considered as well and that the genre needs to be explored as a literary form.

Thus, this work is a starting point for many other future investigations. I believe that the correspondences among Jorge Carrera Andrade and Pablo Neruda have been adequately revealed, as well as the personal relationship that they had. I also believe that with this dissertation the letter is on its way to gaining the attention that it deserves as a literary work. Although I feel to have revealed an interesting study, these areas of research warrant further attention.
Querido amigo: Cuanto agradezco su telegrama que recien recibí en México. Cuando inicié mi viaje pensé en la posibilidad de encontrarnos. Aun ahora estoy deseoso de alcanzar en algunos meses más California. Pero cuando parte Ud?

Porque en N.Y. me han dicho que le han trasladado a Chile, de lo que me alegro a medias ya que según parece, no estare allí para recibirle.

Tengo interés en que convenzamos por carta o como sea sobre su viaje. Yo tengo proyectado regresar este año también. En ese caso me interesará que hicieramos una revision entre los dos. Pero una revisión en serio, no una de esas múltiples hojitas que aparecen y se dejan. Oigo que habría que comprar el papel para un año, ahí en los E.E. U.U.

Hace tiempo que vengo observando su línea poética y política y si no sintiera gran solidaridad con su trabajo y su persona no le propondría estos proyectos, menos cuanto que me he negado salvo mucha escencia a dirigir revistas.

Pero es hoy diferente el caso. Hay necesidad de precisar muchas cosas. Hemos sobrevivido con algo cristalino y puro en las manos, pero turbios tiempos se acercan, y nos movemos por luchar.

Si Ud. no viene a México (me parece esencial que no se vaya de este lado sin conocer este grandioso país) dígame la fecha exacta de su viaje y cómo se irá.

Sé que hay muchas tiendas de caracoles en Los Angeles, ¿sería Ud. tan gentil para mandarme los precios de una Tridacna Squamosa especificando el tamaño? Si tienen también un Argonauta argo del mayor tamaño, cuánto? Puede la casa que le informe mandarme una pequeña lista de ejemplares exóticos, en buen estado y grandes, con sus precios? Mucho voy a agradecerle este encargo porque estoy muy metido en el mundo de los caracoles y ya le busco mi colección si pasa por aquí.

Con gran cariño le abraza.
Caro y recordado amigo:

Su mensaje me causó inmensa alegría. Su nombre, su firma de rasgos como relámpagos o raíces, suelen siempre una campanada simpática en el pocho. Su contesta enseguida; pero los acontecimientos adversos me lo han impedido. He estado viviendo tres o cuatro de sus poemas: enferme- des en la familia, el fantasma de un barco de guerra, trabajo, etc. En efecto, las facturas consulares, la ingrata la- rgo de cosas domésticas, se han acumulado hasta lo im- posible en estas últimas semanas, y a esto ha venido a sumarse razón mayor para mí silencio: Hasta la fecha no sé si voy a quedarme en San Francisco o si voy a viajar a Chile. O si van trasladarme a Washington como Agregado Cultural del Ecuador. Me hallo en plena vida provisional...

Su proyecto es magnífico. Sí, si se proponga hacer una revista con Ud. Esta revista es necesaria. Sí. Nuestro continente debería ser clarificador en ciertas posiciones, explicar ciertas actitudes, demostrar que el espíritu hispanoamericano se halla vigilante. Su mano en la rueda de piloto podría, en estos mo- tos, dar el rumbo necesario a la cultura continental. Per- mítame preguntar: ¿Cuál es el mensual, en qué momento de su vida, en las circunstancias, en el momento...? Me gustaría cambiar ideas con Ud. sobre todos estos temas. No sabe lo beneficioso que resultaría, al viajar, suyo a California. Aquí cuenta usted con muchos amigos, con muchas simpatías. Tal vez podríamos venir, invitado por la Univer- sidad de California, en Berkeley. He estado muy hablando de es- posibilidad con el profesor Torres Rosesco. Dígalo si le inte- resta el asunto para proponerle inmediatamente a las autoridades universitarias respectivas. Sí, que le complacería mucho una serie de lecturas suyas sobre poesía hispanoamericana o poesía en general.

Tuvieron la fortuna de encontrar los ejemplares que Ud. me pidió de crípticas escanciadas y argentinas. En la cuestión de la lista de adjuntos escritos, he tenido menos suerte, pues era santa, después de mucho esfuerzo y mucho devanamen- to, que atender a con gusto su liberal pedido. Pero, no se ha sentido nada clausurado ni ocioso. De todos modos, la dirección de este caso, por si le interesa es: Whitney Bros. Cliff House, 1666 Point Lobos, San Francisco, California.

Recibía un gran abrazo de su admirador fervoroso y afortunado. (I)
Abil 30

Méxi c. D.F.

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra: He

received from the Concha, which was
present to all, a very nice large box
with many gifts. The box was
opened, and we found inside a
large quantity of books, papers,
music scores, and other
miscellaneous items. I
wished to send you my
regards and wishes for
ever-ending health and
prosperity. I wish for you
to continue your good
work and to take care of
your health. Much love
and joy.

I ask you to deliver this
letter to the special
García de Núñez to your
care. My plan is to return
to Chile as soon as
possible. Everything is
ready. I am sending you
this letter as a sign of
my love and appreciation
for your work.

Hasta muy pronto, les
marche gracias desde
Aventura.

Tu amigo,

Pablo
SANTIAGO, 23 de Agosto de 1943.

Señor
Jorge Carrera Andrade.
Caracas.

Mi querido Jorge,

Perdona la brevedad de estas líneas. Estamos en plena lucha electoral, lucha que reviste hoy caracteres definitivos de vida o muerte. Si las derechas triunfaran ahora sería una desgracia por las consecuencias inevitables: por su permanencia en el poder por largos años o el lógico levantamiento popular. Por suerte podemos ser optimistas, los llevamos la candidatura limpia, progresista y honrada de Gabriel González Videla. Hay un inmenso fervor por ella y la recepción que se le hace en todo el país culmina con una verdadera epopeya en Santiago, al recto 29 de este mes. Yo soy generalísimo de la Propaganda, lo que significa un trabajo interno de organización, pero te tengo muy presente y me entusiasmo con las noticias de los intelectuales que te envío "Amor de Chile", la revista de la Alianza y una de las más interesantes de aquí en Chile.

[Signature]
16 de Septiembre de 1945

Apartado 1149

Señor Don
PABLO NERUDA
Senador de Chile
Santiago,

Mi querido Pablo:

Supo con sincero placer su nombramiento de Senador de la República. Esta elección popular me confirma en la alta opinión que tenía de la democracia chilena y me da la medida de la grandeza de su país. Un gran poeta y un luchador social de su categoría está destinado, en verdad, a ocupar uno de esos escenarios históricos donde ha relampagueado muchas veces la voz solemne de América.

Como usted habrá tenido conocimiento, salí de los Estados Unidos a fines del año pasado y me trasladé a Venezuela con el cargo diplomático de Encargado de Negocios del Ecuador. Me fue posible así concretar nuestro plan de publicación de una revista literaria. Además, usted viajó a Chile en los mismos días y no tuvimos oportunidad de encontrarnos en California para echar a un lado sus proyectos. Desde entonces me encuentro sin noticias suyas. Naturalmente, he leído todo lo que usted ha publicado en los últimos tiempos, fortaleciendo mi opinión de que usted, Pablo, es el más grande poeta vivo de lengua española.

Claro que esta opinión no es mía únicamente. Aquí en Caracas, todos los poetas jóvenes piensan lo mismo. La huella suya se ha marcado en la obra poética de toda una generación venezolana. Posiblemente, usted ha hecho escuela en este país más que en ninguna otra parte. Hay hasta un centro literario que se llama "Pablo Neruda". Todo está admirado desinteresadamente ha culminado ahora en un magnífico poema "Oda a Pablo Neruda" que acaba de escribir Ney Himbo, uno de los valores de la nueva poesía venezolana. Himbo, que es un leal amigo, me ha pedido que yo sea quien le en su poema al maestro, y así lo hago, complaciéndome de ser el intocador de un poeta novede de Venezuela. Creo que Ney Himbo es el más interesante que ha dado la nueva generación en este país. Su tomo lírico tiene un auténtico temblor de experiencia vital, una sagra maestría, una madurez de fruto que pesa en cada imagen, en cada línea, en cada estrofa. Pausadamente está realizando este jondo y profundo una obra que le colocará en la primera fila de la poesía hispanoamericana.

Parece que Juan Guzmán Cruchaga escribió a usted de los Nascimiento sugeriéndole que su Editorial publicara una selección de mis poemas. Guzmán Cruchaga me dice que usted es muy...
Mi querido Pablo:

Suple con sincero júbilo su nombramiento de Senador de la República. Esta elección popular me confirma en la alta opinión que tenía de la democracia chilena y me da la medida de la grandeza de su país. Un gran poeta y un luchador social de su categoría estaba destinado, en verdad, a ocupar uno de esos escáneres históricos donde ha relampagueado muchas veces la voz solemne de América.

Como usted habrá tenido conocimiento, salí de los Estados Unidos a fines del año pasado y me trasladé a Venezuela con el cargo diplomático de Embajador de Negocios del Ecuador. No me fue posible así concretar nuestro plan de publicación de una revista literaria. Además, usted viajó a Chile en los mismos días y no tuvimos oportunidad de encontrarnos en California para ejecutar algunos proyectos. Desde entonces me encuentro sin noticias suyas. Naturalmente, he leído todo lo que usted ha publicado en los últimos tiempos, fortaleciendo mi opinión de que usted, Pablo, es el más grande poeta vivo de lengua española.

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dor de un poeta nuevo de Venezuela. Creo que Hey Himio es lo más interesante que ha dado la nueva generación en este país. Su tomo lírico tiene un auténtico temblor de experiencia vital, una segura maestría, una madurez de fruto que pesa en cada imagen, en cada línea, en cada estrofa. Pausadamente está realizando este joven serio y profundo una obra que le colocará en la primera fila de la poesía hispanoamericana.

Parece que Juan Guzmán Cruchaga escribió a uno de los Nascimento sugiriéndole que su Editorial publicara una selección de sus poemas. Guzmán Cruchaga me dice que usted es muy amigo de este señor y que una indicación suya en ese sentido sería decisiva. Francamente, a mí me gustaría más la Editorial Nascimento que cualquiera otra para una selección de poemas destinados a circular en Chile, Argentina y demás países del sur. Espero su consejo sobre este particular.

Aquí estamos publicando unos cuadernitos bajo el rubro de Ediciones DESTINO y desearíamos tener material suyo. Le ruego, Pablo, que nos envíe dos o tres poemas inéditos si es posible. Cada cuadernito tiene 32 páginas, en letra grande, y un dibujo o retrato del autor. Las Ediciones no publican sino poesía. Núdeme algo para uno de los números próximos.
Querido amigo: Cuanto agradezco su telegrama que recien recibo en México. Cuando inicié mi viaje pensé en la posibilidad de encontrarnos. Aun ahora estoy dispuesto a alcanzar en algunos meses más California. Pero cuando parte Ud?

Porque en N.Y. me han dicho que le han trasladado a Chile, de lo que me alegro a medias ya que según parece, no estare allí para recibirle.

Tengo interés en que conversemos, por carta o como sea, sobre su viaje. Yo tengo proyectado regresar este año también. En ese caso, me interesará que hiciéramos una revisión entre los dos. Pero una revisión en serio, no una de esas múltiples hojitas que aparecen y se deshilan. Creo que habría que comprar el papel para un año, ahí, en los E.E. U.U.

Hace tiempo que vengo observando su línea poética y política y si no sintiera gran solidaridad con su trabajo y su persona no le propondría estos proyectos, menos cuanto me he negado salvo mucha escena a dirigir revistas.

Pero es hoy diferente el caso. Hay necesidad de precisar muchas cosas. Hemos sobrevivido con algo cristalino y duro en las manos, pero turbios tiempos se acercan, tenemos mucho por luchar.

Si Ud. no viene a México (me parece esencial que no se vaya de este lado sin conocer este grandioso país) digame la fecha exacta de su viaje y cómo se irá.

Sé que hay muchas tiendas de caracoles en Los Angeles. Sería Ud. tan gentil para mandarme los precios de una Tridacna Squamosa especificando el tamaño? Si tienen también un Argonauta arco del mayor tamaño, cuánto? Puede la casa que le informe mandarme una pequeña lista de ejemplares exóticos, en buen estado y grandes, con sus precios? Muchos voy a agradecerle este encargo porque estoy muy metido en el mundo de los caracoles y ya le dije mi colección si pasa por aquí.

Con gran cariño le abraza.
Esperando prontas noticias tuyas te saluda tu ami-

PABLO NERUDA.
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