

The Immovable Feast:

Paris Meets the Jungle in Manuel Scorza's La danza inmóvil

Marcy Schwartz

Rutgers University  
meschwar@rci.rutgers.edu

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Manuel Scorza's last novel La danza inmóvil exposes the blurred boundaries between regional social struggle, international political organizing and transnational cultural marketing. He departs from the central concerns of his previous novels, which form a five-part narrative "ballad," La guerra silenciosa,<sup>1</sup> that encompasses the jungle and mountain areas of the Andean region. In this first novelistic project Scorza portrays the vast inequities in land ownership and political control between these disadvantaged areas and the more developed Peruvian coast. In La danza inmóvil, Scorza exhibits the culmination of his renegotiation and revival of indigenist literary expression in light of new narrative experiments in Latin America. Conditioned by the nueva novela of the 1960s, Scorza's work fuses social realism and mythical fantasy, political critique and ironic humor, crónica and fiction.<sup>2</sup> Scorza's fiction ultimately exposes his own conflicted social identification and reveals the local and the international as interconnected realms. In La danza inmóvil Scorza exploits the collaboration of the local and the global in textual confrontations that push beyond the boundaries of his earlier work.

Scorza's La danza inmóvil, published just prior to the author's death in 1983, offers a self-reflexive commentary on the author's own experiences and cultural identification. Here Scorza expands his local landscape and cast of characters as he opens his fiction to the contemporary international realm of leftist organizing that he situates in Paris. La danza inmóvil is a metafictional novel that investigates literary production as critically as his earlier novels confronted local political and economic structures. In a challenging esthetic shift, Scorza offers a transnational autocritique of the third world novelist in the international economy.

La danza inmóvil incorporates the many conflicts of an internationally travelled and translated writer who has been committed to local struggles at home but now lives and publishes abroad. While La guerra silenciosa's esthetic project linked

local social realism to magical realism, La danza inmóvil encompasses post-"Boom" international cosmopolitanism for a harsh critique of the literary market and commodity culture. In this last novel, Scorza juxtaposes Andean peasant revolution with an urban, international world centered in Paris. As the plot vacillates between Peruvian and Parisian settings, the characters waver as well in their affections and commitments to revolutionary activism and international culture represented by Paris. The intra- and intertextual complexity of La danza inmóvil straddles Paris and the Peruvian jungle, questioning the transnational production of politics and culture. Scorza examines leftist activism, regional writing and international literary marketing along with his own position in cultural and political projects. His evaluation finds all of these processes inextricably interconnected and all of their endeavors ideologically compromised.

La danza inmóvil is Scorza's first "urban" novel, "una reflexión sobre el arte y la nación" (Forgues Palabra 88). He intermingles a critique of both neo-indigenist and urban cosmopolitan literary conventions to link local, socio-political struggle with international sentimentality. The novel employs Paris as the complex stage for the play of political, erotic, esthetic and textual rivalries. Scorza draws on Paris's legendary promise of sexual adventure for expatriate men and of first-hand contact with European high culture to expose the city as a fossilized touristic museum for failed romantic and erotic fantasy. The plot includes the story of its own production, in a metanarrative that ironically criticizes the transnational production of a large corpus of contemporary Latin American narrative. Scorza reveals Paris's role in a commercial network of publishing centers that appropriates Latin American narrative. He sharpens his critique of Paris's (and Europe's) publishing hegemony by according the city the role of international gathering place for revolutionary activists. In La danza inmóvil, the writer/activist and narrator/revolutionary exploit place and space in the representation of the literary market, third world revolutionary struggle, and postcolonial cultural politics.

The novel has a contrapuntal structure with three plot lines that alternate Paris and the Amazon as setting or imaginary reference. The Paris publishing world is the first of these three, introduced in the novel's opening scene. The business negotiation at the famous literary brasserie La Coupole between a Peruvian novelist and a Parisian publisher continues in fragments throughout the novel, and provides the frame for the other tales.<sup>3</sup> The story of the Latin American novelist's search for recognition in Paris alternates with chapters recounting the revolutionary guerrilla Nicolás's escape through the Amazon, and the third story, a passionate romance, between the Peruvian

writer Santiago and Marie Claire. Both sub-plots overlap with and depend on the frame. In the romance, for example, Santiago turns out to be a revolutionary as well as a writer, and Marie Claire is the woman who caught his eye during lunch earlier that afternoon at La Coupole. The scene at La Coupole leads into the revelation of the writer's revolutionary novel in the intercalated chapters. At the same time, the boredom, hypocrisy, and humiliating alienation of the lunch scene cause the writer's romantic imagination to "write" the new story of his love for Marie Claire.

The initial scene continues throughout the novel as a recurrent frame to offer a scathingly bitter but humorous critique of the international literary marketing of Latin American contemporary fiction. A Peruvian novelist in Paris, desperate to publish, enters La Coupole, an elegant restaurant full of Japanese tourists, American politicians, and Eastern European Nobel-winning scientists. There he endures lunch with the editor of Universal Publishers and the Mexican director of their "New World" collection. The novel he hopes to sell them is about a captured Peruvian guerrilla fighter in the Amazon who relives significant episodes of his life before undergoing torture. When the series director disparagingly associates the Peruvian's novel with the earthy regional narrative of the 1920s, the unpublished guest retorts in defense, "En mi libro, hay personajes que narran la historia desde París" (Scorza 17). The mention of Paris reconnects his work with the urban, international current of Latin American writing, and distances it from local nationalistic settings. The novel's self-reflexivity positions the autobiographical character as a conflicted member of a transnational cultural economy that targets Latin American fiction as a commodity.

Desire, or the romantic pursuit of an ideal, govern all three of the novel's interwoven plots. The sensual and erotic episodes of Nicolás's and Santiago's tales, in their respective pursuits of freedom and of their Parisian lovers, run parallel to the writer's pursuit of publishing. The sensuality and suspense of Nicolas's escape through the Amazon and Santiago's affair with Marie Claire frequently shadow and overtake the frame scene, which temporarily disappears in the novel. Yet the common reference point for erotic desire in all three sub-plots is Paris, its cafés, cultural establishments and beautiful women. The names of restaurants, bars and cafés, an enumeration beginning in the first chapter, immediately associates erotic desire with institutionalized signs (usually French) for sensual pleasure: Las Delicias, Le Rendez Vous, L'Etoile d'Or. La Coupole, then, is the crowned setting, the Parisian domed height that brings the writer to the threshold of publishing and erotic success. There a contract may be negotiated, and there the most beautiful woman will greet him. Santiago and Marie Claire

experience (in the writer's fantasy) vestiges of Paris as the only place where one can experience "el encanto de lo inesperado," the "danza inmóvil" where a painting in the Louvre momentarily comes alive (168). Almost within his reach, Paris once again seems to promise the satisfaction of all desires, but that promise is deceptive. The irony of La danza inmóvil's frame lies in its skillfully maintained critical distance. Santiago's publishing saga manages repeatedly to lure the characters and the reader into the city's romanticized traps while at the same time revealing the hypocritical mechanisms at work in the Latin American cultural construct of Paris.

The two sub-plots, one Andean and one Parisian, come to an end, fatefully circumscribed within the initial frame. Finally, Nicolás's flash-back catches up with him, and he is captured and tied to the tree where he will be devoured by ants. Santiago decides, within his fantasy, to abandon the revolutionary struggle in order to stay with Marie Claire. But his illusions are destroyed when he discovers her at an orgy of Parisian artists in the sculpture studio of an old Peruvian friend.

The final chapters of the novel follow these dramatic dénouements and return to the luncheon scene at La Coupole. Here Scorza's integration of dreams and fantasy plays an important role in concluding the metafiction as the character's fantasies subvert the capitalistic marketing of his novel.<sup>4</sup> Two alternative conclusions link the love affair that occurred only in the writer's imagination, what Scorza calls "un sueño soñado" (Forgues 88), with the "real" scenario of publishing negotiations in Paris. In both versions, Marie Claire approaches their table, in one version as the publisher's daughter, in the other as his press agent. Both personae want to meet Santiago; first because she has read his books, and then because she recognizes him and recalls their imagined affair. He will not pardon her for the pain of "la pasión inmemorial que me había consumido mientras ella cruzaba por entre las mesas, por entre todas las mesas de todos los restaurantes del mundo" (236). In both cases, the writer resists her recognition, denying that he is the Santiago of either story with which she associates him. He abruptly leaves the restaurant, refusing to attach his identity to either fiction. He is wounded by his own imagined tale, and disdains the Parisian publishing world that provoked it.

The narrator of La danza inmóvil criticizes the Paris that is considered an esthetic ideal according to certain class and cultural conventions in Latin America. However, he resigns himself to the reality of Paris's power to manipulate and influence significant elements in the formation of the literary canon. In fact, he embraces the very power factors he disdains in the pursuit of a publishing contract for his novel in Paris. Scorza publishes his novel in Barcelona, entangled in the same entrepreneurial cultural mechanisms his novel's story exposes.

The novel ironically illustrates Paris's potential as a ubiquitous representation of European culture in the Latin American cultural conception of esthetic standards adopted by some urban elites. It is not French literature that this novel designates, but Paris as the axis mundi for all high culture. For Scorza, the Louvre, the Bibliothèque Nationale, European classical music, wine labels, French cuisine and architecture all circulate as signs of high culture. Paris is the meeting place for revolutionaries, leftist intellectuals, and expatriate artists, as well as the depository for art's canonical forms.

Yet the Paris and the Amazon outlined in La danza inmóvil superimpose a mythic concentration of meanings and references onto the concrete, geographical realities and contributions of a culture. Semiotically, the places evoked in Scorza's text unleash a complex of signs and meanings some of which are grounded in the historical past while others depend on elements of the Latin American cultural consciousness. Scorza's "settings" participate on levels that he identifies as "histórico real" and "mitológico" in his writing:

un nivel histórico real, que ha sido ratificado siempre por quienes han ido al lugar, con personajes reales que están vivos; y hay también un nivel mitológico, fantástico, que exige sin embargo una aclaración: no utilizo el Mito como un escape de la realidad, sino como una aclaración de la realidad (Forgues Palabra 81).

For Scorza, both the Andean and the European settings function mythically on several levels. Paris harbors romantic fantasy and nostalgic reminiscing as well as the business realities of international publishing. The Amazonian scenes, with their detailed episodes of escaping prisoners and revolutionary organizing, function as illustrations of an exotic, touristy travel-log. La danza inmóvil asserts the interconnectedness of the political and the literary through its self-conscious and self-critical structure.

La danza inmóvil reconfigures the conventional narrative map of Paris, its street scenes, strolling flâneurs and riverside vistas, and turns the city into an international hub for Latin American subversive organizing. Scorza converts the city into a crossroads for smuggled cash, falsified passports and hidden compañeros. Neighborhoods and subway stops in Scorza's novel map out "los compañeros dispersos en la clandestinidad de París" (125). One chapter reunites fellow revolutionaries from Bolivia, Peru and Cuba through furtive exchanges about briefcases full of cash, airport itineraries, and secret meetings. Paris becomes a metaphorical airport or train station where characters hurriedly meet, hide and then flee again. Scorza intertextualizes Cortázar's Libro de Manuel, where subversive Latin Americans scorn Parisian traditional bohemian neighborhoods (Montparnasse

and the Latin Quarter) to organize a kidnapping at working class cafés in peripheral districts.

Scorza deflates Paris as paragon of high culture through the manipulation of spatially and culturally charged reference points. La danza inmóvil grafts its plot onto a touristic cultural itinerary, making stops at sites such as La Coupole, the Jardin du Luxembourg, the Ile St. Louis, and the Louvre. As the novel "empties" Paris of its symbolic vigor, it strips its cultural icons and renders them hollow rituals. García Canclini includes the Louvre in his discussion of hegemonic artistic institutions, symbols of "traditions" and "territories" that modern culture challenges. The Louvre, like other high culture domains, has become "un programa iconográfico que dramatiza ritualmente el triunfo de la civilización francesa, la consagra como heredera de los valores de la humanidad" (45). La danza inmóvil is less concerned to critique French cultural institutions than to expose the Latin American (and generally international) valorization of them. Scorza counters that semiotization of France for external consumption with a novel about itinerant artists and revolutionaries who "producen fuera de sus países y descontextualizan los objetos" (García Canclini 48).

Scorza's novel parodies the wilderness adventure novel and the action film (Westerns), with cinematographic flashbacks and cuts, in the intercalated chapters of the Amazonian novel. Here Scorza critiques the exoticization of the "natural" American landscape and its commodification for export. The narration in these sections is as sensual and bodily as in the erotic scenes in Paris, and again serves to link the local and the cosmopolitan through language. The novel attacks the expectations of literature that, as Djelal Kadir critiques, "belongs to 'exotic' regions and other-world cultures through which cosmopolitan readers expect to be taken on tour" (Kadir xi). The text intermingles dolor and deseo, hunger and thirst, physical torture and physical pleasure in both the Amazonian and Parisian scenes to cross over the expected regional boundaries.

Names, as connotative markers and signs of identity, become particularly crucial to deciphering the novel's transnational, overlapping world(s). The names of the protagonists' lovers unravel the politics of the Paris construct. Francesca in La danza inmóvil functions as a synecdochal figure, not only of France but of the phenomenon of the Latin American Parisian gaze. As a variant of "France," the name serves as gendered embodiment of Parisian sexual motifs. This sort of depersonalized semiotic icon points to a commodification of both women and Paris. The names take on the function of consumer tags that advertise the conflation of the city and the body, and associate bourgeois cosmopolitanism with sexual consumerism. Along with Francesca, La danza inmóvil's Marie Claire and Colette form a cluster of

cultural icons that the novel ironically strips of personhood or "characterization" in the hollow reductionism of their connotative context. Beyond their linguistic roots, these French names tap cultural realms (the writer Colette, the magazine Marie Claire) that evoke and contribute to the image and politics of Paris for Latin American urban identity. These names and their characters' fictional roles feature commercial endeavors--prostitution and popular press magazines--that link them to Paris as merchandise that the city offers for sale.

The metafictionality of La danza inmóvil (the fragmentation and pastiche, a novel within the novel, multiple narrators and "authors") recalls the collage esthetic of Libro de Manuel.<sup>5</sup> The parallel stories that Scorza fragments and intersperses suggest a book (or books) in the making. The structure sustains ambiguity as to which story or book (if not all of them collectively) is posing as the "fictional" manuscript entitled La danza inmóvil, by the deferral and distrust of all of the plot's threads. While Scorza's earlier work does experiment with narrative voices and metafictionality, his last novel presents a much more radical revision of novelistic practice. The novel proposes an alternative, revolutionary literary form that shows its seams (the abrupt intercalations and overt contract negotiations) and thereby divulges the process of its own emergence as a cultural object.

In La danza inmóvil Scorza problematizes the hegemony of Paris and European capitals on Latin American cultural production. While previous communities of writers proffered an image of the city as the capital of literary inspiration, La danza inmóvil repositions Paris's centrality in the arenas of cultural legitimation and commercial success. As one of the required first steps toward international recognition, Paris has become an essential determiner of the canon or "list" of works accepted and included in the hegemony of cultural institutionalism.<sup>6</sup> Particularly since the international "Boom" in Latin American narrative since the 1960s, Paris and a handful of other European capitals have contracted, published, translated, marketed and distributed Latin American fiction. At the plot level as well as within its structure and discourse, La danza inmóvil criticizes the control that Paris has exerted on esthetic sensibilities and marketing strategies.

The "Boom" marketing of Latin American fiction in the 1960s and 1970s functions as an economic backdrop to Scorza's novel. Hernán Vidal associates the "Boom" with the apogee of consumerism in which Latin American narrative is transformed into "mercancía de distribución y consumo masivos, sometido a sistemas de propaganda, promoción y comercialización similares a los del cine, la televisión, la ropa de moda y los aparatos de uso casero" (Literatura 67). The history of the "boom" reveals a

complex transnational network that includes Paris, Barcelona, and a few Latin American publishing capitals as co-producers of a new international market.<sup>7</sup> With this transnational comercialization of Latin American culture, many leftist critics in the 1970s feared the danger of estrangement from local concerns in the currents of North American and European literary and marketing cultures. Vidal also criticizes the contradictions between the supposed leftist ideology of many "Boom" writers and the capitalist system that assured their success. These writers "intentan una crítica autosindicada como revolucionaria contra los efectos de la dependencia que les dieran prominencia histórica" (Vidal 67).

Although La danza inmóvil would seem to scorn this literary market phenomenon along with critics like Vidal, Scorza's attitude is ambivalent. That Scorza published this last novel in Barcelona only adds to the irony of his self-critique. Despite the obvious first-world appropriation of Latin American culture as an exotic "other," Scorza recognized this newly emerging and expanding readership as the "primer territorio verdaderamente libre de América." Alluding to the writers of his generation, he affirms:

hemos creado una instancia pública, superior al poder de información de una prensa minada por la burguesía; porque nosotros, los escritores, todos juntos, tenemos millones de lectores, una especie de gran plaza pública donde discute (Campra 178).

For Scorza, literature that acquires the dimensions of the popular public square entails added ideological responsibility. In the late 1950s, Scorza started his own publishing endeavor called Populibros that produced inexpensive massive editions of novels that were sold in literary street fairs. Scorza's project dovetailed with the international "Boom" as a counter-marketing effort that provided accessible editions for local readers.<sup>8</sup>

La danza inmóvil exemplifies the "Boom"'s popular and international consequences, and Scorza's scrutiny of cultural production trends in which he actively, if ambivalently, participates. Clearly, an important corpus of Latin American narrative still looks to Paris for recognition in both the intercontinental and inter-American canon.<sup>9</sup> According to many Latin American intellectuals, contact with Europe, and preferably Paris, is acknowledged, recommended and sometimes even required for literary success. Connections with the European publishing industry are not only essential for publishing internationally, but also for establishing the writer's reputation at home.<sup>10</sup> Paris as literary capital legitimates Latin American literature, assigning it new value through the city's intellectual and cultural institutions. Paris helps create Latin American narrative as a commodity, marketing and distributing it as an appropriated European good whose value is attributed, and whose



canon is in large part determined, via transnational interactions (see Appadurai). The texts that participate in this appropriation, agree to a European cultural hegemony controlling their distribution.

La danza inmóvil reveals the conflictual bargaining, the negotiation of Latin American identity, within a Europeanizing cultural market. The novel includes the story of its own emergence as a cultural commodity, incorporating the legal negotiations, media campaigns, and literary public relations as ironic meta-productional twists. Scorza's incorporation of Paris in its canon forming and publishing role in La danza inmóvil constitutes an elaborate example of the thematic and discursive results of this cross-cultural production of literature.<sup>11</sup>

This novel is Scorza's critique of the "Boom," and even more specifically, his critique of literatos "que han convertido a París en un eje central y motivador de su labor artística y observan a América desde La Coupole, desde le Jardin des Plantes. . . ." (Gutierrez 38). In the same way in which he attacks those he considers false intellectuals, Scorza criticizes the Paris that perpetuates a deceptive trap. La danza inmóvil empties Paris of its idealized cultural contents:

. . . salgo a la calle: vacía; recorro el Boulevard: vacío; paso las tardes en la Biblioteca Nacional: vacía; me embriago en L'Etoile d'Or: vacía . . . bebo vino en la Taverne de Henri IV: vacía . . . cruzo semanas vacías y por el día vacío tambaleándome deambulo hacia la noche vacía de París vacío (215).

Suddenly Paris abandons the characters. The all-enveloping world they believed in results in a cold touristic place where they spend only fleeting moments. The meeting place for international revolutionaries seems dissolved, and the love affair disappoints Santiago. He plans to abandon the cause, and the novel ends without any clear conclusion. The city of seduction cannot save Nicolás from his torture, nor can it answer Santiago's various confused quests. It is Paris that leads the character to trade in his revolutionary ideals for romantic fantasies, which are in turn abruptly dispelled by the city's literary bureaucracy. Paris never delivers what the characters presume it promises. The novel strips the city of symbolic vigor. What is left are wandering remnants of deflated illusions. Juxtaposition with the Amazon, along with revelation of Paris's disillusioning underside, exposes the literary capital as an institutionally controlling network.

Scorza's La danza inmóvil demonstrates the political dimensions of contemporary debates over high culture and mass culture, urban and regional writing, and postcolonial identity. His last novel not only explores stylistic and structural innovations but also demands scrutiny of the international publishing industry and of the idea and practice of revolution

for Latin America. For Scorza, politics, business and culture are inextricably linked processes. Writing engages the novelist in a global endeavor, a project that produces culture as a commodity while it examines the political nature of verbal expression and reconfigures the dynamics of transnational interactions. Cultural commodification corrupts esthetics, degrades emotions, and empties the icons of national or regional identification of their meaning. On the other hand, it also boosts distribution, promotes translations, and encourages the trafficking of new objects that redefine the politics of the local and the global.

In the transnational and cross-cultural process of La danza inmóvil, the lines between the European and Latin American worlds often blur. Beyond the inclusion of Paris as theme and structure, the discourse registers the plot's various worlds in linguistic and semiotic interpenetration. Signs that generally pertain to one world begin to appear in the other. Streets, names, foods, indigenous versus European references and lexicon intermix, serving as shifters or points of cross-cultural contact. While La danza inmóvil initially appears to designate clearly separated realms--the guerrilla's escape in the Amazon and the writer in Paris--eventually the characters in the Amazon reminisce about previous romantic escapades in Paris, and Santiago's identity as a doubting revolutionary fuses with that of the writer in Paris.

Rivers often serve as pivotal signs in the discourse's rich texture, effective and subtle shifters since they belong in both the Parisian and the Amazonian zones of the novel. Towards the end of the novel, one chapter ends with Santiago leaning on the railing of one of the bridges over the Seine, considering suicide; "miró otra vez las aguas sucias del Sena. . . ." (220). The next chapter begins as Nicolás "siente amor por el río, acaricia el lomo de aguas pardas, el poderoso flanco del río por donde su balsa desciende victoriosa" (221). A street in Paris, the rue du Comandant Gibau, bifurcates in its simultaneous references to the military (echoing military titles familiar among the Peruvian rebels) and to French history. Marie Claire is another split sign as her name simultaneously indicates both a character in the Paris scenes and the title of the French magazine that the soldiers talk about in the Amazon. Rather than distinct, polarized cultural and discursive territories, the signs throughout the narrative reflect the fluid overlapping boundaries of transnational cultural production.

Extensive episodes enmesh the language and objects of the novel's competing territories. Representative signs from one realm cross into another and intrude on the falsely exclusive terrain. Franklin Gutierrez calls this Scorza's multi-directional language. He finds in particular a central contrast between the military sections, with their brusque and

imperative tone, and the soft, sensual poetic tone of the love story. Other contrasts throughout the novel juxtapose Marxist philosophy and high culture estheticism, or cosmopolitan romance and jungle survival. In the chapter entitled "Francesca entre los lagartos," for example, Nicolás reminisces about Francesca, his lover in Paris, while in the midst of his escape through the Amazon. The short chapter is decorated with the flora and fauna of the Amazon: names of trees (tangana, shapaja) and birds, foods (mate, yuca), descriptions of the jungle's heat and its victim's thirst. Sensual memories of Francesca are laced throughout this suspenseful scene that finds the hero on the brink of death. He grasps for the memory of an evening with Francesca in Paris, drinking Sancerre, listening to Mozart, undressing her:

El trató de no ver la blusa demasiado entreabierta, el comienzo de los senos, las aguas empedradas de lagartos blancos hasta seis metros miden estas bestias, cientos de lagartos rayan el agua. . . . (170).

The discourse synchronizes, in the same sentence, the Paris romance with the Amazonian peril. Nicolás tries to resist Francesca's seduction, considering

lo importante que, según Lenin, es sustituir el parlamentarismo verbal y corrupto de la burguesía por organismos inventados por la Comuna, donde la libertad de opinión y de discusión no degenerare en engaño, pero el aliento de Francesca le quemó la nuca de la burguesía, el cuello del parlamentarismo venal y corrupto, la piel tibia de los organismos inventados por la Comuna, la catarata negra de los cabellos de Lenin y supo que no podría seguir viviendo sin lanzarse a ese precipicio (171-2).

The signs of sensual stimuli emerge from all of the novel's textual realms: erotic desire, political struggle, cultural production and identification. The precipice is simultaneously the space on the verge of amorous seduction, between life and death in the jungle, and eventually the deciding bridge between personal and political commitment. The publishing lunch at La Coupole, degrading and humiliating for the writer, provides the frame within which various textual levels contend for space to be imagined, written, and published. The passions of individual liberty and collective causes battle it out, competing for chapters, out-doing one another in sensual imagery, danger and suspense. Neither of them wins, for neither political causes nor individual romance can stage a victory over the European literary capital's commercialization of words.

La danza inmóvil is a novel about conflicting personal and political desire where Scorza articulates the conjunction of political activism and cultural production in the spaces of the city and Amazonia. He uses the novel form to assess leftist activism in the global economy, and to expose the seductive hold

over conceptions of culture and esthetics exerted by the city. Scorza's last novel exposes failure on the part of individuals and of local, regional and international political practice. The novel turns these limitations into a critique of itself as a text, as fragmented and compromised as its parts. With his last novel, he constructs a metafictional universe that superimposes the persistence of Paris in Latin American cultural consciousness over the transnationalization of previously local struggles. La danza inmóvil calls attention to a new urgency on the level of both representation and action.

La danza inmóvil attempts to reposition the privileged place of the urban evident in the "Boom" novel, what Vidal calls that generation's "polarization" and "desbalance espacial" (Literatura 87). Scorza states that he works toward dismantling the bourgeois, urban novel, in order to resist the brutal limitations of the city and its hegemonic control of cultural production:

Yo pienso que la novela urbana es la muerte de la novela, porque en la novela urbana la urbe va a concentrarse luego en reglamentaciones tan estrictas que ya no dejan lugar a nada (Escajadillo "Scorza" 61).

La danza inmóvil is Scorza's last response to the urban novel. In order to break out of what he views as the genre's strictly regimented space, he provides an extreme example of his own hybrid, self-reflexive form. Scorza incorporates myth, dreams, and imaginative fantasies into his urban discursive space to have his characters dance on a plurality of ontological levels. The novel continually stages clashes in which oppositional categories invade one another's territory. Rather than maintaining the distance between politics and poetry, revolution and love, the global and the local, Scorza questions and breaks the rules that conventionally determine how political and erotic desire are to be inscribed.

Scorza's La danza inmóvil is part of a cultural phenomenon that crosses the convenient boundaries of institutions, nations, languages and traditions, questioning their very production. Hugo Neira characterizes Scorza's texts as "cultural interfaces" between two distant cultures, one that inspires and the other that produces. Scorza "se sitúa entre dos escenarios culturales, el europeo y el latinoamericano, uno que difunde y el otro que inspira, para concluir ocupando un espacio de frontera entre ambos, una interface cultural, una forma lujosa de la marginalidad" (106). This cultural production is a collaborative process, and involves an expansive cast of places and players. The strategic and contagious interpenetration of European and Latin American media and publishing that launched the "Boom," continues to coordinate a large sector of Latin American narrative production since then. Scorza's meta-productional strategies both document and ironically criticize culture's transnational mechanisms.

La danza inmóvil degrades bohemian Paris and exotic Amazonia. The story turns the once romanticized city into a business center for literary negotiations and subversive political action, and converts the jungle in a Hollywood-like backdrop. Nicolás, Santiago, and Scorza himself are transformed into variable cogs in the transnational process of literary production. The protagonists' dependence on Paris (and Scorza's on Barcelona) appears politically and culturally compromising yet inevitable. Inscribed in La danza inmóvil are negotiating desires: the desire to write and publish, to fight and love, to be recognized abroad yet engage in local struggles. In his last novel, Scorza confronts art with politics, and the "country with the city," to demonstrate the disjunction between current transnational culture and a European hegemonic past. In La danza inmóvil Paris and the jungle converge where fiction and ideology sell them both down the river.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The novels of La guerra silenciosa include: Redoble por Rancas (1970), Historia de Garabombo, el invisible (1972), El jinete insomne (1977), Cantar de Agapito Robles (1977), and La tumba del relámpago (1979).

<sup>2</sup> Cornejo Polar situates Scorza in "el cruce de esta doble inserción. . . de una parte, está obviamente condicionado por la nueva narrativa hispanoamericana; de otra; se refiere a una tradición anterior, en gran parte discutida y negada por el boom, como es la novela indigenista y más específicamente la novela indigenista de intensa motivación social" ("Sobre el neoindigenismo y las novelas de MS" 553-4). Escajadillo discusses Scorza in the context of neoindigenismo in his recent book, La narrativa indigenista peruana, and helps bridge the critical gap between La guerra silenciosa and La danza inmóvil. He mentions four characteristics that distinguish neoindigenist writing from "orthodox" or "traditional" indigenism: the use of magic realism to reveal the Andean mythic universe, intensified lyricism in the narrative prose, the integration of the indigenist "theme" into national issues, and an increasingly complex arsenal of literary techniques (55-78). See also Escajadillo's "Scorza antes del último combate." For critiques of Scorza's esthetics and political stance in La guerra silenciosa, see in particular Moraña and Forgues.

<sup>3</sup> La Coupole is famous for hosting notable writers and artists such as Picasso, Giacometti, de Beauvoir and Buñuel.

<sup>4</sup> Scorza states that his novels are "máquinas de soñar, donde más importantes que los niveles reales son los horizontes oníricos" (quoted in Escajadillo "Scorza" 72). Roland Forgues also insists that Scorza's use of magical realism or "superrealidad" has a "papel de subversión del orden vigente" (Estrategia mítica 148).

<sup>5</sup> For insightful discussions of Cortázar's collage esthetic in LM, see Parkinson Zamora's article "Movement and Stasis, Film and Photo" (especially 59-63); and Santiago Juan-Navarro's dissertation chapter on Cortázar and Doctorow, the section entitled "Political Collage and Montage in LM" (260-290).

<sup>6</sup> Canon in this study refers to the range of literary works that a particular culture produces and legitimates over time. As Charles Altieri defines them, Canonical works are expected to provide knowledge of the world represented, to exemplify powers for making representations that express possible attitudes or produce artistic models, and to articulate shared values in a past culture that influences the present or to clarify means of reading other works we have reason to care about (41).

<sup>7</sup> Many critics and literary historians consider Barcelona publisher Carlos Barral the originator of the "Boom" with the Barral literary prize for new fiction first awarded to Mario Vargas Llosa in 1963 for La ciudad y los perros. The French publishing house Gallimard initiated their own translation series called "Le monde entier" that included Latin American writers. The journal Mundo nuevo, edited in Paris by Emir Rodríguez Monegal from 1966-1968, propagated the "Boom" by advertising soon to be published novels with interviews and excerpts by Carlos Fuentes, Gabriel García Márquez and Vargas Llosa.

<sup>8</sup> On Scorza's Populibros project, see the interview with Ortega and the biographical chapter in Aldaz.

<sup>9</sup> Abelardo Oquendo, notable Peruvian critic and publisher, calls a stay in Paris "the intellectual's obligatory military service" (personal interview, Lima, Perú, 15 June 1989). Olver Gilberto de León, a contemporary Uruguayan critic and anthologist in Paris, in 1990, calls French the "vehicular language" and Paris the bridge to enable writers to begin publishing, and then to continue publishing in other languages within Europe (personal interview, Paris, France, 27 December 1989).

<sup>10</sup> David Lagmanovich divided Argentine writers into two distinct territories: Buenos Aires and "el interior" (the provinces). In his critique of the control of the capital and of international publishing, he states that the writers from the provinces cannot become "autores argentinos" until they have published in Europe. Mentioned by Daniel Moyano, personal interview, Madrid, 11 Nov. 1989.

<sup>11</sup> Scorza is not alone in examining this transnational cultural mechanism. Cristina Peri-Rossi (in her short story "La influencia de Edgar Allen Poe en la poesía de Raimundo Arias" and her novel La nave de los locos), José Donoso (in El jardín de al lado) and Alfredo Bryce Echenique (in La vida exagerada de Martín Romaña) all incorporate characters who struggle to write, publish and gain acceptance in the European cultural sphere.