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Realism in the Works of Marta Brunet

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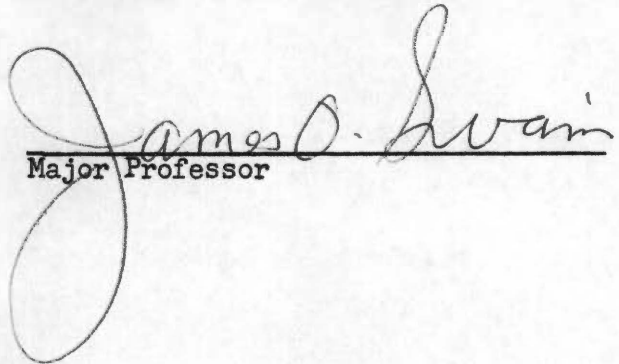
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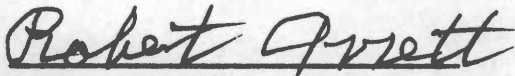
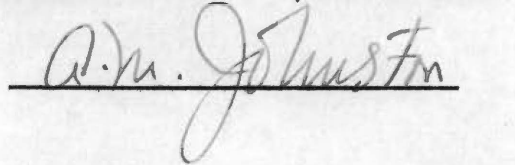
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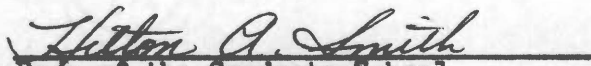
I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Gertrude Steudler Landis entitled "Realism in the Works of Marta Brunet." I recommend that it be accepted for nine quarter hours of credit in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in Spanish.


James O. Swan
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Robert Arsett

A.M. Johnston

Accepted for the Council:


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REALISM IN THE WORKS OF MARTA BRUNET

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Council of
The University of Tennessee

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by
Gertrude Steudler Landis
August, 1963

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For his suggestion of the literary work of Marta Brunet, as well as for his many helpful suggestions and wise counsel, I am very grateful to Dr. James O. Swain.

To Associate Professor Robert Avrett I wish to express my deep appreciation for his patient and most helpful advice, as well as his willingness to see this thesis through to its completion.

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INTRODUCTION

In this brief study we have tried to limit our investigations to a consideration of Marta Brunet as a realistic writer. In our conclusions we shall make some remarks concerning the type and extent of realism shown in the works examined.

The order in which the various subdivisions of this thesis are presented is: Biography of the author, discussion of her principal works, a short discussion of realism in literature and the listing of the six main criteria, the study of the works under each of these criteria and our Conclusions. A short Bibliography is appended.

As is sure to be the case with an author who is still relatively young and who, we hope, will continue for many years to produce other worthwhile books, it is difficult to consider the study conclusive. In the meantime, however, it is hoped that this modest thesis will be of help to students of Chilean literature and that some time in a not too distant future this study may be continued. Because a really conclusive judgement cannot be made until all of this author's works are available, we are not sure just how valuable our beginning has been.

Then, we end this Conclusion by using an old Spanish proverb, "No hay libro, por malo que sea, que no tenga alguna cosa buena."

CHAPTER I

BIOGRAPHY

Marta Brunet was born August 9, 1901, in Chillán, Chile. Her parents were Ambrosio Brunet Molina and María Presentación Cáraves de Cosayo. She did not attend the public schools but was educated by private tutors. In 1911 and again in 1914 she studied and travelled extensively in Europe.¹

In 1923, at the precocious age of 22, she published her first literary work, Montaña adentro. Her first efforts met with amazing success, mingled with surprise at the depth and maturity of her literary work.

She continued to write and in time became the editor of La Nación and La Hora, both newspapers of Santiago, and El Sur of Concepción. She was also for a time the editor of Familia (1934-39).

In 1933 she received the Premio de Novela given her by La Sociedad de Escritores de Chile. El Club del Libro de Buenos Aires, and the Pen Club de Chile in 1946 declared her Humo hacia el sur to be the best work which had appeared during the month of publication of this work.

In 1939, President Pedro Aguirre Cerda named her honorary Cónsul at La Plata, Argentina. In 1943, Juan Antonio Ríos made her Cónsul de Profesión adscrito al Consulado General de Chile in Buenos

¹Ronald Hilton, Who's Who in Latin America, Part IV, Bolivia, Chile and Peru (Chicago, Illinois: Marquis, 1947), p. 65.

Aires. In 1948 Gabriel González Videla named her Third Secretary to the Chilean Ambassador in Buenos Aires, a position which she renounced in 1952 upon the election of Carlos Ibáñez del Campo to the presidency. She returned to Chile. She was honored by being elected president of the Sociedad de Escritores de Chile for 1960-1961.²

In 1961 she received the Premio Nacional de Literatura. Before that time she had already received numerous prizes. In 1929 she had been awarded the Primer Premio en el Concurso de Cuentos which was offered by the leading Chilean newspaper, El Mercurio. For her Aguas abajo she had won the Premio Atenea in 1943, awarded to her by the Atenea of the University of Concepción.³

Critics from Chile as well as those of other countries have given her highest praise for her literary work. Here is a quotation from Donald Walsh, in Books Abroad:

She has the gift of clear and realistic vision, tinged with irony and the rare gift, for South America, of setting down her vision with artistry and interest, with the skill of a true novelist.⁴

Manuel Vega has this to say about her first book, Montaña adentro:

. . . novela escrita por una joven de sociedad. Esperábamos encontrar en ella un ensayo tímido que permitiera a los

²Atenea (Concepción, Chile: 1960), No. 387, p. 175.

³Diccionario de la literatura latinoamericana-Chile (Unión Panamericana, Washington, D.C., 1958), pp. 36-37.

⁴Books Abroad. Vol. 21, pp. 300-301.

lectores aburrirse. El choque fué rudo y casi desconcertador ante esa pintura audaz de nuestro pueblo, ante ese drama regio que desde las primeras páginas empuñaba el interés y lo mantenía, tenso, vibrante a través de escenas condensadas por una mano maestra que, en vez de tantear, parecía saberlo todo y que no empezaba, sino venía de vuelta de la vida y del arte.⁵

Alone (Hernán Díaz Arrieta) has this to say:

Sorprendió al pueblo en año 1923 con Montaña adentro, relato campesino del sur, de acuerdo con la tendencia criollista, popular, ceñido a la tierra, pero de una tensión vibrante y recia inesperada en una joven, y de una lengua castiza y sabrosa, más inesperada aún.⁶

Willis Knapp Jones, writing about Bestia dafina, remarks:

"This young Chilean writer has written a study of the Chilean peasant worthy of being placed beside Edwards Bello's El roto."⁷

Alone has this to add:

Existe cierta relación temática entre ella y Mariano Latorre. Montaña adentro, aparece poco después de la publicación de Ully. Pero Marta Brunet creó su método, estilizó el criollismo para seguir a su manera la senda trazada por Mariano Latorre. No cabe duda de que es uno de los candidatos más serios al Premio Nacional de Literatura.⁸

Emilio Vaisse, the Chilean critic, compliments her with these words:

... En manos de una escritora, menos artista, el tema de Montaña adentro habría dado latitud (y hasta lata) suficiente para llenar quinientas páginas y aún más. La Señorita Brunet no se ha dejado tentar por la posible abundancia. En esto

⁵Hugo Montes and Julio Orlando, Historia de la Literatura chilena (Santiago, Chile: Pacífico, 1957), pp. 289-290.

⁶Hernán Díaz Arrieta (Alone), La literatura chilena durante el medio siglo (Santiago, Chile: Zig-Zag, n.d.), pp. 186-188.

⁷Books Abroad, Vol. 3, p. 276.

⁸Alone, op. cit., p. 291

su talento es viril . . . Ella sabe abstenerse, ella sabe limitar, podar, escoger . . . y por consiguiente sabe escribir.⁹

The noted critic Raúl Silva Castro has this to say about her work, Montaña adentro:

. . . Carácter distintivo de la descripción de la naturaleza en esta obra primigenia es el animismo antropomórfico que la autora infunde en ella. Citemos algunos ejemplos: 'Esa prima noche, y las entrellas al amparo de la sombra curioseaban mirando hacia la tierra; algunas asomaban un instante su pupila de plata y se perdían llamando a las otras para luego aparecer juntos.'¹⁰

Alone describes her as an exceptional, superior writer:

El caso de esta autora, dice Alone, constituye una de esas excepciones, que encuentran desprendido al público. Es necesario destruir la idea de la literatura femenina tradicional, hecha como los dulces de almíbar "por mano de monja". Sería necesario inculcarle a los lectores la convicción de que un autor no es hombre ni mujer, ni soltero ni casado, ni de buena o mala compañía, sino que es una inteligencia, un corazón, una voz de la humanidad, dotada de la facultad de transmitirse.¹¹

During an interview in 1960 with the Argentine writer, Rosa Franco, in which señorita Franco remarked that Marta Brunet wrote like a man, her reply was this:

. . . A mí no me halaga eso, ni entiendo que tal cosa pueda ser un elogio. Decir que una mujer escribe como un hombre parecería querer significar que el talento literario es cosa privativa, exclusiva del sexo fuerte y que lo contrario es la ex-

⁹Emilio Vaisse, Estudios críticos de literatura chilena (Santiago, Chile: Universitaria, 1940), p. 68.

¹⁰Raúl Silva Castro, Panorama de la literatura de Chile (Santiago, Chile: Universitaria, 1961), p. 307.

¹¹Hernán Díaz Arrieta, op. cit., pp. 291-292.

cepción . . . Y dígame usted, si eso no es exagerada petulencia por parte del hombre. . .¹²

Raúl Silva Castro says that in María Nadie, Marta Brunet uses the same style as Dostoevski in The Brothers Karamazov.¹³

The prophecy of Alone . . . "No cabe duda de que es uno de los candidatos más serios al Premio Nacional de Literatura,"¹⁴ came true, for in 1961 she received that award. The critics as well as the many foreign translations acclaim her a superior writer. Many of her writings have been translated into French, English, Portuguese, German, Swedish, and Danish.¹⁵

¹² Julio Durán Cerda, Anales de la Universidad de Chile (Santiago, Chile: cuarto trimestre de 1961), p. 90.

¹³ Atenea (Concepción, Chile: Universidad de Concepción, 1960), No. 378, pp. 258-262.

¹⁴ Hernán Díaz Arrieta, loc. cit., p. 291.

¹⁵ Diccionario de la literatura latinoamericana-Chile, p. 37.

CHAPTER II

DISCUSSION OF MAJOR WORKS TO DATE

Montaña adentro (1923)

Marta Brunet's first book was written when she was only 22 years of age. She surprised the literary world in her vivid, graphic description of life among the country people.

Juan Osis, "el afuerino," comes to help in the harvest. He falls in love with Catita, the daughter of the cook. Fearing trouble, the mother warns her romantically inclined daughter that "Toos son lo mesmo," to which Catita replies: "Este no es cómo l'otro, mamita."¹ Juan is accused of participation in a local robbery, having been absent, at the same time, from the farm on a mercy errand to town to buy some very much needed remedies for the sick, illegitimate child of Catita. He is cruelly mistreated by some brutal local policemen who are more concerned with finding some likely victim upon whom to pin the crime, rather than in an objective solution to the robbery. Catita's former lover, and the father of her child, returns. The harvest fiesta is in full swing, and there is plenty to drink with the usual, resulting fights. Urged on by some local bullies, he kills Juan and flees toward the Argentine border. But for once the policemen are on the job and they apprehend him. Strangely enough, he does not put up a fight but meekly shrugs his shoulders and remarks: "Será mi destino."²

¹Marta Brunet, Montaña adentro (Santiago, Chile: Nascimento, 1923), p. 24.

²Ibid., p. 107.

Don Florisondo (1925)

Pascuala, a very young girl, marries an old man, Florisondo. The people said that this marriage was doomed to failure--the difference in their ages was too great. But Florisondo is very happy, and when his youthful wife presents him with a son, his happiness knows no bounds. But soon Pascuala becomes very ill. Don Florisondo is extremely kind, considerate and helpful. He takes care of his wife and baby. However, in her delirious condition Pascuala confesses that Don Florisondo is not the father of the child. Upon the confession of this betrayal of his love and confidence, Don Florisondo becomes very cruel and even strikes his wife, who dies later. Don Florisondo's anger and wild rage succumb at the sight of the defenseless child. With the death of Pascuala, he will take the child and no one will ever know but he that the child is not his own.³

Bestia daffina (1925)

Don Santos is a carpenter by trade. Upon the death of his wife, he waits until his three daughters are grown to remarry. This he has done at considerable inconvenience to himself, with a desire to shield them from the necessity of becoming adjusted to a step-mother. But his daughters are very unhappy about his choice of a bride--one Chabela, who, it is rumored, is something of a "femme fatale." The daughters of Don Santos refer to her as "una mala bestia."

³ Marta Brunet, Don Florisondo (Santiago, Chile: Nascimento, 1925).

During the wedding feast, one of the daughters of Don Santos, Meche, runs away with a local farmer. They go to Temuco. Soon Tolita, another daughter, becomes emotionally upset due to some friction and family quarrels.

Upon discovering that indeed his young wife is unfaithful--a fact impossible to deny, for Don Santos has caught her in the very act, he accuses her of the cause of all his troubles with his daughters. Because of her, Meche has run off with a man, and Tolita has had serious nervous troubles. In his blind fury, Don Santos strangles his wife. He says that she is "una bestia daffina": "Perdía . . . Bestia no sos más que una bestia daffina y a las bestias se las matan."⁴

Bienvenido (1929)

The owner of the Fundo Malleco, Rosario Rodríguez de Gana, had been wealthy, but is now in reduced financial circumstances. Her husband's vices had brought the family to near poverty before his death. To make matters worse, the one son, Enrique, is a spendthrift. Doña Rosario has only some land, her son Enrique, and Filomena, an illegitimate daughter of her late husband, who has been passed off as some poor child they have taken to rear. Juan Ramírez, administrator of the farm, falls in love with Filomena; they are married in time.

Enrique has been spending huge sums of money on his girl friend, who idles away the days and weeks at the baths in Chile. Juan Ramírez

⁴Marta Brunet, Bestia daffina (Santiago, Chile: Nascimento, 1925), p. 92.

is sent on a mission to offer a considerable sum of money provided the said girl friend is willing to forget Enrique. She accepts the offer, but surprises Juan Ramírez by telling him that it is really he in whom she is interested. Juan is for a time swayed by the temptation to forget about Filomena and accept the love of this exotic woman. But Juan, compelled by duty, returns home where he learns that his wife is pregnant. This enables the rather indecisive Juan to make up his mind about the future. It is the expectant child that enables him to make this vital decision.: "Si el hijo no hubiera venido a equilibrar mi pensamiento, ¿de dónde habría yo sacado fuerzas para repelar esta tentación?" Hence comes the title, Bienvenido, for indeed the coming baby was welcome.⁵

María Rosa--Flor del Quillén (1929)

Pancho Oscares, a local don Juan, boasts, "La mujer que yo quiero es mía."⁶ His friends remark that while this may be generally true, it is not true of María Rosa. Pancho exclaims that she will be no different from the others--she too shall be his.

All her life her parents proudly say of their fair daughter: "Cómo la María Rosa, no hay ninguna."⁷ This thought comes to dominate the thought and affects the very personality of María Rosa. She begins to believe that this is really true. Her parents marry her to

⁵ Marta Brunet, Bienvenido (Santiago, Chile: Nascimento, 1929), p. 179.

⁶ Marta Brunet, María Rosa - Flor del Quillén (Santiago, Chile: La Novela Nueva, 1929), p. 3.

⁷ Ibid., p. 5.

an old man, and in spite of the difference in their ages, they seem happy. Pancho makes it a point to pass her house when she is under the shade tree and is entirely alone. At first he merely greets her and passes on his way, but later he talks for a while, and one day he declares his love for her. She is furious, but in spite of her protests, she has been infatuated by this Pancho. When he appears one day, she declares her love for him. He seduces her, and then, brute that he is, insults her by declaring that she is just like the other women who cannot resist his charm. She chases him out of the house and sets the dogs on him. His claim to having seduced her is not believed by his lewd friends. They pay her a compliment, and she invites them into the house for some food. With evident admiration and pride they look upon her and declare, "Como la María Rosa, Flor de Quillén, no hay ninguna."⁸

Reloj de sol (1930)

This book is comprised of some 15 short sketches. The titles of the stories are: Juanacho, Francina, Lucho el mudo, Niú, Gabriela, Ana María, Ruth Werner, Romelia Romani, Enrique Navarro, Tía Lita, Dofia Tato, Misiá Marianita, Sangre de soledad, Dofia Santitos and Don Cosne de la Barriega.

They are divided into three groups: a) Alba, stories of children, b) Mediodía, stories of youth and c) Ocaso, stories of elderly people. The synopses of two stories of each group follow.

⁸
loc. cit.

Juanacho

Juanacho as a child, playing "hide and seek," hid in a trunk and the lid closed. His mother dies and her body is placed in a coffin. Remembering his unhappy and fearful experience as a child when the lid closed down on the box, he feels that much the same thing must be happening to his mother. Early friends who have come for the "velorio" are amazed to discover Juanacho attempting to pry off the lid of the coffin.

Lucho el mudo

Because he seldom spoke, Lucho was dubbed el mudo. He becomes very jealous of the affection his mother shows for their mayordomo. Lucho develops a serious sense of frustration and of not being wanted. He prays to the Virgin to take him out of this world. He becomes ill and soon dies. His dying words were, "I am going with the Virgin."

Enrique Navarro

He is called "the bluebeard of T.B." He has had five wives. He stops to talk. When he was first married, the doctors told him that he had T.B. Since his first wife got this disease, he felt guilty about the cause of her death. How could he repay his debt to humanity? He would find other women who were suffering from this disease and he would care for them.

Tía Lita

A niece one day asks Tía Lita why she has never married. She tells the following story: While a child in school, she met Teresa, and became so attached to her that her personality became absorbed by Teresa. When Lita fell in love with Fernando Luco, she made the

mistake of telling Teresa, and Teresa became infatuated with Fernando and married him. When they die, Tía Lita exclaims sadly, "Fueron mis dos amores" (meaning Teresa and Fernando).

Dofia Santitos

She is an old woman with only one tooth. She comes to the curandera for medicine. She comes in an oxcart with a very young man, who, strangely enough, is her husband. She is a most interesting character. She tells of her aches and pains and of all the remedies she has taken. The curandera gives her a simple remedy of bread rolled in cinnamon. Within a month she is healed and shows her gratitude by bringing a basket of vegetables, a duck, and flour. To the curandera she reveals the secret of her power over men--keep them guessing--men must be held through fear and uncertainty. Never say sí ni no, sino quizás.⁹ ("yes or no, but rather perhaps.")

Sangre de soledad

Every Saturday night when the work is done, the husband likes to play solitaire. At ten o'clock he usually stops and goes to bed. This is the time for which the wife has waited. When he is fast asleep, she has the privilege to listen to some music.

By means of knitting for others, she has been able to buy things for the home, but none gives her as much pleasure as the phonograph. As she plays the march or the waltz, it brings back memories of her youth.

⁹Marta Brunet, Dofia Santitos, p. 170.

One day her husband and a buyer are discussing a business deal, and he suggests that they listen to some music. The woman tries her best to divert their attention, but finally the guest in his drunken stupor tries to open the lid of the phonograph. The woman says it is hers and attempts to protect it. There is a scuffle and it falls to the floor and the records break. In her despair, she rushes to the woods, and her dog follows. She reviews the situation and finally comes to the conclusion that it is best to return, which she does.¹⁰

Cuentos para Mari Sol (1938)

This book includes a series of stories for children. Synopsés of two of the most interesting follow.

Buscacamino.

The owl's name is really Señor Chuncho, but all the birds call him, Buscacamino. At first there is a resentment toward the owl because he is continually in the practice of augurar calamidades. One day all the birds are shouting, ¿"Periquito, has visto a mi tío Agustín"? Señor Chuncho (owl) puts on his rubbers and raincoat and comes to their aid. He finds Sra. Diuca's husband, Srta. Cachafia's home, and helps many other birds. So they all love him and call him Buscacamino con mucho cariño. He still warns them (presagiando todos los males), and they listen courteously and love him for all the good he does for them.

La flor del cobre.

This story tells of an elderly couple. The husband is very

¹⁰Marta Brunet, Reloj de sol (Santiago, Chile: Nascimento, 1930).

lazy and feigns all sorts of aches and pains when he is asked to do some work. His nickname is very descriptive, Don Quejumbre-No-Hace-Nada. One day as he is going to town to buy a remedy for a toothache, he is met by a meica (medicine woman). She gives him a bag of seed and tells him to plant it and it will cure him.

When Don Quejumbre-No-Hace-Nada decides not to plant any more, the pains return. The plant turns out to be corn, and his wife makes all the corn dishes that the Chileans love; pasteles con pino, humitas, and chuchoca. They sell some corn and buy the many things needed and are never poor again.¹¹

Aguas abajo (1943)

This edition includes three stories: Aguas abajo, Piedra callada and Sangre de soledad. The last is a reprint of a story in Reloj del sol (1930).

1. Aguas abajo (1943)

In the home, near the canal, are three women: grandmother, mother, and daughter. The husband takes the goats to the mountains and cuts wood. The young girl refuses to call him father.

One day the girl is told to call him. The girl goes reluctantly, and is seduced by her step-father. When she returns, she will not obey her mother. The man tells his wife that now the girl is his woman, and that she will give the orders. The wife is astounded at the turn of events, but gradually adjusts to the new situation.

¹¹ Marta Brunet, Cuentos para Mari Sol (Santiago, Chile: Zig-Zag, 1938).

She is told that she can sit and spin like the grandmother, the girl "es dueña de la casa" (boss).

2. Piedra Callada

Esperanza is struck by her mother when she confides that she is going to marry. Esperanza marries, and she has a very difficult time with babies and hard work. Finally she dies and her mother goes to care for the six children. She suggests to Bernabé, the son-in-law, that she will take them all away so that he can marry again, but he refuses.

Bernabé blames everyone for his troubles, his mother-in-law, and his wife because she had so many children and then died. He takes his frustrations out on the children, striking them and one day he even hits the grandmother. She plans for revenge.

One day the children go fishing. Bernabé is delayed and the children suggest that they go to look for him. The grandmother says there is no need. What they do not know is that he has been hit by a stone, hence the name (Piedra callada). That night she does not lock the door--a hint that there is no need, for he won't return.¹²

Humo hacia el sur (1946)

A small frontier town, at the end of the railroad line, is the setting for Humo hacia el sur. There is a project to continue the railroad; so a bridge is in the process of being built. The people of the town consider this a threat to the continued prosperity of the town, and so they oppose its being built. The one who opposes it the

¹²Marta Brunet, Aguas abajo (Santiago, Chile: Cruz del Sur, 1943).

most is Doña Batilde, the town's founder and chief property owner. She is rich, miserly, and ruthless. Her goal in life is "ser es tener y todo lo demás humo, humo que se lleva el viento."¹³ She dominates her husband who had been a "ministro, diputado y senador" and now he is the governor. When her husband informs her that he has no more influence with the politicians, she herself goes to the capital and tries to persuade the president to her point of view. When she realizes that she cannot convince him, she returns determined to do it her way. She sets fire to the town, and walks across the unfinished bridge to her death.

La mampara (1946)

One one of the main streets in Buenos Aires, is a large office building, for doctors and lawyers. Through a long hall and back of a mampara (screen), is a humble, four-room house. Here live three women, closely related by blood, yet their characters are entirely different. The mother does all the housework without any protest. Her one daughter, Ignacia Teresa, rises early, goes to work and supports her mother and sister without any complaint. Carmen, the other daughter, rises at noon and expects her mother to wait upon her hand and foot. Carmen is beautiful and her only preoccupation in life is herself. She dresses in the latest styles and her day is a constant whirl of parties, dances, and good times.

This is the way that the reader sees things; however, Marta

¹³ Marta Brunet, Humo hacia el sur (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Losada, 1946), p. 11.

Brunet has Carmen soliloquize, and in the monologue a clearer picture is given of her: what she appears to like, she dislikes.

As their humble home had a screen to separate them from the modern office building, so too there was a screen to separate their inner thoughts and desires from their actual outward appearances.¹⁴

Raíz del sueño (1948)

This consists of a series of short stories which tell of dreams. They seem so real to the individuals that they affect their waking hours. Some of the stories are these: Raíz del sueño; Una mañana cualquiera; Un trapo de piso; Encrucijada de ausencias; La casa iluminada; La otra voz; and La niña que quiso ser estampa.

Here are the synopses of two of them:

1. Raíz del sueño

Elena screams in the night and her mother comes quickly to her side. She does not want to be awakened and have to answer her mother's questions; she wants to dream. Elena's father had died and the mother transferred that love to her. She is not allowed to have friends. The tree which she would climb to help make friends, is cut down, and the low wall is made higher. Elena's dreams are of open spaces where there are many trees but no walls.¹⁵

¹⁴ Marta Brunet, La Mampara (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Emecé Editores, S.A., 1946).

¹⁵ Marta Brunet, Raíz del sueño (Santiago, Chile: Zig-Zag, 1948).

2. Un trapo de piso

A mop (un trapo de piso) is one of the articles that is sold in the store. The mother, the only one interested in the success of the store, is dictating from sales slips to an inattentive son, the items that had been sold during the day. Roque, the son, thinks about going to the movies and walking in the park with his wife. María Engracia, the wife, hates the store and wishes that she and Roque could travel to distant lands. She wonders if the child that she is bearing will be submissive to the grandmother and the demands of the store. She comes to realize that the store was the dream of her mother-in-law. She makes up her mind to forget her dreams. To the surprise of the mother-in-law, she takes the sales slips away from her and begins to dictate: "un trapo de piso, sesenta."¹⁶

La hermanita hormiga (1953)

In the words of Marta Brunet she tells how she came to write this cookbook, full of favorite Chilean recipes.

Revisando un día efectos de alguien mucho quise; encontré una serie de cuadernos en que su previsión de excelente dueña de casa había recolectado recetas de cocina al albur de viajes y de países. La dejé aparte para bien leerlas después; y admirada entonces del orden y de la redacción que había en ellas--creyendo hacerles un bien a todas las que ansían un buen manual culinario- le hablé a Nascimento de darles a la publicidad. Así llegó a ver la luz este libro, sin que tenga casi yo derecho a ponerle como amparo mi nombre, que en esta labor mi tarea fué la mínima la de copiar a máquina la letrita de cadeneta, infantil y enternecedora, de aquélla que como una buena Hermanita Hormiga iba recogiendo cuanto pudiera ser regalo y regodeo de los suyos.¹⁷

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Marta Brunet, La hermanita hormiga (Santiago, Chile: Nascimento, 1953).

María Nadie (1957)

María López, the attractive new telephone operator arrives at a small lumbering town. The men are interested in the new arrival; the women, however, are displeased. Most of the people live a day-by-day existence, just interested in themselves. María had found this true also in her own home; the parents were interested in themselves and hardly ever were alert to the needs of their own daughter. María goes to the big city to work and there she meets a man whom she loves, but he is only interested in her physically.

She is called by some a "young princess," by others a "Nordic queen," and by two small boys, "the girl with the golden hair." Her name is María López, a very common name, but since she is an outsider, the jealous women refer to her as "María Nadie."

Her purpose in coming to this small southern town, had been to find kind, simple-hearted people, who would help her find peace. They, however, become suspicious of her, first the jealous women, then the men, and at last the two little boys who were her friends. Finally, to a lonely cat on the doorsteps she tells her sad life story.¹⁸

La mujer y "Ésa" (1960)

A woman finds a picture of a girl in the wallet of her dead husband. She becomes suspicious that the girl was his mistress. She inquires about the girl and finally finds her sick in a hospital. She takes her to her home with the purpose of finding out the truth.

¹⁸ Marta Brunet, María Nadie (Santiago, Chile: Zig-Zag, 1957).

She is constantly harassing her with all kinds of questions, and decrees that she cannot die until she has answered her questions. The girl dies and her accuser seems to hear a voice that she had heard in her childhood, saying "sister. .sister."¹⁹

¹⁹ Marta Brunet, La mujer y "ésa" (Concepción, Chile: Atenea, 1960).

CHAPTER III

REALISM IN LITERATURE

"Realism in literature is an attitude which purports to depict life and to reproduce nature, in all its aspects, as faithfully as possible.¹

The French writers were the lawgivers of realism and Stendhal was considered their chief. He stressed emphatically the doctrine of clear seeing. The password of his followers was that the novel may be compared to "a mirror going along the street."²

The French writers were perhaps influenced by Daguerre's invention of photography in 1839, which suggested to the artist a style which should be exact, representational, and close to reality. Some of the early realists depicted the unusual or else the unattainable ideal. Courbet disagreed with this idea in his art. Champfleury transposed Courbet's theory to the literary field, "demanded that the novel should favour the ordinary man, that he should be true to life . . . that his language should be sober."³

In realism, the thought of "a mirror going along the street" has its limitations, however, because a mirror only reveals the

¹S. H. Steinberg, "Realism," Casell's Encyclopedia of World Literature (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1954), Vol. 1, p. 472.

²James O. Swain, Vicente Blasco Ibáñez--General Study With Emphasis on Realistic Techniques, dissertation (Knoxville, Tennessee: Graphic Arts, 1959), p. 6.

³Steinberg, op. cit., p. 473.

outward physical appearance and not the inward thoughts. For example, in da Vinci's painting of the Mona Lisa, there is the famous smile, and for centuries people have wondered what thoughts provoked that smile. So, too, there is a deeper realism, a spiritual or psychological one that will not be shown by detailed physical appearances. There are times, however, when the novelist may bring out some of the spiritual, psychological realism through the outward appearances of things.

In a recent article on the writings of Arnold Bennett, the author states that Bennett would write down key phrases in his notebook which had physical as well as psychological meaning. "Sawed off a wedding ring" was one. It shows that the man is a miser, for he saws it from the woman's hand:

"... in order to have it re-made---at a saving---for their own wedding."

"Double saucepan" was another key phrase. Elsie damages a new saucepan that Violet bought. This occasion provides an opportunity for Bennett to reveal Violet's increasing hysteria. Later Violet refuses to accept money for the saucepan from Elsie. This incident here serves to disclose Violet's changing attitude towards Earlforward, for whom the saucepan was to have provided more nourishing food."⁴

Gustave Flaubert, the great exponent of realism, was guided by a series of important esthetic principles. Most of these principles will be used, and Marta Brunet's writings will be discussed under the following headings in an attempt to show her

⁴ James G. Hepburn, "The Notebook for Riceyman Steps" (PMLA Publications of the Modern Language Association of America (New York: June, 1963), p. 257 ff.

place in literature as a realistic writer. The six criteria worked out in Dr. Swain's dissertation are accepted and used in this study.

They are listed in the following order:

1. Careful Observation--Ability to Perceive.
2. Choice of Significant Detail.
3. Objectivity.
4. Democratic Curiosity.
5. Avoidance of the Exotic.
6. Use of Environment.⁵

⁵Swain, op. cit., p. 11

CHAPTER IV

SIX CRITERIA OF REALISM

1. Careful Observation--Ability to Perceive.

Realistic writing is dependent upon the writer's ability to see accurately. Stendhal stressed the doctrine of clear seeing, and he described a novel to be compared to "a mirror going along the street." Flaubert, however, thought this was a too fleeting glimpse and he advised that one should have his gaze fixed upon an object "until some half-hidden, hitherto unseen aspect should be noted."¹ The following quotations and summaries will show to what extent Marta Brunet demonstrates her ability to observe carefully.

From her Montaña adentro is offered the following as evidence of her ability to observe. She is describing doña Clara's cocina (kitchen):

Diez metros más allá alzabase la cocina; otro edificio análogo, pero aun más miserable. Detrás, protegido por tablas y ramas, quedaba el horno. En frente una ramada servía de comedor a los peones cuando el tiempo lo permitía; lloviendo se comía en la cocina, sentados en la tierra endurecida y negruzca, rodeando el montón de leña que ardía en el centro. Olletas, tarros de parafina vacíos, una batea de amasar y, sobre una zaranda, tarritos de conserva arreglados mafiosamente con un alambre a modo de asa pero servía de vasos. Platos, fuentes y cucharas de latón: todo ello misérrimo, pero limpio.²

¹ James O. Swain, op. cit.

² Marta Brunet, Montaña adentro, (Santiago, Chile: Nascimento, 1923), p. 28.

In Bestia daffina she describes the people arriving for the wedding. The prancing horses raise enormous clouds of dust; the wind causes the mantas (ponchos) to flap on the shoulders of the men; the shining metal on the saddle bags filled almost to bursting with generous contributions of food; the jangling (or jingling) of the enormous silver spurs--the pride of the huaso (cowboy); the bright colors of the women's dresses--red, green, yellow and blue; the broad hats shading the tanned faces of the outdoor men, with their white teeth showing so distinctly against their dark faces--all this and more is graphically described by the author.³

In Humo hacia el sur there is another detailed description of a group of women. They were gathered to make plans for the twentieth anniversary of the town. Months prior to the much-anticipated event, the various local women had been in a dither about the dresses which each would wear during the celebration. They had their numerous spies whose duty it was to discover what their respective social rivals planned to wear. Paca Cueta, one of the best-dressed women, ordered her entire wardrobe for the occasion from Santiago, the capital. Mariana Santos did everything possible to find out what Paca would be wearing. She first enlisted the aid of her faithful servants to spy out the land, and then the wife of the manager of the local Post Office allowed her to use a fashion magazine that should have been delivered long ago to one María Soledad, who was definitely a leader among the aristocracy of

³Marta Brunet, Bestia daffina (Santiago, Chile: Nascimento, 1925), pp. 27-28.

the town. From this magazine she ordered her dressmaker to copy the identical dress which Paca was to wear. The material, color, and every detail were faithfully copied, and with no little delight. When the day finally dawned, Mariana Santos had her maid watch diligently for the first sign of Paca as she left her house. The plan of Mariana was to arrive on the scene slightly prior to the arrival of Sefforita Paca. Her thinking was that by so doing the other women would naturally assume that Sefforita Paca had copied her dress from Mariana's design. This would duly humiliate the haughty Paca! But the servant made the tragic mistake of delaying her report, and Srta. Paca arrived first--to the utter chagrin of Doña Mariana. Doña Mariana was so provoked that she never did put in an appearance!⁴

In María Rosa-flor de Quillén, we have a description of the people going to the mountains to harvest pifiones (a type of nuts). The five carretas (ox carts) creak slowly and laboriously over the narrow, rocky, winding road. The mountains are thick with trees and shrubs. They seek for some clearing suitable for a halt, for they are weary. The incline and the heavy load require frequent stops for rest for the oxen. The people, too, are tired and stretch their limbs, anxious for the end of their journey. From the sides of the ox carts extend numerous utensils and equipment necessary for their journey. There are tin cans, a huge cooking pot, numerous items of food, a guitar, etc. María Rosa is sitting on sacks,

⁴Marta Brunet, Humo hacia el sur (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Losada, 1946), pp. 49-50.

mantas (ponchos), and choapinos (rugs). Behind the carreta of Don Saladino, two faithful dogs trot, barking as they go.⁵

The carefully selected negative words in Reloj de sol, gives one the feeling of doom and disaster.

Hundido en las profundidades de un sillón, don Cosme de la Bariega medita con los ojos fijos en el diabólico bailotear de las llamas.... Cae la lluvia oblicua, violenta, incesante. Ráfagas huracanadas la hacen más agresiva aún. Los pomares gimen a su paso y los altos cipreses se inclinan rígidos, bruscos, desacompañados.

Es noche en el salón que sólo la lumbre rojiza del fuego ilumina. Don Cosme sigue con los ojos extáticos fijos en las llamas. Estos invernales crepúsculos asturianos tienen un hechizo que embruja. En las sombras de la vetusta casona me asalta siempre la pavorosa idea, por alguno de los pasillos lúgubres, por los ángulos tenebrosos de los salones inmensos, el espectro de algún antepasado ha de salirme al encuentro. No huyo la idea. La acaricio, la provocho atravesando los salones desmantelados cuyos ecos resuenan a mi paso, excursionando por el desván tan bajo y tan sombrío que a cada instante me detengo despavorido.

In La Mampara she describes a woman going to the market. She is short, fat, and her hair is held up by a knot on the top of her head. Her dress is percale, with a row of small buttons which mark the curve of her breasts and her stomach. Her broad feet are comfortable in alpargatas (cloth sandals with rope soles). She is dragging a reed bag with vegetables sticking out. There is a strong odor of celery. A dog is following her and her alone.⁷

⁵ Marta Brunet, Maria Rosa-flor de Quillén (Santiago, Chile: La Novela Nueva, 1929), p. 31.

⁶ Marta Brunet, Reloj de sol (Santiago, Chile: Nascimento, 1930), pp. 146-147.

⁷ Marta Brunet, La Mampara (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Emecé Editores, S.A., 1946), pp. 19-20.

In María Nadie there is revealed what goes on in a small post office. One gets to know everything. Of course one must know the tricks of the trade. One must know how to use a razor blade to remove seals, and steam to open sealed envelopes. How interesting are the lives of the people one gets to know through the mail! There are certain things which one can tell openly, others partly and then still other news which cannot be revealed to anyone. This is wisdom and good upbringing. One knows that the wife of the administrador has a lover, who writes to her in the name of her servant. She also knows that one of the women had surgery and that the doctors have discovered that she has only six months more to live. The post office mistress knows it all!⁸

This is what Marta Brunet, herself, has to say about the ideals and principles which guided her as a writer, and that reveal certain rules for realistic writing.

Lo que vale decir que el escritor debe sumarse a la vida, adentrarse en ella, identificarse a través de los sentidos con todos sus aspectos, enriqueciéndose de experiencias, aprendiendo de las artes de las letras y las ciencias cuanto éstas puedan entregar y, al propio tiempo, descifrando con su alegría y su dolor el oscuro, tremendo y apasionante libro de la propia existencia.⁹

The critic, Gonzalo Drago, praised her for her realism in María Nadie:

⁸ Marta Brunet, María Nadie (Santiago, Chile: Zig-Zag, 1957), p. 53.

⁹ Marta Brunet, "Experiencias de mi vida literaria", Atenea (Concepción, Chile: Universidad de Concepción, 1958), No. 380-381, p. 264.

María Nadie es una novela destinada a ocupar un destacado lugar en nuestra literatura. Tiene los méritos suficientes para ello por su crudo realismo. y su realización estética.¹⁰

2. Choice of Significant Detail.

Ability to choose significant detail means the careful selection of exact words, phrases, etc., to bring out the character of the individual or the theme of the book. One of the aspects of realism is to describe things or situations in such exact detail, so that the reader can visualize the environment and likewise feel the experience through which the character is passing. There must be the avoidance of the superficial and the over-emphasis which would detract from the true.

In Montaña adentro the author not only describes the landscapes and all the exterior as it meets the eye of the careful observer, but also gives some insight into the internal or psychological reactions. Doña Clara is washing clothes at the canal:

A fuerza de años y de disgustos tenía ciertas inocentes manías, como ser: hablar sola, ofrecer en sus angustias padres nuestros y rosarios a toda la Corte Celestial, no reír en viernes porque en caso contrario había de llorar en domingo. . . .

Hablaba sola esa mañana, aprovechando los momentos de indignación para apalear con furia la ropa.¹¹

¹⁰ Gonzalo Drago, Atenea (Concepción, Chile: Universidad de Concepción, 1958), No. 379, pp. 265-266.

¹¹ Marta Brunet, Montaña adentro, p. 25.

The material egotism of the youthful, unwed mother-to-be is revealed by the following:

Tampoco te pío na yo. M'hijo es mío. Con su maire pa mantenerlo tendrá de un too--... No quiso oír nada. Pasó la noche sorbiendo silenciosas lágrimas de fuego y haciendo esfuerzos sobrehumanos para no dejar estallar los sollozos. Con el clarear del día, clareó también en su espíritu la conducta que debía seguir en lo futuro. Ante todo contarle "su fatalidá" a doña Clara.¹²

In Bienvenido she gives an almost complete list of the various sounds heard in the country.

El rumor de la cascada se hacía menos intenso, era ya imperceptible al oído y otros nuevos rumores llegaban en confusa polifonía: balar de las ovejas: cencerros tintineando: ladridos de perros pastores: agudos gritos de gaffanes: cachafías en algarabía de malas comadres... runrún de abejas: hablar del agua: zumbidos de tábanos borrachos de sol: risas de las hojas locas de aventuras.¹³

Don Florisando is an old man who is married to a very young girl. His greatest desire is to have a son. Whenever he sees a pregnant woman, he is very much affected.

Al ver la figura deformada de una mujer, próxima a ser madre, los ojos se le humedecían envidiando esa deformidad para Pascuala. Y lo curioso era que no sentía terneza ni envidia mirando a un niño que ninguno le gustaba para hijo, suponiendo siempre mil veces mejor, más bonito, más bueno, más inteligente al suyo.¹⁴

In Bestia daffina she describes the conversation of repartee of the wedding guests as "Las frases más picantes que el ají."¹⁵

¹² Ibid., p. 21.

¹³ Marta Brunet, Bienvenido, p. 8.

¹⁴ Marta Brunet, Don Florisando, p. 183.

¹⁵ Marta Brunet, Bestia daffina, p. 28.

She also uses a few significant words to describe an action: "V́ctor detuvo en seco su cabalgadura."¹⁶

The errors in the lettering of a sign over an eating place, and the fact that it was not corrected, show the illiteracy of both the sign painter and the owner.

ARMUERSO	Y COMIDA	CON
EJEROS	PROPIETARIO	

17

In María Rosa-flor de Quillén, the author not only gives a detailed description of the carretas going to the mountains, but after they have found a clearing and there is a huge common fire, the women gather their food to prepare the meal.

Sin saber cómo sacó de las prevenciones un pedazo de charquí, un trozo de repollo, papas, cebollas, choclos, ají verde, colocándolo todo en una olleta y con ella en una mano y en la otra el tarro, se fué a la fogata que en el centro alzaba su lengua roja, vahorosa de negro humo.¹⁸

María Soledad, in Humo hacia el sur, compares her wealth with that of Doña Baltide who owns most of the town: "Al lado de las tierras suyas, las nuestras son una especie de estampilla."¹⁹

She also gives a remarkable description of the women that are present to plan a program.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 32.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 27-28.

¹⁸ Marta Brunet, María Rosa-flor de Quillén, p. 35.

¹⁹ Marta Brunet, Humo hacia el sur., p. 16.

Casi todas las señoras del pequeño mundo oficial, pero ninguna de las que formaban 'la sociedad' ni las otras que 'eran el medio pelaje' ni por cierto . . . las que constituían 'la cerrada aristocracia.'²⁰

The characters of two girls in La Mampara are shown very clearly, by the way in which they arise in the morning. This is Ignacia Teresa:

Saltaba de la cama, visitiéndose rápidamente entre idas y venidas a encender el anafe y poner agua a calentar y la leche, y tomar de prisa el desayuno, y salir corriendo para hallarse con la madre en el patio . . .²¹

When the other sister arises, she expects her mother to do everything for her.

. . . Mamita, alcánzame las zapatillas. Supongo que me tendrás planchada la blusa . . . y la falda . . . Mamita, creo que el saco tiene una manchita en la solapa . . . Ya te he dicho que prefiero un vaso de jugo de mandarina o de naranja al café con leche.²²

In her more recent book, María Nadie, one of the women of the post office says she is suspicious of the new telephone girl because she dresses differently from the rest of the women of the town. This is misiá Melecia's observation concerning María López:

¿A usted le parece decente no usar polleras ni por casualidad? Yo no le conozco otra pollera que la que traía cuando llegó. Después se puso los pantalones. ¡Si hasta para dormir los usa!

²⁰Ibid., p. 49.

²¹Marta Brunet, La Mampara, p. 10.

²²Ibid., pp. 19-20.

Nada de vestirse como se visten las demás mujeres. Ella tiene que ser distinta en todo. . . .²³

3. Objectivity.

Here an author must remain hidden--not intrude. He does not condemn or praise but tries to give an unbiased picture of each individual and circumstance. Of course it may be said that perfect objectivity cannot be obtained by the writer. Adjectives, adverbs, and verbs used may give a hint of the author's feeling towards people, events, and scenes described.

The various characters within a story or novel will, of course, express their opinions, but as long as the author does not show his own prejudices, as long as he gives each character his "day in court," he cannot be accused of lack of objectivity.

In Montaña adentro, Doña Clara and the rest of the people on the farm speak like country people, who have had very little education and whose knowledge is confined to the farm. The fuerino has been to the big city of Temuco and he has observed what the wealthy German boss does. Doña Clara speaks like an older woman--she is conservative, suspicious, and careful. Catita, on the other hand, is younger and more trusting.

Various characters are presented in Bestia dañina and the reader may form his own likes or dislikes. María Juana, the oldest, takes responsibilities after the death of her mother and is patient, industrious and kind. Mache is a smiling chatterbox, impulsive and

capricious. Talita is very timid, afraid of displeasing anyone and frightened at the quarrels within the family. Each one of the characters is different, and yet the reader can be sympathetic because sometime or other he has shown the same distinctive qualities.

As for morals, Marta Brunet paints virtue without evincing approval and describes vice without showing disgust. In María Rosa--flor de Quillén, Pancho is shown as a Don Juan, bold and daring, whose interest in women was only that of conquest. One who observed him said, . . . "Por eso gustaba de atacar las torres sin puertas, de fácil acceso."²⁴

She generally shows that crime does not pay. In the case of Juan, María sicks the dogs on him and his friends will not believe that he has conquered her. In Montaña adentro Pedro is apprehended by the police after he has killed Juan with a knife. In the case of San Martín, the sadistic policeman, the people show their dislike for his cruelty by shunning him.

While the character of each is fully developed and carefully described, the author neither condemns nor praises. In Humo hacia el sur, she tells us of the extensive wealth of Doña Batilda and we come to realize that she is not satisfied with all she has but desires still more than she has. This is expressed in this sentence: "Ser es tener y todo lo demás es humo, humo que no vale nada."²⁵

²⁴

Marta Brunet, María Rosa-flor de Quillén, p. 10.

²⁵

Marta Brunet, Humo hacia el sur, p. 11.

She cannot understand why her wealthy friend will not open a store and increase her capital. Money means everything to Doña Batilde; and when she realizes that she will be the loser when the bridge is built, she no longer cares to live. She walks across the bridge to her death.

In the illicit love affair of María and Gabriel, it comes to an end when she realizes that he does not want to be tied down by anybody and that he does not love her in the same way that she loves him. Neither is condemned, but the respective point of view of each is given.

The reader can come to his own conclusion in the story, Ana María. When the young girls hear of the death of Ana María, one says that the people here do not remember her, so there is no point in saying anything about her death. This statement is made because the girl speaking does not want to dress in mourning. After this statement is made, they are silent for a moment, and then a young man says, "¿Bailamos?"

In the children's stories the author tells us that Juanacho's mother is dying of tuberculosis. The little boy wants to see his mother and kiss her. He cannot understand why the relatives will not permit him to see her. The reader can sympathize with him in his questions and also with the relatives in their answers.

The author does not condemn María López for wearing pantalones.²⁶ This is what she has been accustomed to wear in the city, but one of

the women in this little town tells her how she and the people of the town feel about it. It is not Marta Brunet who is condemning the girl's dress, but one of the characters.

One can also sympathize with the boys, Cacho and Conejo, who have given wild violets to María and then a little later find them on the lapel of Cacho's father. The author does not condemn, but she indicates how difficult it was to get the violets and then how soon they are transferred from María's hands to the lapel of one of the fathers.²⁷

From the illustrations, it will be seen that the author is very objective in her presentation of her characters and situations. She does stay hidden, does not condemn or approve, but rather lets the reader draw his own conclusions.

4. Democratic Curiosity.

This means that all people and all their actions have a place in the novel. Marta Brunet considers all subjects with equal sympathy and with equal interest.

An author may, of course, describe the lower classes better than the middle or upper classes because of experience and training, but he will not eliminate persons, events or scenes because they are ugly, beautiful, or taboo. If the thing is true, it deserves consideration.

Montafia adentro is a story of the country people, but the

²⁷ Ibid. pp. 14, 18.

administrator also is shown as he gives orders to the farm hands. The author describes equally everyone on the farm, as well as those who come in contact with them: the harvesters, the fuerinos (outsiders), Doña Clara, the cook, her daughter and her illegitimate baby. Juan Oses is the farm hand, big and muscular, but his manners are refined. He forgives Catita's moral lapse and is courteous at all times. At the other extreme is Pedro Peiro who insinuates that he isn't the father of the child, and refuses to marry her. San Martín is the tough, hard, cruel, sadistic policeman. Thus there are many types of characters.

There are various scenes: the breakdown of the threshing machine; the harvesters working in the fields and eating and conversing in the kitchen; Doña Catita preparing food, washing clothes, and giving advice to her daughter; tender scenes as they care for the sick baby; cruel treatment of the men by the policeman; the drunken brawl after the dance; the knifing of Juan. There are some scenes that are beautiful and others are disgusting as the author gives a true picture of country life.

Marta Brunet's second book, Bienvenido, has also its setting in the country, but the emphasis is on the employer rather than the farm workers. The hero is the administrator of a farm who has married the illegitimate daughter of the owner. Doña Rosario, the mother-in-law, has many problems with her son, Enrique, and his paramour.

There are various scenes: Filomena picking strawberries; the administrator teaching the servant's children to read; a picnic near

the waterfall; the servant preparing the food and serving it; taking tea at Doña Rosario's home; Juan and Filomena on their honeymoon. The scenes in this book deal mostly with upper middle-class people.

The previous books deal with the country; Humo hacia el sur portrays a large, prosperous town. There are many classes of people: the cerrada aristocracia (elite) which is composed of two families, Doña Batilde and her husband who own half of the town, and Ernesto Pérez and his wife and small child, Solita; the medio-pelaje (the middle class) are Paca Cueta, the fashion horse, the head of the women's society, the directress of the public school, the post office mistress, Moraima, who runs the local brothel, and at the bottom of the scale are Pedro Molina, the prisoner, and Tom, the Negro.

There are typical scenes of the rainy section of Chile: the rich women are knitting and gossiping, the men are playing billiards and solving the world's problems; Solita gives us a graphic picture of the town as she takes a ride on her pony; Solita and the French governess take up an offering in the Catholic church; there is the typical telephone call, not able to hear and urging central to get the number; the prisoner walking in his cell; the town on fire, people fleeing; and finally the death of Doña Batilde. There is also a typical scene which is very common to all parts of Latin America, the parading around the plaza.

María Rosa-flor de Quillén goes back to the country. There are new scenes of going to the mountain for pifiones, preparing a meal over an open fire, and the social that follows.

Life in a big city is treated in La mampara: Ignacia Teresa as an office girl, taking the bus and working in the office; hunting an inexpensive restaurant because she has only thirty pesos for her lunch; the mother dressing for market--feeling uncomfortable in her corset, high-heeled shoes, gloves, hat, and envious of a poor woman in her simple dress and sandals; Carmen in a whirl of social activities--shopping excursions, dances, drinking and small talk.

In the last book, María Nadie, the setting takes place in a large city and also in a small town. María's father is a public employee going up the political ladder as his wife harassed the politicians for a better position; the town's curiosity at a new arrival; María's work as a telephone operator; Melecia's manner of opening other people's mail; preparations for a circus; Pataca's empanadas (meat pies), the store and restaurant; Cacho and Conejo, the two little boys who gave violets to María and just about worship her; María's illicit love affair with Gabriel; the embarrassing scene at the circus. These and other scenes are contained in this remarkable book.

The illustrations cited indicate that Marta Brunet possesses democratic curiosity in considering all classes of people, actions, and scenes.

5. Avoidance of the Exotic.

Realism from its beginning accepted the theory that the author should describe the thing which seemed most natural to him. This also meant that the writer should avoid things that his readers would not understand. This led to the theory of the mediocre and the common-

place. What is to be avoided is the unusual, the hard-to-believe coincidence, and the far-away in time and place. In some of her last novels, for example, La mampara and Raíz del sueño, Marta Brunet depicts various scenes which have a psychological aspect. These cannot be considered exotic, because they are treated today more and more in textbooks, magazines, and even on television programs.

The many characters described by the author are very representative of their class status. The country, city, or town people are typical of what would be expected of these people. Their manner of speech also is characteristic; the country people in particular use many chilenismos (colloquisms.)

Their customs reveal the area where they live and their status in society. For example, the courting of the country fellow in Bestia daffina is far different from that of the suave Hans in La mampara.

In her latest novel, María Nadie, there is a marked contrast between the isolation and the indifference of the people who lived in the same apartment building as María, and the busy-bodies and the suspicious people of a small provincial Chilean town.

It is apparent then, that Marta Brunet generally deals with characters, events, and scenes which are easily understood by the reader. She does avoid the exotic, except in a few instances where she depicts scenes that have a psychological aspect.

6. Use of Environment.

Marta Brunet uses a great deal of local color in her novels. They are properly placed to give a better understanding of the

characters and their surroundings. She has the ability to show the characters in their normal surroundings, in their time, and also to paint into these characterizations a little of their respective surroundings.

In Montaña adentro Dofia Clara says, "One doesn't laugh on Friday so as not to cry on Sunday. Cross your shoes when you go to bed and thus scare away '¡al malo.'"²⁸ Upon hearing the story of Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp, Catita gives her baby that name.²⁹ This is very typical of the Chileans, who name their children upon any impulse or pretext, never considering whether or not the names are suitable.

"¿Quién es?" Cato will not open the door at night without knowing who is there. This is also typical of the Chilean. He has a fear of the unknown, especially at night.³⁰

Catita has much faith in the power of certain herbs for medicine. This is universally true of the rural people of southern Chile. They have implicit faith in the power of herbs. In fact, they place much more faith in these herbs than in the medicine prescribed by the doctor.

In Humo hacia el sur she describes the typical farewell:

²⁸ Marta Brunet, Montaña adentro, p. 25.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 38.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 78.

... Se despedía con un abrazo embozado, apoyando apenas una mano en su hombro y dando con la otra leves golpecitos a su espalda.³¹

Marta Brunet gives a picture of the Indians.

Pasa el cacique, tactiturno a sus mujeres a la siga, silenciosas, con las guaguas a la espalda, atadas en una escalerilla.³²

In the mountains there was a tree called el pino hilachento. It was the custom of the people as they passed this tree to tie something on it. Perhaps only a cigarette, a few matches, a bit of Chilean or Argentine money, or a handkerchief, etc. Peiro Fáez, the Argentine gaucho, just laughed and would not put anything on the tree. In fact, he boasted that upon his return he would strip the tree of all the money the deluded, superstitious people had placed there.

Next spring when the people arrived from Argentina, they reported that Peiro Fáez's wife and children had died from a strange fever, and that the skeleton of Peiro had been seen hanging from a tree in Argentina. Upon receipt of this gruesome information, there were the inevitable comments. Perhaps the most typical was made by a woman who summed up the thought of the common people: "En esas cosas es mejor creer. Entre ponerle y no ponerle, lo mejor es ponerle."³³

³¹ Marta Brunet, Humo hacia el sur, p. 18.

³² Marta Brunet, Humo hacia el sur, p. 183.

³³ Ibid., p. 43.

Another custom is that of putting some parche (plaster) on the face with a view toward drawing out the mal (evil).³⁴

In Bienvenido, Pancho tells his patrón of the fear that the people have when they hear the strange cry of an animal.

Sí patrón. Lloro en las noches tan triste, tan triste que dan deseos de llorar también. Otras veces grita con un lamento largo y entonces es cuando se muere alguien. L'última vez lo oyimos a los poquitos días después se murió el compadre Juan Pedro Abello.³⁵

Although Juan does not subscribe to this superstitious belief, he listens attentively as Pancho tells him what he must do.

Puede ser que su mersé alguna vez l'oiga como se lamienta. Tiene que cortarse al tiro un mechón de pelo y enterrarlo al lao de la laguna. Es pa qu'el Mal se vaiga. Tamién es güeno icir'Veta pa tu casa animal del agua, que Dios te mire y el Malo te traga.³⁶

Many of the country people have much faith in the mache, the local medicine woman.

Hey tomao cuanto remedio se pue su mercé figurar. Me han visto toas las meicas conocías de por aquí y hasta los doutores de Curacautín y de Victoria. Ninguno ha podío aliviarme ni así tantito.³⁷

Familiar areas of Santiago are referred to frequently.

. . . Otras veces se iba por la calle de Pedro de Valdivia para seguir por la del Cerro, pasar por la de Rosal hasta desembocar en la de Merced, frente a la subida de Santa Lucía.³⁸

³⁴Ibid., p. 50.

³⁵Marta Brunet, Bienvenido, p. 14.

³⁶Ibid., p. 16.

³⁷Marta Brunet, Reloj de sol, pp. 164-165.

³⁸Ibid., pp. 153-154

A mother sending her child to the store to make a few simple purchases, expresses herself in the following typical manner:

Pancha--¿Dónde estás, condenada? Anda al despacho y te compras un tarro de sardinas y un cinco de pan, y ají y cebolla otro cinco.³⁹

At the circus, there was a marked separation of the classes as to their seating. Usually the poor people arrived first.

. . . Los de los fundos no habían llegado todavía. Todos los asientos de las primeras filas estaban vacíos. Esos que correspondían a las localidades más caras. En las otras que las seguían en precio, el público dejaba ya pocas ralas. . . el pueblo de pelo abajo. . . obreros, peones, campesinos, todos bulliciosos, endomingados, rebosantes de inocente felicidad. . .⁴⁰

The preceding selections show that Marta Brunet uses much of the local color in her description of scenes of rural Chile. The colloquialisms, the customs, and speech also show the Chilean environment.

39

Marta Brunet, Humo hacia el sur, p. 161.

40

Marta Brunet, María Nadie, p. 106.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The novels of Marta Brunet bear the ring of authenticity. She has taken great pains to portray in convincing terms the people about whom she writes. It is apparent that she portrays well all six phases of realism considered in this thesis.

Careful Observation: Many instances have been noted of various events, scenes, and people in which she is a master at the art of clear and careful observation.

Ability to Choose Significant Detail: She has used a few well-chosen words to describe her object, whether it be human or material. Many times she not only describes the external, but also the internal, or psychological.

Democratic Curiosity: This means that all people and all their actions have a place in the novel. She considers all subjects with equal sympathy and interest.

Objectivity: The author remains hidden and does not intrude. She gives an unbiased picture of each individual.

Avoidance of the Exotic: In her novels, the unusual, hard-to-believe coincidence, and the far-away in time and place are avoided.

Environment: In this realm, the Chilean writers are at their best, and Marta Brunet is no exception.

The final conclusion reached is that Marta Brunet is an excellent realistic writer.

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