

Est.  
1841

YORK  
ST JOHN  
UNIVERSITY

Carpenter, Victoria ORCID logoORCID:  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3880-6555> (2010) When Was  
Tomorrow? Manipulation of Time and Memory in the Works of  
Mexican Onda. In: Carpenter, Victoria ORCID logoORCID:  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3880-6555>, (ed.) (Re)Collecting the  
Past: History and Collective Memory in Latin American Literature.  
Oxford, Peter Lang, pp. 37-57

Downloaded from: <https://ray.yorks.ac.uk/id/eprint/1446/>

The version presented here may differ from the published version or version of record. If  
you intend to cite from the work you are advised to consult the publisher's version:

[http://www.peterlang.com/download/datasheet/52828/datasheet\\_11928.pdf](http://www.peterlang.com/download/datasheet/52828/datasheet_11928.pdf)

Research at York St John (RaY) is an institutional repository. It supports the principles of  
open access by making the research outputs of the University available in digital form.  
Copyright of the items stored in RaY reside with the authors and/or other copyright  
owners. Users may access full text items free of charge, and may download a copy for  
private study or non-commercial research. For further reuse terms, see licence terms  
governing individual outputs. [Institutional Repository Policy Statement](#)

# RaY

Research at the University of York St John

For more information please contact RaY at [ray@yorks.ac.uk](mailto:ray@yorks.ac.uk)

plot lines denies any narrative the dominant role, reserving it for the editorial text. This text remains largely invisible throughout the story, surfacing occasionally in order to change or terminate an unsustainable narrative line. By the end of the novel, the three texts collapse in on themselves as the editor surfaces in the clicks of the typewriter keys. The clicks act as the editor's part of the dialogue with Gabriel the narrator. There are several indications of this dialogue in the last page of the story: the presence of 'sí, claro' and 'sí, cómodo',<sup>36</sup> which can be interpreted both as emphasis and an answer to a question; the statement 'ya lo había pensado, esto es algo vulgar'<sup>37</sup> supposes that there was another statement made to that effect. Earlier in this section, Gabriel appears to be talking to himself: '¿No tengo otra solución? [...] Yep, pero prefiero ésta.'<sup>38</sup> It is possible that Gabriel the protagonist is talking to Gabriel the narrator; since two are aspects of one person, the first-person forms of 'tengo' and 'prefiero' are appropriate. However, this is the only instance of a complete dialogue with a question receiving an answer. The disappearance of the respondent indicates that he has been eliminated from the narrative line; so the protagonists are being terminated along with their storylines in the inverse order. The clicks then represent the erasing of storylines.

As a result, by the end of the story the remaining Gabriel is the primary narrator, who has eliminated the secondary and tertiary texts and is now being terminated by the editor. In this case, the last statement 'sí, cómodo' is Gabriel the narrator's point of disappearance; 18 clicks following this quotation are the evidence of the editorial text erasing the original storyline or starting a new one. The interaction between the editorial text and other narratives results in the editorial text manipulating the latter both directly and indirectly. Direct manipulation is evident in the case of the primary text. Indirect manipulation appears in the case of other texts, whose plots are changed directly by the primary text and, therefore, manipulated indirectly by the editorial text.

36 'Yes, sure', 'Yes, comfortable' (Agustín, 101).

37 'I had already thought about it, it's vulgar' (Agustín, 101).

38 'Don't I have another solution? [...] Yep, but I prefer this one' (Agustín, 100).

The manipulation of linear narrative reaches a new level in Gustavo Sainz's novel *Obsesivos días circulares* (1969), which is a kind of a 'dirty secret' of the Onda. Nobody has ventured to place it into the context of the movement or a wider context of contemporary popular culture, let alone analyze in detail. Gunia's 1994 comprehensive study of the Onda literature dedicates a page to the novel; Morrow's 2006 examination of the novel is all but the recognition of its incomprehensibility. Sainz labeled this work 'novela de lenguaje',<sup>39</sup> which is hardly surprising if we consider the characteristics of the Onda works. The novel is narrated in first person by Terencio, a janitor at a private girls' school. He lives in an apartment on the premises together with Donají, his second wife; Sarro, a middle-aged hitman; Yin, Sarro's girlfriend; and Lalka, Yin's sister. Terencio spends his days watching girls through a one-way mirror, reading James Joyce's *Ulysses* and writing letters to his ex-wife Leticia and friend Joby. The novel is comprised of a large number of 'vignettes', focussing on each character. These vignettes narrate seemingly unconnected events in Terencio's life and repeat throughout the novel often before the events described in them take place. There are several occasions in the novel when references to later events misinterpret them, as will be evident from the analysis.

As in other Onda works, character absorption in the novel is achieved by introducing the editor entity into the narrative. The editor first appears in Chapter 1 when Terencio is reading morning papers and talking to Donají and Sarro. The quotation 'que vayas rapidito, quickly, aprisa, pronto o como se diga'<sup>40</sup> does not appear to be assigned to any participant of the conversation; in fact, the absence of punctuation to indicate who is speaking makes the multilogic exchange a monologue. Later in the chapter, when Terencio is talking to a schoolgirl, the editor surfaces to analyse the conversation: 'Ya sabes que en época de exámenes ... Así, idiota, dócilmente, una palabra tras otra y al final tres puntos suspensivos.'<sup>41</sup> The use of 'idiota'

39 'language novel.'

40 'Go quickly, quickly, quickly, quickly or whatever else you call it' (Sainz 1969: 15).

41 'Now, you know already that during the exam period ... Like this, idiot, gently, word after word and at the end three dots of suspense' (Sainz, 18).